

The Toronto World

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PUNISHMENT THE BEST REMEDY

Mechanical safeguards for the sanctity of the ballot ought not to be neglected. The greatest safeguard of all, however, is to punish the offender and to make his tricks of no value to his friends. Fraud and corruption should be rendered unprofitable and unprofitable. It is important, too, that the responsibility shall extend as far as possible. If the candidate elected by fraud loses his seat, and the perpetrator of the fraud is severely punished, there are two most effective deterrents to wrongdoing.

We used upon Controller Richardson some time ago to resign, and not to attempt to take advantage of the defect in the statute. The Globe now calls for the resignation of Controller Richardson and Ald. Ramsden, and there may be others whose election is affected in the same way. If those gentlemen please to resign, the connection between the instrument and the beneficiary of fraud and corruption is carefully covered up, and investigations begun with a great apparent thirst for justice and reform have a farcical ending. The cure for this is to apply the principle of responsibility from the actual offender all the way up thru the political party to his chief.

A NEW PROMISE TO PRO-
Representatives of the Methodist and Baptist Churches have urged the premier to abolish the bars, declaring that such a course would be to his political advantage. "If the premier took a firm stand against the bars, he would not support him, and he would not be the greatest triumph of his life that death would soon issue in a glorious resurrection."

In spite of these inducements, the premier was wary, and declared that he would state his position in writing in 48 hours, that is, to-day. He gave the deputation his sympathy, but he hesitated about adding to the large pile of promissory notes now held by the prohibitionists. If he goes only as far as the caucus and his colleagues desire, he will promise little or nothing. But it is just possible that he may decide to take the great plunge, and run the risk of disrupting the ministry and destroying the cherished majority of three, under the belief that an appeal to the country will create his following.

If the premier had been actuated by a genuine zeal for prohibition, he would have gone to the country on that issue in 1902. Whatever is done now will be done as the result of a cold calculation of the political chances; but that will not detract from the importance of the carefully framed deliverance that is to be made to-day.

SAFEGUARDS FOR THE BALLOT.
What the grand jury have recommended as additional safeguards for preserving the integrity of the electoral poll marks an approximation towards the ballot system in force thruout the United Kingdom, and proceeds on the lines The World has at various times suggested. These have to do with the three divisions of the electoral arrangements—the preparation for the poll, the actual taking of it and the enumeration of the votes.

Taking them in their order, the jury recommend that the poll clerk, and the poll clerk's assistant, be employed, with a cancellation stamp to be used in presence of the voter and in such a form that when folded the D. R. O. can use an embossing stamp so corrugating the crosses that additions or alterations can be easily detected. All D. R. O.'s to be appointed by the city clerk, and the polling clerks to be police officers in uniform. Every voter's name to bear a number known only to the city clerk.

To prevent personation, a recommendation is made that every voter sign his name—the poll clerk adding his address—and for the purpose of safeguarding the ballot papers during the counting of the votes, the jury suggest that the scrutineers remain till the last ballot is counted, but without actively taking part in the enumeration.

It is evident that some of these precautions would be rendered unnecessary if the duties of the deputy returning officers were restricted, as in Britain, to the purely ministerial action of taking the poll only. Were the enumeration as in that system to take place in a central hall in presence of the returning officer, the scrutineers and their agents, tampering with the ballot papers after the boxes are opened would be rendered impossible, and any irregularities in the taking of the poll itself would at once come under observation. The present practice of

permitting the D. R. O. to open his own box and act as enumerator for his own district is bad in principle. The votes should be counted together by an official staff appointed for the purpose, and the result authoritatively declared by the returning officer himself.

There will be general approval of the jury's recommendation that the D. R. O.'s be appointed by the city clerk, but The World is not so sure about the suggestion that policemen in uniform should act as poll clerks. Constables, though acquainted with the district, should certainly be present in every polling station, but they should be there with the definite duty of detecting misdemeanors and preserving order. The clerks should also be appointed by the city clerk, and should be wholly independent of the D. R. O., and acting under his direction during the poll.

With the same object of depriving the D. R. O. of all judicial power, much can be said for the adoption of the British system in regard to the form and method of marking the ballot paper. The ballot paper should be so marked that only one ballot paper should be used on which every vote falling to be given could be marked. Before its issue each section should be stamped with an embossing stamp, but once handed to the voter, it should not again pass into the hands of the D. R. O. Having marked his paper, the voter should fold it up, exhibit the official mark on the back to the D. R. O. and himself deposit it in the ballot box. If the ballot papers are numbered consecutively with their counterparts, the substitution of a spurious ballot paper would be impossible and if done would only result in the loss of the vote. As a matter of fact, during the thirty years' experience of the working of the British ballot act, there has not been one single case of fraud during the taking of the poll, although there have been occasional instances of personation. This is a remarkable record.

The numbering of the voter's name and the marking of his number on the counterfoil of the ballot paper, is also an essential feature of the British system and enables every vote to be traced should it prove necessary to do so. Very stringent provision is made for securing the inviolability of the records of the poll, which can only be opened under judicial sanction, and for a special object. Doubts were at first expressed regarding the possibility of preserving the secrets of the ballot box, but these have long been dispelled, and all parties in Britain are united in their satisfaction with the actual working of the act.

What The World is inclined to lay most stress upon are the reduction of the D. R. O.'s duties to those of a ministerial character, and the responsibility for the irregularity in the taking of the poll; the opening of the ballot boxes in presence of the returning officer and an independent official staff, the candidates and their authorized agents; the appointment of all officials by the returning officer and the police during the whole time of the poll; constables possessing special knowledge of the district. These, with the requirement that every voter sign the roll on applying for a ballot paper, should go far to eliminate the evils of which Toronto now complains.

