

A Pretender Squelched.

Editor Evening Telegram.

Dear Sir.—The Opposition party tried manfully to keep personalities out of this political wrangle, but without avail, for the Squires and Coaker organs, true to the instinct of the jungle find no more potent weapon than the bludgeon, with seeming oblivion to the fact that civilization has moved on a pace or two.

One by one the gentlemen who have come forward to fight over again the fight for our political freedom and economic stability have been subjected to the stuperous assaults of the Squire hirlings. The last to feel the sting of outraged feelings is the author of these few lines. My name is not considered good enough to be heard in public, according to the gentleman who runs the Squires personal organ, as if some taint were attached to it.

All I have in the world is my honest and humble name, and this I intend to defend against the attacks of such men as Dr. Mosdell.

So much for the personal side of this issue raised between us. Of this I will say no more, but I intend to question and challenge the right of Dr. Mosdell to the lofty position he aspires to, as mentor to the intelligent people of this country, when they would seek wisely to decide political questions for themselves.

That Dr. Mosdell assumes and presumes too much I propose to prove from an authority he will scarcely challenge, to wit, his own publications.

This presuming gentleman imposes on the country by virtue of a medical degree which he holds. Whether he is a shining light among his professional congeners or not I do not intend to investigate. I will content myself with proving that as far as general intelligence goes and as far as being a well-rounded man is concerned he is but a poorly informed person and a decided mediocrity, with all a shabby pretender.

This gentleman by virtue of a diligent application of "scissors and paste" succeeded in getting together from the published works of others two or three small volumes, which he had the cheek to advertise as "5000 Facts." He also got together between two covers a compilation of clap-trap which bears the title "Newfoundland and Its Attractions," all filched from previously published works.

He received hundreds of dollars

from the public treasury on account of those publications, for which the country received not one cent of value. The book contains seventy-two pages, seventeen of which carry Government advertisements, for which Dr. Mosdell received fifty dollars a page.

One of the advertisements that relating to the Game Laws is obsolete since 1920, or three years out of date. As proof of this I will quote part of the paragraph respecting beaver.

"Any person who shall hunt, kill or pursue or take any Beaver within the Colony at any time from the first of October, 1913, to the first day of October, 1920," etc.

Easy money for a Squires touter. The book is advertised as "Just the thing for the business man, the school teacher and the men of all professions and callings who require a cheap and dependable ready reference work on Newfoundland."

Cheap it certainly is, but how dependable let this review show. Page one shows a map of Newfoundland, from which Bonne Bay is omitted and Conception and Hermitage Bays are mere patches showing no name whatever.

Page two presents some figures showing the trade of the country. There are five columns of figures, four of which have grave errors in the additions. And one is inclined to close up the book at this point with the reflection falsus in omnia.

When it is found to be wrong in one instance its value as a work of reference is totally destroyed. But, let us not condemn it for this one mistake.

Let us give it a chance to re-instate itself in our estimation. On page three we find the oft-repeated statement that Newfoundland is the tenth largest island, but this time there is a rhetorical caudal appendage, for it is "the tenth largest island of the seven seas." Newfoundland is not the tenth largest island, as every school boy knows.

The difference between the length and breadth of the island is about one mile, as far as our imperfect knowledge goes, but Dr. Mosdell is so careless that even this one mile is of no account in his "5000 Facts." The length and breadth are about the same. How exact! In Canada and United States they are conducting a geodetic survey, where an error of a small part of an inch is not permitted. Cape Clear in Ireland is spelled as Capse Clear.

In the next paragraph a new term in measurements is introduced for we find that "Grand Lake is 56 miles long and a paradise."

In Florida they use other terms when they wish to designate distances, for instance they may tell you a spot is "two peeks and a go-by" from where you are. Dr. Mosdell should publish a glossary.

"The Island is intersected in all directions by rivers and streams which supply the inland fisherman with the finest sport."

In the compass of just these two lines are mistakes and platitudes running in all directions.

"The Humber River is 70 miles long." Where did Dr. Mosdell get the "facts?"

"Many parts of the island are mountainous and these bear a striking resemblance to the Highlands of Scotland."

What insane drivel. Why Newfoundland hills should resemble the Highlands of Scotland is a mystery except in so far as they are hills in both instances.

The great bays or fjords, indenting the coast of Newfoundland are remarkable for number, extent and attractiveness.

Just as a school boy writing his fish essay on geography might be expected to confound the premises Dr. Mosdell gets himself badly confused.

It is not the bays that are remarkable for number, but the country may be remarkable for the number of its bays. How are the bays remarkable for "extent?"

Besides this a bay is not an "inlet." Dr. Mosdell applies the diminutive to bays he was just extolling for their "extent."

"Trinity and Placentia Bays form the northern boundaries of the Peninsula of Avalon." More likely western boundaries.

"Bonne Bay is a deep indentation (not on the map) of three spacious arms, is renowned for its lofty and rugged mountains and for its unrivalled salmon streams." Not the Bay is renowned for its mountains, but it may be renowned for the mountains which overlook it.

