

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

Reflections on Current Events by the Boarders.

"When rogues fall out, honest men may get a chance," said Phil, "and for this reason I hope that the Liberals and Conservatives will get downright mad at each other. I hope they will get mad enough to show each other just how corrupt and scoundrelly they really are, and I trust that while they are thus engaged workingmen will keep their heads cool and their powder dry. First the Liberals called the Conservatives thieves, and lately the Conservatives returned the compliment, and the fun of it is that both sides proved that they were right. Courts, Commissions and Parliamentary Committees have proven to the satisfaction of the people that both parties are corrupt enough to steal anything from a whaleboat to a railway or from a clapboard to a public building; the only thing that remains to be settled is which can steal the most in the shortest possible time. If the events of the last six months don't open the eyes of the Canadian people nothing short of an earthquake ever will."

"It is now claimed in certain quarters that Angers acted contrary to the Constitution in refusing to call the Legislature," said Brown, "and this gives the professional politician an opportunity to pose as a patriot. You will find him before long stamping the country and trying to make us believe that our rights as British subjects have been filched from us, and that unless you elect him and return the party to which he belongs to power Constitutional Government will be a thing of the past in Canada. Now, I wish to warn you; whenever a professional politician becomes patriotic he needs watching. I have little faith and no respect for a Constitution under which a nation may be robbed in such a wholesale and barefaced way as we have been, but I will say this: that if that document is of any value, either as an agreement, or record, or as a curio, I would strongly advise the keeper of that old piece of sheepskin to send it to some place out of Canada for safe-keeping, for the chances are that if either of the old political parties are returned to power they'll steal country, constitution and all."

"There is no other country under the sun," said Gaskill, "in which political corruption has assumed such an alarming hold as in Canada, and no other people but Canadians would put up with it; it clearly shows that the electorate is either ignorant or that its morality is of a low order. If the former is the case, then our system of education is wrong and should be remodelled, but if the latter is true, what shall be said of your priests and parsons who, after centuries of almost absolute control of the moral education of the people, can show nothing higher or better than that? If they are, as they claim to be, the moral guides and teachers of their flocks, the indifference of the people to corruption in high places is little to their credit, and if they are not, of what use are they? I maintain that the church has not in the past, and is not at the present, doing its duty by the people; neither is it doing justice to itself. With the clergy of all denominations in Canada determined to purify politics, no corrupt Government could maintain itself in power for a week in any part of this Dominion; and if ever circumstances warranted clerical interference in politics, they certainly warrant it now. But the clergy, with one or two honorable exceptions, are as silent as the grave. It is such conduct on their part at critical times like these that produces Atheism for:

"If God is, there must be justice;
Is there justice here or aught?
'Twere a thought far less blasphemous
To believe that God were not."

BILL BLADES.

IMMIGRATION.

The Bureau of Statistics gives some interesting figures in regard to recent immigration to the United States. During the last ten months immigration has increased to 628,458, against 427,666 in the same period of 1890. The largest contribution to this swelling tide of immigration is made by Russia, and amounts to 61,888. This is exclusive of 28,462 immigrants from Poland, a large proportion of whom were subjects of the Czar. The two immigrations together, amounting to 90,350, show an increase of nearly 50,000 over the immigrations from Russia and Poland during the corresponding period of last year. Most of this undesirable acquisition of inhabitants is due to despotic government, persecution and famine in Russia. But should this year of famine be succeeded by years of abundance in Russia it is not probable that there would be any serious interruption in the tide of immigration, unless it should be arrested by legislation in this country. While the Russian peasants have almost a fanatical attachment for their wretched homes, when they become once thoroughly stirred by the impulse of migration there is no predicting the extent of a movement which has already reached such formidable proportions. The people of the United States have no right to interfere with the internal policy of Russia; but they have a right to protect themselves from one of the worst consequences of Muscovite persecution and tyranny. Next to Russia, Germany makes the largest increase of immigration, the number rising to 107,835 from 83,269 in the ten months of 1890. While military conscription has always a large share in immigration from Germany, the recent movement has been stimulated in no small degree by the dearth of bread in that country.

