

London Advertiser.

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Managing Director and Editor, John Cameron

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Time for a Change.

Municipal reform is receiving a great impulse in Ontario, and it is time that London should share it.

Lindsay, Owen Sound, Peterboro, Belleville, Chatham, Galt, and other cities and towns have taken the lead by abolishing the ward system, and in most cases reducing the number of aldermen. The people of Stratford will vote on the question in January.

The movement is spreading to larger places. In Hamilton, all the daily newspapers are agitating for a change of men and methods in the civic administration. The Times thinks the remedy is the election of a higher type of representatives. No one disputes this; but how is the higher type to be induced to come forward? The Herald advocates the abolition of the ward system and the election of fifteen aldermen by the votes of all the electors, the aldermen to be elected for a three-years' term, five to retire each year. The Spectator also attacks the ward system, and would entrust the city government, both legislative and executive, to seven men, elected by the ratepayers.

In Ottawa, there is the same dissatisfaction with municipal management. This dissatisfaction has been sharpened by circumstances similar to our own. Ottawa has undertaken an expensive drainage work, and the city council has floundered over it in such a manner that citizens are calling for an independent commission to carry the project through.

The Municipal World, a high authority, vigorously assails the ward system. The system, says the World, is productive of selfishness, sectional jealousies and personal ambitions. Frequently work is commenced and never completed, merely for the sake of giving employment to ward heelers. For the same reason work is done which would be better left undone. The ward system scatters money in small jobs and patchwork, instead of concentrating the expenditure on finished and durable work.

In London, we have no immunity from the evils which other municipalities feel, and which some, to their credit, are trying to remedy. We have here the ward system in its worst form. Proposals to reduce the wards have been in years past submitted to the ratepayers and voted down. The reduction would have been a step in the right direction, but would not have gone far enough. Aldermen would still have been elected by wards—and that is the root of the evil. Intelligent citizens know the system is pernicious. They are more to be censured for tolerating ward grabbing than are the aldermen who practice it. But apart from the extravagance and injustice to which it leads, the ward system deters many able, public-spirited men from entering municipal life. They refuse to compete with the typical ward alderman who makes a house-to-house canvass, loaded up with promises, who doles out the street improvements where they will bring him most votes, who is a hall-fellow on all the back streets, who stands in with "the boys," and nurses his little constituency from year to year. There are some able men in this year's council who were elected despite the ward system; there are some mediocrities who were elected because of it. These latter would hardly have ventured to seek the suffrage of the whole city.

The ratepayers should seriously consider these matters, and should keep up with the march of progress in other cities. The abolition of the ward system should be the first step; the reduction of the number of aldermen is advisable, but not so imperative at present. The introduction of politics into municipal affairs is deplorable, but there seems to be no cure for it except a mutual agreement between the parties. Both have found out by this time that the City Hall is worth nothing as a political machine. The Conservatives made a desperate attempt to gain control last January and succeeded. Has it helped them one iota?

A New Famine.

We have heard a good deal about a universal wheat famine, but a famine of another kind is predicted in Great Britain, which would be even a more curious natural phenomenon. The famine alluded to is a water famine, and the strange feature of it is that the rural and not the urban districts are threatened. This would seem contrary to physical conditions, but the explanation is simple. For instance the city of London cannot obtain a sufficient supply from the River Thames and its tributaries, and is drawing millions of gallons from deep wells spread over a large and increasing area. This is the case with other great British cities. It is also a fact that while the land in the country is being better drained, this drainage lessens the water supply of the country, and adds to that of the city. The water is taken off the land by drain pipes and carried to streams, which are utilized as sources of supply by the great cities, leaving the village and farm house to face a slowly but surely advancing famine. The more favored by nature a district is, the more rapid this process goes on. Wherever mountain and rainfall combine to make an area rich in streams and lakes the en-

gineer of some municipal corporation is at hand scheming to impound the supply, and carry it many miles away. Already corporations are actively competing for water-bearing areas. An English magazine says that from all parts of the country there comes the same story of streams becoming shallower and more intermittent, of wells that have continually to be dug deeper in order to get any water at all, of springs which once gushed out from the hillside and now do but trickle. So serious has the matter become that the Government has been urged to make the necessary inquiries and undertake the necessary legislation.

