

and though you have never been asked you would not go if you were. Thank goodness, you have nothing in common with those who imagine themselves nabobs, though why on earth they should believe themselves among the elect you cannot make out. It was just like their petty meanness that you were not asked to take a stall at the church bazaar. They maybe thought you were not good enough to meet Lady Golightly. Of course you did not want to have anything to do with the bazaar; you were much better out of that set. You do not believe in people pushing themselves where they are not wanted. There's Mrs. Getahead—was there ever such a woman! She's asked you three times to tea, and is always so simperingly nice when she meets you. What does the woman think of? Why, you remember her when she was a shop assistant, and your father had a shop of his own! It is just like some folk; they always want to mix with their betters. If it is true that Mrs. Getahead—after you have repulsed her three times—says you are stuck up, and that her husband could buy your husband up, and that you are a snob—heavens, and you know you are not—it is because you think better of your position in the town than to hob-nob with the like of her. But you are a snob, dear lady. You are, you are, you are. Of course, I'm a horrid man for suggesting it; but, you see, I like snobs.

I'M a snob! Of course I am. Do you think I would sit down to praise snobs if I did not know it. I know several lords. Some of them are pleasant men; others are just dull. None of them have the crisp, sparkling conversational power which some of my author friends possess. When I dine with my book writing friends I prefer to go "as I am"; but I always put on the clean bib and tucker of a white shirt, and climb into what is called evening dress, when I dine with a knight. That's snobbishness. But I defend it. I do it because I like to, and I like to because I do it.

As the sparks fly upwards, so all of us are snobs. The member of the township council likes to be taken notice of by the member of the county council. The member of the county council wants it to be known he is on friendly terms with the M. P. for the constituency. The M. P. has spent a week end at the country house of a railway magnate, and a paragraph duly appears in the local press to that effect. The magnate is found to be the acquaintance of an English duke, and the duke would eat his heart out if he were slighted by a king, whereas a king probably puts on side amongst his brother kings when he is known to be on particularly intimate terms with three emperors.

The man who is not a snob ought to be consigned to wash bottles for the stretch of his life. He is without grit, without ambition; he is without the afflatus which buoys the world along. The snob is a man with a soul, which soars above his mean surroundings. You and I may be among his mean surroundings and we do not like it. But then we have inclinations of our own and, being true democrats, whilst believing that those above us in rank are no better men than, or as good as, ourselves, we hold tightly to the conviction that those in lesser rank to ourselves should be kept in their proper place.

The snob does not drift with the tide. He breasts it. He is able to get into a society circle that does not want him, and that is evidence of persistence. We try and fail, and tell tales about sour grapes; but we know what is the matter all along; we lack the requisite ability. The snob looks after his finger nails, and generally has a nice taste in clothes. We ourselves look down upon these things, and he looks down upon us. And if the hour comes when he pats us upon the shoulder, gives us the insignia of "dear old chap," we decide he is not such a bad sort after all. The snob has no common tastes; therefore he is a shining light. Sometimes he has an affectation of speech which makes us mad; but it causes folk of lesser degree to touch their caps to him, whilst we go unnoticed. That is the type of snob who is above us. The snob in us displays itself in other directions.

I—that is you who are a doctor, or an architect or a dry-goods man—am riding in a railway carriage. A jovial, holiday-making man gets in, and he sees my name on the label of my scuffed old traveling-bag. So I am Foster Fraser, the writing johnnie. Gum! but he is pleased. He reads me every week, and thinks it's just wonderful to be able to sit down and sling off yards of stuff for the newspapers. His missus will be so pleased he has met me. Won't I have a drink? He produces a slab-breasted bottle from his coat, and as the grimy cork sticks he hauls it out with his teeth, rubs his dirty hand across the bottle neck, and invites me—or you—to have a sup. I tell him I don't drink

whiskey, which happens to be true; but I know perfectly well by the look in his eye that he thinks I'm a snob.

I'm in a railway carriage on another occasion. There is a different sort of person. There is something aristocratic about him, and I can tell by the hoist of his nose that he is wondering why the devil I don't travel elsewhere. I say it is a nice day. He says, icily, "Is it?" and goes on with his newspaper. When he has finished and looks, blase, upon the landscape, I offer him an illustrated journal from my heap. He thanks me, and says that if he wants an illustrated paper he will be able to buy one. He is a snob; there is no doubt about that. And he treats me as though I were an outsider, and intends to keep me there. Then his eye sees the label, and I know he is scrutinizing me. He begs my pardon, but am I any relation to Foster Fraser who writes every morning in the what-do-you-call-it newspaper? I enlighten him. Ah, very interesting! He has long been hoping to meet me. Indeed, every morning the first thing he reads—and so on. Well, he isn't a snob after all. He appreciates me; that proves he isn't. He gives me his card; one of the fortunates of the world! And he hopes that when I'm in his part of the country I'll do him the honour of staying with him for a few days. On second thoughts he is a fine specimen of a gentleman. Tut, tut; we are both snobs all the same.

