

Hot Weather Reflections

By S. T. WOOD

STRANGE it is that man does not cry out against the tyranny of clothes. Milder arrogance and less onerous inflictions have provoked revolutionary world-movements. He sees his sister pass with bared neck, cool and comfortable, inviting the soothing airs that soften the sun's sweltering heat, while a starched abomination grips him by the throat and holds him relentlessly. The inventor of starch must be classed with those who have brought afflictions on humanity. Women bowed to its tyrannies and tortures for a generation, but they have successfully rebelled. It still imposes occasional annoyance and inconvenience, but its worst tortures are to them things of the past, like the rack and thumb-screw. Man is still its slave. It manacles his wrists through the long, torrid days while his emancipated sister with arms clad in cool, transparent gauze, looks pityingly on his distress. Even if he were to carry a successful revolt against the tyrant starch he would suffer the tortures of a coat of heavy cloth with lined sleeves, padded shoulders and fiendishly irritating design. The temptation to pun on the coat of male is almost irresistible. It is true that man under the tyrant clothes has some advantages when compared with emancipated woman. There is no tyranny or oppression entirely lacking in compensations. He can climb a fence or run to catch a street-car with greater facility. But a very small portion of the individual life is spent in climbing fences or chasing street cars.

The squandering of time on a man's toilet is a waste to grieve over, especially when contemplating the paucity of results. It is true that his sister spends almost as much time putting up her hair as he does over his morning shave. But the inartistic pressing, the uncleanly starching, the futile ironing, the creasing, sponging, hooking, binding, chaining, clasp and pinning make a lamentable waste that has strangely escaped the conservation commission. The man who can afford the services of half a dozen experts does not feel the fruitless loss and waste, but in any household where the high cost of living

is an ever-present reality every member of the family must be pressed into the service and every day must be made an industrial emergency to make the man presentable for the street. And such a result! The veil of charity cannot cover up its awful hideousness. Sixteenth century prints tell us that man's costume once had the merit of being artistic. Now it would seem as if some fiend had exhausted his ingenuity in devising a combination of afflictions to torture the human eye and inner sense with ugliness, to vex man's soul with annoying inconvenience, to bind him with rigid bands, to intensify his sufferings in the intolerable heat and waste his time in a multitude of futilities. Woman, with the courage that faces death from starvation for an idea would never submit to the sartorial domination that keeps man in pained humility. Even her present impediments are not endured without protest, and she keeps up continuous threatenings of revolt against the moralists, artists, philosophers, costumers, husbands and other conventional people who insist that her biological classification as a biped be ignored. From man there is not protest or even plaint. Ages of submission have taught him to bless the manacles on his wrists and glory in the garroting clutch at his throat.

Sir Edward, Peacemaker

SOME men are born limelights; some achieve the limelight, and some have it thrust upon them. It is but a few months since Sir Edward Grey, another Edward the Peacemaker, saw his aim consummated, and the Balkan peoples if not in absolute harmony, at any rate no longer belligerent. All through that war the commanding figure was not King Ferdinand of Bulgaria, nor Nicholas of Montenegro. It was Edward Grey.

Once again the world stands on the brink of a disastrous war. Austria and Serbia are at each other's throats. Germany, Russia and Great Britain stand ready—at no matter what cost—to keep their respective national words, and support their re-

spective allies. In this crisis, as in the last, and in the Moroccan affair before that, all eyes are on Britain's foreign minister. His name leaps to the lips of the man on the street. Can Grey hold back the dogs of war? He will if he can.

Somehow, everyone is willing to trust Grey. This man of silences has captured the confidence of a continent. More than a politician, less, perhaps, than a statesman, he is a consummate diplomat. He stands for all that is best in diplomatic tradition.

It is curious that such a man should hold such a place in the popular esteem. Less is known about Sir Edward Grey than about any other British Minister to-day. Ever since he entered politics this was true of him. For nine years he has been Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the Asquith Government. The public has no method of finding out just how arduous his tasks have been. Grey won't talk. Lloyd George may raise the roof at Limehouse. Asquith may lay down the law at Ladybank. Winston may speak in Celtic Park, but the voice of Edward Grey, at any rate in the country, is rarely heard. He is too busy doing things to find time for saying very much.

He is the Sphinx in British politics. Sitting with his hand on his head on the treasury bench at St. Stephens, nor taunt nor sneer can irk him. When someone rises to ask him a question, he gravely tells as much as he wants and withholds the rest. No one can surprise him into a reply if he doesn't want to. But he always has the ear of the House. And afterward, in the lobbies, the questioning goes on amongst the members, ending up with the remark that Grey has spoken, and Grey knows what he is talking about. There is a solidity and a stolidity about the man that inspires respect and trust alike. He is the Gibraltar that cannot be shaken.

The House always fills, if it is known that Grey is up. There are few empty benches for him to talk to. But he would rather be in his office settling the foreign policy of Great Britain, or strolling over the hills with Teddy Roosevelt, or perhaps thinking of an extra chapter he might have put in his book, "Fly-fishing." Hearing himself talk has no fascination for Edward Grey. And I don't think that hearing other people talk has very much. "Deeds, not words," might very well be his slogan.

But it is something to have gained the confidence of a continent, when you don't even know enough French to conduct a conversation over the round table in that language.

H. S. E.



HAS THE EMERGENCY ARRIVED ?

AND IS IT TOO LATE FOR SIR ROBERT AND SIR WILFRID TO GET TOGETHER AND SAVE CANADA'S HUMILIATION ?