

## THE HURON SIGNAL

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**GODERICH, ONTARIO.**  
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FRIDAY, JULY 20th, 1883.

## THE EAST HURON PETITION.

As we anticipated, the petitioner in the East Huron election case is not anxious to face the music. At the request of his lawyers the trial, which was to have come off inside of a week, has been postponed, and the order granting the postponement is most indefinite in its extension of time. The chief reason argued by the petitioners in their petition, that two of the witnesses—in fact, the principal witnesses upon whom the petitioner relied—were out of the country, one being in England and the other in California.

A poor excuse is said to be better than none at all, and it happens so in this instance. Had the witnesses who are now absent been present, it is quite possible some other pretext for asking for a postponement of the trial would have been in order. The fact is, the petitioner's friends are not so sure that Mr. Gibson, M.P., would not carry East Huron by a much larger majority were a new election held at the present time. The election in Brant has taken the bombast out of them, so far as bragging of bye-elections is concerned. Besides, the results so far reaped from the election trials have not been nearly so satisfactory as their ardent hopes and the bluster of the Mail had led them to believe. The petition seed, which was so widely sown after the 27th of Feb., has not turned out according to calculation. Indications are, thus far, of a hopeless failure in the crop, so to speak.

For these reasons the action of the petitioner in asking for a postponement is a surprise to no one acquainted with the case; and the postponement of trial looks very like one way of letting the protest down easy.

## THE POORHOUSE QUESTION.

Several articles on the poorhouse question have appeared in these columns and in those of our local contemporary. Although we have our differences on political questions—and differ strongly at times—yet on the subject of the necessity for an infirmary or industrial farm in which the indigent aged and infirm of the county can peacefully pass their declining years, we see eye to eye. So far, with one or two exceptions, the outside press of the county has not taken hold of the question in that earnest manner which we had wished for, but the signs are that the time is not distant when united action will be taken throughout the county in the interest of humanity, so that a thorough ventilation of the matter will result. Our carefully edited contemporary, the *Scotcher Express*, last week raised its voice on the question, and endorsed its utterance the position taken by THE SIGNAL from the first. In speaking of the unfortunate aged and infirm indigents "who are now the sole occupants of the gaol, and whose misfortunes, are and poverty surely do not make criminals of them, the *Express* says:—

"They are committed as vagrants, but they are not vagrants in the proper sense of the term, nor as recognized by law, and it must require an undue stretching of the conscience of the magistrate who makes the conviction to classify them as such. They are, no doubt, poor, homeless, destitute and unfortunate, but they are just of that class which require, and should receive the paternal care of the municipality to which they belong, and the municipality should be forced to support them. The county gaol were never designed nor intended for hospitals or houses of refuge, and they do not possess any of the requisite facilities for such. They are designed and intended for the confinement of the lawless and vicious of the population. These parties have not broken any of the laws of the county, and they have committed no crime. They are simply poor or diseased, and can be provided for much better at home than in the gaol, and it is an act of heartless cruelty to have them incarcerated as criminals. The gaol authorities should be prohibited by law from receiving them, and the municipal authorities should be forced to provide for them, and failing to properly do so should be subject to the most severe penalties. There are always some municipal policies which, through parsimony, neglect this duty, and throw the burden of supporting these unfortunate population upon their neighbors, by having them incarcerated in the county gaol, through the misapprehension of vagrancy. This sort of thing should be stopped. It is contrary to the infirmities themselves, and it is an injustice to those who do their duty in this respect. If municipal officers knew that by neglecting to provide for the poor of their

their municipality they made themselves liable to severe personal penalties, they would be more careful in the discharge of this duty, the nuisance of having these unfortunate people incarcerated in the gaols would be stopped, and the sense of the public would not be shocked by having these institutions turned into hospitals for incurables and alms houses for the destitute. There is no municipality that could not get even the worst cases properly provided and cared for if they were willing to incur the necessary expenditure, and these who through parsimony or negligence fail in the performance of this duty, should be forced to it by the requirements of the law.

Owing to the strike of operators, the telegraph business of the country has been paralyzed since Thursday morning at 9 o'clock. A few despatches have passed over the wires at Toronto, but have been taken by green hands. The strike prevails both in Canada and the United States.

## THE BABY AND THE EDITOR.

The Journalist Comes out Second Best in the Contest—How the Baby made him "Knuckle Down" and Acknowledge Her Supremacy.

On Monday last we were quietly sitting in our sanctum, forming thought upon the threatened embroglio between England and France, which the cablegrams in the dailies led us to believe was of a serious nature, when a matron of our acquaintance tapped at the office door and said:

"Mr. Editor, would you kindly allow me to leave the perambulator, with the baby in it, here for a few minutes. I would like to do a little shopping, and it is somewhat irksome to wheel the carriage in and out of the stores. You needn't be afraid, for she is the sweetest-tempered little thing in town—and her pa'll be ever so much obliged to you for your kindness."

"Oh, we're not afraid of the little girl,—we never were afraid of girls. We—we—that is to say—we prefer girls—although we haven't any of our own. Of course, of course! We are delighted. It'll give a status to the office to know that the matrons think our office a nice summer resort for their darlings, and the little ones rejoice in the seclusion that a sanctum grants, and insist upon having it as eagerly as they would put in prior claims for Mrs. Winslow's soothing syrup, or want a full ownership in the moon. By all means, ma'am, leave the baby. We want to have somebody's darling to illumine the office, and we'd as soon have yours as any one else's."

