

son is a capacity for suspending judgment, for waiting patiently, for attacking always good naturedly, for defending with sustained energy—and for amazing candour in defeat. There may never have been a better loser in any field of competition than the Toronto Daily Star.

But the Star was not made merely by the advent of Atkinson and his alleged \$75,000. In the evening paper field the Telegram was supreme. The only other field left open was that of opposition of the Tely. For a time, under the able guidance of that same Hocken who led the strikers from the News office, but who was later the chief editorial writer on that paper, the News gave the Telegram cause for alarm. It concentrated on local news and especially city hall news. It elected something like eleven out of thirteen mayors against the Telegram. Three years after Atkinson took the Star, and shortly before Willison left the Globe to take over the News, the Star was still in deep water, a large hole had been made in Atkinson's capital and the circulation was nothing to boast of. In 1900 the Star was selling something less than 10,000 copies a day, in 1901 a little more than 11,000. But from 1901 to 1902 it rose almost three thousand, and in 1903 was over 21,000. From that time to this day the Star's circulation has gone up "by leaps and bounds"—last year its average daily circulation was 104,886! But why that first jump of three thousand in a year? Some say it was because the News changed its policy, neglected local news, abandoned its old vigorous municipal writing and left the field open to the Star. This may be true, or it may be robbing the Star of credit for winning its way by sheer merit. Certainly Atkinson was making a strong bid for that element of independent-mindedness which flourishes in almost any extremely partizan city. The very strength of the Conservative Telegram lent force to his opposing slogan, "A newspaper, not an organ." And it was a newspaper. It made "service" its motto. It subdued its private views on small issues to the main business of digging up information for a news-hungry public. Even its strongest editorial opinions never kept honest news of the opposition's doings out of the Star. It would chronicle the defeat of its dearest project in good-natured, dispassionate seven-column headings if it thought it was NEWS! More than this: the Roman Catholic population observed that here was a paper quite willing to publish legitimate reports of Catholic matters. Similarly even the Hebrew population found that this was a paper in

which the troubles of the Jew were not held up to ridicule simply because Hebrews were the sufferers. The Star imported the Sporting Extra for the baseball fans. Later it brought out the "Noon Edition." What real value these editions may have is hard to say, but they were items in Atkinson's programme of "service." In time the Star achieved the dignity—and the losses, of a weekly edition, the Star Weekly. It sent special writers all over the country and to Europe to report special events. It founded a syndicate. It subscribed to the finest news services to be had. It started perennial Fresh Air Funds and Santa Claus Funds, raising thousands of dollars for poor children. Its swat the fly campaigns were once famous dog-day reading. And withal it studied the element of entertainment—it was the Star that stood sponsor for H. F. Gadsby and his "Gallery Clock." Possibly there is too much entertainment in the Star. There are those who would say they buy a newspaper to inform them, not to interrupt information in order to tickle the ears with fancy. Whatever the merit of that observation as an abstract in journalism, it is answered in at least one way by the Star's success.

And with all this attention to the quality of his newspaper Atkinson still had time to become perhaps one of the best business managers in a Canadian newspaper office. No bank is more skilfully managed in the matter of expenditures. Atkinson spends lavishly, but insists on getting full return for his outlay. His cost system is rumoured to be a marvel of detail and simplicity. There was a time when it was a popular pastime of verandah wise-aces to prove that the Eatons owned the Star. Gossip held steadily to the story that Senator Cox, the Mulocks and Timothy Eaton controlled the paper. That may be true or partly true, but the controlling owner of the Star to-day is J. E. Atkinson.

BUT, says someone, this is a description of a "shop window," as Gardiner said of Northcliffe's papers—not a force in journalism and politics: the Star panders to Democracy, follows the crowd! There is room for thought here. Those good people who believe in centralizing the British Empire by noiseless propaganda among select men only, show a distrust of the public that could never be reconciled with the Star's implicit faith in the proletariat. And it isn't just the Star that believes in the right instincts of the public, but Atkinson himself. He is not a Hearst, nor a Northcliffe. He is not a sensation

monger. The writer has personal knowledge of stories all but suppressed in the Star's columns because they were merely morbid and unwholesome. But toward the sometimes naive curiosity and childish enthusiasms of the public at large Atkinson has an indulgent sympathy. He is not a bit of a snob. He admires what is homely, in the true sense of the word, and while he would be the last to tolerate tatting mottoes or embroidery dogs on the walls of his house, he would be the last to sneer at these simplicities; rather he would, I suspect, regard them with a sort of mild pleasure as the sincere strivings of simple honest folk toward "Art." It would never trouble this man to be thought naive. He would much rather that than have to affect that disdain for the commonplace which so often marks the undiscerning. He is a bit of a sentimentalist, as shown by his explanation, when the writer asked him his view of the relation of newspaper to public, that the newspaper is the woman and the public the bow in Longfellow's lines: "As unto the bow the cord is. So unto the man is woman, Though she bends him she obeys him, Though she draws him yet she follows. . . ." In other words, his "public" is really only his studied and sympathetic interpretation of the public's best tendencies. He fought for Reciprocity, well-knowing it must fail in his constituency at least. He has supported the cause of the Roman Catholics at Ottawa—on special cases only—when his circulation manager was reporting wholesale cancellations, and his own friends were protesting to his face. As this article is written the Star, through Arthur Hawkes, is giving peculiarly valuable reports of the French-Canadian's attitude toward the war. The French-Canadian is even defended and men like Bourassa and Lavergne explained and expounded—in Orange Toronto! This is not shop-window-ism, neither is it Quixotic dare-devil journalism. Atkinson, here again, reads what he would call the better side of the public's mind, sees deeper than its surface prejudices, and risks its present malice for its ultimate approval.

