

The Weekly Ontario

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G. O. Herby, Editor-in-Chief

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MR. BIRREL ON BOOKS

Mr. Birrel, Secretary of State for Ireland, is a literary man of high distinction. The duties of his office, particularly at this time, necessarily make him one of the busiest of public men, yet he finds time to vary his political activities with addresses on literary subjects which always command a large audience. Recently he had some things to say at a meeting held in connection with the annual conference of the Yorkshire Village Library, about the reading of books, which is as true as they are humorous. Mr. Birrel complained of the exaggeration of literary men, and said:

"You know there is really a good deal of humbug written about books, about the company of books, and the divine solace of books, and all the rest of it. When you look carefully into the matter you will find that most of these fine raptures are not the heartfelt effusions, the eager pious ejaculations of readers. Not at all they are the carefully compiled and slightly overdone productions smelling of the lamp of authors. It is not the readers who have written all these pretty things: it is the authors."

Speaking of the choice of books, he did not know that anybody was entitled to "set himself up as judge of other people." There was a contest always going on between the old and the new, the approved taste and the unapproved taste of their daughters' taste. "Never try to keep the new out," he urged; "you cannot do it. Each generation will have its own stand in literary matters and in authors. I remember I was a sore cross to my father in my choice of books, and I am free to come, in the absence of my son, that I am often amazed at his."

But, as the Westminster Gazette points out, every generation has its own taste. The reading of the son is always a trial to the patience of the father, who looks back upon the books which were the foundation of his own literary knowledge. The new generation always appears preverse in its taste. "What schoolboy of to-day, for example could appreciate Sandford and Merton, which was a classic to the good boy of the Victorian era? Happily there are certain books which are common to all the succeeding generations of readers. These must be the common ground. Outside that comparatively small field each age will have its own tastes in literature, and he is a wise father who accepts the situation, and is content to see his son browsing where he will, certain that the essential thing is that there shall be the love of reading at all."

THE SPENDTHRIFTS

When the United States undertook to cut down its tariff there was a great outcry from parties interested in keeping up protection. Business would be ruined, and it would not be possible to raise sufficient revenue to carry on the government. But the fiscal year has just closed, and the prophecies of disaster do not appear to have materialized. So far as business is concerned, manufacturers and merchants appear to be prospering. Republican papers still talk about depression, but to the average observer the depression is not visible.

In the matter of revenue, however, there can be no room for dispute. It exceeds by \$22,000,000 the amount estimated. There is a surplus of \$30,000,000 over ordinary expenditures. The only extra expenditure contemplated is a sum of \$35,000,000 for the Panama Canal. Even with this counted in, there will only be a deficit of \$5,000,000, which, the Government announces, can easily be taken care of from the accumulated surplus in the treasury. Had the income tax been in operation for a full year, instead of only a part of it, the result would have been still more satisfactory, and the slight deficit would have been wiped out.

In contrast to this record the reports from the Canadian Finance Department, show a drop in the revenue for the first two months of the fiscal year of more than \$50,000,000 as compared with April and May of last year. The actual figures were for the two months of 1913, \$26,964,374; for the same two months of 1914, \$21,572,161. It was in the Customs Department that the greatest loss appeared—no less than \$5,220,674. Then there was a drop of \$400,000 in the Inland Revenue returns, besides a slight falling off in the receipts from the Intercolonial.

The United States brought down its tariff walls, and by its reduced tariff has facilitated

trade, and increased its revenue. In Canada we "stand pat" on the old protection idea, and our revenue diminishes. The contrast is a lesson for us all. Not that it will make much difference to our government. Public expenditures will continue on a scale of magnificent figures. Col. Hughes will still continue to put up armories in little villages, and the Minister of Public Works will not cease his activity in building where it will do his friends the most good. We may have less money to spend, but Mr. White can borrow some more at a high rate of interest. The Conservative-Nationalist system of government may not be much good in improving business, but it has no equal in its capacity for spending. The contrast between the results of the fiscal laws of Canada and the United States will not teach the Conservative-Nationalist combination anything. But it may teach the people something.

EARNINGS OF THE DOLLAR

No financial genius is required to make \$2 do the work of \$1. Success comes in the proportion that \$1 may safely be made to perform the ordinary work of \$2.

Harnessing money so that it will work for you even while you sleep ought to be a matter of lively interest. And the less money you have the more eager you should be to hitch it up to something.

Money lying around loose is a temptation. It usually not only loses itself, but leads you into some form of extravagance.

Buy something that puts the dollar to work, and let it be something that gives the dollar a steady job. That means you must not skylark or try to make your dollar earn the wages of three dollars.

