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London, Saturday, Oct. 29.

WHY MAKE HALF A JOB OF IT?

The London Board of Health has made a move towards the removal of the domestic refuse of the city. It has resolved to have waste vegetable matter, old boots, etc., carted away, but it draws the line at coal and wood ashes.

This halfway measure, though in the right direction, will not be satisfactory to the people. But, strange to say, the Board of Health is prepared to defend its action on the ground that it believes the people would not pay for the added cost of a completed job!

It would have been time enough to assume this attitude when the council refused to place the money needed in the estimates.

The board has waited to hear what they do in Toronto and Hamilton. It has found out that in both these cities a complete job is made of it, and a weekly removal of all vegetable refuse and ashes takes place.

It would have been better if the London Board of Health had followed the example set by these cities.

"The expense scares us," say the board. Is not that a shortsighted excuse? The ashes have to be moved in any case. Taken away by the co-operative method, as in Toronto and Hamilton, the cost to the average householder in yearly taxation would not be over 30 cents a year. By the system now in vogue, each citizen making his own bargain, the cost is from \$1 to \$2 a year! Where is the saving in providing that a dirty heap of ashes shall be saved up for a year at a time, when, at so small cost, the collective method might be pursued, and ashes, as well as bad vegetables, could be carted off every week? We are convinced that the taxpayers will not be satisfied with this half-way measure, and that the faint-hearted Board of Health will be compelled to revise its scheme before many months have elapsed.

THOSE SPECIAL MEETINGS.
We are now told that the agreement between the London aldermen and the Electric Street Railway Company is not valid because it was amended in the interests of the citizens at a special meeting of the council.

The ruling of the city solicitor is that inasmuch as the council has never bound itself down by bylaw to hold special meetings, it has absolutely no right to hold a special meeting, therefore any business transacted at a special meeting is null and void!

It seems to us that it savors of absurdity to say that a great public body shall have no right to meet and transact public business whenever its members decree, no matter whether they bind themselves by bylaw to do so or not.

Suppose, under the present arrangement, some great calamity should fall upon the city, requiring speedy action, would it be illegal for the mayor to summon the aldermen for immediate consultation and work?

Then, if business transacted at the recent special meeting is invalid, what shall be said of the resolutions arrived at by the council at the hundreds of special meetings held in the past. Will the civic authorities have to go to the Legislature and ask for a special act to legalize its transactions?

Surely it ought to be enough that the mayor and aldermen are agreed that public business shall be transacted at other than the so-called regular meetings of the council. But if it is not, how comes it that the city solicitor has all these years failed to discover the alleged vital flaw in the government of the city? Bylaws and important agreements, drawn up under the city solicitor's eye, have been considered and passed at these special meetings, and no one has ever thrown any discredit on them until now, when the solicitor comes forward with the assurance that for these special meetings there was no legal warrant! We are laymen and may be a trifle practical, but it seems to us that there is more law than common sense in this contention.

The proposed consolidation with the Grand Trunk of fourteen subsidiary railways will largely curtail the cost of management, meaning as it practically does the extinction of just so many boards of directors, bookkeepers and other office employees. As the consent of all the boards is assured, the entire Grand Trunk system will before long be placed under one general board of directors. The lines included in the amalgamation scheme are the London, Huron and Bruce; Galt and Guelph; Brantford, Norfolk and Port Huron; Wellington, Grey and Bruce; North Simcoe; Waterloo Junction; Cobourg, Blenheim and Marmora; Jacques Cartier Union; Montreal and Champlain Junction; Bathurst and Chemung; Midland Railway; Peterboro and Chemung; Lake Simcoe Junction, and the Grand Trunk, Georgian Bay and Lake Erie.

"COUGHT MRS. MAYBRICK TO BE TORTURED TO DEATH?"

Such is the question that Mr. Stead, editor of the Review of Reviews, propounds in an article on the famous Maybrick poisoning case, which has interested two continents, and which he has answered by a remarkable statement in the condemned woman's favor.

Mr. Stead took the matter up because of a communication which he received from Johannesburg, South Africa, inclosing an alleged death-bed confession by a man named Henry Wilson, who asserted that he could not die without confessing that he, and not Mrs. Maybrick, had put arsenic into her husband's medicine. He did so, he said, "for purposes of revenge on Mrs. Maybrick." This man wrote to Sir Charles Russell, counsel for Mrs. Maybrick, first; but not obtaining an answer to his letter in four months, he communicated with Mr. Stead, as likely to look into the matter as "one loving justice for my fellow men."