BUT I wouldn't have it otherwise, not for a motor-car. Snobbishness gives spice to life. What a drab, sodden, sago pudding sort of world this would be if we were all on a level. We might think it nice if all those who refused to have our acquaintance were to hail us as boon companions. What a smudge on our dignity, however, if we had to be agreeable to all the bounders who want to

know us, if we had to invite them to our houses and let their awful wives become friendly with our wives; if, indeed, we had to lower ourselves a considerable number of pegs. No, no; there is quite a good case to be made out for being snobbish.

I know it can be argued that the snob is an individual who advances pretensions to which he, or she, is in no way entitled. The snob, however, has another point of view. He is simply achieving his due. Remember we are all three personages. I am as I think I am; I am as I really am; I am as you think I am. The middle one is correct, and the other two are erroneous.

Snobbery is one of the evidences of our higher civilization. And the genuine and undiluted snob is the person who says he is not a snob. He shows he is a snob by claiming to be better than other people. I do not blame him for that; I admire him; he is putting his best foot forward.

We screw ourselves up to our best, and we pretend because pretence gives us satisfaction and makes other folk jealous. One of the advantages of foreign travel is that you can come home with a hat box mosaiced with strange hotel labels, the very sight of which makes your friends envious. It gives a woman a splendid glow of superiority when, being the wife of a knight, she can walk in to dinner before the wife of an alderman. Some men refuse knighthoods; but that is because they think they ought to have been made baronets. We like to belong to exclusive clubs because other fellows cannot become members.

Banish snobbery from the land and half the fun of life would go. As it is we smile a superior smile at the snob, and the snob retaliates with a contemptuous grin. The snob is a much maligned person. The snob marks the value of his goods rather high, as most of us are inclined to do. We are all snobs.

THE TWO BORDENS

How It Must Feel to the Hon. Premier to Lead a Double Life

THE Premier is deceiving us. If there was one thing more than all others that personally helped to elect Mr. Borden in 1911 it was his honesty. Sir James Whitney was not more open. Sir Galahad was never more radiantly pure.



Now, what do we behold? Two distinct and divergent Bordens, one all that the other is not; the reverse, the counter-foil, the antipodes. But three short weeks ago a most authentic newspaper called the *Globe*, of Toronto, gave out repeatedly that the Hon. Premier was suffering from insomnia. Something was gnawing at his nerves. He must go away for his health. Public business be hanged! Life was not worth the living. Trouble in the Cabinet; weak men unable to handle huge business; disruption; bye-election reverses; defection of Nationalists; increased cost of living; Sir Wilfrid and free food; no emergency; reciprocity bobbing up again—

The Hon. Premier, once so ruddy and beaming and optimistic, was staggering under his burdens. He was getting hollow-eyed and thin; his voice raucous with premature disability; his step no longer elastic and vigorous, but tottering and uncertain, as a man who, when others are asleep, has insomnia, and when others are wide-awake, seems to be walking in his sleep.

So the Premier went down to the Virginia golf links and the Hot Springs of Arkansas. And as Hon. Mr. Perley happened to be absent on a three-months trip to Europe the reins of government were handed over to Hon. George E. Foster, who was away all last session in Australia and Japan.

So the *Globe*, it may be surmised, sent a reporter to Hot Springs to interview the Premier. And this was the result:

"The Premier was found at the baths; probably the most distinguished patient among a curious conglomeration of debilitated prize-fighters, anemic society ladies, bridge-room derelicts and worn-out speculators from Wall St. It seemed, at least, pathetic, that our excellent Premier, once as fresh as the morning dew, should have been discovered

in such a melancholy and maudlin company. Here was a sad picture of civilization at its lowest ebb. And the sadness of it was deepened by the reflection that our own vigorous, full-blooded North, where men become strong through contact with the north wind, should have sent our first citizen to represent us among such a wastrelage. Here was the Premier of an ardent, strong-hearted, clean-limbed young nation being mauled and man-handled by a Russian masseuse in the vain attempt to recover the strength which once he had from nature, but lost it—why? Not from dissipation and late hours, for the Premier is known to be a man of the strictest habits. Why? Because in his flush of triumph after election he chose for his colleagues in the business of administering the affairs of a country beset with great problems, not statesmen, as Sir Wilfrid Laurier did in 1896—but—

"Well that's another matter. Whatever the causes, here was the man. When your correspondent saw him he was mumbling words of Russian to his masseuse. He seemed worried. The man had not enough command of himself even to direct the masseuse. Fancy Sir Wilfrid being handled so without very courtly admonitions to the attendant—but of course that's quite ridiculous, for in the worst scimmages the ex-Premier ever had he was always debonair and temperamental enough to offset his perplexities by a superb mastery of other people. Mr. Borden can't even master himself. (So helpless he was in the hands of a common Russian bath-attendant that one could easily imagine what a child he must be in the hands of such a dominating character as Hon. Robert Rogers.



"Asked as to whether he expected to be able to return to Ottawa in time for even a January session, the Premier replied—"

But here the correspondent evidently had recourse to his imagination, and it was but a few minutes till the *Mail and Empire* interviewer came

in. There was no room for both. The Premier, in his elation at seeing one who could be relied upon to tell the truth, evidently ordered the masseuse out of the room, rang for cigars and

(Concluded on page 18.)