

Our Contributors.

THE ONE THING ALWAYS EASILY DONE.

BY KNOXIAN

It is always easy to talk. Anybody can do it who has the physical power to make his unruly member wag. Sense is not needed. Intelligence is not necessary. Brains are not required. Character may be left out of the question. Position is of no account. Anybody can talk. In fact, a man who has no sense, no intelligence, no brains, no position, no character, no responsibility, generally talks with much greater freedom than one who has. A man who knows nothing about a subject often talks about it with astounding assurance.

There must be half-a-dozen men around every pot-house in England who know exactly what Gladstone should do with Ireland. The late Government, composed of the leading statesmen of the Conservative Party, probably did not know how to arrange matters in the Green Isle. Perhaps they decided that the best thing to do was—nothing. There is a remote possibility that Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues are at the present moment undecided on many points. Ireland is a knotty problem at present. The wisest statesmen and the Empire are puzzled over the problem. But it should be a relief to know that there are many thousand amateur statesmen in the pot-houses and corner groceries who can tell you in a moment what ought to be done. The reason they can tell you is because *it is always easy to talk*.

There are several thousand men in Canada who know exactly how Sir John Macdonald should govern this Dominion. Of course all the Grits know. The party system makes it necessary that they should all know. But there are a great many other people who don't belong to any party who could govern this Dominion quite easily. They know exactly what ought to be done with every question from the hanging of Riel down to the appointment of a doorkeeper. Statesmen who have studied the matter know that Canada is a very hard country to govern. Its shape makes it difficult. Fiscal regulations that suit Nova Scotia may be the worst possible for Manitoba or British Columbia. Then we have two races and two languages. Canada is harder to govern than the British Empire when times are good and Ireland quiet. But it is pleasant to know that there are men in every saloon, on every street corner, and at every cross-road who can tell at a moment's notice how the country ought to be governed. The reason they can tell is because *it is always easy to talk*.

The number of people in Ontario who know exactly how Mr. Mowat should govern the Province is surprising. They can tell at a moment's notice how every knotty question should be settled. With marvellous ease they say: "The Government should do this, the Government should do that, the Government should do the other." As you listen you begin to think that governing a country is the easiest and most delightful work imaginable. Statesmanship is mere amusement. The life of a politician is delightfully pleasant—serenely quiet and easy. The reason why those people say the work of government is easy is because *it is always easy to talk*.

You have probably been in a court room when an unfortunate man is being tried for a capital offence. His life is at stake. The judge feels his responsibility keenly. His dignity and professional reserve fail to conceal the fact that he realizes painfully the awful responsibility of having a human life upon his hands. Every word uttered to jury and counsel is carefully guarded. Around the bar there stands or sits a motley group—a goodly number of them loiterers—who know exactly how that trial ought to be conducted. With the most amazing assurance they whisper "The judge is wrong," "the judge should have done this, or should not have done the other." To hold the scales evenly and decide the nicest points of jurisprudence in a moment is to their acute minds to their massive intellects—the easiest thing in the world. What they prove is that *it is always easy to talk*.

There must be several hundred thousand people in this country who can edit a newspaper. They can sit quietly in their homes and without any trouble say exactly how every article, every contribution, every paragraph ought to be written. They can say at a glance what ought to be kept out and what put in. In fact, they can make up a model newspaper in a

moment in talk. To hear these worthy people speak one would think that publishing a newspaper is a pleasant kind of pastime in which people might engage for amusement and recreation. Writing every day or week is an easy kind of intellectual exercise that anybody can take until he tries. These people don't prove that getting out a fairly good journal is easy. They simply prove that they know nothing about journalism and that *it is always easy to talk*.

There are a few people in almost every congregation who think that it is the easiest thing in the world to preach. They see no difficulty in addressing the same people a hundred times a year, a thousand times in ten years. They think a man may speak a hundred times in succession and produce fresh matter every time, without the slightest effort. It is the easiest thing in the world. Not only should he address the same people one hundred times a year—one hundred and fifty if prayer-meeting addresses are counted—he should do this and have any amount of time to visit them and attend to a thousand and one other duties. People who say that all this can be done easily show just one thing, and that is that *it is always easy to talk*.

It is always easy to say what the session ought to do—what the deacons ought to do—what the managers ought to do—what the Sabbath school ought to do—what the Church ought to do—what the Presbytery ought to do—what everybody ought to do and ought not to do. Yes, it is very easy—especially for a man who takes good care he does nothing himself. It is the easiest thing imaginable to stand to one side and say what people ought or ought not to do.

It is always easy to say what the council ought to do—what the school board ought to do—what the teachers ought to do. In fact, all parents know exactly what a teacher should do. People who get considerably mixed over those twenty-six propositions known as the English alphabet know exactly how a school should be conducted. Some of them think that a teacher should be able to put brains into their children's heads. —*It is always easy to talk*.

It is very easy for a good brother to sit in an easy chair in his study, look wiser than any man really is, strike an attitude, pucker his lips and say: "The colleges should be consolidated." Yes, that is easy. Tell us how. Submit your plan. That is not so easy.