There has been little or no change in the immigration from Great Britain and Ireland; but Italy has sent 61,837 of its impoverished inhabitants to the United States during the last ten months, and increase of upward of 8,000 over the large immigration of the corresponding period of last year. Scandinavia contributes 47,871 new immigrants to join their brethren in peopling the agricultural regions of the Northwest. It is very evident from these returns that the new laws of Congress to restrict immigration have had very little effect. The eagerness of the steamship companies to secure the largest possible human cargoes, and the industry of their agents, who receive a liberal price upon every head which they obtain, have proved more than a match for the vigilance and zeal of the officials who superintend immigration to this country. There is not a district in Southern Europe that has not its rival steamship agents, who fill the imaginations of the inhabitants with delusive pictures of the blessings that await them in the United States. Russia, formerly so jealous of immigration, is now glad to get rid of a portion of her population, whom famine and persecution are converting into deadly enemies of her government. So long, therefore, as no effective restraints shall be put upon this class of immigration the movement from Russia and from Southeastern Europe may be expected to swell in volume.—Philadelphia Record.

CAN ENGLAND HOLD INDIA?

It is not for soldiers alone that war finds employment. With the discharge of the first gun or the appearance of the first cavalry scout, the world's scribblers at once seek to turn an honest penny by appearing as war correspondents sufficiently near the scene of action to be reasonably safe, or as novelists to stay at home and manufacture thrilling tales of love and slaughter while the opportunity offers—that is, while men's minds are

swayed by the sounds of strife. It was so during the Crimean struggle, during the Indian mutiny, and, later still, during the murderous contest between the Northern Democracy, determined on the freedom that could only be preserved by solidarity, and the Southern Oligarchy prepared for selfish ends to drive a wedge into the Union. It was in a novelette touching on some episodes in the Indian uprising, which so nearly destroyed in a day the work of a century, that a literary hack in the neighborhood of Ratcliffe Highway wrote of Hindostan as "An Empire won by the sword, but which the Bible alone can retain." At that time the Sepoys in squads were being blown away from guns. It is therefore but fair to the British authorities of the time to say that they recognized the expediency of not depending solely on the Word of God. The Bible is admirable in many ways: but its persuasive power is in no way diminished by alliance with a field-piece.

It may be said without irreverence that the part hitherto played in the Jewish scriptures in governing the great Asiatic dependency has been insignificant. It will probably remain so. Nor is there much evidence to show that, even if the bulk of the inhabitants accepted the European Trinity instead of their own gods, any great benefit would result, so far, at least, as this world is concerned. Europeans nations have enjoyed in some instances the blessings of the true faith for 15 or 16 centuries with the result that at the present moment millions of young men go to bed every night with rifles and ammunition within easy reach. Hence, in order to hold India there appears at present to be no better method than the primitive one of braining those who desire to take it. In a word, the country was not only won by the sword, but will have to be retained, if retained at all, by the same weapon. The case is but a modern illustration of the well-known dictum, to place rather more trust in powder than in Providence.

At the present time considerable attention is focussed on the broad tracts of country drained by the Indus and extending from the foot of the Himalayas to the sea under the northern tropic. It is probably in the neighborhood of this great Panjab stream that India will be won or lost. For many years past the conquerors have kept a jealous eye on this north-western border land, which is occupied by the Sikhs, the fiercest of warriors, and which is daily being approached by the Russians. So long as Britain holds the sea, danger can only come from the north-west, except as in 1857, when the trouble is entirely internal. Within the last week or two, brief telegrams of ominous import have come from this region, or rather from the region just to the north, where the Himalayas, having run themselves out, degenerate into the Hindoo Coosh, or form little knots of mountainous outlying sentries, as if to guard the upper angle of the Panjab. It is about here that after some centuries of advance, the Co-sack has at last run into the Afghan—impinged upon him, so to say—and there they stand at this moment biting thumbs at each other with every prospect of arbitrating with the bayonet before long. In the meantime, two spectators, one from the extreme east, the other from the far west of the old continent—one with a pig-tail, the other with spats—stands by to show fair play or to take a hand in the dispute, according to circumstances. Nobody supposes the Muscovite wants the barren Afghan rocks or would risk a Jewish soldier for a right-of-way through one of the valleys, except as a highway to the fruitful plains further south.

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