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**Personation.** Among the various corrupt practices in elections which have become prevalent is that of personation. This is the term applied to the act of voting in the name of another. Thus A., the personator, who may or may not be himself an elector, goes to a polling-place and deposits a vote in the name of B. who is a genuine elector in that ward. Then A. perhaps goes to another polling-place and deposits another vote in the name of C. who is an elector in the second ward, and this he may carry on so far as he deems it safe to proceed. If B. and C. come afterwards to the polls to vote, they find that their votes have already been cast. Thickly settled communities obviously offer the best opportunities for this sort of corrupt practice, and in cities, accordingly, the crime of personation has become frequent. The personator is of course the tool of a political machine of greater or less importance. Others who have more in the way of reputation at stake make use of him, direct his movements, pay him well for his risks and probably engage to pay his fines, if perchance he fall into the clutches of the election law. It is evident that personation is intrinsically a crime of a most serious character. It combines in itself the elements of forgery and theft, not only withholding from an elector his right of citizenship, which ought to be more precious to him than gold, but also using his vote to sanction a policy which it may be he entirely repudiates. It is much of the same complexion as that kind of corrupt practice which would add a batch of bogus names to an electoral list, and both are of a character to deserve the severest punishment.

**Personation in the Referendum.** It is known that personation was one of the methods freely employed by the friends of the liquor traffic in their fight for the defeat of the Ontario Liquor Act in the recent Referendum. It is said that investigations will be made in regard to the matter in different places, and it is certainly to be hoped that the offenders will be discovered and properly punished. The election law of Ontario is understood to deal severely with the crime of personation, providing for a heavy fine in cases of conviction and also for imprisonment for the term of one year. It would seem, however, that certain magistrates regard themselves as being clothed with large powers of discretion in this matter. Thus, a Toronto magistrate, following as it is said the precedent of a Kingston magistrate, has let off several persons convicted of personation, without imprisonment, and with a fine of only \$50 each—the maximum fine under the law being, we believe, \$200, and imprisonment, as has been said, being without option. One cannot but wonder what laws are made for if magistrates are permitted to ignore them in such fashion. What really counts for the discouragement of such a crime as personation is a fine heavy enough to be felt by those who supply corrupt election funds, and imprisonment, especially the latter, for many a fellow is willing enough to run the risk of being arrested and fined for personation, with the assurance that someone else will pay the fine, who would be very careful how he faced the contingency of a year in jail.

**Canada's Indians.** The annual report of the Department of Indian Affairs for the Dominion, recently issued, gives the Indian population of Canada as 108,112. During the year there were 2,500 births and 2,349 deaths. The increase, it will be seen, is very small, being less than one-seventh of one per cent. Still it is an increase, and is sufficient to indicate that the aborigines of Canada as a whole are not dying out. The

report of the Department indicates good behaviour on the part of the Indians generally, especially in reference to the commission of serious crimes. In this respect the Indians seem to compare very favorably with the population of Canada as a whole. The general good character of the Indians is doubtless due largely to the fact that, under the provisions of the Indian Act, they are in a great measure protected from the curse of liquor. Drinking of course exists among them to some degree, and wherever it exists it brings forth its legitimate fruits, but it is gratifying to learn that in some localities a marked advance in the direction of checking the evil has been made, and still more so that there are perceptible indications of a growth of Indian public sentiment against intemperance. The deputy superintendent general says it is gratifying to be able to state that the Indians throughout the Dominion have on the whole, by their industry and good conduct, not only secured comfort and contentment for themselves, but have contributed their quota to the welfare of the country. Uniformity of prosperity cannot be expected among those scattered over so great an extent of territory, in which the conditions necessarily greatly vary, but whilst some have been more favored in one direction, and others in another, the aggregate earnings from the various forms of industry, in so far as the department has been able to obtain account of them, exceeded those of the preceding year by nearly \$213,000.

**Congress Removes Duty From Coal.** The United States Congress last week passed a bill removing, for the period of one year, the duty of 67 cents on coal imported into that country. The motive actuating this legislation is to afford relief to the consumers of fuel, who in many parts of the country are feeling very keenly the scarcity of coal and the unprecedentedly high prices prevailing. The removal of duty will apply to bituminous coal from Canada and from Great Britain, including some kinds of coal usually classed as anthracite. It will benefit the coal-producing interests of Canada, and if the Canadian Parliament shall remove the duty from bituminous coal, benefit would accrue to soft coal consumers in Ontario. But in that case the Nova Scotia coal miners would probably lose any advantage gained by the removal of the United States duty on coal. In any event the change would have little effect upon the price of coal in the Maritime Provinces, as bituminous coal would not be imported here in any considerable quantity from the United States, and anthracite coal is already on the free list. But reciprocity in coal would doubtless give the manufacturers of New England and Ontario some advantage over those of the Maritime Provinces as compared with present conditions.

