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SPATIAL IN THE ELECTIONS. Seeing that the result of the contests in the constituencies now vacant will certainly be taken as foreshadowing the issue of the general elections next year, and bearing in mind the shortness of the time that now intervenes before polling day, it might have been expected that an active and widespread interest would be taken in the impending contest. With our characteristic love for elections and election excitement, and with questions of real and vital importance at stake, there should be electricity in the political atmosphere, and men of both parties should be straining every nerve to give their side the prestige which victory now will give it in next year's fight. Instead of this it is somewhat surprising to find that the interest taken in the matter is languid and that the absence of anything like a "barrage" element is conspicuous. In one of the constituencies a compromise has been effected by which the seat is given to an independent, in others one or both sides have not yet placed their candidates in the field, the leaders have so far almost entirely refrained from active interference, and on all hands there appears to be a lack of the usual amount of enthusiasm. Perhaps affairs may assume a different aspect as polling day approaches, but the time is short. One explanation of this apathetic state of things may probably be found in the fact that there are "by-elections" and that in any event the contest will have to be re-fought next year. A party which sets on the assumption that after all it does not matter much which side holds the seat for one year makes a great mistake. Possession in politics, as well as in law, is a great advantage. Let a feeling once become prevalent in a constituency that it is given over to the hands of the enemy, that it is useless to try to dialogue him, and it becomes more than ever difficult to lead a successful attack. Every vacant constituency should be contested, and contested thoroughly, not only now, but whenever an election is held, not for party reasons merely but on public grounds as well. It is not a healthy sign of public opinion when a seat is allowed to go by default, or when only a half-hearted interest in a contest is shown. It is chiefly by means of a spirited campaign that the mass of voters can be reached, that individual opinions can be touched, and intelligent and correct estimates of men and measures formed. There are issues at stake now in the province perhaps more important than any that have arisen since confederation, upon the settlement of which the place of Ontario among her sister provinces, and her rank as a self-governing power, very largely depend. The verdict which the seven contested constituencies return, if at all a decisive one, will assist to no small extent in the decision of these questions, and for this reason we say we are somewhat surprised at the inactivity with which the situation is being forced by both parties.

MUNICIPAL REFORM. If anything is to be done in the way of reforming our system of municipal representation, now is the time. Legislation will have to be asked for next session of the Ontario parliament, in order to enable Toronto to annex Yorkville in accordance with the expressed consent of the people of that village. It is the duty of the city council and also of the council of Yorkville to consider the matter calmly and see whether the ward system should be any longer maintained. If they come to the conclusion that it would be better abolished the necessary legislation—if any is needed—could be obtained. It must have struck every thinking citizen long ago as a singular thing that in a city which can boast of so many able men of business, civic affairs should have been, for so many years, managed by a body largely made up of very inferior members. We mean no disrespect to the present or any

the council, but there is the startling fact that year after year men find their way into the civic institutions who are not equal to the position. The council should be made up entirely of men in whom the public can have complete confidence and not men who are not of this description. How do they get there? Would they secure their election if they had to depend on a general vote all over the city instead of the vote of the few streets in their own neighborhoods. At present a man's personal friends are usually enough to carry him in, and however objectionable he may be on any ground no vote outside of his ward can do anything to prevent his election.

A lives near the Doss and is a large taxpayer, but pays taxes only on property in his own ward. He has therefore no vote in any of the other eight wards. He does what he can to put in three good men, but can do nothing to influence the election of the other twenty-four. The representatives of each of the other wards are just as influential for good or evil, individually collectively, as the three aldermen he is allowed to vote for and yet his right to express a preference respecting eight-ninths of the council is arbitrarily taken from him. Theoretically such a system is utterly indefensible; practically it is productive of no end of mischief through "ward-grabbing."