The swindler always promises that he can attach your money to a plow that will turn a much bigger crop than is legitimate—that his way will make your dollar earn as much as three of Rockefeller's.

About six cents a year is all you should expect any dollar to earn for you, and it must work night and day to do that. When you try to coax it or compel it to earn 20 cents a year it is very likely to balk, and just as like as not you will never see your dollar again, let alone the 20 cents.

Most of the failures in big business and in small are due to the fact that so many men are unwilling to put the dollar to work, and be satisfied with a legitimate and reasonable profit.

—Salem Capital Journal.

As a newspaper stunt the Boston Journal set a new pace when the day after the fire at Salem and while firemen were still fighting the burning ruins, it sent a photographer in a flying machine, who sailed over the still burning city and secured by far the most novel pictures ever used in a newspaper. It is an example that will be followed, and pictures of disasters taken from airships will be a common feature of the papers in the very near future.

Last month a party of 50 farmers from South Africa made a tour of England for the purpose of studying agriculture as exemplified in that country. Their visit was made possible by the invitation extended by Sir Owen Phillips, the Chairman of the Union Castle line, who invited fifty farmers to be the guests of his company in the summer of the present year. The party was chosen by agricultural associations, ten being selected from each of the four Provinces of the Union and ten from Rhodesia. Their first impressions appear to have been overwhelming amazement and delight at the wonderful greenness of the fields and the number of British trees, coupled with envy of the rainfall. "We were fighting a bitter war only a few years ago," said one of them, "and now at peace we enjoy the genuine friendship and assistance of our fellow British subjects. This peace is the biggest thing of all."

Denmark has been termed the paradise of the small proprietor, and The London Chronicle in giving the reason, says: "Nearly two-thirds of her population make a living—from the land one-half of the agriculturists being their own masters. The secret of success has lain in technical education and co-operation. Every farmer big or little, belongs to one of the great co-operative associations which guide him in the care of land and cattle, and dispose of his produce the best advantage without the needless waste of competition. The result of the system has been to make Denmark one of the richest countries in Europe in proportion to her size."

The 44-page Food Supplement issued by The Times yesterday—a journalistic achievement on which we must congratulate our contemporary—really ought to have been issued by the Free Trade Union. There is something

quasi-miraculous about the vast machinery of commerce, which under Free Trade has fed the population of Great Britain. Our teeming millions live on a relatively small island, which could not produce food for them by any system of national economy at present in vogue, and yet they not only are fed, but they get a large and varied supply of practically all the world's food-stuffs, and get it at lower average prices than any nation in the world. Famines have been abolished; a bad harvest in one country only means that we buy more from another; and we have eloquent testimonies to the effects of improved feeding in the fall of the death-rate from consumption ("peculiarly influenced by nutrition," notes the Times), the disappearance of typhus ("pre-eminently the hunger fever") and the decline of pauperism by over fifty percent, accompanied by a raise in the expenditure on paupers per head of over 150 per cent.

—London Chronicle.

Mr. Lloyd George has made a characteristic reply to a recent attack upon his finance by Mr. J. J. Hill, the American Railroad magnate. The real significance of Mr. Hill's speech, the Chancellor observed, was the favorable reception it got from the Tory press in England. Mr. Hill lamented the fact that British trade, commerce and industry were being destroyed by Lloyd George finance, and by what he calls the false humanitarianism of British social legislation. Mr. Lloyd George said:

"What does he mean by the false humanitarianism of our social legislation. As long as old people, who had spent their strength in building up great fortunes for men like this, at the end of their days were driven to the workhouse or to starve in their homes, as long as workmen died for lack of proper medical aid or because they could not afford the rest which was necessary in order to enable them to recover their strength—as long as these things happen, then I suppose this benignant financial potentate regarded that as true humanitarianism."

Mr. Hill will find, says Mr. Lloyd George "with all reverence," that "the Power that governs the world does not punish with bankruptcy and ruin nations that do kindnesses to the old, the feeble, the broken, and the sick."

