

## LETTER RECALLS OLD SHOOTING AFFRAY AT AMHERST YEARS AGO

Convict Who Claims He Was Unjustly Accused Writes From Dorchester Pen.

Some years ago considerable excitement was created in this part of the country by a shooting at Amherst, C. B. R. station, where a railway policeman named Jones was fired at and wounded by a couple of alleged desperadoes who made their escape in the

confusion following the shots. Many Monctonians who remember this affair will be interested in the following item recently clipped from an Ontario newspaper, which printed it to show, among other things, the hard proposition the criminal who tries to reform is up against.

Even for those who do not recall the circumstances of the Jones shooting, the article reproduced above will be interesting on account of its references to the McMahon-Belyea shooting in this city, only a comparatively short time ago.

The Toronto paper's article is as follows: Once a man is sentenced to a term in a Canadian penitentiary, as a general rule, he is condemned to a life of crime and successive periods of incarceration. Once the mark of the penitentiary is stamped upon him, it is made almost impossible for him to live an honest life and keep clear of the clutches of the law. We have seen

this state of affairs exemplified time and again, and that is why we are inclined to place some credence in the following statement sent to us by a convict in Dorchester Penitentiary, N. B.:

"I send you this statement," writes the convict, "in the hope that you will publish it with a desire to see fair play and justice meted out to the unfortunate poor and in the hope that it might secure for me a reduction of sentence. I have no friends or money left in this world."

"In April, 1900, I was arrested by Detective Powers, of the Halifax Police, for theft, and sentenced to two and a half years in Dorchester Pen. While lying in Halifax Jail, an I. C. R. policeman named Jones, from Amherst, N. S., came to the jail to identify me as one of two men who shot at him some months previously in the I. C. R. station waiting room at Amherst. Jones had me brought out to the jail office. He said nothing to me, but later on gave it out that I was the man named 'Belyea' who did not figure in the case against me. He is here now serving ten years for shooting and is aware that Jones did me foul."

"After I arrived at Dorchester Pen, Jones returned with two men to identify me, but these two, seeing I was not the man, kept out of Jones' game. Jones got the authorities here to leave my hair and mustache. I have three fingers off my right hand. No mention of that fact was made either by Jones or his pal, Stewart, before the trial, but at the trial Jones swore to my maimed hand."

"The two men on the eve of the shooting, beating their way on his freight train, came here to see if I was one of the men, and he told the Deputy Warden that he had never seen me before. The authorities here did not believe I was to be tried, but suddenly, without warning, Deputy Chief Sampson, of the Amherst police, came and took me to Amherst Court. I protested my innocence, explained how I was situated, and asked for time to procure counsel and witnesses to prove I was not the man. But this legal right was refused. The Judge appointed a young lawyer, Hewson, to defend me. This young man did not stand up for his legal rights, and he let me be sacrificed. The Judge gave me only five minutes to consult with counsel privately. I was put through a mockery of a trial, found guilty in a few minutes and sentenced to ten years."

"Jones swore that a youth named Wilson, sixteen years old, was in the waiting room at the time and saw the man who shot at him. My counsel asked for Wilson, only to be informed that Wilson was out of town."

"The conductor, too, was away, as were also the two men who came to identify me with Jones. A doctor who extracted a 32 calibre bullet out of Jones was absent. He had the bullet with him in case anyone in court would try to make it fit into my 38 revolver. A 38 revolver was got in my room when Powers arrested me. I called the attention of the Judge to this fact, but neither he nor the jury would examine the gun."

"After I got back from Amherst I made two attempts to escape from the Pen and received two and a half more years. I saw Inspector Dawson when he visited the Dorchester Pen in 1901, and as a result of my protest I was transferred to Kingston Pen in February, 1902, and confined in the isolation cell. I was kept working on a tread mill for the first six months, then placed in the carpenter's sweat shop. When in Kingston I made many applications to the Commissioners to have my case looked into, and for clemency."

