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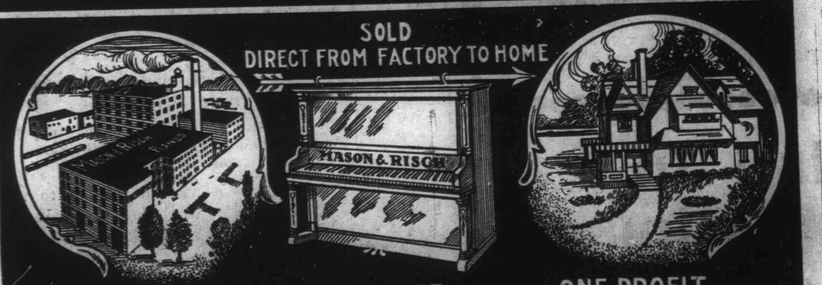

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WATSON TELLS OF ASQUITH

His Bitter Poem Refers to the Family of England's Premier —An American's Reply.

New York, Dec. 8.—"The Woman With the Serpent's Tongue" may bring a change in the British ministry and cause one of the greatest political and literary sensations England has ever known, is the opinion of many persons who read the startling statement by William Watson, the English poet, and author of the poem with the foregoing title, that the poem was physically inspired by Mrs. Margaret Asquith, wife of the British premier, and mentally by her stepdaughter, Miss Violet Asquith.

Watson waited until he arrived in this country before admitting the charge that his now famous poem was aimed at the Asquiths, thereby removing himself from the centre of the storm, which cables from England say his admission has already aroused. As long as he was in England he denied that his poem was dedicated to the Asquiths or anyone in particular.

In explaining what led up to the poem, Watson tells of a visit he made to the Asquith home last June, when he was surprised to hear Miss Asquith say that a man named Nash, one of her father's secretaries, was the man who "used to write C.-B.'s speeches for him."

By "C.-B." she meant the late Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Premier Asquith's predecessor, and probably the best loved of English premiers since the days of Gladstone. Continuing, Miss Asquith said, according to Watson:

"Do you know I have often wondered if some of those phrases of C.-B.'s that caught on so much such as 'methods of barbarism,' and that sort of nonsense, really came from C.-B. or from Nash."

These expressions by Miss Asquith, it is practically certain, will be taken as reflecting the sentiments of the present premier and cause a storm of criticism of Mr. Asquith.

Watson's signed statement regarding the poem is as follows:

"The woman with the serpent's tongue is a composite photograph of Mrs. Asquith and her step-daughter, Violet. The poem is a portrait of the physical characteristics of Mrs. Asquith and mentally of Miss Asquith. The latter is the voice of the family and rules them all. Violet is the real official voice, speaking with authority. She it is:

'Who slights the worthiest in the land,
Sneers at the just, condemns the brave,
And blackens goodness in its grave.'"

The poet says he attempted to show his resentment at the reflection cast upon the dead premier by offering to write in the Album of Miss Asquith a stirring defence of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.

"I thought I had flung the most unforgiveable insult at this family by this offer," Watson says, but to his surprise he received a letter from Mrs Asquith in which she said her daughter would welcome the contribution to her album.

Mrs. Asquith sent other cordial notes to the poet, which, in the light of his dedication of the poem, he clearly believes to be hypocritical.

TWO OF THE VERSES

Two of the verses of the Watson piece are as follows:

She is not old, she is not young,
The Woman with the serpent's tongue
The haggard cheek, the hungering eye,
The poisoned words that wildly fly,
The famished face, the fevered hand,
Who slights the worthiest in the land
Sneers at the just, condemns the brave,
And blackens goodness in its grave.

Who half makes love to you today,
Tomorrow gives her guest away,
Burnt up within by that strange soul
She cannot slake, or yet control!
Malignant-hipped, unkind, unsweet,
Past all example indiscreet;
Hectic, and always overstrung—
The Woman With the Serpent's Tongue.

