POOR DOCUMENT

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THE MAN WHO WAS DEAD

BY ARTHUR W. MARCHMONT

Author of "In the Cause of Freedom," "When I Was Czar," Etc.

CHAPTER XXI.—(Continued.)

Lepova sat with a face af steel. Stephanie, on her part, was afraid to speak before him; and I waited in silence for Normia to regain self-command. A long and very embarrassing pause it was.

"I will go away at once—to Belgrade," declared Normia, when she had mastered her agitation. You will take me, monsieur?"

"Certainly. I am convinced it is your safest course—the only safe one, indeed," I replied readily.

"Wait," interposed the prince harshly. "A decision like this cannot be made without deliberation. And there is much to be explained."

"I shall not alter my decision," declared Normia firmly.

"We have as yet no confirmation of this gentleman's story."

"I do not need it," she retorted.

"I do, however. He tells us he is the man we believed he himself had killed. In his assumed character he has informed himself of all our plans, and asserts that you, baroness, have known his secret—have been in league with him, in other words."

"I declare——" began Stephanie when he interrupted her.

"Wait, if you please," he said; and his tone grew increasingly harsh and threatening as he proceeded. "The proof rests with you, baroness. I wish you to realize that entirely. You have been almost the head of everything. You have, we believe, rendered great services to our cause, and we have trusted you implicitly. I shall take take your word in this. If you deny what this man has said he is a traitor, and shall answer for it with his life. But,"—and he paused—"if you admit it, your treachery will have been a thousand fold greater than his, and you shall surely die for it—if I have to strangle you with my own hands—to avenge my betrayed friends. That I declare on my honor."

Every word was spoken slowly and deliberately, with all the sterness of implacable purpose; and Stephanie's alarm and perplexity waxed with every syllable.

There was a silence lasting for a few tense, awesome moments.

Lepova broke it.

"I do understand your silence, baroness; but is is well that you should realize all that depends upon your answer. Meanwhile there is a question for you to answer, monsieur. If you are Mr. Pershore, where is the real Gerard Provost?"

"Dead. He was murdered in my rooms in mistake for me."

Normia shuddered.

"When our agents reached the room you two alone were there—he dead, you alive and in possession of the papers he had brought from Belgrade. He had been killed by you. Why?"

"I had no hand in his death. He was dead when I reached the room."

"You accepted the responsibility for the deed then, and afterward you took his name, played his part; became him, in fact. Why?"

"I acted as I did at the time because had I not accepted the mistake which your agents made, they would have carried out their appointed work and have taken my life. Afterward it was impossible for me to explain until I had found the real murderer of Provost."

"You were sent to Vienna to destroy our cause; and you took advantage of the mistake to turn spy, you mean?"

"I mean nothing of the sort. I am no spy."

He turned to Stephanie. "Now, baroness."

He had made a mistake, however, in giving her time to collect her thoughts.

"I deny your right—yes, even yours, prince—to question me. My services to the cause——"

"Are now on their trial, madame," he burst in furiously. He raised his voice for the first time, thundering out the words and dashing his clenched fist on the table, his dark eyes flashing with rage. "By Heaven, I say you must answer, and you shall!"

But this outburst had far less terrifying effect on Stephanie than his former cold, concentrated, suppressed passion. She rose and met his look scornfully.

"I see only that your presence while in this mood, Prince Lepova, is an insult to me." Her tone was an excellent assumption of haughty, deeply injured pride.

"For the present I will relieve you of it, then," he replied. "In anticipation of this trouble, I have called together the leaders, and this matter will be submitted to them." Then, turning to me, but obviously speaking at Stephanie, he added: "Of course no one can leave the house in the meantime."

He fired that as a parting shot, and left the room hurriedly.

Stephanie did not lose a moment in making her intentions clear.

"He has gone to bring others to hear my answer?" she said directly. "What am I to say?"

"So far as I am concerned, what you will. I will be Gerald Provost no longer, come what may. I ought to have known the value of a Bosnian noble's honor."

"You persist that you are not Provost?"

Normia looked up in surprise at the question, and glanced at us both.

"You know that I am not. Why this pretense?"

"The pretense is yours," she cried, with a flash of anger. "Retract this story, and, as my affianced husband, no one will dare to touch you. Persist in it, and they will treat you as a spy."

"This farce is only intended to mislead Normia. Put an end to it, please."

"I am not misled, Mr. Pershore," said Normia, with a smile which delighted me as much as it enraged Stephanie, who turned on her.

"You wish clim to be murdered, then?" the baroness cried viciously.