"I was released from Kingston, 1910, and being sore in heart against society for the punishment I had suffered, I fell again into the hands of my enemies. This time I was arrested by the Halifax police in the act of being drinking at a saloon when I had just left this time, the latter told my counsel before me that ex-Detective Powers said he had learned that I was innocent of the Jones shooting, and that he (Powers) would tell the truth if called upon. Lawyer O'Hearn promised to act on my behalf on account of the long unjust sentences that I had received. The Warden here would not allow me to write to Powers, but I wrote to Mr. Doherty, Minister of Justice, for permission. He, in turn, asked for a statement. I wrote one and he refused to grant my request. Is this Canadian justice?"

## SHIPPING NEWS

### DOMESTIC PORTS.

Halifax, Dec. 27.—Ard stirs Durango. Liverpool; Snetoppen (Nor.), Wernberg, New York for Havre (re-pairs); 27th, in port, stuns Algier, Purness; Banan (Nor., Emanuel Nobel, Belg.), Kanawha; Manchester Inventor; Matasua, dry dock.

### FOREIGN PORTS.

New York, Dec. 28.—Ard schs Annie B. Mitchell, Roberts Harbor; Emma S. Briggs, South Gardner; B. H. Warford, Nanucket; M. D. Cressy, Bath; Samuel Hart, Stockholm. Sid Dec. 28, schs Emily F. Northam, South Amboy for Rockland. Boston, Dec. 28.—Ard schs Eagle, Stockton; Mary Langdon, Rockland. City Island, Dec. 27.—Sid Flora Condon, Boston for Norfolk.

### SCHOONER LIBELLED.

As the result of a collision which occurred in Rockland harbor on Dec. 19 last between the British schooner St. Maurice and the barge Shickshinny, owned by the Potter Transportation Co. of New York, a libel has just been placed on the schooner which was anchored in Boothbay Harbor on Wednesday, damages being claimed in the sum of \$3,000. The schooner has been bonded, and she will proceed to New York.

### SCHOONER CHARTERED.

Schr. 1,448 tons, Gulf port to west coast Italy, lumber, \$60, February-March.

### DAMAGE IN BAY PORTS.

The recent big westerly gale which prevailed in the Bay of Fundy caused a lot of damage to fishing craft along the Bay Shore. Trout Cove, Centres, was one of the places to be hit, and at least four gasoline fishing vessels were so damaged as to become a total loss. The new breakwater was considerably injured and the schooner Lila G. Boutillier slightly damaged. The injuries to boats alone is estimated at \$2,000.

### LOST HER HEADGEAR.

The Loran B. Snow, when riding anchor in the channel at Yarmouth was fouled by the steamer Prince George recently. She lost some of her head gear and the jibboom, and was forced aground, but has since been refloated and is apparently not much the worse.

### MAN LOST OVERBOARD.

The fishing schooner Commonwealth, of Gloucester, reports losing a man off Liscomb—Joseph Daley, of Newfoundland, aged 25 years. He was thrown out of a dory on December 25th.

### BELGIUM'S KING AND THE SLAVE RAIDS.

No event since war began has caused King Albert of Belgium such extreme distress as the recent slave raids by which his people in hundreds of thousands are being shipped to bondage in Germany.

If the ruin of Belgium stands out in pathetic relief from the general tragedy of the war, the figure of King Albert stands equally apart from among those who have been thrown into prominence by the catastrophe. Long before his coming to the throne, there was not a man in Belgium more in sympathy with the people who work and who suffer than this King, who has toiled in coal mines, spent days with engine drivers on their engines, and interested himself in every feature of his country's labors.

From the first day of war, he has been at the head of his troops. Everywhere and always he has really been chief in command, first in the line of fire where shot and shell fell alike on the great or humble. When the field forces were in central Belgium between Louvain and Namur, he went from point to point talking familiarly with the officers, and examining everything. Later when the Belgian army left the entrenched camp of Antwerp, to reconquer Malines, and advance to what had been Louvain, King Albert marched at the head of his troops, and went down into the trenches beside his soldiers. When Antwerp fell, it is said that the last shot of that heroic defense was fired by King Albert.