The Review of Reviews editor was moved to look further into the case, and he reached the conclusion that whether or not there was anything in the confession, "the case is so scandalous an illustration of the very worst sides of the British judicial system and of the British character, that, if only to give us a chance of burying the matter in oblivion, Mrs. Maybrick should be released." It will be remembered that Mrs. Maybrick, a native of the United States, was sentenced to death on circumstantial evidence for the murder of her husband by poisoning. The presiding justice was Sir Fitzjames Stephens, and for some reason or other he took strong grounds against the woman. Logically, she should have been hanged; but Home Secretary Matthews did not dare to carry out the capital sentence, and instead of sending Mrs. Maybrick for trial on the charge of attempting to poison, he agreed with the judge that the sentence should be commuted to penal servitude for life. As the editor of Truth remarked at the time, this virtually knocked the bottom out of the whole case against Mrs. Maybrick.

Mr. Stead now points out that Mrs. Maybrick made a fatal mistake when, even after she was placed in the dock, she chivalrously shielded the reputation of her dead husband. It now turns out that he had a very bad reputation, that he was a debauchee, that before marriage he lived the life of a rake, and that he had repeatedly broken his marital vows. He even continued to spend his money in support of households other than his own. Long before Mrs. Maybrick met her friend Brierley, and was guilty of at least indiscreet conduct, she had been compelled to virtually separate herself from her husband. Far more damaging evidence than this, Mr. Stead assures us, could have been adduced in court, but the fatal chivalry of the loving heart of a deeply injured woman influenced her to command her lawyers "to spare Jen as much as possible." Thus the "hideous miscarriage of justice" was rendered comparatively easy.

When Mr. Maybrick married he was over 40, but he was a physical wreck from his own vices. He only kept himself going by the perpetual administration of aphrodisiacs. His office was like a drug-shop, his house had arsenic in almost every corner. He habitually drugged himself with arsenic, in the hope of restoring his exhausted vitality. This does not condone or excuse the wife, but it entirely puts the husband out of court, and Mr. Stead asserts, makes Judge Fitzjames's anathemas seem even more "brutally unjust" than they appeared at the time. That this man was a confirmed arsenic eater, Mr. Stead found abundance of evidence when he visited Liverpool last month. He had arsenic everywhere, arsenic in his pocket, arsenic in his house, in capsules and powders and solutions, and one chemist in Liverpool told Mr. Stead that he used to buy supplies at his store as often as five times in one day. To assume that the arsenic found in his body had been placed there by any other hands than his own is a supposition which would need to be supported by very strong evidence indeed before it could be believed. But of that evidence, asks Mr. Stead, where is there even a shred or a tittle to be found? Mrs. Maybrick had a prescription for an arsenical facewash for her complexion, which, unfortunately, was not discovered until after the trial, and its existence was doubted. But it was found afterwards, and is printed in Macdonald's book. But beyond the infinitesimal quantity of arsenic which she used for her complexion, there is no evidence whatever to prove that she ever had procured any poison anywhere.

The fact is, according to this investigator, that the case was decided not in the least upon the evidence of experts, but solely upon the prejudice imported into the case by the judge on the last day of the trial. Sir James Fitzjames was much prejudiced against wives suspected of misbehavior, and he had worked himself up into a kind of frenzy at the thought of Mrs. Maybrick's becoming a popular heroine. Sir Charles Russell, the Attorney-General, has pointed out that it is the duty of a judge to ally prejudice instead of inviting it by vehement appeal. But he asserts that Sir Fitzjames Stephen "passionately invited" the jury to find a verdict of guilty. The judge made suggestions which were untenable, and had never been advanced by the prosecution, and went out of his way to make misleading references. He took two days to sum up. The first day he spoke as a judge; the second day he raged like a violent counsel for the prosecution. He laid himself out to excite prejudice against this "horrible woman." Yet notwithstanding that, it is on record that to the clerk of the court he expressed strong doubts as to the verdict of the jury; that is, because of the medical evidence.

There was a strong revolt against the

verdict, and every member of the bar present at the assizes, with the addition of the recorder of Liverpool, signed the memorial in Mrs. Maybrick's favor. Then, when Home Secretary Matthews was appealed to, he re-tried the case, and the result was the summary but decisive overturn of the very foundation upon which the verdict of murder had been given. The jury found that James Maybrick died of arsenic. The judge did not need to remind them that if there was any reasonable doubt, it is the established principle of English law that the prisoner must have the benefit of that doubt. That goes without saying. But the jury, notwithstanding the evidence of four most distinguished medical experts, who swore that the deceased did not die of poison, decided that there was no reason for doubting but that James Maybrick did die of arsenic. The Home Secretary re-tried the case and proclaims to the world that after taking the best medical and legal advice that could be obtained, he has come to the conclusion that "the evidence does not wholly exclude a reasonable doubt whether his death was in fact caused by the administration of arsenic!" This is directly opposed to the finding of the jury, and as the prisoner is entitled to the benefit of the doubt, the very foundation of the verdict of the jury is knocked out. If there was no murder no one can be guilty of murder. If there is a "reasonable doubt" that Maybrick did not die of poison, then clearly there can be no ground in law or reason for convicting his wife of having poisoned him. But although the Home Secretary thus summarily destroys the foundation of the verdict of the jury he refuses to alter the decision that she is guilty of willfully murdering a man who, he admits, may never have been murdered at all. We shall have to ransack the annals of toadyism to discover a precedent for this absurd and ridiculous conclusion. But it stands to this day unreversed, though strenuous efforts are now being made to secure the release of the condemned woman.