ESCAPE OF DANGEROUS CRIMINALS.
Within six months many desperate criminals have escaped from custody around Toronto. Hamilton and London have also been the scene in the same time of several daring incidents that do not reflect credit upon the authorities. Either officials in charge of these men are not discharging their duty or the prisoners are not properly confined. There is no suggestion that these breaks for liberty are contrived at by the guards. They are rather the result of failure to appreciate the extremes to which desperate men will go to avoid the consequences of crime. Last year the notorious blacksmith, who had been caught at getting away from Toronto police as well as from the Central, with Doyle on one occasion went Steve Doyle, who was killed by the London police a few weeks ago, and "Texas," his companion, was taken. Twice "Texas" passed to out his guards. The last time he succeeded. Each time he worked under imminent danger of being shot to death. His desperate courage was rewarded. This man was strongly suspected of complicity in the murder of the Hamilton policeman. Within a few months prisoners in the hands of officers passing thru Toronto jumped from the train, and in the vernacular of the street, "made their get-away." An even more astonishing instance of official negligence was that which permitted Chase, the Calgary murderer, to temporarily escape the grasp of the police.

A MODEL HUSBAND.
His excellency was also apprised of the outbreak, but he already knew from the smoke of the presence of fire. His first thought was of Lady Minto-Globe despatch. Hats off to his excellency for his gallant first thoughts evolved in the gathering clouds of suffocating smoke. In this case first thoughts were best thoughts.

His excellency thought of Lady Minto. He might have thought first of Major Maude, or Col. Sam. Hughes. The first mouthful of smoke might have set him wondering how the fire started, whether he had dropped a live coal while shaking down the furnace or whether he had left his boots too near the kitchen stove.

Again his excellency's first thoughts might have been centred on the 400,000 going up in smoke. He might have wondered if the insurance policy was paid up or where he would be able to find shelter for himself and family on the following night. Still another thought might have claimed his excellency's attention, and that was the shooting seconds of his rude awakening. He might have wondered whether the coal for which he paid \$7.50 a ton spot cash was participating in the conflagration.

These and scores of other thoughts might well have leaped to his excellency's mind as he smelt the smoke and heard the crackling of flames. But the Master of Rideau Hall, so The Globe tells us, thought first of Lady Minto. This shows us that model husbands dwell in high places, as well as in the cottages of the poor and lowly. The Globe is to be congratulated for slipping in the bud the first thoughts of his excellency—thoughts which mark an exemplary husband and bid all other Canadian husbands look for strength and guidance in the titled tenant of Rideau Hall.

ST. LUKE'S VESTRY.
Editor World: Will you allow me to say that owing to a mistake in handing the reporter the warden's report on current affairs, instead of summarizing the whole of the reports laid before the vestry, an entirely wrong impression was conveyed? In addition to the \$4972.46 reported for current expenses, the following amounts were contributed for special purposes: By individuals \$1450, by the guilds \$2200.16, making the offerings thru the church during the year \$8822.62. The envelope contribution, as the result of recent efforts, has been increased from \$24 to \$75 a Sunday, and this, when the canvass was completed, would reach \$800, giving with other sources an average of not less than \$13 a Sunday, enabling the warden to meet current expenses, pay arrears

in defaulting to the utmost caution in dealing with desperate prisoners, yet when "Texas" escaped at London Monday night he was attired in the form of a heavy iron poker and was prepared to make good his escape. Just what good purpose was served in keeping this known burglar and suspected murderer out of jail garb is one of the little incidents that require explanation.

POETRY AS A BLOOD PURIFIER.
With the spring comes the spring poet, and with him the man who jokes at the expense of the spring poet. All our sympathies are with the poet. Spring poetry ought not to be scanned with a coldly critical eye, nor should the poet be held to a pedantic adherence to the regular methods of versification. The writing of spring poetry is not a mere literary performance, but a process of nature. It is a fact that is taught to be better known that the writing of spring poetry purifies the blood, and that spring poets never find it necessary to take sulphur, cream of tartar and molasses, or any of the decoctions to which less fortunate persons resort for the purpose of improving the circulation of the blood. Patent medicine may make no money out of this, but it is a fact that the poet, provided the verse flows freely.

We impart this great secret to mankind free of charge, and without even the customary two-cent stamp. It is not necessary that the poetry should be published, and this is an important point, as some of our contemporaries will not publish anything unless it is at the usual advertising rates. Relief comes the moment the poetry begins to leave the system. Some authorities recommend that the poetry be recited in the hearing of sympathetic friends; and conscientious poets refrain from this course, on account of the danger of the matter being absorbed into the system of the audience.

ONTARIO AND THE S.O.

The Star says: "The Sault surely has just ground of complaint against the editorial writers on The Toronto News, World and Mail and Empire for the manner in which they are, in an endeavor to down the government, damning the Sault. We have columns of stuff touching us, as the 'buried bubble,' 'moribund concern,' 'a phantasm,' and so on. Can't these gentlemen see that attacking Mr. Ross is one thing and writing down the town is another? Supposing the bill is defeated, does these papers wish to keep us down forever? Surely it must be apparent to them that the Sault is a 'buried bubble,' 'moribund concern,' 'a phantasm,' and so on. Can't these gentlemen see that attacking Mr. Ross is one thing and writing down the town is another? Supposing the bill is defeated, does these papers wish to keep us down forever? Surely it must be apparent to them that the Sault is a 'buried bubble,' 'moribund concern,' 'a phantasm,' and so on. 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