

Ups and Downs

PUBLISHED ON THE FIRST OF EVERY MONTH, UNDER THE AUSPICES OF DR. BARNARDO'S HOMES.

OFFICE OF PUBLICATION, 214 FARLEY AVE.,
TEL. 5097. TORONTO, ONT

Advertising Rates will be supplied upon application at the office of publication.

The Annual Subscription is 25c., which may be remitted in stamps or cash.

All Correspondence should be addressed, Editor "Ups and Downs," 214 Farley Avenue, Toronto; and letters intended for publication should reach the office not later than the 20th inst. of the month to insure insertion in the next issue.

We shall be obliged if subscribers will notify us at once in the even of delay or irregularity in the delivery of their papers.

TORONTO, JULY 1ST, 1896.



SINCE our last issue appeared Canada has undergone a great change of front politically. The elections are a thing of the past, and, for the first time in eighteen years, the reins of power are in the hands of the Liberal party, at the head of which is Mr. Wilfred Laurier. The change may not suit all of us, but it is the will of the majority, and to that all loyal and law-abiding subjects must bow with as good grace as possible. And in Mr. Laurier Canada will have a premier of whom all parties, sects and races may well feel proud. A man of great intellectual culture, possessing undoubted capacity for statesmanship, and with a chivalrous courtesy of manner which is far too rare in the political arena; his elevation to the position of Her Majesty's Chief Minister in Canada brings before the gaze of other nations one of the most attractive personalities to be found in Canadian public life.

* *

The change of government would not have appeared so startling at first had we not been so long accustomed to the rule of one party as to almost forget that the other party had any reason for existence, except to perform the too often unappreciated duties of an Opposition. And having regard only to the best interests of Canada, we hope that in the future a change from one party to another will not be as rare as heretofore. An "Opposition" is as essential to constitutional rule as a "Government," and both should be kept up to the highest possible pitch of efficiency. This is impossible where one party remains for a great number of years in a minority; the Opposition becomes sluggish and inert from that "hope deferred" which "maketh the heart sick," and the Government hardly less so from a belief in their own infallibility which has been engendered by frequent successes; and the country suffers in consequence.

* *

In striking contrast to the state of affairs which has prevailed in Canada in this respect, is the regularity with which the people of England make the two great parties take "turn about." For over fifty-five years every election has been followed by a change of Government, the "ins" going out, and the "outs" going in. Instead of this regularity of change working to the injury of the country it has a directly opposite effect. It keeps both parties on their mettle, and causes changes in policy to be made more gradually and with more regard for consequences in the future than would likely be the case were

one party to be kept continuously in opposition and then suddenly be raised to power, fired with a desire to execute at one fell swoop the ideas which have taken a decade or two to accumulate. At the same time it prevents the growth of abuses under the fostering care or with the silent acquiescence of either party.

The people of Canada having at last decided on a change of government, we only hope that the change will usher in a fresh era of prosperity and not prove to be the harbinger of hard times made harder through attempts to make sudden and drastic changes in what has been the established policy of the country for nearly twenty years.

* *

We expect that there were but few of our boys to whose ears did not come the report two weeks ago that one of our number had committed cruel and deliberate murder. A murder *was* committed, the accused *was* a youth, and an English youth. Here was a glorious opportunity for the "special," or "our own," correspondent of the daily papers to perform one of those feats of imagination in which his soul revels. A report of a murder is at all times sure to create a certain amount of sensation, but here was a chance of holding up, not one, but six thousand, young people to opprobrium.



MR. WILFRED LAURIER,
Premier-Elect of Canada.

So the lie went forth throughout the length and breadth of Canada—"A brutal murder at Port Hope by a Barnardo Home boy named Prentiss."

Mr. Owen was first made aware of the startling news in the same manner that several hundred thousand others would learn it, through the morning papers of June 10th.

The improbability of the report being true was strengthened by the fact that there is no boy named Prentiss upon the register at the Home. Telephonic communication was at once opened with the Chief of Police at Port Hope, and enquiry made as to the foundation of the report that the murderer was a Home lad. The answer was a prompt and complete refutation of the dastardly falsehood, the Chief of Police stating that he could not understand how such a report arose or imagine who was the author of it. The people in the district were well aware that the perpetrator of the murder was not a Home boy, but a young Englishman whose friends in England are well-to-do, and who had accompanied his brother to Canada a few years ago.

To make assurance doubly sure, Mr. Davis left for Port Hope on the first train, and his

investigations soon proved that the unfortunate young criminal had never in any way been connected with the Home either here or in England.

So much for the reliability of that individual who hides his identity, thereby saving himself many a well-merited horsewhipping, under the style of "our correspondent;" and, let us add, so much for the acumen and sense of justice of editors of daily papers who will unquestioningly accept from such sources statements of so serious an import. There would not be such an outrageous abandonment of truth to sensation by correspondents, nor such culpable neglect in not seeking corroboration before publishing by editors, if the law of the land afforded to a large number of citizens *as a body*, the same protection that it gives to each as an individual. As it is, however, we have to depend for justice upon the amount of consideration that correspondents and editors give to the Divine command, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour." We regret to say we find the Divine law more honoured in the breach than in the observance. It is only right that we should mention that the editors of the *Toronto Star* and the *Toronto Evening Telegram* proved notable exceptions to their colleagues of Toronto and elsewhere. Instead of publishing the report of the murder, as they received it, they telephoned to the Home to ask if the murderer were in reality a "Barnardo Boy." Upon being assured that such was not the case, that portion which was untrue, and to us and to our friends exceedingly painful, was eliminated; a simple act of justice which it would not be necessary to mention were it not in such marked contrast to the treatment accorded us by other journals, who, having published the libel, did little or nothing to remove the erroneous impression they had made on the minds of their readers, beyond omitting from subsequent reports of the murder the words "Barnardo Boy."

* *

The power of attraction which these misstatements, appearing from time to time in the daily press, possess over some people is really remarkable. In fact, it would appear that they supply the only mental nourishment which not a few supposedly intelligent people allow themselves. Only a week or two prior to the Port Hope tragedy, the Grand Jury at Hamilton had under its consideration the cause of the startling increase in crime which has recently taken place in that district. To the aggregated wisdom of the good men and true constituting the Grand Jury only one explanation of the uncomplimentary state of affairs was possible: that explanation was—the "juvenile immigrants"—the Home boys! And on the shoulders of the Home boys did their presentment lay the blame for the increasing criminality with which their district was afflicted.

* *

This convenient method of disposing of a perplexing problem was not allowed to pass unchallenged, however. His Honour Judge Street, to whom the presentment was made, so completely demolished the contention of the Grand Jury as to leave the latter in a very pitiable plight—the victims either of unreasoning prejudice or of woful ignorance. His Honour stated that he had caused careful enquiry to be made into the antecedents of the prisoners who had been tried before him at that court, and in every case except one they had been brought up in the district and had been educated at their own public schools. It would be well, he said, if, instead of seeking to lay the blame for the increase in the number of young criminals upon the juvenile immigrants, they would look nearer home. They would