

# CITY OF LEGISLATIVE HALLS.

## The Old and New in the Parliamentary Arena.

### Interesting Reminiscences of Some of Canada's Foremost Public Men The Fads of the Leaders of the Smart Set.

### A Graphic Description of the Now Famous "Kangaroo Shake."

FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.

OTTAWA, Jan. 10, 1898.

We are all here sighing for the meeting of Parliament, except, perhaps, some of the Ministers, but even they are anxious to have the thing on and be done with it. Our trade-men are calculating their prospective gains; our hotel keepers are putting their houses in order, and our smart set are on the *qui vive* for the usual balls and routs of the session. To be in the smart set is the legitimate ambition of every one in the civil service, be his salary great or small. One of the first essentials is the

**"Kangaroo Shake."**  
You tilt up your elbow, raise your forearm to about the level of your shoulder, crook your fingers, gingerly clasp the tips of your friends' digits, give a short jerk upwards—and there you are. You feel that you are the stamp of fashion and the mould of form—quite English, you know. A friend of mine, who was making a call on one of his lady acquaintances, was told by her in the most serious manner possible: "We are living in a most select locality; there is no one among our neighbors on the rank of second class clerk." He was, of course duly impressed, and can never think of the incident without a chuckle. Ottawa society is not unlike Pickwick's description of the dock yard ball: "Upper rank dock yard people don't know lower rank—lower rank dock-yard people don't know small gentry—small gentry don't know trad-people—commissioner don't know anybody."

**What Will Be Done**  
next session is, of course, the endless subject of conjecture. Here, more than anywhere else, is the usand-tongued rumor busy. Even the corner shop-black can reconstruct you a cabinet at a moment's notice, and suggest a line of policy for Sir Wilfrid Laurier in the present crisis. We have still a pretty good Parliament and a particularly lively Opposition, even if many of the old-time hard hitters have gone. MacKenzie, Macdonald and Thompson have played their brief roles and disappeared, Blake has gone to Westminster, but we have still Cartwright of the

**Old Guard.**  
and Tupper, the war horse of Cumberland and Patterson of Brant, who, when ever he speaks, shouts so loud that it is said he speaks not only for the House, but the whole country, and Foster, with a host of the younger men, keen-witted and spoiling for a fight, and the sage from Bothwell in the Senate, and very depressing must be his atmosphere. And over them all is the stately and genial Sir Wilfrid, imperturbably good humored and serene no matter what happens.

**Mr. MacKenzie.**  
I was then new to the gallery, and when I saw this man, who looked every inch a plain working man, rise in his seat and pour forth a stream of pure, nervous English, every sentence perfect, I was struck with wonder. He looked as if he had just laid down his tools to lead the Government. It was the dignity of labor clothed in the power of rhetoric. I have heard a good many orators since, but none who made on me the impression that did plain old Mr. MacKenzie. His old opponent, Sir John Macdonald, apparently the most capable of his followers, but nevertheless leading them

## OUR PHILADELPHIA LETTER.

### A Brief Estimate of Colonel "Bob" Ingersoll's Peculiar Theories.

### The Noble Sacrifice of a Convert to the Faith—The Caprices of Short Story Writers.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT)

PHILADELPHIA, January 10, 1898.—It appears that Colonel Ingersoll is again upon the warpath, and enjoying (?) the success of his blatant blasphemies. Well, we all know what some wise American said for all of us not so very long ago, putting the concentrated experience of the Old World into the spicy adage of the New World's clever insight: "You can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time." Ingersoll has long ago discovered the truth conveyed in this homely way. He is fully aware that he is known now to the greater portion of his hearers as a fraud, and, more than that, that those of the people whom he may fool all the time are "no accounts," the "pore white trash" of the intellectual world. There are men of wit, a science and intellectual weight who

whether he would, one would imagine at times had come to life again in the person of the present leader of the House. In appearance