THE COWARD'S TONGUE

As to Richard Le Gallienne's reply, "The Poet with the Coward's Tongue," recently printed in a New York daily, it reads thus:

Was it a woman bore this thing,
Made out the words to sneer and sing
A thing of words to scan and scan,
Yet dares to sign himself a man;
He's growing old, he is not young—
The poet with the coward's tongue.

Was it a woman long ago
Went through the fires of her young womb,
To bear this man who sings this song—
The poet with the coward's tongue?
In truthful numbers be he sung—
The poet with the coward's tongue.

Made out of words to sneer and sing;
A thing of words, a paper thing,
A little book of classic song—
The poet with the coward's song.
Think not the woman he betrayed—
Name all unknown—is thus portrayed;
Poor poet starved for her strange eyes,
Despair tells all of us strange lies.

But there's an answer to his song,
O, woman with the serpent's tongue,
O, poet with the coward's tongue,
Come to New York and you shall know,
His fate who sings a woman so.

Come to New York and face the men
Who sing not, yet whose life is song,
Because they love their women and would die—
Rather than tell a William Watson lie
About a woman—even in a song—
O, Poet with the coward's tongue.

ENVOI

Was he a "guest" who dares to wrong
His hostess in so foul a song?
O, poet with the coward's tongue.

SKETCH OF MRS. ASQUITH

The wife of Premier Asquith was formerly Miss Tennant. A recent descriptive article says her eyes, her nose, her cheeks, her chin, and the trick of her tongue in protruding timidly between two rows of immaculate teeth, afford subjects to the ablest paragraphers in the personal journalism of the old land. The eyes are mischevious. They can be homes of silent prayer too, upon occasions, it seems, and then they are grey as squirrels.

No woman in London can be persuaded that Mrs. Asquith dispenses with the services of a complexion specialist. She is no longer of course in the first flush of her youth—for her thirtieth year has come and gone long since. She has been a wife for fully fifteen years, but her skin is as white and as translucent as if she had been born last autumn.

However, it is the expression of the countenance of "Margot," to give her her pet name, which constitutes its personal charm. The nose is undeniably inconsequential, and critics have objected to the size and shape of the mouth. The chin—to quote the expression of a writer in the London Throne—is "too saucy." But the face as a whole is inexpressibly ravishing.

A NATURE ACTRESS

On the stage the wife of the British premier, according to those competent critics, the reporters of the society papers, would have reduced the most brilliant French actress to an imbecility of envy. No one outside of the precincts of all that is finest in social London under King Edwards sway has been privileged to witness "Margot" in her glorious impersonations. The one-act plays of a well known statesman's wife afford Mrs. Asquith her best parts. She has upon occasion assayed Ophelia in the mad scene, but as a general thing she seems herself, her own mischevious, irresistible, adorable self, only in what is described as the lightest juvenile. "Margot" shows her audience the girl in love through the medium of many delightful little touches and her play of feature is wonderful. Then there is the voice—loud, but musical, high but not shrill. Mrs. Asquith is one of the very few society women in England who have no fear of the sound of their own voices. She can halloo quite audibly across a golf field, and does it deliciously.

She forgets nobody and remembers everything, even one's sick aunt and the baby's exact age. Her interest in life is increditably personal. Mrs. Asquith is always eager to learn the likes and dislikes of persons, their past history and their present prospects. These details she arrives at without the slightest trace of an impertinent curiosity. She is interested in the people she meets, and she takes care to meet only the people who interest her. To this one fact, possibly is due her success as a matchmaker. Not one marriage in London society made by the wife of the prime minister has yet turned out a failure, and she has made if we may trust the gossips, dozens. A young peer without a wife is a source of positive dread to Mrs. Asquith, who is affirmed to regard marriage as the supreme duty of man—especially when he has money.