When a man undertakes to write facts he should be very particular to have his data from some recognized authority and not repeat guess work and hearsay.

The statement is made that "seven thousand square miles of Newfoundland, or about four million acres are suitable for agricultural purposes."

This is simply a hazard for a regular survey of the agricultural lands of the country has never been made.

As a specimen of Dr. Mosdell's loose way of dealing with figures notice when he converts seven thousand square miles into terms of acres, the small consideration given to the immense item of 480,000 acres. Every school boy knows that 7,000 square miles equals 4,480,000 acres.

The book of facts (7) gives the value of farm products and cattle as fifteen million dollars annually. This is a gross misstatement and deserves special analysis, I reserve this for another time. What little of understanding consideration Dr. Mosdell has given the farm topics he so off-hand deals with can be easily imagined from the following.

The census shows there are about 2,500 farmers in the country. According to Dr. Mosdell these produce \$15,000,000 worth annually. We import farm products to the value of \$3,879,170. (Census 1911).

Now then 2,500 farmers produce \$15,000,000 worth. Dr. Mosdell says we need 10,000 farmers to supply the country with home-grown produce.

In other words we need four times as many farmers to produce \$18,791,700 worth as it takes to produce \$15,000,000. Did I not say that every mother's son of the Coaker-Squires crowd knows all about farming. At any rate they all talk as if they did.

One finds it hard to deal with agricultural matters for there are no reliable statistics to refer to. Only the Coaker-Squires crowd of pretenders can deal with the question, as they are not very particular as to what they say. Quantity and not quality counts with such folk. "Fools venture where angels fear to tread."

Speaking of climate Dr. Mosdell introduces us to "previous precedents." Now all precedents hitherto known have been "previous." Can you bring in a future precedent, Dr. Mosdell?

The author of the "Facts" also speaks of "anthracite coal," which is, of course, taubogio and as ridiculous as to say Brassica cabbage or carbon diamond.

Referring to the herring fishery Dr. Mosdell omits St. George's, Fortune, as well as Placentia and St. Mary's Bays as the seats of a considerable herring fishery.

Next we come to Forestry, and here again the author of the "Facts" is as indifferent as to the kind of "Facts" as it is possible to be. He quotes figures relative to the extent of Newfoundland's wooded areas with a carelessness that is almost criminal.

Hearsay is his authority while he pretends to deal in "facts." He tells us with an assurance that is almost grotesque that "the timber lands of the country aggregate 10,000 sq. miles."

A wild guess and of no statistical value. The simple fact is we do not know, nor have we ever tried, to find out. Mr. Howe, the Ranger estimated there were 8,000 sq. miles of wooded area in 1920. This area has greatly diminished since through fire and cutting. It is only nonsense to be talking where there are no data to sustain, confirm or rebut. This is unfortunately our position when we come to discuss many matters of public importance in this country.

With the same indifference to ascertainable facts he tells us that our woodlands yield 10 cords per acre. I believe four cords would be extreme, but I do not know.

He says the acre is capable of yielding 10 cords of pulpwood or 1000 superficial feet of lumber.

It is a revelation to know that 10 cords of wood equals only 1,000 feet of lumber, and that it is all an acre of Newfoundland forest can produce. Is this a "fact," Doctor?

The next paragraph makes utter nonsense of the forestry. It says, "The net standing value of Newfoundland timber is five hundred million dollars."

We are told there are 4,000,000 acres of forest in Newfoundland. Each acre yields 1000 ft. of board. This puts a value on each 1000 ft. of \$125 net, a preposterous figure, but it is in the book of "facts."

Then the compiler of the "facts" tells us that Newfoundland spruce and fir averages 10 inches at the butt. Which is, of course, a very silly statement to make.

Then we are told that "Newfoundland hardwoods are wych-hazel, birch, ash, tamarack."

As for wych-hazel you may get some big enough to make a "broomstick nag" for a witch, but nothing more. Yellow birch is locally called wych-hazel, but this is a mistake, as wych-hazel is the small tree or shrub which produces the hazel nut. It is not a birch.

It is wrong to speak of ash as one of our forest trees. We have very few ash trees in this country and they are of no account.

One page 29 we are told the value of exported forestry products is \$500,000, and on page 44 we are informed it is \$5,000,000. The bewildered seeker after "facts" is lost in the woods when he thought he had a guide who knew the way.

"Newfoundland's chief forest areas are found on the margins of its lakes and its water courses."

This makes utter nonsense of all that has been said about the extent and value of our timber areas. A margin is a narrow strip. Are then our wonderful forests but narrow strips along the water ways.

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YOU SAW "WHERE IS MY WANDERING BOY"—
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Having made such an egregious mess of his forestry "facts" we are invited by the author of the "Facts" to consider the mines. The author of literary pick-pocket if you wish, introduced the subject of mines in the usual hyperbolic way, by referring to Bell Island deposits as the biggest and most extensive deposits of iron ore so far discovered anywhere. How silly this statement is anybody can prove for himself. The illiterate only can be fooled by clap-trap of this kind. There are iron mines about Lake Superior to conceal Bell Island were it to be dropped into them. The mines of the Mesabi Range are producing yearly over 32,000,000 tons of ore.