How often it happens that the inventor of some ingenious device or machine that comes into general use dies poor, while the manufacturer who buys the invention for a mere song, proceeds to make a huge fortune out of it. The Eastman Kodak Company of Rochester, N. Y. has just given the world a very pleasing exception to that all-too-common rule. Amateur photographers, after taking numerous snapshots of scenes and people which they have wished to keep as souvenirs of their travels, have often been greatly annoyed because when those same pictures were developed and printed they have been unable to identify some of them. For many years the employes in the Eastman laboratories had tried in vain to make some device that would obviate that difficulty. Without the knowledge of the Eastman Company, an unknown, struggling young inventor, named H. J. Gaisman, was working on that problem in a small laboratory in his own house in New York. After four years of his experimentation perfected a film, which under the pressure of a lead pencil would let in enough light to enable one to write the title of the picture on the film in the camera, at the time the picture is taken, and the title appears in white when the prints are taken from the negative. The young man then took his invention to Mr. George Eastman, the inventor of the Kodak and the President of the famous company bearing his name, who proceeded to estimate the value of this longed for invention in a fashion that is so unusual as to be worthy of public record and praise. Mr. Eastman, first put down a suitable valuation of the young inventor's time for the four years he had spent on the invention. That sum being arrived at, Mr. Eastman then doubled that amount. Next he doubled the cost of the inventor's laboratory and the materials he had used, and finally he added a large enough sum to make the young man independent for life giving him a cheque for \$300,000! Mr. Gaisman told a New York reporter last week that he would have accepted \$10,000, and that he would have jumped at \$50,000! His experience is a praise worthy exception to the tales we have all heard of the heartless and heart-breaking exploitation of inventors.

DON'T FORGET THE OLD FOLKS

Nay don't forget the old folks boys, they've not forgotten you:
Though years have passed since you were home
The old hearts still are true.
And not an evening passes by they haven't the desire
To see your faces once again and hear your footsteps nigher.
You're young and buoyant and for you Hope beckons with her hands;
And life spreads out a waveless sea that laps but tropic strands;
The world is all before your face, but let your

memories turn
To where fond hearts still cherish you and loving bosoms yearn.

No matter what your duties are nor what your place in life,
There's never been a time they'd not assume your load of strife;
And shrunken shoulders, trembling hands, and forms racked by disease,
Would bravely dare the grave to bring to you the pearl of peace.

So don't forget the old folks, boys, they've not forgotten you.
Though years have passed since you were home,
The old hearts still are true.
And write them now and then to bring the light into their eyes,
And make the world glow once again and bluer gleam the skies.

—Will T. Hale, in Tennessee Farmer.

A BOOK AGENT

Mr. Daniel Webster Riley, had a smile he valued highly:
Said 'twas worth a million dollars, which I rather think was true:
For so many men's moustaches hide such unbecoming gashes
Where a tooth or so is missing of the normal thirty-two!

It was down in Indiana, which has given many a man a
A start in politics or letters, that our hero's life began.

Where they say, "Yes I have saw it" which is surely more adroit
Then to say "I seen him saw it," as they do in Michigan.

Then he learned that oratory was the toilsome path in glory.

He must learn to read before he could attain to place and power;
So at 25 we see him realizing boyhood's dream,
Selling "Gems of song and story plucked from poetry's bright power!"

There was lovely Minnehaha, Pocahontas and her papa,
And the merry tones 'tra la la that the minstrels used to trill;

There we saw the midnight canter of the bibulo us O'Shanter
And the one that stopped instanter down by Sleepy Hollow Hill.

"Here are gems from Scott and Clibbey, Mrs. Holmes and Laura Libby,
Mr. Crabbe and Mr. Cribby with their melodies sublime;
So through 700 pages with the sages of the ages
We descend by easy stages down the golden stream of Time."

"Now," continued Mr. Riley, while he watched me very slyly,
To detect the secret workings of my mind,
"For a man of your position and extensive erudition
This here good de looks edition has been specially designed."

Just as soon as I am able I shall buy a centre table,
Made to match the gorgeous label of the book that now is mine;
And I've this to say for Riley; His opinion cost me highly.
But his brand of oratory was exceptionally fine.

—F. L. Ross, in Chicago Record-Herald.

THE SACRED HOUR

"God bless mamma," she says at night,
"And God bless papa" her childish prayer,
And we stand by her bed in the fading light,
And look at the little one kneeling there;
About her shoulders her tresses fall,
Like fine spun gold is each yellow curl,
And a gentle silence steals over all,
As we listen there to our baby girl.

I reckon the evening hour must be
A wonderful hour for God above;
For everywhere He looks He'll see
Our little ones bending to him in love,
And the angel choirs must pause to hear
The soft, sweet prayers that the children say;
With the little voices so sweet and clear
When "God bless mamma," they nightly pray.

And God must smile as He looks below,
At the little ones in their robes of white
Kneeling there in the evening glow,
Asking His care through the hours of night,
For this must be His most sacred hour,
When the heavenly silence most perfect seems
As the children ask for His gracious power
To keep them safe in the land of dreams.

—Detroit Free Press.

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