Normia drew herself up to her full height, paused, and, with a look of intense scorn, said, with slow, cutting contempt: "It would be a better fate for an honorable man than life as the husband of a woman so false as you, Baroness Dolgoroff."

"Yet he was affianced to me!"

"If I know Mr. Pershore, it was as the preface, not of marriage, but of death."

At this the last vestige of Stephanie's self-control took flight.

"He is worthy of your championship, indeed. His hand is red with the blood of Provost, whom he murdered, and he offers it to you."

"His lips are wet with the kisses of your serving wench Catarina, and he would press them to yours," was Stephanie's next venomous insinuation.

"Your malice is becoming mere stupidity, baroness," returned Normia, coldly. "Even to ask you to deny that, Guy, would be an insult."

"On my honor, Normia," I declared, as I pressed my lips to the hand she offered me.

If ever the light of murder shone in a woman's eyes it was in Stephanie's then, as she stood watching us, trembling with passion, her bosom heaving and her nostrils dilated with her quickly drawn breath.

"I have my answer ready for the prince now. This shall cost you both your lives." And with that she hurried out—obviously to seek Lepova.

Instinctively I opened my arms.

"Normia!"

With a low cry of delight she let me draw her to my heart, and our lips met.

"Ah, Guy, can you ever forgive me?"

"I have never blamed you, sweetheart. You could not know, I whispered.

"What will they do to us?"

"They cannot kill our love, dearest." And our lips met again.

"I do not care—now," she whispered tenderly, as she lifted her eyes, radiant with the light of love, to mine. "I have never feared for myself. I can face even death happily now."

"No, no. We will talk of facing it when it comes. Life is all sweet now, with promise for us both."

As we stood thus, the noise of confused murmurs and disorder in the house below reached our ears; the voices of men raised in angry altercation, and the sound of scurrying footsteps.

A moment later we heard rapid steps approaching the room.

"They are coming, Guy," said Normia.

"Are there any means of escape that way?" I asked, pointing to a door at the opposite end of the room.

"None that I know. Those are the baroness' private apartments only."

"Thank Heaven they cannot harm you!" I whispered, not believing what I said, however.

"I do not fear for myself, Guy. But I have brought you to this."

"Courage, dearest, and hope," I murmured; but my own words mocked me. There was no hope.

"I am not afraid."

"Indeed her coolness was wonderful.

The clamor below seemed to increase—in those desperate circumstances a terrifying sound. My knowledge of her peril and my helplessness to avert it made me, indeed, a coward.

And, when the steps were close to the room, a very paralysis of panic seized me, and I could do nothing but stare blankly at the door, waiting for it to open to admit the men whose coming meant death to us both.

Chapter XXII.

The Opening Skirmish.

Only once before in my life had I known such acute suspense as during the moments when Normia and I stood waiting for the entrance of Prince Lepova and his companions. That had been on the night of Provost's murder, as I waited for the entrance of Arnheim and the other two.

I was almost as scared as a child, and, when the handle of the door was turned, I caught my breath, and felt a chill of sweat break out on my forehead.

But it was Stephanie who entered, not the prince; and, in place of the threatening anger in which she had left us, she was now wild and distraught with agitation, and her face was white to the lips with fear.

"All is lost!" she cried despairingly. "It is your doing. You have ruined us all. Some arrests have already been made, and they accuse me of treachery. The prince has all the leaders here, and we are to go before them. They will kill me! They will kill me! Oh, God! Oh, God! I cannot die!" And she flung herself headlong on a couch, a prey to overwhelming and utterly abject terror.

The sight of her fear made me ashamed of mine. I crossed to her, and laid my hand on her shoulder.

"Tell me what has happened. Come this will do no good."

She shuddered and quivered, shaking like one in an ague.

"They will kill me! They will kill me!" she moaned over and over again.

"You won't escape by giving way in that fashion," I said briskly, for the sight of her cowardly fear for herself disgusted me. She had terrorized others readily enough, and had glibly placed their lives in peril.

"There is no escape. We are trapped. Every way out of the house is blocked. They will kill me. There is no escape." And again she gave the reins to her panic.

Normia, on the other hand, was as calm as Stephanie was terror-stricken, and witnessed the breakdown with contemptuous surprise.

"I could not have believed she was such a coward," she said. "I will go and find out what has occurred."

"No, no, you had better not," I protested.

"They will not harm me. Besides, if they mean to, one place is as good as another. Here we are only in a trap, as she says."

"How many rooms are there?" I asked, pointing to Stephanie's apartments.

"Three—boudoir, bedroom, and dressing-room beyond."

"How are the rooms reached—I mean from outside?"