It is of course as a dresser that "Margot" has won her supreme contemporary renown. The tantalizing elegance of her rather tight-fitting dresses is admired in Paris as much as it is imitated in London, for Mrs. Asquith has made the fortune of one French establishment upon the basis of its chic simplicity of effect in the grey green satin she loves. She is one of the extremely few Englishwomen who walk without inconvenience in the tightest restriction fashion can now imposed upon the knees in the directoire gown. It is characteristic of Mrs. Asquith's consideration for others that she purposely relaxed the severity of the lengths her Paris dressmaker was disposed to go in the sheathed skirt.

at Front of Stove

Where it is Easy to Turn

No reaching across a hot stove and over steaming pots to turn direct-draft damper on Sask-Alta. It is placed right at front of stove (see illustration) where a child can readily operate it.

Sask-Alta Direct Damper insures your arms against scalding by steam, and fingers from being burned. But you cannot get this feature in any other range. It's patented—an exclusive Sask-Alta improvement. 27

McClary's Sask-Alta Steel Range

For Sale by Peart Bros. Hardware Company

TRAGEDY ON LAKE ERIE

Ten Wrecked Sailors Frozen to Death in a Yawl.

Erie, Pa., Dec. 12.—Nine men frozen to death and covered with ice, were towed here today by the state fisheries boat, Commodore Perry.

The frigid fetters that bound them kept eight of the men seated stark and stiff in the little yawl, in which they had struggled to escape the fate that overcame them. The ninth man of the crew was prone, frozen to the yawl's bottom. And there had been a tenth passenger in this hideous voyage, for in the yawl's bottom was found every stitch of clothing that a sailor man on the seas wears at this season of the year. There is little doubt that this tenth man, seeing his comrades staring at him through films of ice, went mad, stripped himself and plunged to a quicker grave in the waters of the lake.

The nine glassy images were of the crew of the Bessemer and Marquette car ferry No. 2, which had been missing since the terrible winter gale swept lake Erie last Tuesday. The Commodore Perry with scores of other boats, were searching for No. 2. She had aboard 38 men, of whom six were passengers. It seems impossible that any have escaped, said Captain Driscoll, of the Commodore Perry tonight.

"A heavy sea was running when we sighted the yawl and we had some difficulty in reaching it. As we made her out with our glasses, eight of the men were sitting up in the boat, their life preservers strapped about their shoulders. The ninth man lay at the bottom of the boat frozen to the slat flooring. We did not try to take the nine dead on board, as we feared the yawl would capsize if our men tried to board it."

OUR OTTAWA LETTER.

A suggestion of considerable interest was made by Mr. Blain (Con., Peel) in the course of the discussion of the bill to amend the seed control act. The bill is to make regulations determining the standard of vitality of the seeds, and to keep certain seeds free from the mixture of weeds. Mr. Blain asked if any provision was made for stamping on small packages. "This is a matter of considerable interest in the province of Ontario," he said. "For example, a wholesale merchant puts small packages of seeds into a box and ships them to the retailer. The retailer sells a number of the small packages during the season, and in many cases returns the unsold packages to the wholesaler. There is a complaint that the wholesale merchant continues to send out these packages, year after year, without any investigation as to whether any vitality is left in the seed or not; and it is suggested that the wholesale merchant should be required to put on small packages of seeds he sends out for sale the date on which the seed was put into the package, so that the farmer or gardener buying it would have some assurance of the vitality of the seed."

Mr. Fisher was rather reluctant, saying that also dates might be put on packages of seeds offered for sale, but Mr. Blain pointed out that he was speaking for the man who owns a small garden rather than for the large dealer, and after some discussion Mr. Fisher yielded sufficiently to say that he was willing to look into the matter.

GRANTING CHARTERS.

In the course of the week Mr. Chas. Murphy, the secretary of state, made a statement of the subject of granting charters. It will be remembered that the Ontario government cancelled an Ontario charter which had been obtained by the association of race-track men which is managing a track on the outskirts of Toronto whose management had evoked so much criticism; and the association forthwith and without difficulty secured a Dominion charter premitting it to carry on the business of racetrack gambling. Asked about it by Capt. Tom Wallace, Mr. Murphy made a reply which in effect amounts to an affirmative that the secretary of state has no option and must grant any charter providing that the application is made in proper form.

