

The Passing Show.

BY WILFRID WISGAST.

"All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players."

While the result of the elections on Monday last might personally have been more flattering to me, I am not at all inclined to indulge in lamentation. I voted for Mr. Osler and of course should have preferred to see my man come in first, but Mr. Fleming will doubtless fill the position well, and I tender him my hearty congratulations. He shall receive not only just, but generous, treatment from me in my journalistic capacity.

It may satisfy some people to be told that Mr. Osler is not at all displeased at the result. He did his best to win, and does not feel sore at being beaten by a little over a couple of hundred in a total vote approaching twenty five thousand—the largest municipal vote ever cast in this city. Messrs. Fleming and Osler both bore themselves in this contest like gentlemen, and can now, in the orthodox manner, after a fair stand-up fight, shake hands.

The vote for Sunday street cars is one on which all of us who have advocated greater freedom on Sundays have reason to feel extremely pleased. We did not win straight away; it would have been a surprise to us if we had; but we have polled over ten thousand votes, and we were loudly assured by many who thought they knew that it was impossible for us to score as many hundreds.

In fact, the general belief of this had much to do with the result. I do not say we should have won, but I have been told by many persons since the numbers were declared, that they would have voted in favor of cars on Sundays had they had any idea the proposal was so near winning. Before the election many people to whom I spoke told me they would vote for the proposal if it was of any use, but "that it was sure to be snowed under."

All of us who voted for a free Sunday have cause to congratulate ourselves. We have broken the ice, and have shown our strength. We need claim no moral victory. We have suffered a temporary defeat, but one that has left our opponents in a much more shattered condition than ourselves. The narrow-minded sectarianism of this city has received a blow from which it will never recover.

On the other hand the people have to thank a large number of liberal-minded ministers in this city for the way they have dealt with this question. Some of them have said that, while opposed to it themselves, they would not attempt to dictate to the people how to act; while several ministers have spoken boldly out on our side. These are clergymen whom we can respect, and in this connection owe our thanks.

THE OBSERVER recommended the people to vote for Messrs. Leslie, W. J. Hambly, Bernard Saunders, J. Maloney and Gowanlock. The people thought the advice was so good that the gentlemen above mentioned all gained the offices they sought, and gained them easily too.

This is as it should be. As a weekly paper we are fresh in the field, but our friends may rest assured that we are here to stay, and the people will find the advice we give them will be in the main such advice as they can safely follow.

In this connection a correspondent has written to me saying that my opinions in "The Passing Show" do not always quite accord with the views expressed in the editorial columns of THE OBSERVER. There is no reason that they should; all the departmental writers are allowed to say much what they please, as long as they remain in a kind of general accord. We all quite understand the lines on which the paper is run; we may differ in details, but not in principle.

Mr. James Keith writes to the *Pall Mall Gazette* as follows:—"Not one person in a hundred who knows Mr. Gladstone by sight, not one in a hundred thousand of the general public knows that when quite a young man Mr. Gladstone lost the forefinger of his left hand by an accident. Mr. Forbes, by advice, meanwhile, has painted this finger in, in the original portrait intended for the National Liberal Club, because this picture is to be reproduced for photogravure."

If the people of London are concerned about Mr. Gladstone's missing finger well and good; there are a large number of people in the Old Country who can afford to waste time in discussing such trivialities. Fortunately, or unfortunately, out here we have other things to do; we do not care about the missing finger. But we are all anxious to see the portrait of the Grand Old Man, both on account of the original and of the artist.

A large number of people in Canada are dead against Mr. Gladstone as a politician. They believe—and in my opinion they believe correctly—that he has done untold harm to political morality and to political liberty; but as the most unique figure in English public life to-day one cannot but feel an interest in the man. Yes, we are all curious to see Mr. Forbes' portrait of the famous Englishman who is an active politician at eighty-three.

The fact that at a recent meeting of the National League in Dublin as much as £2.10s. (about twelve dollars) was announced as the total receipts of the previous fortnight will prove more conclusively than anything in the shape of argument how completely the Irish Home Rule farce has fallen through.

We are gradually getting to know a good deal more than we expected about the inside history of this contemptible movement. When knaves fall out, if honest men do not necessarily become

possessed of their own, a lot of useful and interesting light is sure to be let in on the mode of procedure among the thieves. We see this in the course pursued by the Irish Home Rule gang.

For more than twelve months now these fellows have been wrangling among themselves, and applying to each other such epithets as only a patriotic Irishman can use. And the strongest "argument" each "patriot" has used was that the other fellow was a thief. And *vice versa*.

Who does the dramatic criticisms for the *Globe*? It would be absurd to say that the amusement column of the *Globe* is laughed at all over the city, because no one reads the stuff. Some time ago the *Globe* used very often to send a deaf man to "write up" a performance. The result was interesting; there was "oh, such a difference in the morning" between what had occurred on the stage and what the journalistic Mrs. Gamp of Toronto narrated to the Betsy Prigs who form her audience.

Of course if systematic laudation and endorsement of every dramatic outrage that comes along is the correct thing, then the kind of balderdash the *Globe* publishes will suffice. But if the idea be to act as a guide to the public and tell them not only when a good thing is on, but also—unfortunately the much more frequent case—when our enterprising managers are palming off on the public a "rotten show;" if the idea be to tell the truth and so enable people to save their dollars, then the *Globe* is simply conniving at a clumsy fraud on the pockets of the public.

Has the *Empire* yet found out who is mayor? Most of us knew by ten o'clock on Monday evening last, but the enterprising Government organ was not quite sure on Wednesday morning. It is surprising how long it takes to ascertain what one does not want to know.

When the *Empire* started it endeavored to procure good men and it offered good salaries. With a very few exceptions it failed in the men, but paid the salaries—for a time. Now, I am told, whenever a man leaves the *Empire* his post is filled by a boy at one-third of the former salary. No wonder that the organ is in "a parlous state—a very parlous state."

Victoria C. Woodhull (Lady Martin) has forwarded me from London a copy of her pamphlet "The Rapid Multiplication of the Unfit." I agree with her line of argument, but if the writer wishes to propagate her ideas why not write in language that ordinary people can understand?

"Afferent," "efferent," and many similarly unfamiliar words are out of place in a pamphlet meant for popular reading. It is a pity that so many instructors of the public will not understand that the more plainly they speak the more effective will be their teaching; and not write to show how much they know, but in a manner plain enough and distinct enough for the many to understand what is wanted to be taught.