"A corridor runs along that side of them all, and there is a door into each of the first two rooms. The third, the dressing-room, is entered only from the bedroom." She answered me without a sign of agitation.

"If we had a weapon of some sort, we could hold that room against them until some sort of assistance comes; or until we could try an escape in the dark. Have you no weapons?" I asked Stephanie. "For Heaven's sake, rouse yourself!"

"No, no. I have nothing. There is no hope, no escape, I tell you."

I ran through to look at the dressing-room, and found it the best for our purpose.

I had my plan in a moment—to barricade the door of the room so as to allow of no more than one man entering at once, and hold the entrance with some heavy weapon. I was hunting around for something that would serve my purpose, when Normia called me.

"I have a plan, Guy," she said. "I have been listening, and all is much quieter in the house. Probably she has much exaggerated things in her terror. Let me go and find Prince Lepova. If I can induce him to return, we may find a way for you to escape, or, at worst, keep him here as a kind of hostage."

It was a shrewd thought, but too dangerous.

"He would not let you return here; and Heaven alone knows what they would do to you!" I said.

"I have done nothing. They will not herm me. And I have many friends in the house. Let me go please," she urged.

But even as I hestitated we heard some one coming to the room. Stephanie heard the step also, and sprang up with a cry of fear, and rushed away just as Lepova entered. He was accompanied, to my surprise and relief, by but one man. I did not know him, but the revolver he carried, with a clumsy and ineffectual attempt at concealment, sufficed to show the intentions of the pair.

"Where is Baroness Dolgoroff?"

"She has gone into the room beyond," said Normia, and pointed to the door.

"Are you armed?" he demanded of me.

"No. I came here relying on your pledge. Why do you ask?"

His reply was to glance at the other man, who leveled his revolver at me. "You are a prisoner, of course," he said sternly.

"What is the meaning of this, Prince Lepova?" asked Normia.

"There is treachery somewhere—we are finding out where. You will have to answer to the leaders below, and will have a chance to clear yourself, if you can," he said to me, as I was turning out my pockets at the other man's bidding.

"I will answer for Mr. Pershore, prince," declared Normia.

"You have yet to answer for yourself," was the reply, very harshly spoken, as he went to the door of the boudoir and called to Stephanie.

I shall never forget Normia's cool quickwittedness at that crisis. She seemed to read my thoughts in the one swift glance that passed between us.

"She has gone to her bedroom, prince; the room beyond," she said, as calmly as if the position were one of the most ordinary every-day character. "Shall I tell her?" and she went toward him.

"No. Stay here, if you please," he snapped, and went alone through the door.

He was evidently accustomed to regard her as a negligible quantity, and made no allowance for the change in her which my news had brought. She turned back with a careless shrug of the shoulders and a smile, walked leisurely to a lounge chair, which stood close to the man who was covering me, and picked up the cushion and shook it up, as if about to sit down. Then, with another swift, meaning glance at me, she swung the cushion at him sideways.

The next moment his revolver was in my hands instead of his, and, snatching up a heavy bronze figure, I dealt him a blow on the head, which felled him, and knocked all the consciousness out of him.

The groan he gave and the noise of the fall were heard by the prince.

"What's that?" he called from the inner room.

"Your man's had a fit, or something, you'd better come," I replied; and I bent over the man, as if to see what was the matter.

Lepova had drawn his weapon at the noise of the fall, and it was in his hand as he came hurrying out.

"Poor fellow! What is it?" exclaimed Normia, with excellently assumed sympathy in her tone, and not a trace of excitement.

This, together with my attitude, quieted the prince's suspicions. He put his revolver in his pocket, and came to my side and bent down. The next instant he was on his back with my knee on his stomach, and my revolver at his head.

"If you want to live, keep quiet," I said sternly. "I swear to Heaven that if you resist or make a sound I'll fire. You've broken your oath, you know, and sought my life."

Then I took his pistol from him, and satisfied myself that he had no other weapons. He had been taken entirely by surprise, and, reading in my look that I meant mischief, saw that resistance was hopeless at that juncture.

"Lock the big doors, Normia. We shall have some of the others up directly to know what is keeping these two. Then go and find the baroness. We must get to that inner room. Quick. Call to me when the way is clear."

She did it all very quietly and quickly. And when she called to me, I let Lepova get up, keeping his head covered by my pistol all the time.

"Now, prince, we'll have a plain talk. You got me here with a lie, and meant all the time to have my life."

"No. I merely wanted an explanation."

"Well, you're going to have it now. It's this: Your life is safe just so long as our lives are safe—and not one second longer. You've had a proof of what I can do with a pistol, and now that I have your's and this man's, you'll know I mean to put up a fight."