In this connection an interesting piece of history has been uncovered. Years ago, when the Liberal party was in opposition, a combination of cotton companies was affected and the Liberal party in parliament, led by Mr. James Edgar, attacked the government for permitting it to take place. Part of the attack was on the ground that letters patent had been issued to the company without proper scrutiny. This was in 1892 and 1893. Sir John Thompson's government was impressed by the argument that there should be more careful examination of applications for charters. It accordingly made a change and directed that all such applications should be sent to the finance department for review. This was done for several years, the finance department taking this duty seriously and passing every application under rigid scrutiny. This was done by the Conservative government. In 1896 the Liberals came into power. And after two or three years it quietly abrogated the reform for which it had pressed in its years of opposition and caused the old way of granting charters to be resumed. The result is seen in Mr. Murphy's answer of the other day.

MACKENZIE KING'S WORK.

Mr. Mackenzie King has made his first important speech in parliament. He signalized it by making a noteworthy error in management, by bringing about a division when he was instructed to chloroform the debate, by cutting down the government's majority to the lowest figure since 1896, and most important of all by exposing the hollowness of the government's position on an important subject.

Once a year Mr. Hugh Guthrie, (Lib., South Wellington) moves a resolution looking towards the encouragement of technical education by the Dominion government. The regular program is for a lot of members to praise technical education and to say that something should be done; then somebody moves the adjournment of the debate and nothing more is heard of it till the next year. This time it was Mr. King who had instructions to choke off the debate with a few kind words. He made a glowing speech. He said that "an imperative ethical obligation" rested upon Canada in the matter. After which he suddenly discovered constitutional difficulties and moved the adjournment of the debate.

The contrast was so glaring between Mr. King's enthusiastic speech and his desire to end the discussion, that the Conservatives contested the motion to adjourn and insisted upon a division. Several Liberals bolted having committed themselves to the resolution before Mr. King mismanaged the business, and the vote stood 78 to 56, a majority of only 22. Thus we see how much good words are worth. Praise technical education, but vote down any effort to have it seriously investigated. That is the way of the Laurier government.

New Zealand navy bill has passed without a division. It authorizes the financing of a Dreadnought for the imperial navy.

For Christmas and New Year holidays, the Canadian Pacific Railway Company announce a rate of fare and one-third for round-trip. Tickets for Christmas will be on sale December 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25, and for New Year, December 28, 29, 30, 31 and January 1, with final return limit in both cases of January 5, 1910.

If there be some weaker one,
Give me strength to help him on;
If a blinder soul there be,
Let me guide him nearer thee.
Make my mortal dreams come true
With the work I fain would do.

Minard's Liniment Cures Distemper.

WILL HANG IN REGINA

Hainor, the Margo Murderer, Sentenced to Be Hanged in Regina in February.

Yorkton, Sask., Dec. 12.—Saturday was the first time in the history of Yorkton that a murderer was sentenced to be hanged, when Sanford Hainor, found guilty by a jury of ten farmers and two merchants, was sentenced by Judge Johnstone to pay the extreme penalty for the awful crime committed last July, when he lurked in a bluff and shot to death an unsuspecting neighbor, A. D. Fraser, of Margo. The case was concluded on Saturday morning when after hearing one more witness for the defence, J. A. M. Patrick, prisoner's counsel, made an eloquent plea on his behalf, endeavoring from evidence to prove that the prisoner had a disordered mind.

Letters produced in court indicate that on June 1st and 17th Hainor was mentally unbalanced, and the evidence of McLaren as to prisoner's actions immediately after committing the crime would indicate that he was unbalanced also on that day, and therefore not responsible for his act.

Frank Ford, K.C., who prosecuted, in a clear, logical address, contended that the evidence of insanity submitted was insufficient to warrant acquittal on that plea. Those who had had dealings with the prisoner considered him perculiar, but capable of judging right from wrong, and looking after himself. He generally talked rationally and intelligently, as both the ctown and defence witnesses' evidence proved. His action in resisting arrest until further resistence was impossible, and inquiries regarding the poluce showed that he knew the quality of the act committed, and he should pay the penalty. The burden of proof showing insanity rested the defence, and the evidence they submitted was insufficient to warrant the finding of not guilty on the plea of insanity.