Fortunately this is a problem Canada will never have to face. With our magnificent waterways, a score of Londons and Liverpools could be planted right here in Ontario and they would never lower farm yard wells an inch.

Bismarck's Boswell.

It has been said that no man is a hero to his valet, but that cynical remark does not hold good in the case of Dr. Moritz Busch, who has just given to the world "some secret pages" of Bismarck's history, for as an able reviewer has remarked, "There is something almost pathetic in the contrast between the blindness of confident enthusiasm which has impelled Dr. Busch to give publicity to these extraordinary reminiscences, and the impressions which their perusal must leave on the reader's mind." The reason that the great Chancellor's lackey makes these revelations is "because in these corrupt times truth cannot too soon be helped to her rights." He has certainly helped truth to her rights with a vengeance.

Without wishing to pose as a pattern of scrupulosity the reader of this strange story feels that if this is the real Bismarck there was much in his work that can only be described as diabolical. But we are told that Dr. Busch's attitude "towards his hero is informed throughout with the same spirit of almost idolatrous worship which led him on one occasion to apostrophize Prince Bismarck to his face as 'Mein Heiland—My Saviour.'" No doubt this worship was perfectly sincere—in the view of his minion Bismarck could do no wrong—but the effect of these revelations on the unprejudiced mind is to lessen the reverence for the great statesman which is inspired by his tremendous strength of character and unflinching steadiness of purpose. Bismarck the man of "blood and iron" who through three wars welded together the present German Empire—this Bismarck we know. This powerful personality commanded respect, and probably evoked more hate than love. But this dry pedantic report of his doings penned by the plodding vassal, shows another Bismarck, who works in the dark and is utterly unscrupulous.

No doubt it is best for the world that the truth should be told, but we cannot help feeling that it is a pity that the truth takes this color. We do not owe any particular debt of gratitude to Prince Bismarck, but we regret to meet him in the character of Mephistopheles with a "literary" laboratory for concocting slanders and a reptile press for scattering them through the land. Bismarck, the founder of the German Empire, with his brutal frankness and his supreme contempt for opposition is something like a demi-god, but Bismarck, the pressman, is a very low kind of devil. To that reviewer of this startling book in Literature is constrained to say: "Indeed Dr. Busch might well have given to his work the sub-title 'Prince Bismarck as Pressman.' For in spite of the contemptuous way in which he used to talk of the reams of paper smeared with printers' ink few journalists have done more newspaper work than the first chancellor of the German Empire at the height of his pride and power, and, let us hope, still fewer have done such base work."

This is the "seamy side" of Bismarck's life, and its revelation of "the ways that are dark" is not creditable to human nature in general or the political life of Germany in particular. His underhand attacks against the Empress Augusta and afterwards against the hated English woman, the Empress Frederick, were marked by cunning and spite. In all this dirty work Dr. Busch was the go-between, and tells unblushingly the tale of his own degradation. His one redeeming feature is that he remains true to his idol when political disgrace came, and helped his old master to smuggle his papers out of the palace. Such fidelity is admirable, but it is none the less a pity that the service required was often of the most contemptible kind. The fact is Bismarck believed in the divine right of things, and in the divine right of Bismarck to make and guide kings, but he had no faith in the people, and hence the main use that he had for the press was not to form a healthy public opinion, but to cajole the mob into shouting against those whom he regarded as his enemies, and enemies of the Empire. In so far as he was a true patriot let him receive admiration, but may his foul use of journalism find few imitators.

The Indians in the Western States have gone again on the warpath, and have slaughtered a company of regulars. There is a reflection on the American Government in the frequent recurrence of these troubles. Either the Indian laws are unjust or they are unjustly administered. Canada had a severe lesson thirteen years ago, but the evil was cured—apparently forever.

A dispatch from Pekin says the greatest harmony exists between the Dowager Empress and the Emperor. This strengthens the suspicion that the Emperor is dead.