He was very cool, and there was no question about his courage, but he recognized he had no chance.

"You can shoot me, if you will. I can't resist, but that will not save you."

"I mean to do better than shoot you, unless you drive me to it by trying to fool me. I mean to hold you as a hostage for our safety."

"Are you in truth the Englishman, Mr. Pershore?"

"Yes, and a good many degrees more dangerous to you than Provost the spy."

"Will you pledge your honor not to reveal anything you have found out here?"

"A little late to suggest terms, isn't it?"

"You are not out of the house," he replied meaningly. "But if you will give that pledge, and also surrender the Baroness Dolgoroff, you may go free."

"Didn't you hear me say I was an Englishman? Well, we English don't betray women into the hands of such men as you."

"She shall not go," he answered, his face set with anger and resolve.

"That's your last word?"

"Yes, absolutely. Come what may, she shall not escape."

"Then we'll wait and see what the rest say. Just walk ahead of me into that room there. No tricks, mind."

Now that her fear of immediate death had passed, Stephanie's terror had given place to rage and the instant the prince entered she broke out into a furious tirade against him, until I stopped her and told her pretty bluntly to hold her tongue.

Normia, meanwhile, had anticipated that I should need something with which to bind Lepova, and had found some silken cords, thin, but very strong, which exactly suited the purpose. With these I tied his hands behind him and then fastened his legs. He bore it all with the same inflexible firmness.

Next I went back to the fellow in the reception-room, treated him much in the same fashion, but I gagged him in addition, and then hauled him through into the bedroom, bundled him into a closet, and turned the key on him.

Then some one knocked on the door of the big room.

"Monsieur Le Prince! Monsieur Le Prince!" came a call.

"You will answer that call, prince," I said; and, slipping the cords off his legs, took him back to the door.

"Tell them not to disturb you, and that you'll call when you need them."

He hesitated, and shook his head.

"You can take your choice," I whispered, grimly and threateningly.

"Monsieur Le Prince! Monsieur Le Prince!" came the call again, more impatiently.

"I give you five seconds," I growled.

He yielded, but the sweat was in great beads on his forehead.

"What is the matter? I can't be disturbed. I will call you presently," he replied.

I heard the murmur of their voices, and then footsteps as they went away.

He went back to the dressing-room, and I set about making such preparations as I could for the struggle that I knew must come sooner or later.

Now that I had the revolvers I was fairly confident that I could hold the room until dark, when I meant either to attempt an escape by means of the window, or to employ vigorous methods to bring the police to the house. Normia suggested the latter plan. It was to bring into our room everything breakable, and throw it out of the window in the dark, when the streets were quiet.

The window was about twenty feet from the ground—too far to jump, and, unfortunately, it looked out upon a portion of the grounds. But the noise of the crash which we could make was likely to be heard for some distance and so attract attention.

When the preparations were completed, I told Normia the idea of attempting an escape by the window, and set her to tear up the sheets and blankets from Stephanie's bed, and twist the strips into a rope; and while she was busy with this, a loud knocking at the big folding doors told us that the patience of the men had given out.

I tried the same ruse as before, but it failed. Those outside declared they would only be satisfied if the prince opened the door himself, in proof that all was well with him.

I was prepared for this result, and when the first blows came, indicating that the doors were to be battered in, I took him back to the door of the "fortress," tied his legs again, and placed him so that he should be in full sight of his friends the instant they entered. I stood behind him, with my drawn revolver.

"You'd better understand, prince'" I said, with intense earnestness, "that your life depends on what your men do. You can tell them what you please, but if they attempt to rescue you or to get in here, it will be your death sentence."

I meant it, every syllable; and he knew it. He had broken faith with me, and I was fighting for Normia's safety, as well as my own life.

We had not long to wait. A few minutes elapsed, and then a big crash and splintering wood proclaimed that they had rushed the doors. They came quickly across the big room and through the boudoir, only to halt with cries of anger and confusion at the door of the bedroom on seeing Lepova's plight.

In the midst of the medley a shot was fired, and then I saw one of the men at the front in the act of aiming at me. Quick as light I fired, and he fell back into the arms of a man behind him, as his revolver dropped on the floor in front.

"My next shot will be for the prince," I cried in a ringing tone; and at that they hung back and huddled together like a flock of sheep.

"What does it mean, prince?" called one of them.

"That I am a prisoner, as you see; and this man has sworn to take my life if you attempt a rescue," answered Lepova promptly. "You can tell whether he means what he says by the death of Veloskov there."

They turned and held a conference, and presently one of them stooped forward to recover the fallen revolver.

"Leave that!" I called.