The view of the law officers seems to be that, though the verdict of willful murder has been practically annulled, the Home Secretary decided that the evidence clearly pointed to the conclusion that Mrs. Maybrick administered and attempted to administer arsenic to her husband with intent to murder, and that for attempting to poison she may be lawfully imprisoned for life. If so, so be it. But, remarks Mr. Stead, in that case let us clearly understand that Mrs. Maybrick is at this moment a convict in Working, not for committing willful murder, but for attempting to poison. That surely is clear enough from the decision of the Home Office. Yet so anomalous are the ways of the circumlocution office, so labyrinthine the maze of British jurisprudence, that the Home Office still maintains that Mrs. Maybrick is under sentence, not for attempting to poison, but for willful murder. It is such banal facilities which will yet make the British Home Office the laughing-stock of the world.

Is it true that the evidence points so clearly to the administration of poison by Mrs. Maybrick? She herself admitted having put a powder, at her husband's urgent request, into a bottle of meat juice, and at the trial a bottle of meat juice was produced which contained arsenic, but Mrs. Maybrick declared she never saw it before. It is, however, admitted that none of that arsenious meat juice was ever administered to him, so that, whatever her intent may have been, it was not carried into effect. Where, then, is the evidence that she administered the arsenic, if she ever gave him any, which is not proved, with felonious intent? If she gave him arsenic in his medicine, it may have been at his own request, or she may have given it to him inadvertently, owing to the poison having been placed in his medicine by other parties. The former is the conclusion which is suggested by the notorious habits of Mr. Maybrick, the latter is put forward by the confession from South Africa. In either case there would be no reason for keeping Mrs. Maybrick in jail. There has been no evidence that Mrs. Maybrick ever procured any arsenic anywhere, or administered it at any time. Medical experts who gave evidence deposed that the arsenic found in James Maybrick's body might have been taken merely in medical doses, and that it could have been taken, and probably was taken, a considerable time before either his death or illness. The analysis failed to find more than one-twentieth part of a fatal dose.

Mr. Stead reasons, with much force, that Home Secretary Asquith should under the circumstances order Mrs. Maybrick's release, or at least reduce her sentence to five years' penal servitude—now nearly accomplished. He claims that Mrs. Maybrick is being slowly tortured to death in solitary confinement, and that pain, despair, gloom and disease are her portion, and must soon end her life if she is not released. It would, he says, be more merciful and more logical to hang her off-hand than to persist in wearing out her life by this horror of slow torment, out of regard for the amour propre of an ex-Home Secretary and a superannuated judge. The legal adviser of the present British Government (Sir Charles Russell) may find it a somewhat delicate question on which to take action. But he was Mrs. Maybrick's counsel, and before he was Attorney-General he drew up a memorial to Mr. Matthews in which he took strong grounds in favor of the woman's innocence, and he has not resiled from it. British governments are slow to interfere with criminal cases already pronounced upon, but Mrs. Maybrick's sentence may well be further commuted without unduly stretching the prerogative of mercy.

A HOUSEKEEPER informs us that the manufacturer who provides an attachment to his house furnace which will enable a busy meal-getter to hurriedly boil a kettle on a cold day will make a decided strike. Economy has to be practiced all along the line these days, and this hint might well be acted on.

THE PEOPLE'S FORUM.

Throwing Reptiles.
To the Editor of the ADVERTISER:
Do you not agree with me in thinking that the diabolical custom, so prevalent of late years, should be made to cease—I mean the one of throwing reptiles at and into residences? Surely iron-handed justice should be meted to all offenders, whether respectable or otherwise.
A SUFFERER.

Landlord and Tenant.
To the Editor of the ADVERTISER:
Can a landlord make a tenant pay rent after the latter has moved to another house? An answer will oblige.
Oct. 27.

OLD SUBSCRIBER.
[The tenant is liable to pay all rent due previous to his removal, and if the tenant has moved fraudulently or clandestinely, the landlord may, within 30 days, follow and detain on goods liable to seizure, but otherwise his remedy is like ordinary debts by suit. If the tenant leaves in the middle of the month or before the end of his term and before any rent is payable, the landlord may sue the tenant for the rent when it becomes due and payable, such rent being in respect of the legal, although not actual, possession of the premises by the tenant.]
—EDITOR ADVERTISER.]

Why He Didn't Come.
Lady (wildly).—"Why didn't you bring me milk for the baby yesterday?"
Milkman.—"You said you wanted it from one cow, mum."
"Certainly."
"Well, you see, mum, that cow kicked the bucket yesterday, mum."

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