The ward system might be defended in the case of a township where there is a considerable geographical area to be represented by the council collectively. In it there might be some inconvenience in having all the five councillors lumped together in one career. But in Toronto there can be no such inconvenience. Our best and most prominent citizens are found scattered over the whole area of the city and its suburbs, and many of them have their places of business on King, Yonge, Wellington or Front street, and their residences in more outlying districts. Moreover the franchise system has now solved the geographical problem, such as it was in the earlier days of our corporation. What is wanted now is good legislation of a general character, and honest and able administration of the city business and other property. This can be secured very much better by having the members of council elected by a general vote than by leaving them to be elected now by the vote of a small section.

CAMPBELL'S MARMION. We have already made a critical examination of Gage's edition of Marmion. We found the work of the editor bad, and of the publisher worse. It is but fair that we should now submit the other edition of the book, Campbell's, to the same test. On opening this book it is plain at once that the editorial as well as the typographical work differ much from the other. Of the typographical features we need only say that it is neat and unobjectionable. We have not found a serious blunder in the whole book. Of the editor's work however, and the editor is T. C. L. Armstrong, M. A., of Toronto university, we cannot say so much. Mr. Armstrong is a more tasteful and clean cut scholar than Mr. Miller. He hasn't that pedantry and flowing at the mouth characteristic of the St. Thomas author; yet he errs in his own way. He misunderstands what his duty was as an annotator, and so failed. Some notes he should have left out altogether, some he should have made that he hasn't made, and many of his justifiable notes are only suitable for an advanced reader, but far short of the requirements of an English classic in the high schools. Let us make ourselves plain. What the dictionary of pupil and teacher can supply it is useless to put as a note. That which should be given in explanation of ancient customs alluded to in the text, and the notes should afford a clear and picturesque description such as might catch the imagination of an appreciative learner and incite him to further research. It is because the allusion in Marmion points to such a rich field of medieval lore that the poem is valuable as a classic. To pass an allusion to a tournament, a joust, or one of the ceremonies peculiar to that age, is only to tantalize the learner and to ignore the aim of the work. We shall turn to the text for proof of the objections we urge.

In Canto I "Donjon keep" is simply described as "the prison in the tower of a castle," a piece of information that any dictionary will give; and conveying the dimmest possible picture to the student's eye. "Sangreal's Holy Quest" in the introduction to Canto I is dismissed with two or three lines of "information," while such a phrase as "for Britain's sins" is explained at equal length. An acquire is described as the attendant of a knight, but we are told nothing of the romantic position and duties of a squire, information which would catch the fancy and open up new interests in the text. The notes on these points should be as refreshing wells from which the student could draw. The same sin of omission can be found in the explanation of "pursuivant," "giust," "stirrup-cup," "Benedictine school," "palmer," and a number of other phrases. In Canto II the following verses are let pass with not even one of Mr. Armstrong's brief notes:

"We saw the victor with the crest His warts with curly ring, And on the gibbet-tree reversed, His footman's a stoeborn knight." Then just is described as a "mock fight." The author does not say whether the mock fight is with boxing gloves, swords, or quarter-staves. The school-boy will probably infer with the "bare fist." In Canto II, the sweet verses occur: "No fairy forms in Tarrow's bowers Trip o'er the walks, or tend the flowers, Fair as the doves whom Juno saw By moonlight dance on Ceylaugh."

But in the notes no reference is made to the lines, and the student is left to explain to himself all about the "elves whom Janet saw." Then in line 202, introduction to Canto II, the "wizard's grave" is merely described as "a mound in the cemetery, so called," though Scott himself makes the

allusion the subject of an elaborate note in three respects: a number of similar notes Mr. Armstrong has failed—a failure all the more to be regretted as we come to examine the taste and terseness of his notes explaining words, phrases, and other references in the text. He has failed because he did not see at the outset the true object of the introduction of the poem as a classic; though according to his own conception of the subject he has done his work with the grace and finish of a scholar.

OUR MEDICAL SCHOOLS. Trinity medical school opened yesterday, and the Toronto school of medicine opens to-day, both under favorable auspices and with promise of increasing prosperity. So far we congratulate the faculties and the students. But Toronto will never become a first-class centre of medical teaching until certain radical changes are effected. The medical schools must be brought nearer to University college and the school of practical science; and the doctors of the rival schools must come to see that there is room for only one first-class school.

