

The Passing Show.

BY WILFRID WISGAST.

"All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players."

If Mayor Fleming is pledged to one thing more decidedly than another it is to inaugurate a regime of strict economy. The first step in this direction can be taken at once in connection with the police force. A new police station is being opened on Ossington avenue, and of course the necessary appointments must be made.

Now I object to the discharge of any men who have been appointed to berths in any of our public offices for any other cause than proved incapacity or dishonesty. If a man has procured his appointment by fair means and accepted it in good faith he should not be made the sport of an electioneering cry for economy. We shall never obtain the services of good men in any of the departments if it once is recognised that men are to be discharged to aid a demagogue in his bids for popularity.

So that, much as I desire to see that monstrosity that has been contemptuously termed the Morality Department swept out of the way, I do not ask that any men be discharged for such a purpose. Let them be drafted back into the police force and no additional men be taken on to fill the Ossington avenue station, but let the necessary material be found within the force.

The police force here is absurdly over-manned and too expensively conducted. But if the plan I suggest be adopted, that no fresh hands be taken on, before the year is out we shall have a material reduction in the numbers and the expense of the police, and there is little doubt but that a proportional increase in its efficiency will also occur.

Let Mayor Fleming see to this at once. We want to start with not a proof of his good intentions, but of his administrative grasp and capacity. It may not be pleasant to Mr. Fleming to have to wipe out an absurdity that I am told he helped to create; but Mr. Fleming will find that, having become a servant of the people, he will have to do much he does not relish.

We all know that that person who is ostensibly editor of the *Globe* is a mere figurehead, a foil, in fact, to cover the acts of other people. A kind of literary hay-seed, he was swept up out of a little country office at London, Ont., and pitchforked into the *Globe* office to be at once a flunkey and a tool. But having accepted the humiliating position, he cannot be allowed to shirk the consequences.

What, then, are we to think of the literary skunk who allowed such an attack as that on Lady Macdonald to appear in columns that he is supposed to control. Such a fellow ought to be, not kicked—because it would be a degradation to a decent boot to be applied to any part of his person—but cut in the most marked and insulting

manner by all self-respecting men as a cowardly and offensive calumniator of a stricken and defenceless woman.

What is the object of attacking Lady Macdonald? It can only be the most mean kind of spite, because the lady is naturally in sympathy with the political party with which her husband was associated all his life. The Grit gang must be desperately in want of the crumbs of office when they try to improve their position by inventing calumnies about women.

Besides, if this kind of thing is to be the order of political warfare, how will it do to import into the arena the wives of some of these slander-mongers themselves? It would be interesting to see how the inventors and publishers of the sort of journalistic outrage to which I have called attention would act if we turned the light of an impertinent publicity into the interior of their ménage.

No one desires to have resort to this kind of miserable silliness, and I hope no one will do it, because, whatever the enemy do, let us fight fair. But I mention this because it has been proposed in certain quarters, and was very nearly carried out a few days ago; but ultimately, I am glad to say, better advice and calmer counsel prevailed.

The discovery of a dynamite bomb factory at Walsall, in Lancashire, is one of those interesting events that may give some of us a little food for reflection. When we think how easy it is now for any madman or knave to do incalculable injury to any number of people by exploding a bomb, is it not time for us to ask what the people who are not incipient assassins can do to protect themselves?

It would appear now that a man has only to call himself a "Socialist," or Anarchist, or advanced thinker of some brand or the other, and he can commit murder singly or by wholesale, and men claim immunity because it is only a political offence. Patrick Egan, the United States Minister to Chili, is an example. He was both a thief and an assassin, and on this account President Harrison honored him only to insult England.

Now, we have to consider how to deal with these desperadoes, not for their benefit or reclamation, or any sentimental nonsense of that sort, but how to exterminate them for the safety and advantage of society at large, and how to exterminate them at the least cost and in the speediest possible way.

We cannot do better than to hang them, and to hang them with only the preliminaries a fair trial and strict justice require. We have had this kind of fester in the body politic all our lives, and our fathers and fore-fathers suffered from the same infliction. But they had not the same tolerance and apology accorded to them in days gone by; once caught red-handed, their transference to another and a better world was swift.

The hanging of the Haymarket assassins at Chicago had a wonderfully beneficial effect; we have heard but little about anarchism and the

"policy of dynamite," as it is elegantly termed, since then on this continent. What we have to do is to let these people swing, and swing freely.

This is not brutality, but common sense. The way to hinder murder is to punish it, and to punish it severely. The lunatic or knave who will throw a dynamite bomb into a crowd in the street or into a business office is not the kind of animal entitled to any rights, but should be treated as something much more dangerous than a mad dog, and shot or hanged on sight.

We hear occasionally the delirious shouts of a few fools in honor of the "Manchester Martyrs," the "Phoenix Park Martyrs," and the "Martyrs of Chicago"; the martyrdom is a rather unsatisfactory quantity, but the result of enforcing the law has been undoubtedly deterrent. The moral is inevitable: if patriots insist on blowing up society in sections, society must persist in hanging them in bulk.

Many years ago Feice Orsini, a crazy Italian, because he hated the then Emperor of the French, threw some bombs among an immense crowd of people in the Rue Lepelletier, Paris, and killed several of the spectators; we all remember the Saturday evening in May when the chivalry of Irishmen was shown by a party of ten armed Irishmen lying in ambush for two unarmed and unsuspecting men and stabbing them to death as they walked home to dinner; later at Chicago some of the scum of foreign emigrants that the United States has nursed so kindly in the past, showed their love of liberty and their appreciation of the law by hurling bombs among a mass of people in the Hay Market.

It is folly to talk to fanatics of this kind. They appeal to force; well and good, let them be treated by their own recipe. It is the only cure we have for this kind of madness—a madness that is, unfortunately, on the increase, which also added knowledge affords desperate men every possible facility to deal death and injury all around them and gain an ephemeral notoriety themselves.

What society has done in the past it will undoubtedly have to do again. It will have to hang these people who will indulge in this very pronounced form of propaganda; and it will have again, as it has had to do before, meet force by force and violence by violence and mow down by bayonet and by bullet these outragers of public liberty, these enemies of the public prosperity and peace.

Rightly or wrongly the highest development of liberty that we can at present conceive is that the majority shall rule. It may not be the best attainable, but it is the best we at present know. Therefore any man or number of men in a free country, who dispute by force the wish of the majority, are traitors to democracy as we understand it, and if they persist in their folly we must shoot or hang them before they have the opportunity of performing the same interesting experiment on ourselves.