

Chas. F. Moberly Bell, Manager of The Times

A Man Who Made and is Making History.

(By L. W. Makovski, in Vancouver Province.)

When I first saw him he was sitting hunched in a chair, with his profile clean cut by the light from a window. He looked the incarnation of unapproachableness, as he glowered at a magazine which he held in both hands, his elbows resting on the arms of the chair. The dome of his big head fringed with gray black hair, and the curve of his Roman nose, set above tightly closed lips, gave me an impression of immense power, while the strong jaw gave him a grim appearance that boded ill for any disturber of his peace. There were many ways of reading a magazine, but never before had I seen any man actually dining off its contents in the way that Mr. Moberly Bell, manager of The London Times, was doing. What it contained I had no idea, but he appeared to give it the same concentrated attention that a student would apply to a complex political problem. I sat back and watched him furtively. He moved easily, sat up, put the magazine on his knees, picked up a paper from a table in front of him and in a moment was deep down in his chair again, apparently oblivious to all the world. In that light and judging by his profile only I remembered Harry Furniss' sketches of Gladstone: when thru the courtesy of Lord Northcliffe I was introduced to him, I saw what William Jennings Bryan, sometime Democratic candidate for the presidency of the United States, may see in his looking glass if his strength matures, and he can slightly elongate his face, and swell his forehead so as to give more depth to his eyes.

Kindness With Strength. On closer inspection and in conversation Mr. Moberly Bell's face loses none of its strength but all its grimness. Instead of the latter there appears a great kindness, that comes

from within the man himself. I should judge that his one weak spot was his great heart, and that children could twist him round their tiny thumbs. He is a big heavily framed man, not stout, but very powerfully built. His health apparently is of the best and yet one of the first things he told me was that in 1866 when he was 18 years old the doctors gave him six months to live. "The day Lord Northcliffe was born," he said, "I went off to Egypt. Cholera was raging there." "Then why choose Egypt?" I asked. "Well, I thought I might as well die of cholera as consumption, and so went into business there." In that sentence he revealed a good deal of his character. He knew he had to die, but the manner of his death did not disturb him in the least. Fear is unknown to him and he takes things as they come with philosophical contentment. If he had died it is quite possible the history of Egypt might have been different, as well as the words of Ismail Pasha to him when he was finally forced to abdicate in 1879. "You have done more to get me deposed than any official." There is a whole volume of history in those words, but it is probably history that only Mr. Bell can write.

A Little of History. He told me many things of those days: of his famous "Well done Condor" telegram to The Times and the consequent fame of Lord Charles Beresford; of a certain telegram recalling Lieutenant Herbert Kitchener to Cyprus from a shooting holiday spent in Egypt, which telegram happened to be in Mr. Bell's pocket until the Cyprus steamer had sailed.

"Kitchener swore at me when I gave it him," he said whimsically, "but I knew the ultimatum to Arabi was to be delivered next day. The consequence was that when Wolsey arrived about the only British officer on the spot was Kitchener; that was the beginning of his Egyptian career."

Truly fate stalks in the person of Mr. Moberly Bell. He has great daring and there are evidently other ways of disregarding orders than putting a telescope to a blind eye.

I asked him how he first became connected with The Times and here again

was something extremely characteristic of the man. "About six months after I arrived in Egypt, when I should have been preparing for my funeral an Italian steamship company started a service to Brindisi, and experimentally I mailed letters to London that way and found I saved a clear two days over the Marseilles route. "I considered who would profit most by that saving and fixed on The Times, Mowbray Morris was the business manager then and I wrote to him suggesting that I send them their eastern papers, but he took no notice. However, I subscribed to papers in China, Australia and India, and had them sent to Alexandria and from there forwarded them to The Times. The papers were delivered in London on Friday instead of Saturday, when the regular Oriental mail was distributed, thus getting extracts into Saturday's instead of Monday's papers. The Times sent me a cheque for £500 and offered me £250 a year to keep up my correspondence. After that I took to politics seriously. I found them too interesting to give up, besides I had always hated business. Just at that time Rivers Wilson, who was financial minister, drafted the Liquidation laws for Egypt. When they were passed he suggested I telegraph the details to The Times. It cost me \$900 to do it, but I made the speculation on my own account and it turned out well."

To me this bit of history showed not only the resourcefulness of the man but also his monumental patience. He marks his quarry down and then without any excitement proceeds to stalk it. He will dine, sleep, and go about his ordinary business but never lose sight of his game. Where another man would go wild with excitement, and lose his head I can imagine Mr. Bell sitting quietly sifting and appraising the value of some speech-making news item than if he were reading a law report. When he makes up his mind to a thing he will not worry about it, or lay spectacular plans to bring about its accomplishment; he believes in persistence to bring about success rather than brilliant coups.