It is suspected the American international commissioners wanted an adjournment to Washington because they dreaded a Quebec winter. They will miss one of the most invigorating experiences of their lives.

Some heartless antiquary has discovered Patti's birth record, dated 57 years ago, and has published her age to the world. Patti's vanity need not suffer. She is just as old as her voice, and her admirers say that is as young and fresh as ever.

Bradstreet's latest circular has the following reference to Canada: Number of failures—1898, 1,091; 1897, 1,501; 1896, 1,651. Liabilities—1898, \$7,882,510; 1897, \$10,053,212; 1896, \$12,219,996. Assets—1898, \$3,277,772; 1897, \$4,141,800; 1896, \$5,047,300.

Miss Anglin, daughter of the late Hon. T. W. Anglin, Speaker of the House of Commons, has made a decided hit in New York, and bids fair to become a star. Canada has given the English-speaking stage some of its brightest ornaments, such as Julia Arthur, Franklin McLeay, and W. H. Crane.

Sir Charles Tupper has been talking in England. He blames the Toronto Globe for saying that Senator Fairbanks was favorable to the lowering of the American duty on some Canadian products. Instead of waiting till he reached England to censure the Globe, Sir Charles should have called off some of his own organs while here. They did their best to impair the usefulness of the conference by personal attacks on the American commissioners, by representing the Canadian commissioners as willing to betray Canada's interests, and by predicting utter failure.

The people of Great Britain are only beginning to eat bananas, but it is hoped that in the near future a large and increasing trade in this fruit will be carried on between the British West Indies and the heart of the empire. This will be a great benefit to the islands, which are at the present moment threatened with a new trouble because of the acquisition of Cuba by the United States. Hitherto a very considerable portion of the banana supply of the United States has been obtained from the British West India Islands, but it is now said that Cuba will be turned into a huge banana farm, and that very soon nearly all the supplies of that fruit required by the United States will be obtained from that island.

The friends of the late Wm. Terriss, the English actor, have erected a memorial of him, with the inscription: "Shadows we are and shadows we pursue." Says the Detroit Free Press: "While the devoted souls were about their labor it would have been as well, perhaps, to correctly quote their Shakespeare." The Free Press critic should look over his anthology before he questions another quotation. "What shadows we are and what shadows we pursue!" are the correct words, and they are those of Edmund Burke, not Shakespeare. Burke uttered this pathetic sentiment in an address bidding farewell to his constituents in Bristol. It was inspired by the sudden death of the candidate opposing him, which occurred in the midst of the canvass.

WHAT OTHERS SAY.

Same Here.

[Hamilton Herald.] If anybody else has a scheme for the better government of the city, this would be a good time to unfold it.

Burst Their Swaddling Clothes.

[Detroit Free Press.] The policy of protection is fast becoming an anomaly for this commercial expanding nation. Our erstwhile "infant industries" have outgrown their swaddling clothes.

Some Use for Titles.

[Washington Star.] The revelations concerning the relations of "promoters" to the English nobility may remove some of the objections which fathers of heiresses often express toward aristocratic sons-in-law. A title may, after all, be a very valuable asset to have in the family in case of a pinch.

Municipal Evils Must Go.

[Ottawa Free Press.] But the present growing municipal evils must go. The fiat is proclaimed from the gulf to the northern fringe of civilization. The Americans are taking the means best suited to themselves to make them "go." It is time Canadians followed their example. Let Ottawa lead. We have before advocated the formation of a citizens' committee here and the present time is opportune for repeating the suggestion.

LIGHT AND SHADE.

Outdated.

"I suppose this season," said the Elastic Skin Man, "you'll go as a Cuban reconstrado?" "Bah!" said the Living Skeleton, "you're outdated. I'm just a plain, ordinary United States volunteer returned from camp."—Life.

Liberty Vs. Prudence.

It is by the goodness of God that in our country we have these three unexpectable things: freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and the prudence to practice neither of them.

Proved by Necessity.

She—No, Tom, it wouldn't be judicious for us to marry until you have had your salary increased. He (pleadingly)—But two can live

cheaper than one, you know, Mollie. She—Yes, I know that's what people say. As a matter of fact, they've got to.—New York Evening Journal.

