

TOPICS TALKED OF.

TO-DAY, I make my debut before a Victoria audience! With a certain feeling, vague and indefinable, of fear and trembling, I hear the words "dear public, this is Dr. Beast; the public, Dr. Beast; Dr. Beast, the public." In other words, I am introduced, and my kind friend who has led me thus far by the hand, leaves me to fight my own battles, to become popular or unpopular or neither—in short to plunge in for myself and do or die. I don't want to die. My ambition is to do and to do well. Will I succeed, you ask, but that is where you and I differ. I don't say "will I," but reverse the order and say "I will," with a heavy accent on the "I," and a still heavier one on the "will." Now, "dear public," you know as much about me as you can find out in a day.

Matters political are looking 'up. Hon. J. C. Paterson's victory in West Huron over the notorious M. C. Cameron, filled my loving heart with joy. I figured it out that here was another sinner that repented, but he repented at so late a stage of the game, that his light went out. Not being a politician, you wonder why I chuckle with fiendish delight because Cameron is gone? It is because I am a Canadian and a patriotic Canadian. Cameron isn't. Few men in Ontario have been more unceasing in their efforts to give the fair Dominion a black eye, and that is saying a good deal. Now with Hyman in London, it is different. I was sorry to see him beaten. He is "young blood" and vigorous, and Hon. Mr. Carling could have gone back to the Senate so that his great experience and ability would not have been lost to the country. M. C. Cameron is a Grit, Hyman is a Liberal—that's where the difference between the two men lies, and every one who knows anything about Canadian politics knows that there is a terrible gap!

The young men of Canada, I heard a man say, the other day, where are they? I beg to offer him my distinguished opinion. The young men of Canada are all right. That's where there may be a difference and a considerable difference too between the young men of Canada and the young men of several other countries. We, the young men, are in the ranks, patiently following in

the footsteps of our leaders, tried and true, earnestly seeking the knowledge which cometh as a power, and when the heat of battle and the long day's work shall have caused our veteran leaders to rest by the way side, then, I say, we, the young men, will be found on hand sufficiently trained and moulded in judgment and in heart, to creditably fill the places of those great and good men at whose feet we have been studying. Fools, rash men, rush in where angels fear to tread. Let us profit all we can by the ability and the experience of our old men. When we shall be called upon to act for ourselves, we will be better fitted to grapple with the world.

Not that I wish to be understood as opposing the ambition of the young man. But the ditches by the wayside are filled with wrecks. Old heads do not grow on young shoulders, and you can't teach a man in 20 years what it took his brainy ancestors 40 years to learn. Youth is rash, it is impetuous; age is discreet and cautious. I join the mob and shout down with "the old foggies," but every old man isn't an old foggy—no not by a long shot.

The lecture announced for the 7th on Russia and the Russians under the especial patronage of His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor will doubtless be well attended. The proceeds will go towards the relief of the starving millions in the Czar's domain. "The case," says a local writer, "is one which should appeal to the charity of the world." To most of us, the idea that some men should be starving to death while others have more than enough to eat, is thoroughly repulsive. But Russia is a great nation, has a great army, and is to all appearances preparing for a great war. When that war breaks out, as it surely will, England can hardly help being involved, and English blood will be spilt. It is one thing to be sorry for a fellow-mortal who has nothing to eat, but it is quite another thing to keep alive a man, who, a few months hence, may be, and probably will be, aiming a bullet at his neighbor's heart. And this is how many of the people of the other nations of Europe are looking at the question. In war, as a military virtue, we not only kill our enemy, but we go further, and destroy his provisions, and so endeavor

to bring famine upon him. Is it well, these European people ask, to strengthen an enemy before the war breaks out? Yet remember that the starving poor are not the offenders. Man's inhumanity to man in this case is traceable to the ruling houses. But better that the ninety and nine should undeservedly eat the bread of charity, than that the one-hundredth should lack bread to sustain life.

There is a good deal of gush being talked just now about the miseries of Mrs. Jas. G. Blaine, Jr., who has just been granted a divorce from her reckless and careless husband. Nearly everyone pities the woman and condemns the man. That is natural. A man is a man; he can stand his medicine, and poor frail woman gets the sympathy. Young Blaine was 17 years of age when he married the woman from whom he is now divorced—no, I make a mistake, when she married him, I should have said. What a fatal mistake she made! and oh what a warning! The pen of the writer, like the hand of time, works imperceptibly, and perhaps in the next few centuries the reforms I would now occasion may become complete. But had I my way there would be no divorce. Who heaps misery on his own head, should bear the brunt, and he alone. Time is the Great Physician. He heals all wounds and the hand of Death shall efface the scar. The shackles of marriage stricken off in the Dakota Divorce Court, do not free the soul. Misery, misery, misery! It is but to exchange one hell for the tortures of another. I hope none of my lady readers will think I am giving them a leap year lesson.

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