**Sir Wilfrid Laurier**  
often reminds one of the late chieftain. He has a head very like Sir John's, with mobile features and lofty brow, topped by slightly curling hair receding from the temples, and has many of his mannerisms—the same jaunty shake of the head and cordial greeting. But in repose he wears a dreamy, poetic look lacking in his predecessor, and has not the alertness of repartee or the faculty for telling a good story on any and every occasion, which, more than anything else, keeps Sir John Macdonald's memory green. In sharp debate across the House there are many who can give points to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, but none who can surpass him in a set, carefully thought out speech on an important question. There is one thing Laurier can do, said a Conservative member to me once, which nobody else in the House can. He can sometimes send a shiver down your spine. He approaches his subject in a lofty, statesmanlike spirit, free from personal animus, and invariably raises the tone of debate. No matter how much you may dissent from his views, you cannot help being impressed by his way of putting them. His speech on the Kiel question, for instance, powerful plea though it was for the Rebel of the Prairies, would have compelled the interested attention even of an Orange Lodge. And his tribute to the late Sir John Macdonald, on the occasion of his death was the most graceful, effective and sympathetic given from either side of the House.

**Sir Charles Tupper.**  
Then there is the veteran always on the attack, and forgetting his years once he has the floor. Sir Charles when speaking, always reminds me of a ball in the arena. His neck swells, he appears to loam at the mouth, there is power and energy in every gesture and inflection, and he has a command of superlatives which not one can approach, save perhaps Sir Richard Cartwright. And he never knows when he is beaten. One feels there is a fighter, every inch of him, and a thorough gentleman besides. When Sir Charles Tupper takes a line of policy, you feel he will not swerve from it, though the heavens may fall.

**Sir Richard Cartwright.**  
always forcible and logical and a master of sarcasm, showed last session a kindness and tact, when leading in the absence of the Premier, which was a revelation to those who only knew him in opposition. He is really in private life the best hearted of men, but in public matters he cannot content himself with calling a spade a spade, but must call it an infernal shovel. His caustic description, "scoundrels great and scoundrels small," applied to the men who make money out of the tariff is characteristic of his style when in full swing. But Sir Richard, who, by the way, is a graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, has a very fine literary faculty as well. His speech on the motion of thanks to the volunteers after the North West Rebellion will rank as a classic for beauty of style and diction. Even Sir Wilfrid could not do better. It's the kind of literature that ought to be given a place in our school readers.

But Mr. Foster is pretty generally admitted the best all round debater in the House. He never misses an opening. His only weakness is a disposition to be too argumentative in small matters. He seems to lack a nice sense of proportion. He is a born pleader. Had he articulated himself to the Bar, he would no doubt have become one of the ablest specialist pleaders in the country. But he has gone in for gold mining instead, the El Dorado of all the ex-Cabinet Ministers.

There are also Blair and Fielding, both amble of fence and hard hitters, and the irrepressible Tarte, the stormy petrel of debate, and a host of younger men with plenty of good stuff in them; Solicitor General Fitzpatrick, cool and aggressive, whose favorite parry is the counter; Russell, of Halifax, with wit as keen as a Toledo blade; Jim Lister, ever ready to enter the ring, and who can give and take with the best of them; Powell, of Westmoreland, and McInerney, who are not conscious of their own strength; Casgrain, of Quebec, glib and *spirited* in attack and retort; and your own M. J. F. Quinn polished and suave, who is gradually getting the ear of the House and bids fair to make his mark there in time.

God help them!—do not believe, nor hope, nor love. Ingersoll is not one of them. His "points" are pointless to the well-informed, his "eloquence" is clap-trap, his "defiance" is mere bluster, his "strength" is coarseness. Years ago, when people talked more of him, took him more seriously and grew hot with indignation in many a pious household, an intelligent child listened to the discussion of a lecture of his as it was reported, in which he had assailed the Bible and, with his usual coarse exaggeration, scoffed at its references to the customs and habits of that time in the East. "Why he ought to read the old Westminster Reviews!" piped up the shrill little voice of the unheeded listener. "They'll tell him a lot he don't know. I've just been reading all about travels in the Holy Land in them, and the people do just that way now." It was quite true. The very statements which which he had made his "great hits," and with which he had taunted and defied his God had been used in some delightful books of travel during the first quarter of this century to emphasize the evident truth and precision of the Bible's history, with explanations and reasons for these usages as growing out of the same conditions now existing. And thus the evidence of Ingersoll's shallowness has grown and expanded, as has the "average intelligence." He could hardly now capture