While there is something in the idea that competition is the life of trade, we fail to see its appropriateness in the maintenance of two medical schools where one would do better. Nothing is gained in the way of the realization of the principle of the division of labor in the case of two schools. There are two professors, one for each school, in each subject with half the number of subjects; while if there was one school there could be just as many professors with twice the number of subjects, as there would then be a scientific division of labor. A good deal of the work now attempted by each school is perfunctory. They have not the appliances and, what is more, they have not the students. The united energies of the two schools in the way of professors, appliances, cases and special work would no more than make a first-class school.

And then as to our other point: the medical students should be near University college and the school of practical science, where a number of subjects adjunct to a thorough medical training are taught much more fully and perfectly than in the medical schools. It is only folly to attempt to teach chemistry, botany, zoology and like subjects in the two medical schools when they are better taught in the city elsewhere. The medical schools, just as much as the theological halls, should be the possessors of the resources of University college wherever possible, and put all their energy, men and means where they will do most good, viz., in the departments of anatomy, surgery, medicine, obstetrics, etc.

We do not say that all these things can be done in a day, but their ultimate attainment should be the aim of every doctor who has the advancement of his profession at heart. The present hospital could be sold to the government for an asylum, or to some charity, or to the city; a new one could be built if it is gone about in the right way; and to meet the increased demands upon them University college and the school of science would have to be enlarged. But all these things could be brought about, and when they are consummated Toronto would be in a position to put forth a claim as a centre of medical and surgical knowledge of the first-class.

OVERLOADING. One sensible lake captain we hear of Captain John Hurley of the schooner Blazing Star, who recently made the run from Detroit to Kingston in four days, and from Oswego to Detroit in three days and four hours—a quick round trip, by the way, which speaks volumes in favor of the Welland canal. Captain Hurley says he has begun reducing his cargo for the fall season, taking now about 1,000 bushels less than he did during the summer months. If more captains would act on this principle, says a contemporary, there would be fewer losses reported every fall; and which we say, ditto, ditto. The evidence in the Asia case goes to show that independently of the vessel being seaworthy or otherwise, she was outrageously overloaded on her last and fatal trip.

Referring to the working of the Pilmoll act in England, the Globe gives these figures as the record of six years since it came into force—83 iron steamships detained as unsafe; 404 sailing vessels detained or stopped altogether as unsafe; and besides these 228 cases of overloading, the far greater number of the vessels detained for overloading having been steamers. It is not enough that lake steamers carrying passengers be inspected to see whether they be unsafe; but also that all cases of overloading be sharply looked after and summarily dealt with.

COMPETITION IN PROSPECT. The report comes from Montreal that last week three influential gentlemen from near the border line between Manitoba to the north and Minnesota and Dakota to the south were in that city on an important railway mission. This mission of theirs is nothing less than the promotion of arrangements for the opening up of a new line of railway into Manitoba, in connection with certain American railways and the Grand Trunk, to compete with the Canadian Pacific. In order to make contact a considerable length of new road would have to be built from West Lynn on the boundary eighty miles to Grand Forks, thence in a direct line as possible to Duluth, with which both land and water communication with the seaboard are already secured. The gentlemen from the west say that they are bound to have the new route, whoever builds and operates it, and they offer to the Grand Trunk the first chance of taking up the scheme.

The question now is, will the Grand Trunk take it up or stand off and decline? In the absence of information from inner circles, we should say that the Grand Trunk will most probably take hold of the scheme and push it through. This surmise of ours may be promptly disproved by the next batch of telegraphic dispatches; but we may say at present that to take hold of this enterprise of competition with the syndicate

would be thoroughly in accord with Grand Trunk policy as we have known it during these few years past, or argue since this policy took on the strong and aggressive character which it now maintains. Against tremendous obstacles, the opposition of Vanderbilt included, the Grand Trunk has already forced its own independent way into Chicago. Will Sir Henry Tyler and Mr. Hickson be content to stop there, or is it not more likely that the same ambition which impelled them to push their way so far west will ere long drive them further still? The Grand Trunk has already many miles of road on American soil—from Portland to the Quebec province boundary line, and from Port Huron to Detroit, and to Chicago. Looking at the wonderful prospects of the great Northwest as a cattle and grain exporting region, why should the Grand Trunk stop at Chicago? Why not push on still further west—to Duluth, to St. Paul and Manitoba? Following this conquest of this year the Grand Trunk can now command millions of money; its credit in London is practically unlimited. Perhaps the thing which we have thus outlined is not destined to be; but we see no substantial reason why it should not be. As great railway projects are in these days driven ahead with railway speed, the project may not have long to wait for the settlement of all doubts with regard to this important matter.