The Fayal Mine, Mesabi Range worked as an open pit could swallow Bell Island and forget it. A little further down the same page Dr. Mosdell displays a most remarkable ignorance for one who presumes to write a book. He confounds iron pyrites with iron ore, when he interpolates with his remarks on iron ore that "Pile's Island mine was successfully operated for a number of years, exports from this location running as high as 32,000 tons of iron pyrites per year."

"Rich deposits have been prospected at York Harbor, Bay of Islands, and at Middle Arm, in the same place." York Harbor mine produced pyrites and was worked as a regular producer and not as a "prospect." After this display of ignorance respecting iron mines the "facts" writer invites our attention to the lime-stone quarries.

"There is a considerable industry in Newfoundland connected with the working of extensive areas of lime-stone to be found around Bay of Islands and in the neighbourhood."

Now it happens that apart from an inconsiderate quarrying on the lower Humber, the business of lime-stone quarrying is carried on solely at Port au Port, in Bay St. George.

Then we are told by this wonderful book of "facts" that "Newfoundland lime-stone has been found by analysis to be eminently suited for the manufacture of artificial Portland cement."

According to this there is only one quality of lime-stone fit for the making of Portland cement, and this is the only kind found in Newfoundland. The Doctor is quite ignorant of what he is talking about. He has some idea that lime-stone is needed to make cement and that is all, and this knowledge he casually gleaned as a newspaper man from the scandals connected with certain "cement" claims in this country.

Magnesian lime-stone is a natural cement rock.

He is quite ignorant too of the fact that Portland cement is itself an artificial product. We are next invited to a silly treatise on oil shales.

Speaking of the deposits of oil shale at Deer Lake he first treats us to some unfounded statements respecting the extent those shale deposits, then he founders dolefully in the technical slough.

Speaking of the values of the shale he says the "yield in crude oil and sulphate of ammonia equal to that of the Scotch deposit," and then proceeds to add: "Newfoundland shale carries much higher percentage of petrol than the Scotch. This a double distilled bit of nonsense."

In the first place it is inexecutable in any writer to use the term sulphate of ammonia. There is no such thing as sulphate of ammonia, but there is "ammonium sulphate," which is grammar while the other is not petrol is only a truncation of the proper term which is petroleum or mineral oil. How then can the Newfoundland oil shales be equal to and superior to the Scotch at the same time. Next we come to the more prosaic matter of Postal Money Orders.

Of course Dr. Mosdell does not know that the building of Bonne Bay and Badger Roads is responsible for the big increase in Money Order business for 1921-22. Only through Money Orders could the 3000 or 4000 men working on those roads make remittances to their families. Dr. Mosdell makes a statement but takes no heed to explain it. Of what value are such figures if it be not explained that the inflation was due to a temporary condition.

I have about done with this book of "5000 Facts" and I think I have shown pretty clearly the type of man it is who presumes to tell this country how to vote in the ensuing elections. What particular reason has this ignorant man to assume the role of arbiter of either taste in writing or what is politically sound. The cheek of the fellow passes all understanding.

Ho has learned how to ring the changes on the most common place which anybody could do provided he were daffy enough. His attempt to break into the literary field are at abortive as dipping water with a sieve. He has just done enough to make himself look silly. But of course some will not see them. You may find them reason but there the matter ends. You find it beyond the power of a mortal being to find them an understanding.

Dr. Mosdell may be like the teacher in Goldsmith's tale:

"In argument they own'd his wondrous skill
For e'en though vanquished he could argue still."

There is just one other little item and I am done with this "5000 Facts." Dr. Mosdell says on page 29 of this abortion that "Newfoundland's forests reproduce themselves in 30 years."

A more silly statement he could not possibly make. He, as editor of the "Trade Review" made the same statement a little while ago which I pointed out to readers of the "Evening Telegram," and showed from actual records within the trees themselves how idle the assertion.

Some simpleton from Bay Roberts, attempted to defend Dr. Mosdell, but only got himself into the list of boobies for his trouble. He could not disprove my statement, he did not try, he merely became abusive.

In about four times thirty years, a spruce forest may reproduce itself to a size represented by an ordinary saw log as seen in this country. In other words it might be a foot in diameter. In thirty years it would not be more than a stout picket or small fence post.

My statements can be verified by reference to any authoritative work on forestry.

The annular rings on the stems in the Museum or on some of the "splints" being bought up by Campbell any day will prove the truth of what I say.

Dr. Mosdell can now see himself others see him.

His ill got reputation for a knowledgeable man is burst but I do intend to drop my iconoclastic speech here. He has another book in the making.

Meaning, Messrs. Messrs. Cashin and Hunt and the other gentlemen are making fragments of the Squires bubble reputation, and I believe me, there will not be much left when they get through with it.

If the chief touter has the gall to face and intelligence audience after this, he has more of cheek than I know him to have.

"Empire! Thou poor and despised thing.
When such as these make and
make a king."

Yours truly,
ARTHUR ENGLISH
March 23rd, 1923.

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