He has long since seen his country, under the iron heel of the invader, its people, rich and poor, kept alive by bread and soup kitchens, its liberties gone, its people hardly daring to breathe lest the "Frischfulness" that has laid waste Louvain, Termonde, Dinant, and a score of other thriving towns, should become universal.

Today he has to witness a greater horror still, his people rounded into gangs at the point of the bayonet, families torn asunder, and shipped away like cattle to German labor camps.

Even to faintly conceive the situation, we must think of Belgium in the terms of our own land, swept from Quebec to Vancouver by a tidal wave of destruction, towns in ashes, industry paralyzed, the country a waste, the population dead, or starving, subject every day to slave raids, every large city in the hands of the enemy, and out off from the world, telephones everywhere inoperative, mails undelivered.

But through it all, and in spite of it all, the work of the Belgian Relief Fund will go on, as long as there is a starving population to feed and compassionate people to help them.

Tens and twenties of thousands of Belgians have been deported. But millions will continue to line up

every day for three slices of bread and a bowl of soup. Will you help to keep them fed, and fend off starvation. Send your contribution to the nearest committee in your town or district, or direct to the Belgian Relief Committee, 59 St. Peter street, Montreal.

### Harcourt

The secretary of the Harcourt Institute reports a splendid paper on "Tact" at the November meeting. Suggestions were given by several members as to nick-nacks for the home.

### RACES TODAY.

Several prominent horses will figure in the races to be held this afternoon at Clifton on the Kennebec and river. Among the entries will be a well known Hampton speedster and a Norton horse, both running for even money. The last two or three days frost has provided an excellent speedway for fast travelling. A large number of horse followers are planning to be present at the races which start this afternoon about 4:30 o'clock.

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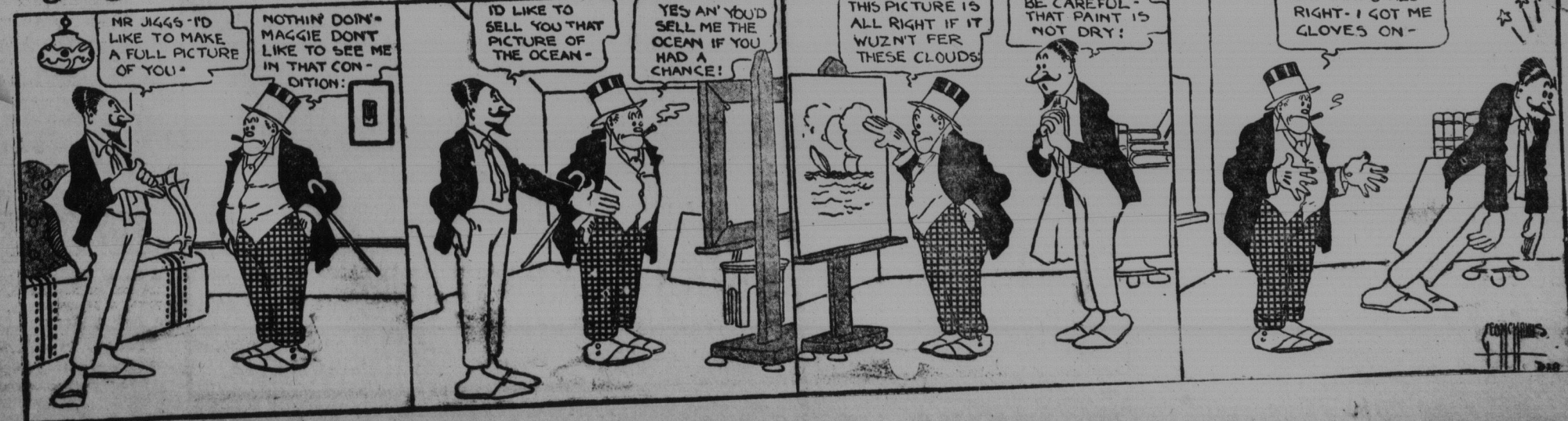
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