ABOUT LOAN COMPANIES. We do not know that those persons are far wrong who hold that loan companies have been an unmitigated evil to Canada. The whole country is mortgaged up to the eyes to banks, farms, city and town property alike. If a loan is too dear it is a direct loss, and we hold that in far too many instances the money advanced to our people by these loan companies has been got at too high a price. Besides the straight eight per cent—until recently the lowest rate—there are lawyers' fees, and loss of time. If a farmer who raises money on his place counted up the time he lost in "running to town" about his loan, the fees he had to pay the lawyers and the valuers, the registrars and the one and another, he would find that twelve per cent paid on a loan would be the rate he paid on his loan.

One reason why interest is so high is that the loan companies are extravagantly administered. Directors and managers are paid large salaries, palatial offices are put up and rash financial ventures are made—the cost of all which have to come out of the borrower. We must have cheaper interest—transatlantic rates as nearly as possible—and we must have cheaper management.

A NATIONAL CURRENCY. From the Meaford Mirror. A revision of Canadian currency is, we believe, an absolute necessity in the interests of the people. We were unqualifiedly glad to notice a week or two since that some of our ablest newspapers, notably the Toronto World, the St. Catharines Journal, the Montreal Shareholder, and others were interesting themselves in the matter and supplying facts on money for the digestion of the electorate. We have no wish to be classed among alarmists, but if there be one thing more than another that we require for the financial safety of the people of Canada it is that the federal government shall issue all money and everything intended to pass current as money. Under the present system "shaving" is the rule, not the exception. You receive a bill of the banks in Nova Scotia and it is subjected in Ontario to a discount of 8 per cent, and the same for a bill of the Prince Edward Island banks; 7 per cent on a British Columbia bill; 5 on a Newfoundland note, and very often the Quebec bank bills are refused, except at a discount. But this is not all. The government which charters the banks does not even make the notes they issue legal tender, and a consequence of this is that unless you present gold or diamond notes to the receiver-general you can get small bills, which are only issued by the dominion.

And the result of all this is that bank notes do very little towards regulating the circulating wants of the country. In Meaford itself, small as its business is compared with that of some of the cities, the inconvenience arising out of the state of things is felt severely. Week after week passed and one seldom sees anything in the way of a bank note except those of the denominations issued by the banks—from \$5 to \$50. Again, in the United States Canadian bank bills are subjected to a heavy discount, and not without some show of reason. The banks of issue in the dominion are so numerous and are scattered over so wide an extent of territory that it might be fairly argued that this would be a loss to the United States people to accept them at par. There is no sound reason why this should not all be changed by an extension of the Dominion note system, first introduced by Sir Alexander Galt in the face of fierce opposition from the banks—a system which, so far as it goes, has been of wonderful advantage to the trade and commerce of the dominion. There should be only one bank of issue in the country. The power to issue notes should rest solely in the dominion government. Our money would then assume a national character, and, if the anomaly of dominion notes redeemable in Halifax being shaved if presented for redemption in Toronto were remedied, our currency would be the same from one end of this great country to the other. And that is not all; the notes, backed as they would be by the credit of the entire nation, besides the amount of specie held for their redemption, would soon be as good as gold with the United States and very shortly in England. On the minor point—the additional issue of fractional currency—we perfectly agree with our contemporaries. And especially with the World in its remarks on this point. It says: "For the want of small bills our merchants suffer considerable loss. We in common with Toronto statesmen and very short-sighted speakers on this question with experience [so can we]. Every week we receive a

considerable portion of our subscription money in stamps, and these are subject to a discount of five or ten per cent, when we sell them to the stamp vendors. Stamp vendors would avoid this loss—in the aggregate a heavy loss to newspapers, publishers and others who get many small remittances. We earnestly trust that Sir Leonard Tilley, who has already done some considerable service to the country in this direction, may work out the details and submit some scheme at the next session for the approval of parliament whereby the government alone would have the power to issue money in Canada.