an audience or secure readers by the use of such a phrase as once set off the title page of his publications: "I would rather be free in hell than a slave in heaven." Words are nothing in themselves. Effectively used, sound without sense floats for a season, but, sooner or later, mere sound escapes the pricked bubble it inflated. Colonel Ingersoll is but a "bag of wind" and his fame a bubble.

### A Noble Sacrifice.

In the summing up which takes place in everything at the end of the year, it is, of course, expected that there should be some numbering and telling off of the successes in the work among non-Catholics. Whether it is a really good thing or not, it is for someone else to decide, but, for my part, it seems that it agreed far better with the holy dignity of the Church when she made no apparent comment on those she welcomed as wanderers who had come home. Lords and ladies and decesses and statesmen have souls to save and they had much better see to it that they are saved than not, but a soul is only—and that "only" does not undervalue it worth—a soul, if it does animate a body that "has fed on the roses and lain in the lilies of life." The great gain in a conversion is to the convert, and the humbler they are after it, the better for them. They are of all the world those who are simply doing what they ought, and they deserve no credit for it. I have a perfect right to say this as a convert old enough to stand alone on my own experience. However, there are some converts of whom it would be well if all could hear, as I heard one day this week, of a noble fellow in San Francisco. He was a nurse at the City and County Hospital, and it seems that in San Francisco they are not very well off—for a city so new and fine and "up to date"—for accommodations for their sick. There was brought to the Hospital a patient suffering from typhus fever, whom they were forced to place in an old barn, which lacked even the first elements of comfort or protection for a sick man. William Hawkins went to the head nurse and said: "What are you going to do? There is no one to nurse him?" "I know it," replied the nurse; "I must do it myself." "No," said Hawkins quietly, "you can't do it, for if anything happens to you you would be a great loss. I wouldn't be missed, and I will nurse him." The nurse remonstrated, but Hawkins became the nurse, and with all the devotion and unselfishness one expects from such a volunteer, he nursed the sufferer back to health at the cost of his own life. When he felt that he was stricken down, he begged piteously not to be left in the wretched barn, remembering in his weakened and suffering state all that he had seen his patient suffer there, and his prayer was so far listened to that he died in a tent that was spread for him in the grounds of the Hospital. He was baptized by a Catholic priest some days before his death, and his funeral was one that honored the people, for it evinced a true appreciation of a manhood that followed, even from afar, in the footsteps of the Divine Master. Truly, as one of Luther's own band has said, "there is no religion to die by equal to that of the Catholic Church." It was given to this fine, unselfish soul to know all its comfort and its strengthening peace. Surely, with ears scarce dulled to the turmoil of earth, he heard the sweetest sounds of Heaven, the Voice that welcomed him, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these."

### The Story Writers.

There is a noticeable looking up in the short story business. Everyone seems to have protested to some purpose, and those who have taken the protest sensibly and earnestly have made rapid progress. I venture to say, too, that it is not really so difficult to write the good, sensible, eventful stories we are getting now as it was to forge out those mystical, involved, utterly false character-studies we used to weary through not so very long ago. Sancho Panza says in the words of an old Spanish proverb: "Every tub stands on its own bottom." It does, indeed. And every man's character is his own in such a manner that no other man can make it out with the study of a lifetime. Involved and false must be every character-study, even when undertaken and set forth by the wisest and keenest minds. It is the safeguard God has given to each soul he has created that He alone shall know its inward meanings and purposes, inspirations and instincts. The follies that have been perpetrated, the nonsense that has been set down in black and white, and thrust upon a long suffering reading public as the results of neither the wisest nor the keenest character-study, the whole unwholesome jumble has had its day. May we never see the dawn of another of the same madness!

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