The White Gull.

The great cloud-navies, one by one, bend sails and fill. From ports below the round sea-verge; I watch them gather and emerge, And steer for havens of the sun. Beyond the hill.

The gray sea-horses troop and roam; The shadows fly. Along the wind-floor at their heels: And where the golden daylight wheels, A white gull searches the blue dome With keening cry.

—Carman.

Partial Return.

Algy—You say she only partially returned your affection? Clarence—Yes; and that's what I'm kicking about. She returned all the love letters but retained all the jewelry.—Tit Bits.

STARTED IN A CEMETERY

Widow Lindsay's Tiff With a Detroit Undertaker.

She Funched His Nose and Now Threatens to Thrash Him With a Rawhide.

[Detroit Evening News.]

The differences between Mrs. Lucy E. Lindsay, of 341 Seventeenth avenue, and Charles F. Hess, of the undertaking firm of C. & W. Hess, on Gratiot avenue, began in 1891. They have continued with varying degrees of temperature ever since. They reached a white heat when Mrs. Lindsay, in an outburst of wrath, punched the nose of Mr. Hess in Woodmere cemetery, last Sunday, after a funeral. It was a woman's blow, and did no damage, except to the undertaker's dignity.

In 1891, Mrs. Lindsay's husband, who was a veteran of the civil war, died, and Hess secured the job of conducting the funeral. This was because both he and Mrs. Lindsay belonged to the same council of Chosen Friends. Besides collecting some \$7 from Mrs. Lindsay for the funeral, Mr. Hess also obtained from the county the \$40 that is allowed for the burial of soldiers. Through that little circumstance of the funeral, Mr. Hess and Mrs. Lindsay became acquainted, and in the end the widow mortgaged her home on Seventeenth street for \$1,000, and Hess got the money on the understanding that Mrs. Lindsay was to be his partner in the undertaking business. He never paid Mrs. Lindsay but \$25, and some three years ago she obtained a judgment against him for the full amount of her claim, but she has been unable to collect it.

Mrs. Lindsay has been sadly in need of that \$1,000 for a long time. "I don't know what I'll do," she said this morning. "My house is mortgaged, and I can't pay the interest. I have to go out cleaning offices and take in washing, and do whatever I can to get a living. My mother is bedridden, and it takes all I can earn to take care of her and myself, to say nothing of two cats and a dog, besides the interest."

"My lawyer says that Hess has fixed his property so that I can't collect the judgment. So I'm going to take it out of his hide. I'll get a good rawhide whip and I'll carry it in my belt. Then I'll go to every funeral he has, and I'll baste him at every one. Did you hear what I did to him? No? Well, it was in Woodmere cemetery. I was down there at my husband's grave. Hess had a big funeral near by. When I saw him couldn't I call myself? I don't want to interrupt the funeral, so I waited until the carriages with the mourners in had gone and then I went up to Hess before all the people. I took him by the arm and asked him when he was going to pay me.

"I'll pay you, I'll pay you," he said, and Mrs. Lindsay's voice was pitched in a high key with a cowardly tremor in it. "Just wait till I get my hat," he said. "You won't need any hat to hear what I have to say to you," says I. "Just wait a minute," he says, but I couldn't wait any longer. I was so excited. I just let go and I caught him on the end of the nose. I'm ashamed of it now, but it seems to be the only way I am to be paid. I was so excited.

"I don't know what happened then. Hess got hold of my wrists and twisted my left arm so that it's been sore ever since. But I'll go to his next funeral and I'll fix him. I guess I'll see the governor about it. I think he could do something. The prosecuting attorney was going to do something a year ago, when Hess returned the \$40 to the county that he had had six years, but he never did it. Do you think it would do any good to see the governor? The widow and the orphan have no show in this country."

AN ALTERNATIVE PROBLEM.

Friend—I suppose rapid transit is still the great question in Harlem? Harlemitte—No; it has been superseded by the question, "How to get along without rapid transit."

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You don't seem to be able to throw them off. All the ordinary remedies you've tried don't touch them. The cough remedy for you is Dr. Wood's Norway Pine Syrup.

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