It is very easy for a man to look pious, draw on a long face, put a little whine in his voice and say: "The Church is dead." Yes, that is so easily said that the most useless man in the Church generally says it most frequently.

Yes, it is always easy to talk. The vocal organs are a wind instrument. All anybody need do is compress the lungs, and send the air up through the trachea. As it passes the vocal cords they vibrate and produce noise. Then wag the unruly member, and you have talk. It is the easiest thing in the world to talk. People of very feeble intellect are usually great talkers. Those who are so infirm that they have to be cared for by the Government often talk very fluently.

Moral:—Never pay much attention to a person who talks but does nothing more.

BOSTON.

THE HUB CITY—ITS STREETS—PUBLIC BUILDINGS—PARKS—CHURCHES AND RELIGIOUS LIFE.

We had long wished to visit Boston, which for many years has stood in the front rank of the cities of this Continent as the centre of culture and educational influences.

The advantages which Boston offers to those who follow literary pursuits, and to students preparing for any of the professions, are unequalled, as a large number of the literary and scientific societies have their headquarters here; consequently large libraries are at the disposal of those thirsting for knowledge.

Boston is the oldest of the American cities, and has a population of over 400,000 inhabitants. It was settled in the year 1630, and has the most interesting history of the many cities in the Great Republic. For any tourist or traveller to visit the United States, and leave without seeing Boston it would be considered that he had missed what was best worth seeing. In shape the city resembles a wheel, the streets running out from the centre and crossing one another at irregular points. Strangers who are in search of some given point are often bewildered. From the descriptions given from time to time of a native-born Bostonian, with his hair cut short on the front of his head, or pro-

bably no hair at all, his extraordinary cleverness, or cuteness, his tact and smart business habits, and polished manners, one feels somewhat disappointed to find that he is very much like other people.

The streets are wide and long, and the business houses are splendid specimens of architecture, well adapted for the wants of a rapidly growing city such as Boston. The question is not finally settled whether Boston is named after an English town or not; but many of the streets are named after those of London and other places in England. Since the Revolution many of the English names were dropped and names better known in American parlance substituted, such as State Street for King Street, and Court Street for Queen Street. Such names as Milk Street and Cornhill are well known in England, and in Boston, as in London, were closely associated with the book trade which has always been a prominent feature of the mercantile life of Boston.

With the space at your disposal it would be impossible to give any detailed description of the large business establishments with which the city abounds. Banking is prosecuted here on a large scale, there being sixty national banks, with a combined capital of fifty-two millions of dollars, and sixteen savings banks, including penny and five-cent banks. Americans and Bostonians are not forgetful of their distinguished men, as on many of the streets and public squares handsome monuments are erected to those who as soldiers, orators, or statesmen have made their mark on the city, but that of

BUNKER HILL.

outstrips them all for magnificence. Bunker Hill Monument, which stands on Monument Square, is one of the lions of the city, and any one attempting to do the Hub without seeing this would be regarded as having made the mistake of his life. The monument is 220 feet high, was erected in 1843, and cost \$150,000. The writer had a special melancholy interest here as on this classic spot some of his relatives fought and fell.

The public parks are large and well laid out. Boston Common contains forty-eight acres, is shaded by stately elms, and enclosed by a fence of over 6,000 feet.

The public buildings of Boston are a source of honest pride to the Bostonian, and among the many which claim friendly notice may be mentioned the City Hall, on School Street, the old State House, which still exhibits the English coat of arms, and the Post Office, which, as might be expected, is a very large building, and is said to be the first ever owned by the Government, the estimated cost of building being between five and six millions.

HARVARD COLLEGE

was established in 1638, and for many years was the only institution of the kind in the New England States. It draws its support from all religious denominations. Its income from students' fees is very large, and it is endowed by princely donations from private individuals. The University's resources are valued at \$7,000,000, and the receipts from students about \$150,000. It has about one hundred teachers and sixty professors. When will the charities of our wealthy Canadians flow in such a channel?

CHURCHES.

Boston is pre-eminently the city of churches, there being in all, connected with the various denominations, 223 churches. The first one (a small wooden structure) was erected in 1632. The first Universalist Church was erected 1785, and a Methodist Church was built ten years later. The most interesting church edifice in Boston, however, is the Old South Church, which stands on the corner of Washington and Milk Streets, organized in 1669, and is one of the landmarks of the city. Here Franklin was baptized. Here Whitfield poured forth his eloquence, moving the crowds who hung on his lips. The land on which the church stands is worth half a million dollars, and great efforts are being put forth to keep it from being sold. The church is being used as a museum and may remain in its present shape for some time to come. The Unitarians have thirty congregations; Congregationalists, twenty-nine; Methodist Episcopal, twenty-eight; Baptists, twenty-seven; and Presbyterians, seven.

It is much to be regretted that among such a large and flourishing population our Church should be so low down on the list. Presbyterianism was organized in 1846, and it is difficult to account for the slow progress it has made, compared with its rapid advance