**Gets Off Easy.** The trial of the boy, Frederick Goodspeed, on the charge of being an accessory after the fact in the murder of William Doherty, was concluded last week, and resulted, so far as that indictment was concerned, in the acquittal of the accused through the disagreement of the jury and the decision of the crown officers not to carry the case farther. It is said that only three of the twelve jurymen favored conviction, while nine were for acquittal. It will be very difficult, we should suppose, for most persons who have followed the evidence in the case to understand how the nine jurymen reached this conclusion. According to Goodspeed's own sworn statement, Higgins had asked him a short time before the murder if he would assist him in killing Doherty, and Goodspeed had replied that he would not. Yet he continued to keep company with Higgins and went with him and Doherty alone to the scene of the tragedy on the afternoon Doherty was killed. Then, if Higgins did not look upon Goodspeed as willing to have some share in the crime, why did he have

him on hand when he killed Doherty? Then the silence of Goodspeed after the murder, when he had plenty of chances without risk to himself to inform on Higgins, his keeping in touch with the latter, going away with him under an assumed name, and making accusation only when both were tight in the grip of the law—to say nothing of his taking part in a burglary a day or two after the murder—are facts not favorable to the theory of Goodspeed's entire innocence, or to that of his conduct being determined by mortal terror of Higgins. The presiding Judge, Chief Justice Tuck, plainly told the prisoner that he should have been found guilty and sentenced to the Penitentiary for a long term of years. But the Judge himself has dealt very leniently with the boy. Besides the indictment in connection with the murder, there were two counts against Goodspeed for burglary, and on these he was found guilty. The Judge accordingly could still have sent him to the Penitentiary for a term of years, but he decided, with much hesitation as he confesses, to adopt a lenient alternative and send him to the Reformatory for a period of three years and three months. At the same time the Chief Justice has declared that he did not approve of the commutation of Higgins' sentence, and that if the matter had rested with him, he would have hanged him. The Chief Justice was very favorably impressed with the possibilities of good in Goodspeed's character, and his lenient course toward him was dictated by the benevolent desire to give him a favorable opportunity to reform. One can fully appreciate such a desire, but the reported remarks of the Chief Justice in reference to these cases suggest the interesting question how far a court may fairly be influenced by the impression made upon it by a prisoner's appearance or deportment, apart from the cold facts in the case? Another question not unnaturally occurs in connection with these trials and their results,—that is to say,—is the punishment meted out in these cases such as will strongly tend to deter youthful desperadoes from the commission of similar crimes?

**The Mercury Vapor Lamp.** The latest departure in electric lighting is what is described as a mercury vapor lamp. The lamp which may be made in a variety of forms is said to consist of a vacuum tube of any length up to about six feet, in which the mercury vapor is raised to a high state of incandescence. The light produced is said to be remarkably soft and soothing to the eyes. The lamp was recently inspected by Lord Kelvin and other distinguished scientists in company with men prominent in the railway and commercial world who are reported as being most favorably impressed with the new invention which is said to be the work of Mr. Peter Cooper Hewitt, son of ex Mayor Hewitt of New York.

**The Transvaal's Share.** Recent statements in reference to the amount of the war debt to be assumed by the Transvaal, although not officially confirmed, are generally regarded as correct. According to these statements, the Transvaal's contribution to the debt has been fixed at £30,000,000, while the Imperial Government will guarantee a loan of another £30,000,000 to be expended on reproductive public works in the Transvaal and Orange Colonies. The fraction of the debt assessed upon the Transvaal, considering the interests which the mine-owners had at stake and their influence in causing the appeal to arms to be made, will naturally seem to the taxpayers of England by no means a large one, but it is probably as large as under existing circumstances could be expected, and it is felt that there would be no advantage in saddling the Transvaal with a war debt, so heavy that it would seriously check the development of the country's immense mineral resources. On the whole there appears to be a disposition to admit that Mr. Chamberlain is succeeding well in dealing with the situation, and that his visit to South Africa will mean additional laurels for the Colonial Secretary.