

Strong, Comely and Well-trained English Servants.



During the fiscal year of 1907-08, the Department of Immigration brought to Canada 10,499 Domestics. This is a fair sample of these welcome additions to our population. This party was recently brought out by Mrs. Sanford of Winnipeg, who may be seen in centre of group.

ON BREAKING UP

By BART KENNEDY

I.

ONE of the hard things in life is the breaking up of a party that has lived or that has worked together. There may be people in the party that you don't like, but the thought of not seeing even these people again is apt to cause you a pang. And the people you really care for and have grown fond of—well, parting from them is very hard indeed.

Oh, yes. You have had your quarrels and your tiffs and your intrigues. So-and-so has tried to get you out of your place, or has tried to do you out of this or that. But even at your angriest you would hardly have wished him to have gone from your sight altogether. Even at your angriest you would like him to be around, so that you could get back at him.

And here is the moment of breaking up—the moment of parting. The business that kept you all together has been dissolved, or the voyage or project that you set out to accomplish has been accomplished.

Where will everybody go now? What will become of them? What will become of yourself?

But the possible after fate of yourself and those you have been with does not really worry you. It is the fact that you are all breaking up—that you are all being scattered.

II.

When you get to know people well, you will find that they are in the main all right. This talk about man being a wicked and ferocious and selfish animal is based upon that flimsiest basis of all—a half-truth. It is true that he is wicked and ferocious and selfish, and that he would take the roof off your house. But it is also true that he is good-hearted and kindly and helpful and hospitable. And that is why a writer such as Zola never pictures truly human beings. He only gives the dark tones of humanity.

Man is a very mixed-up affair indeed. It is impossible to gauge him according to rules.

But on the whole, my experience has shown me that he is a good sort. There are very few men who are really evil.

Yes, men are rattling good fellows when you

get to know them. And the more you have knocked around the more do you see this. The more do you see that this abuse of mankind generally is silly. True, there is a good deal of preventable fighting and hardship and injustice and misery in the world. But that is not because man is inherently wicked. It is because of something else.

III.

For me the ideal life would be to get with a party of jolly people and always remain with them. How grand it would be when you travelled to travel with them. To go together all over the world—here, there, everywhere. Yes, differences would come I know. But these differences would settle themselves. To go along always with a fine crowd of people! It would be glorious.

The ideal community was that of the clan—where everybody was practically on the same basis as everybody else. And I am sure that when man becomes intelligent enough, this principle of social life will be reverted to. The world will be filled with clans—but clans that possess enough intelligence not to try and destroy one another. This class idea is a stifling, hideous thing.

IV.

I often wonder where the people have gone with whom I foregathered at different times years and years ago. Their faces come up before me. I wonder if they are living or dead. I wonder if I shall meet them again in another state of life. For it is difficult to believe that the end of this physical existence—that we call death—is really the end of things for us. It is hard to think that the consciousness and personality of a man is absolutely extinguished when he dies. I hope that it is not so. I hope that it is true that we live again after we have passed out through our life in this world.

For life is so beautiful. And consciousness is so beautiful. And it is so beautiful to have friends.

Life is beautiful even in darkness. Even in hard and terrible places. There is something ineffably wonderful in life even under the blackest circumstances.

Life surely does not end for us in this world!

V.

I remember—when I was on the stage—how sad I used to feel when the company with which I was

playing was about to break up. In fact, we all of us felt sad, for the people of the stage are the most human people in the wide world. Dear, delightful, generous, impulsive, happy-go-lucky people.

I remember a certain company breaking up. There was a girl in it of whom I was very fond. It almost broke my heart to think that she would go, and that I would not see her again. But it was impossible for us to keep together. For I was only a chorus singer. I could not keep myself, much less anybody else.

Dear girl of the past! Where are you now? What has become of you? It is years and years since I saw you. But your face often comes up before me.

And the men I knew! What has become of them? Are they doing well or ill—or are they here in life, or are they gone?

How strange it is when you meet one who was of a group with whom you were associated in the past. It is many years since you saw this comrade. Many years since that day on which you parted.

You hardly know what to say to each other. The past comes up so vividly before you both. The present is lost in it. Your immediate good or evil fortune is as nothing. You may be down in the world. You may be up in the world. But it matters nothing. You can only think of the past.

What became of So-and-so? And then you speak of one of the long-scattered group whose name you cannot recall. But the comrade, whom you have just met, recalls his name through your description. And you talk and talk away. Always about the past. Always about the group that has been so long scattered.

There is sadness in your talk, and there is regret in your talk. But how beautiful it is to go over the old times together. To fight the old battles again. The past lives for you both in a dim, magical, enchanted frame. And you part with a vow to meet again soon to renew your talk about the old group of which you formed a part in the long ago.

The breaking up of a party that has lived or that has worked together. It is one of the hard things in life. But surely we will meet the people we once knew and grew to like or to understand, again!

If not in this world, perhaps in some other. —
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