Judge Johnstone's charge to the jury left little loophole of escape for the prisoner. The defence admitted Hainor's guilt, and the question for the jury to decide was, was the prisoner insane when the deed was committed. He directed the return of either one of two verdicts, guilty or not guilty because of his insanity at the time the offence was committed. If the latter verdict, it must be because the man did not know that he was doing wrong when he committed the deed. The evidence does not show this, and unless the jury was sure beyond a reasonable doubt that Hainor was insane when he committed the deed, they must not shirk their duty, but bring in a verdict of guilty. "You have a duty to perform, and you must perform it without fear, favor or affection. The performance of this duty, according to a juryman's path has made Canada famous, as a law abiding land of justice, and the envy of the neighboring republic."

After being out three hours the jury returned and Foreman Outhwait announced a verdict of guilty.

Asked if he had anything to say why judgment should not be passed upon him, Hainor replied: "No."

The judge then sentenced him to be hanged at Regina on Thursday, Feb. 17th, and in doing so remarked that the jury could find no other verdict from the evidence. Addressing the prisoner, he said: You knew perfectly well you were doing wrong when you lurked in that bush and shot poor Fraser. The hardships you underwent in two or three years homesteading may have made you reckless, and brooding over your wrongs caused a wicked feeling to grow up within you, resulting in the committing of a crime. You will be given time to prepare for your execution, though you gave your victim none before you caused his spirit to speed to eternity.

Victoria, B.C., Dec. 9.—With the reply filed today in the case of Dunsmuir vs. Dunsmuir, arrangements are now being made for the trial, which will involve a fight between the heirs of the late Mrs. Joan Dunsmuir, and retiring Lieut.-Gov. Hon. James Dunsmuir, for recovery of an estate valued at between fifteen and eighteen million dollars. Plaintiffs, who are the other members of the family of the late Mrs. Dunsmuir, obtained the Dunsmuir estate from their mother by false pretences, they having prevailed upon her to sell them the estate, including the Vancouver Island coal miles, Esquimalt and Nanaimo railroad lands, steamers, etc., for $400,000, the estate being worth over $15,000,000. When Alexander Dunsmuir dies he will his interests to Jas Dunsmuir, and suit was unsuecessfully brought by the actress, Edna Wallace Hopper, step-daughter of Alexander Dunsmuir to break the will.

NEW RAILWAY TO THE ARCTIC

Railway North from Edmonton to Be Built Next Year to Connect with Waterways.

Montreal, Dec. 8.—Official of the Alberta and Great Waterways Railway, which will be the most northerly road in Canada, running 350 miles northeast from Edmonton, are in Montreal, arranging for starting active construction in the spring. The officers here are W. R. Clark, of Kansas City, president of the United States trust company, and president of the Alberta railway, and E. A. James, general manager of the company. They stated that the road had been fully financed, and that they were here preparing to secure supplies for work in the spring. Contracts for the whole 350 miles will be let in January, and these will stipulate that 150 miles should be completed for operation by next fall.

The company like the G.T.P. will let the grading by contract, and lay the steel itself. Mr. James stated the road would terminate at Fort McMurray, 350 miles northeast of Edmonton, and would open out a stretch of country equal to the Edmonton district for farming purposes.

At Fort McMurray it will connect with the Peace, Athabasca and Mackenzie rivers, which together have 3,500 miles of waterway navigable by steamers, stretching to the Arctic and the Pacific oceans. The road will thus connect the Arctic ocean by water and rail, direct with the Transcontinental railways at Edmonton.

Minard's Liniment Cures Distemper.

Special Notice.

BETTER THAN SPANKING.

Spanking does not cure children of bed-wetting. There is a constitutional cause for this trouble. Mrs. M. Summers, Box 43, Windsor, Ont., will send free to any mother her successful home treatment, with full instructions. Send no money, but write her to-day if your children trouble you in this way. Don't blame the child, the chances are it can't help it. This treatment also cures adults and aged people troubled with urine difficulties by day or night.