SMALL CHANGE AND SIR FRANCIS HICKSON. (To the Editor of the World.) Sir: I note that one of your correspondents on the currency question assumes that there is no lack of fractional currency in Canada. When I said this, Mr. Editor, I felt inclined to wish that the writer would turn retail storekeeper in Toronto, and then he would soon find out how false his assumption is. The fact is that the want of small change is quite a tax upon shopkeepers, for continually you find a five or ten dollar bill offered you after some small five or ten cent purchase, and the shopkeeper not having change and the amount being so small, the customer is requested to drop it in when he is passing—this he or she sometimes does and sometimes does not—and the sometimes—does not—is often enough to make quite an amount at the year's end. Indeed, I am positive that if the amount lost in this way by the trading community of Toronto in a single day could be ascertained, it would foot up to quite a sum. And I have seen enough to convince me that there are people in Toronto—mainly of the feminine gender—who when they get a \$5 or \$10 bill use it while for the express purpose of getting five, ten and fifteen cent articles they never intend to pay for. The fact is there is no more crying want of large storekeepers than plenty of fractional currency to make small change.

The 25 cent stamp, which we owe to the financial genius of Sir Francis Hicks, as his method of ridding the commercial community of the silver nuisance, was a boon that I often think has never been appreciated and acknowledged as it ought to have been. Time was when every hundred dollars of silver was subject to a tax of two, three and four dollars, before it could be converted into bankable money. Yet the man who relieved the trading community of this tax has never had his act appreciated or acknowledged; while the public is ever ready to worship at the shrine of the millionaire who amasses a fortune for himself. Moreover, concerning this 25-cent stamp, it is to be taken into account that there are hundreds of them destroyed in circulation and which never therefore return for redemption, and are to that extent clear profit to the government.

MORE OF ROSENBAUM'S WORK GIRLS. (To the Editor of the World.) Sir: With reference to an article which appeared in your issue of last Saturday headed "How our shop girls are treated and paid," I must confess it was not a very creditable or business-like act of this Hebrew stationer to engage the young woman in question a week or so before the exhibition with the understanding (as I have been informed) of giving her permanent employment and discharging her without recompensing her for the whole of her time—and then to turn her for the paltry dollar which she was justly entitled to—the young woman gave back the dollar, so as to avoid being postponed upon (whenever she appeared on the street) by this Hebrew or his wife. Now, Sir, I have enquired into this matter, and ascertained from Mr. Rosenbaum's employees that it is customary for him to engage help, on condition that they serve two or three weeks for nothing. There are two sisters at present in his employ who have done this, and not having relations in the city paid \$20 per week for board, and are only receiving from \$4 to \$4.50 per week wages and long hours at that, a paltry amount for young women to pay board and washing and appear respectably dressed, as they do to their credit, for they are very tidy, industrious young women, well deserving of a more generous and worthy employer. Another instance of Rosenbaum's selfishness as there was a young woman in his employ last winter who served four weeks without pay for her services, and was prostrated on a bed of sickness for weeks through being compelled to stand outside (to solicit customers into the shop), exposed to the severest cold winds of the arctic, and strange to say he was not mean enough to offer her employment after she recovered from her illness; still such men as this are patronized by our citizens. In conclusion, I am surprised that the working girls of our city should be so dilatory in making their wrongs known, when they are well aware that the columns of the press are open to the working class.

SHOP GIRL. (To the Editor of the World.) Sir: I have read with interest your article on the treatment of shop girls, and I am glad to see that you have given them the credit they deserve. I am sure that the working girls of our city should be so dilatory in making their wrongs known, when they are well aware that the columns of the press are open to the working class.

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