The lady smiled, and said: "I am ever so much obliged to you, Mr. Editor. Good bye, pet, (this was said to the baby). I'll be back presently, dear." And she left the little miss, and passed out to her shopping.

After the lady had gone, we raised our eyes from the telegraphic despatches for an instant and glanced at the young female in the buggy. Our thoughts crossed the Atlantic in about a second, and centered on the occupant of the baby-carriage. She seemed to be lost in deep wonderment, and after taking in the ceiling, the sides of the room, the desks, the chairs, the newspapers, the waste basket, the shears, the paste pot, &c., in a bewildering gaze, she fixed her great dark eyes upon us, as much as to say, "Well, who are you, anyhow?"

We told her, in answer to the enquiring glance, that we were the editor of THE SIGNAL, but the information didn't appear to make her feel a bit pleased. In fact she squeezed up her little mouth, and let a faint wail come forth, which, together with a tear from each eye, showed that we had her sympathy just as much as if she had said, "Poor man! I pity you from the bottom of my heart—I do, really!"

We then gave her to understand that weeping had a tendency to destroy good looks—that she could easily see that we never wept,—and immediately she burst forth in a loud laugh, as if there was a joke somewhere.

She was now in pretty good condition, and once more admired the furniture and other contents, evincing a decided interest for the mutilated bottle, which, with its nickel-plated top, evidently reminded her of something she had seen somewhere else,—perhaps at home with the nurse.

We left her to her cogitation, and once more buried ourselves in the European question, through the medium of the dailies, and for about ten minutes a beautiful tranquillity pervaded the sanctum, and a supreme quietness pervaded the sanctum.

But we were doomed to a sudden awakening from our state of blissful quiet. Two or three little girls in passing on the sidewalk, looked in at the open door, and beheld the baby. One of them immediately cried, "Oh, look at the lovely baby in the editor's office!"—as if lovely babies had no business there—and they all immediately rushed in, to kiss and cuddle the little girl.

Now, the little girl was all right and proper so long as there was only herself and the editor in the sanctum, but when strange young ladies appeared upon the scene that jealous feeling, which seems to be hereditary with all Eve's fair daughters seemed to take possession of her, and she at once raised a mani-

festation in the shape of an indignant yell.

The intruders immediately retired in good order, leaving the sanctum in possession of the baby.

We told the young lady then that it was all a mistake that the other little girls came in; that we didn't care anything about them; and that she was the sweetest and best little popsy-wopsy that the sun had ever shone upon. This had the effect of quietening her somewhat, and finding that we had been comparatively successful we then proceeded to wipe her little cheeks and chin with our best crushed-strawberry silk pocket-handkerchief. This fashionable color caught her fancy at once, and the howl ceased, to be succeeded by a heavy sob, ever and anon.

Thus far had we been successful, and we began to write to keep the printer's from eating the bread of idleness—a practice of ours, by the way—and were beginning to flatter ourselves that when the newspaper business, through the workings of science, was superseded by some more electric calling, we could seek peace and quietness as under-nurses in some large establishment for properly training infants, when the pent-up sobbing again gave place to the most terrible yelling, and looking at our charge we discovered her almost apoplectic in the effort to raise the ceiling with her voice. The bright-colored pocket handkerchief had lost its charm, and the feelings of our sweetest-tempered little thing in town—as the doting mother had called her—were finding vent in screams that would cause a steam whistle to hide its head in envy.

What was to be done? We offered her our watch and chain, and she threw the proffered gift on to the floor. A silver napkin ring to be given to the owner "for proving property and paying expenses," was next held up before her. This she at once appropriated without attempting to prove property or tendering pay for charges. But the appropriation did not stop the excitement. She still showed evidence of bad feeling.

At this stage we thought of a plan that had worked well in the sweet long-ago with young lady friends of our acquaintance—we took her on our knee, and called her a "honey-kiss-chunk," and besought her to close her mouth and open her "eyes-e-pieses," and be "a good little girl," &c. The scheme didn't work vigorously, with no other result than to bring her little toothless gums into sore conflict.

We began to sigh for the return of the baby's mother.

It was a problem in our mind whether we or the baby wished most ardently for the return of the mother.

We pressed the baby to our manly bosom, and drenched out to the best of our ability "Hush-a-boy, baby," forgetting for the moment that what we most wanted was to hush a girl baby—when all at once one of the young ladies from over-the-way, who had been attracted by the screams of the little one, stepped into the office, and mildly remarked, "That's a nice way to hold a baby, any how," it is no wonder the poor little thing cried! And she took the noisy little bit of humanity from us and walked off with it in triumph.

We didn't feel a bit annoyed at being thus relieved of the "sweetest-tempered little thing in town," but we hadn't time to be glad, for the young lady who had taken the baby, and who had a bad reputation to the doting mother when she appeared on the scene after half-an-hour's absence.

When she thanked us for our trouble, and excused the annoyance caused by the tantrums of the babe, somehow it made us think that a good many years ago our now old grey head was that of a little child, and that a kind mother had sought on many, many occasions to quiet the cry of distress and thinking of that, and looking at the fond young mother now gazing lovingly on her darling, we could only say:—

"Don't you think, ma'am, we're glad the baby is healthy and good?"

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