But he would not. With a snatch he grasped it, only to drop it again instantly with a cry of pain, as I fired and broke his arm. I could well afford one cartridge to secure half a dozen more.

It was the last argument they needed, and, without showing their faces again, they turned and went off in a body.

The honors of the opening skirmish were distinctly with me. I had increased my ammunition by fifty per cent., had put two of the enemy out of the fight, and had filled every man of them with a wholesome belief in my capacity to shoot straight.

A heavy gain under the circumstances.

CHAPTER XXIII.

An Assault in Force.

The effect was seen at once. As soon as I had picked up the third revolver the prince opened negotiations for a truce.

"Can't we come to terms, Mr. Pershore? What is it you want?" he asked.

"To get out of here in safety—all three of us."

"You are at liberty to go. I'll answer for my followers."

I smiled. "Thank you, but who is to answer for you?"

"I pledge my honor."

"I trusted to that before. I can't trust you. I'm not saying this merely to insult you, but nothing you can say will induce me to do it again."

"But there must be some means," he persisted. "I'll do anything you wish."

"Yes, there's one way. There is someone to whom I could write and he'd send and get me out promptly enough."

"Do you mean the police?" he asked.

"Much the same thing—but soldiers, probably."

"I should be mad to do it."

"No. Your people can clear out, and I'll explain your presence plausibly."

He thought it over, frowning heavily.

"It would be the same thing if the house were cleared," he said, next.

"Yes—if!" And I shook my head.

"But this sort of thing can't go on forever," he exclaimed testily.

"I mean to bring the police here myself as soon as it's dark, and my report then will be awkward for you. You planned my murder, you know."

"No, no, no," he protested, and, after a pause: "If your letter is sent will you promise to keep secret everything concerning matters here?"

"How can I? The facts must be told about Normia. It is as much to me to clear her from the danger into which you two have forced her as it is to get away from here."

"You are unreasonable," he retorted very angrily.

"Let the others decide it, then," I said.

"Not the baroness," he declared grimly. "She shall answer for her treachery."

Stephanie broke her long silence with a burst of indignant repudiation of the charge of treachery, but the prince silenced her at once.

"You lie!" he cried fiercely, and then it came out that he knew of Count Kassler's visits and of her attempted betrayal of Normia.

But Normia sided with me.

"Whether she has done this or not, we cannot leave without her," she declared firmly.

"You two are giving your lives for one who has done her utmost against you both," was the prince's reply.

"You are giving yours in the futile effort to punish her," I said. "But the matter is settled. You can arrange for us all three to leave in safety, or none."

"She shall not escape," he growled vindictively, and the discussion ended.

Normia and I crossed and sat by the window. It was growing dark, and I was beginning to be impatient for the time to come for our attempt to attract help from outside.

More than an hour had passed in this way, and all the time the men had given no sign or sound of an intention to renew the attack. Before it was quite dark I shut and barricaded the door, and Normia and I discussed the attempt to bring the police to the house.

"It is the back of the house, Guy, remember, and very far from the street where any police will be."

"Sounds travel well at night."

"I should not build too much upon it," she answered. "I don't wish to dash your hopes, you know that, but I don't want you to be disappointed if the attempt should fail."

"Your courage is wonderful, Normia," I cried.

"What is that?" she asked, with a start, as we heard movements in the room above.

We listened intently. Men tramped about the room, and then began to move the furniture. Hammering followed, and a noise like the ripping up of planks.

Directly afterward Stephanie cried out in alarm, as heavy blows were struck against the ceiling of the room below setting the floor trembling and shaking with the concussion.

"They are going to break a way through from above and below," said Normia instantly. Nothing appeared able to shake her coolness.

"It sounds like it," I agreed. "We'll give them something else to think about, but I wish they had waited a bit. We'll send out our signals of distress, Normia."

It was already dark enough for the purpose, but too early in the evening. I had intended to wait until the city was quiet, but the form of the new attack rendered me too uneasy to wait longer.

I opened the window, and as Normia handed me some large glass and china ornaments and some pictures I dashed them to the ground, and at the same time sent up loud shouts for the police at the top of my lung power.

At the first crash the hammering ceased, and the rush of footsteps told us that we had, at any rate, created a diversion.

(To be continued.)

OPPOSES SEPARATE SCHOOLS IN MANITOBA'S NEW TERRITORY

Sifton's Organ Serves Notice on the Powers at Ottawa.