Things like these make one feel that Atkinson is a force, growing daily stronger, in Canadian public life. When he suggests that his paper is like a good wife to the public, he is perhaps more poetic than true. The real element of truth in the figure is that the paper, like the good wife, approaches its master armed always with sympathy, a readiness to understand and to promote his wishes. Atkinson's paper is gathering power by its moderation and good sense.

# THE TRAGEDY OF THE TRELLIS

*Involving a Wild Cucumber, a Morning-Glory, a Scarlet Runner and a Cobia*

By A RANK AMATEUR

IT was only a lattice-work ten feet high and eight feet broad; but it was the scene of a tragedy, the struggle for existence based upon the survival of the fittest in its most acute form. The tragedy began in the fact that four climbing things wanted right of way over that trellis. There was the morning-glory, the cobia, the scarlet runner and the wild cucumber. Each of these had his own peculiar methods of getting what he wanted. The struggle began in a handicap, in favour of the cucumber. He was ready to start up as soon as the season commenced. The others had to be planted. The cucumber knew he was a pirate. For seven summers he had been rooted out. Seven springs he diligently bobbed up again. He was three feet up the trellis before the other things were out of the ground. He seemed to say:

"Well, what are you going to do about it? Here's a vacant trellis that has to be covered with something before the middle of July. Those morning glories and scarlet beans and cobias won't be doing much for a month. Why not let me go ahead as far as I can reach, and when the rest of 'em get going they can cover the rest? Eh?"

The rambunctious pale-green boulder was so cheerful about it that I let him go. And he went. For some weeks he had it all his own way. Mr. Cucumber was the only decoration on the trellis. He enjoyed the distinction. He seemed conscious of the fact. Plants are self-conscious that way.

Well the first to give any signs of catching up on the cucumber was the cobia. But he took a long while to lay out the ground he wanted to cover. He seemed fidgety about his undergrowth, wanting to be sure also that there were some perfectly adjusted poles on which he could fasten those queer little rope feet of his before he would consent to do anything but prow round among the things below. However, I got him off to a good start and proceeded to bet on the cucumber, who, by this time, had scooted clean across the trellis staking out far more ground than he could possibly occupy. He was a subdivisionist.

The scarlet beans soon poked up through and were up only a few days before they started to make a feint at a little climbing. But the cucumber was so far ahead that the bean seemed to have very little show.

The morning glories were the slowest of all. Those demure little customers took a long while to get started doing anything. I had half a notion to yank them all out. There they stuck three inches above ground for days and days waiting till they got a nice convenient string to convolute around—and when they couldn't get it they twisted what tendrils they had under way round the geraniums and golden-glows. It took me half an hour one evening to untwist some of those foolish things that should have been two feet up the trellis on the track of that cucumber.

That was how the trellis stood when I went away on my holidays. In two weeks I forgot all about it. Even a garden, much as you hate to leave it, soon passes out of mind when you are spending money on steamship companies and summer hotels.

When I got back in the middle of August that trellis was a sight to behold. In my absence the four climbers had got into a terrible mix-up. Mr. Cucumber was splashed clean across the trellis as he had been when I went away, and he was putting out a fine lot of little pods for next year's seeds. But those despicable morning glories had him tangled up in a terrific snarl. The morning glory can do only one thing; but he is an expert, and he does it well. He had every reachable inch of that cucumber twisted into his ropes that were braided and plaited about the cucumber till the sap would have been choked clean out of him if he had been anything else. And the glories were blooming away serenely, cockeyed and beautiful, knowing that they had Mr. Cucumber just where they wanted him. They intended before the summer was over to hang out

their blue and white flags all over him and cover up his pods completely. But somehow the bright green of that cucumber stuck out all over the trellis. Even where he was half choked to death he hung on, knowing that his peculiar shade of pale green would never be hidden by any morning glories.

Scarlet runners, however, were soaring away gaily all over the vacant spots. They had the advantage of not requiring much room for their feet, and when they got them down they hung out great packs of broad leaves with scarlet flowers under them that seemed to be absolutely colour-sure they could never be hidden even by cucumbers and morning glories. And I almost began to bet on the scarlet bean. For by this time the trellis was jamful of one thing and another—

And what about the cobia? Here was a different story. Mr. Cobia had studied out the situation in his own way. He decided not to try the game of sprawling all over the other things. He just picked out one edge of the trellis up which he climbed at about two inches a day faster than any of the others were doing at that time. He didn't make much fuss. He knew very well that if the morning glories ever got the stranglehold on him he might as well give up. And I almost forgot what the cobia was doing till one day in early September I looked at the trellis and saw how the race had come out.

Mr. Cobia had climbed right up to the eaves and along the eave trough. From there he began his real business which from his way of working was the easiest thing out of doors. He just poured a cataract of leaves and blue bell-shaped blossoms down over morning glories, scarlet beans and cucumber. He covered them clean over, beginning at the top and working downwards. And by the first frost that called the tragedy to a halt, he had that trellis so completely covered with cobia that there seemed to be nothing else on it.

The cobia may be a foreign beast. But after this, on trellis tragedies I intend to bet on the cobia.