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TALES OF THE TOWN.

*"I must have liberty
Withal, as large a charter as the wind
To blow on whom I please."*

ONLY secondary in importance to the decision of the Behring's Sea arbitrators is the crossing of swords—or perhaps more properly speaking, pens—between ex-President Ellis of the Agricultural Society, and President Higgins of the tramway. Mr. Ellis, with several others, attributed the partial failure of the Exposition to a defective tramway service, and quite naturally Mr. Higgins took up the cudgels for his much-abused company. THE HOME JOURNAL so far has not taken part in the controversy, but as the evidence of the persons to the dispute appears to be all in, I feel it my duty to pass on the same and award judgment.

In the first place, it is strongly in evidence that the exhibition was not a success. The failure might be attributed to many causes. It could be said that the hard times contributed toward this failure; again it is alleged that the exhibition was held too early in the year to secure the best results, and lastly, (and I observe that my learned friend, the editor of the *Times*, takes this view of the question) it is held by some that the means for transporting the immense crowd to the grounds were utterly inadequate, therefore, but few could be present—or, in other words, as Judge Drabble of Comox learnedly remarks in one of his judgments, *causa sine qua non*. The lack of attendance may, consequently be attributed to any one or all of the causes just laid down.

It is quite evident, and I think

neither Mr. Ellis nor Mr. Higgins will dispute the fact, that a fair without persons to attend it would practically amount to no great affair (*vide* Victoria correspondence *Vancouver World*); on the other hand, supposing there were people who under other circumstances would have attended said fair, but were prevented from so doing by reason of a defective tramcar service, it would to my mind constitute a very important factor in the failure of the aforesaid exhibition. But it is argued, on the evidence of two reporters for the press, who were presumably sober for the time being, but who went out to the grounds in hacks, that the tramcar service was simply delightful and most efficient, and the manager of the company quotes figures to substantiate this proposition; but as against this latter testimony, is the evidence of many witnesses, who got left, that the service was defective. This to any reasonable mind should be conclusive.

The other reasons advanced for the failure of the exhibition—namely hard times and the fact that the show was held too early in the year—are in a measure foreign to the question at issue, but no doubt contributed toward the general result. I therefore conclude that, combined with these causes, the defective tramcar service was in a great measure responsible for the lack of attendance at the fair the five days on which it was holden.

Apart from the legal aspect of the case, it appears quite clear that if next year's show is to be a success the management must add many new features which have heretofore been neglected. In this connection, I was much struck with the force of Mr.

Falconer's remarks at the meeting of the agricultural board. This gentleman has had much experience with exhibitions in the east and what he advocates should be received with some degree of attention. An exhibition by itself possesses but little attraction for the ordinary individual, and requires many other features to draw the crowd. And no doubt if the tramcar company can be shown that additional service is required, they will give it, and might even go so far as to furnish a "10-minute service and a 5-cent fare."

I heard a good story on Mr. Alex. Begg, the other day, which will bear repetition. Mr. Begg is well known in the literary world, having written several popular novels in his day. When the Manitoba Historical Society was first organized Mr. Begg was one of the leading spirits, and to him was entrusted the preparation of the constitution and by-laws. He prepared them and presented them for the due consideration of the scientific circle. With great solemnity, the different paragraphs were read to the assembled wisdom, and adopted, until he read one which set forth that "the annual meeting of this Society shall be held on the first Tuesday in February in each year, unless such day should fall on a Sunday, or other holiday," and then even the most profound and straight-laced amongst them gave way to laughter, and the author of the merriment retired in utter confusion. But he made a good secretary, notwithstanding this little slip.

Among all the smokers of this city, those who take theirs in the form of a cigar, or puff the horrid

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