Winnipeg, July 10—The Manitoba Free Press, on behalf of the provincial Liberals, pronounces against separate schools in the territory to be annexed to the province.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

[The opinions of correspondents are not necessarily those of The Telegraph. This newspaper does not undertake to publish all or any of the letters received. Unsigned communications will not be noticed. Write on one side of paper only. Communications must be plainly written; otherwise they will be rejected. Stamps should be enclosed if return of manuscript is desired in case it is not used. The name and address of the writer should be sent with every letter in evidence of good faith.—Ed. Telegraph.]

ABOUT EXAMINATION PAPERS

To the Editor of The Telegraph:

SIR:—About a year ago, attention was directed through the columns of your paper to cases of manifest unfairness on the part of certain examiners, who were permitted to set papers for the departmental examinations held last July.

It was hoped that steps would then be taken by those who manipulate the examination system in this province to prevent a recurrence of the undesirable features of last year's examination.

But what do we find this year? While many of the Normal School papers are thoughtfully prepared — especially the geography papers—yet there are some remarkable exceptions. Especially is this true of the algebra paper for candidates for second class Normal School entrance.

The first question on this paper evidently contains a typographical error in having a multiplication instead of an addition sign, for if the question be correct as it was printed, it may be regarded as ample proof of the examiner's incompetence.

Again in the third question, a fraction is given which is to be reduced to its lowest terms. It is interesting to note that neither of the terms of this fraction can be factored.

The inclusion of such problems as those mentioned, may be regarded by the examiner as extremely funny, but the hundreds of candidates who wasted so much valuable time wrestling with these senseless problems and were thereby prevented from making a pass mark on the paper as a whole, will scarcely appreciate the humor of the situation. This paper would have been more reasonable had questions one, two and three, been omitted altogether and the time limit cut from two hours to one.

That more careful proof-reading of these papers is necessary, becomes more apparent from year to year. A single sign omitted or misprinted, as is often the case on these examinations, is apt to cause complete failure to a nervous candidate. The school law makes no special provision for proof-reading, and so it is presumed that little is done along these lines.

Reputable printing establishments usually exercise great care in seeing to it that printed matter shall correspond exactly with the furnished "copy," but it is little wonder that the ordinary compositor is helpless when he tries to interpret the abstract brain-twisting algebraic problems which are submitted to him to be put into type for examination purposes.

It is well known that teachers in this province are usually rated according to the number of pupils they succeed in pulling through these examinations, hence in case any errors occur in setting of the papers, in poor proof-reading, unreasonable questions asked or foolish problems required, it all reflects at once upon the innocent principal of the rural or village school, who has labored hard (often outside of school hours), to prepare pupils for these formidable tests.

Nor would I advocate easy examinations. In fact, I believe the standard should be gradually raised throughout the whole system, but this can surely be done in a rational manner and not by resorting to tricky or purposeless questions.

Teachers are always willing to help their pupils struggle through the various subjects of the course of instruction no matter how unserviceable the prescribed texts may be, but when it comes to placing before these pupils an examination which in no sense of the word can be considered a test of knowledge or ability, then the time has arrived when those who are responsible for this condition of affairs should be held strictly accountable.

Thanking you, Mr. Editor, for this privilege of expressing not only my personal views, but what I believe to be the views held by a large percentage of the school principals as well as ratepayers of this province,

I remain,

OLD TEACHER.

Lord Roberts Sails for Canada

Liverpool, July 10—The Duke of Norfolk, Lord Roberts, and a distinguished party sailed today on board the Canadian Pacific liner Empress of Ireland for Quebec to attend the tercentenary celebration of the founding of Quebec by Champlain.

LAND GRANTS FOR SOUTH AFRICAN VOLUNTEERS

All Those Who Enlisted in Canada Entitled to the Bounty

May Take Scrip Instead—Legal Representatives of Those Who Have Died Since Are Entitled to the Same—Cartwright's Old Age Annuities Bill Gets Second Reading—Boys Over Sixteen Can Use Tobacco.

Ottawa, July 10.—Tonight Mr. Oliver moved a resolution that the bill to authorize a bounty to volunteers who served the crown in South Africa shall apply to all volunteers who reside or were domiciled in Canada at the time of their enlistment for military service in South Africa; that in the event of a volunteer's death between the date of his enlistment and December 31, 1910, the proposed grant of land may be made to his legal representative and that any person entitled to choose scrip in lieu of land may give notice before Dec. 31, 1910.

Mr. Oliver said those who enlisted in the South Africa constabulary would be eligible.

Col. Sam Hughes thought that Canadians who enlisted in Britain or South Africa, should be included, while Messrs. Bickerdike and Schell (Oxford), spoke for the Fenian raid veterans.

The resolution carried and the bill was taken up.

Again Col Hughes pressed for recognition of the men who went to South Africa to enlist, "including, if you like," he said, "Col. Sam Hughes."

Mr. Oliver intended that, but thought it would be imposible to draft a clause covering all the cases.

Mr. Borden suggested a clause, but E. McDonald objected and said this country should recognize only those men who enlisted in Canadian corps.

Col. Hughes instanced the case of Col. Hamilton Merritt, of Toronto, who served on General Brabant's horse. "And I," said the Colonel, "couldn't go to South Africa, because of the tyranny of an English officer, who happened to be a servant of the Canadian government."

The clause was allowed to stand.

An amendment to Clause 3 makes the grant available to the legal representative of any person entitled to the grant who died between the date of his enlistment and the 31st of December, 1910.

A number of suggestions and amendments were rejected. Mr. Martin, of P.E.I. for instance, thought that chaplains should be entitled to the grant.

Dr. Barr wanted Canadian war correspondents included and Mr. Blain, of Peel, urged that nurses should participate in the grant.

Mr. Herron, of Alberta, offered several important amendments, of which he had given notice early in the session and of which Mr. Oliver had freely availed himself in recasting his bill.

Mr. Fowler favored the bill, but he objected to the substitution clause which, he said, was a concession to the scrip sharks, who already had their eyes on this bill.

Mr. Oliver said it was a wrong impression to suppose that this was a measure to benefit the west. As a matter of fact it was a sacrifice on the part of the people of the west, but one which they made willingly and in the interests of the empire and of Canada as a whole.

Mr. Fowler argued that the northwest should not be asked to make any special sacrifices and this could be avoided by making the grant in money instead of in land.

Progress was reported on the bill.

A bill to authorize the construction of a branch line of the P.E.I. Railway was opposed by Mr. Emmerson, former minister of railways, in the house tonight. He wanted a bigger scheme of development adopted.

The branch line will be in the constituency of Mr. Hughes, the only Liberal member from the Island. It is only thirteen miles in length.

The bill was read a third time, the minister of railways not even doing his predecessor the courtesy of a reply.

The bill to provide for the payment of bounties on crude petroleum produced from shales was also given a third reading as were also the bills in respect to the salary of the superintendent of insurance and the act to secure to the auditor general the right of making promotions in his department.

The house went into committee on Mr. Fielding's resolution respecting the cancellation of the privileges of foreign nations to enjoy the coasting trade of Canada.

Mr. Fielding said the coal companies had represented that the cancellation of these privileges was a hardship, and it had been decided that the government should have the power to make exceptions.

Mr. Emmerson asked if the vessels engaged in the coal trade were manned by Norwegians to the exclusion of Canadians and Mr. Fielding said that was the case.

Mr. Stanfield urged that there should be an arrangement to protect Canadian vessels which were discriminated against at Iverness and Port Hood.

In the senate today, on the motion for the reading of the bill to restrain the use of tobacco by young persons, Senator Power moved an amendment to reduce the age at which tobacco is forbidden to boys from eighteen to sixteen years. The amendment carried by 33 to 13 and the bill, as amended, was passed.

In moving the second reading of his old age annuities bill, Sir Richard Cartwright said there were few differences between this and the bill he had presented to the senate last session. The chief difference was the age, at which an annuity could be obtained, had been reduced to fifty-five years from sixty. This had been suggested by the finance minister for the benefit of those employed in trades in which their health was injured. There would have to be higher payments made for fifty-five-year annuities.

There was a provision to prevent a man about to go into insolvency from taking assets from his creditors and investing them in an annuity, which could not be touched.

Sir Richard said he had received inquiries from a number of societies which intimated a desire to arrange for the purchase of annuities for certain of their members. He had also received inquiries from large employers of labor who intimated that they would purchase annuities for their deserving old employes.

The bill was given a second reading.

HARVEY STATION FARMERS MAKE SUGGESTIONS TO AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION

The Agricultural Commission held a meeting at Harvey Station on July 7. The attendance was not large but there was an active discussion and considerable information as to the district given. Albert Little presided, and among others there were present Elisha Hamilton, Marshall Coburn, Henry P. Craig, Odbur Little, Fred Grieve, Richard Davis, Wm. Hunter, Samuel Hunter and John Taylor.

The evidence showed that in some parts of the parish of Manners Sutton there were practically no vacant farms, while in others quite a number of people had moved away, but generally the farms were being worked by men in the neighborhood; only a few places were known to be for sale.

Unlike most districts, there was plenty of labor available, in fact men went away from Harvey to help in other districts.

In regard to live stock, it was shown that dairying was the main business. Milch cows were on the increase, and some farmers were keeping herds of milch cows exclusively raising practically no young stock. Some years ago a butter factory had been established, but at that time the price of butter was very low and the farmers did not get the returns from the factory which they thought they should, after a few years the factory was burned and had not been rebuilt. There was, however, a good demand and quick market for the dairy-made butter. The Farmers' Trading Company taking all they could buy at 20c. per lb. and shipping to St. John.

Cattle kept were a mixture of Shorthorn, Ayrshire and Jersey. A good many farmers were growing more or less turnips and feeding their cows for milk in the winter season. The bulk of the butter was made on the grass, but winter dairying was gradually increasing.

There was a great difference of opinion as to the breed of cattle best adapted to the district. Albert Little said he had a small herd of purebred Shorthorns, some of the cows being extra good milkers, but he was not sure that this breed was the best for the district. There were three purebred Shorthorn bulls in the district now. There had been Jerseys and some Ayrshires. A good many of the cows milked for nine months or more each year, and generally speaking, it was upon the cows of the district that the people depended for their income. Mr. Little, in speaking of the needs of the district, said he thought a systematic testing of the cows, so as to enable the farmers to weed out the poor ones, was the most urgent need at the present time. Evidence went to show that there were some splendid cows sired by Shorthorn bulls and that a certain amount of beef was made in the district.

"Not half as many sheep kept as formerly," was the unanimous opinion of the meeting. The reasons given were the ravages of dogs and because cows did not do well on the same pasture as sheep. The average price for lambs last year was about $3.40 per head, lambs weighing as much as 90 pounds not receiving any extra price. The opinion of the meeting seemed to be that it paid better to keep more cows and not try to keep many sheep.

When the question of horse raising was taken up, it was learned that no purebred heavy stallion was now available in the district. A half-bred Clyde stallion had been sent in in the early part of the season but had not received much encouragement. A half-bred Hackney stallion was kept in Acton. Several men were now away on Prince Edward Island looking for horses, and it was thought to be their intention to bring in a stallion if one was found to suit. The opinion of the meeting seemed to be that Percherons were more popular than Clydesdales, as the latter were thought to be too slow for farm work. There would be a good opening for a good heavy draft stallion.

There was no complaint in regard to market demands for all kinds of produce. Some potatoes and turnips had been shipped and there seemed to be buyers ready for all that could be raised. Farmers did not go extensively into potato growing, preferring to raise more turnips and feed them. Beef and dairy products met a ready sale.

There was considerable demand for commercial fertilizer, six carloads having been used this season. It was used mostly in growing turnips and buckwheat. This fertilizer was bought largely through the Agricultural Society, and cost from $28 to $32 per ton. Dealers in fertilizer had to meet the competition of the Agricultural Society and if they handled it had to sell for the same money. Land plaster was very little used, but the question of using it in the stables and on the manure heaps was discussed and the suggestions of the commission in this regard seemed to meet with favor.

Evidence went to show that the Agricultural Society had been a great benefit to the district. H. P. Craig, as secretary, said there were this year some 75 members, and they were intending to have an exhibition this autumn. The society imported stock and seeds, making a strong effort year to secure the very best seeds on market. As a result it was shown that the weeds were not many weeds in the farms, wild mustard being almost unknown.

The question of Farmers' Institute meetings was discussed and while some did not think that they were of much benefit, Mr. Little and others said that new methods and improved ideas had been introduced by these meetings, and there certainly had been a benefit to the district by holding them. There was, however, a lack of interest in them, it being very difficult to get a large attendance of farmers. In regard to the selection of seed grain, no work had been done in the selection of best heads.

Commissioner Fisher related his experience in regard to the increased crops derived from sowing seed from the best heads of wheat and oats, saying that when he began to select the seed wheat the heads only averaged about three inches in length, now the average was almost five inches, a difference which gave a largely increased yield. He suggested that the Harvey Society at its proposed exhibition this year should offer prizes to the boys and girls who brought the best hundred heads of wheat and oats to the exhibition. The suggestion met with approval.

Hon. Dr. Landry, at the conclusion of the meeting, gave a short address, in which he urged the need of more study and closer attention to improved agriculture. He believed that many boys were encouraged to do so by their parents. The cry that there was no money in farming drove many a bright young man to other occupations, whereas had he been encouraged to devote his ability and industry along improved methods, he might have been today a leading farmer. It was necessary, he said, with both live stock and plants to continually breed up and not allow the stock or seed to run down. This could be done by selection, careful feeding of the animals liberally fertilizing the soil. He asked farmers of Harvey to at all times upon the department of agriculture for any thing the department could do, and he would be glad at any time to have suggestions from them as to how the department might be made more useful.