He gave me a kaleidoscopic view of the Egyptian campaigns of Gordon, Stanley, Stewart and other men whose names are writ large across the pages of Egyptian history. Incidentally he also gave me an insight into his vein of almost sardonic humor. Referring to the Sudan campaign he said:

"I would have gone with him, but broke my leg. I was in hospital from September '94, to January '95, with a compound fracture and had to have 21 operations. Eventually the ankle bone was taken out, rendering me lame for the rest of my days. I had that hope made into a heel for my walking stick, so that you see it still supports me. Some of my friends suggested that I better have it made into a cigarette holder, but I feared people might say that whenever I opened my mouth I put my foot in it."

Returns to London. In 1880 Mr. Walter, proprietor of The Times, telegraphed to him to come and help at headquarters for three months. It was just after the Farnley commission. Mr. Bell's action was characteristic. He packed up all his household goods and took his family to England, leaving the dust of Egypt on his feet. "I meant to stay in England anyhow, my children were growing up, and there was their education to be considered," he said. He did stay, for at the end of the three months Mr. Walter asked him to take full charge. He replied that he would try it for a year, as he had had no experience. A less honest and less conscientious man would have accepted the position at once. However, on March 4 next he will have been manager for 20 years. "Lord Northcliffe told me," I said, "that as long as I talked to you of The Times I need not fear you, of my import from such a blood of my blood and bone of my bone," he quoted, and forthwith told me many things of The Thunderer, in which he takes a positively fatherly pride.

Down on the wharf just before the Victoria boat left, I happened to catch another glimpse of the man as he is. A sturdy but rather short laboring man was standing just in front of Mr. Bell, and over his left shoulder sprang a child about a year old. In the press of people the child's head was very close to the editor's eyes. They were gazing into his face curiously. Suddenly it began to talk its own language and apparently Mr. Bell understood exactly what was said. He stooped and for a few moments held an animated conversation with that child. I am sure no one else could have understood a word of what they had to say to each other, but it was evident that it was an affair of deep import from which earnestly Mr. Bell discussed it. I remembered the picture I had drawn in my mind the evening before of the man in the chair and contrasted it with the man standing among the crowd of people, waiting for a boat, talking animatedly with a baby. The latter showed where his weakness lay as well as his strength.

I have tried to portray the man as he is by mapping bits of his conversation which to my mind tend to show his character. Of all the intensely interesting things he told me, of the history he has made and will make, for as he says "The Times makes history," of his pride in the paper, and its influence, of the present government and its policy, I have said no more. The only other glimpse of one great Englishman who in his own quiet, persistent way helps work out his country's destiny.

A Knight in Petticoats. From The New York Press. Queen Alexandra is the only woman who ever has been made a knight. It was not until 1862 that an order was given to women, and then the Order of Victoria and Albert was established. This is divided into four classes, two being restricted to women in the royal family, the other two being open only to persons. Queen Victoria, however, confined the order strictly to her relatives and friends, and not a single woman has been decorated since Edward and Alexandra began their reign. The Order of the Crown of India is bestowed on women who have been associated with government work in India, either themselves or thru their husbands.

WURTTEMBERG TOWN A MODEL COMMUNITY

Workingmen Live in Comfort and Happiness in Ulm, Germany—The Enterprise a Financial Success.

Some twenty years ago the City of Ulm, which is in Wurttemberg, undertook to work out a reform in the matter of living conditions for wage earners. The city owned a tract of land and it erected upon it modest little houses, each with a small yard and garden, and these the city sold on easy terms to laborers.

Other improvements were, of course, made in the way of sewers, parks and pavements, and all of them have added to the betterment of living conditions of the city, but it is claimed that the workingmen's homes, more than anything else are responsible for the conditions now found in Ulm. And what are those conditions? These: The death rate is lower than anywhere else in Wurttemberg. The infant mortality has been greatly lessened. The tax rate is lower than anywhere else. There is less crime and fewer paupers. There are more contented people and the rising generation gives promise of eclipsing any other generation that has been produced in the country.

Houses Paid For. In addition to all of this the city has lost nothing in the transaction in the way of finances. The houses have all been paid for, so the city is not out a penny. In fact it made a small profit on the places. It receives more taxes than if the improvements had not been made, and the cost of policing that section of Ulm and the expenses attendant upon the fire department and police department generally are not so great for that section of the city.

Erecting More Houses. After this twenty-year demonstration the city proposes to go into the home-building business in earnest. The proposition is approved by the people all over the city and money will be borrowed and additional land purchased and a lot of workingmen's homes erected. It is believed by the people who have studied the matter that Ulm has solved a very hard problem and that it has solved it in a way that other cities and countries will have to adopt if they are to produce the best results in citizenship and wealth.—Dayton News

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POLO PLAYERS COMING.

International Matches Promised for Next Year.

Altho the present intention of the English polo players who will visit the United States next summer is to play only friendly matches, there is a likelihood of the visit resulting in a challenge for the international championship, much in the same manner as the Meadowbrook team last season challenged the Hurlingham club at the last moment. Captain Wilson proposes to bring over a team composed entirely of army officers, all first-class players, who will make a side as strong as could be gathered in England. There seems no doubt the trip was promoted by a desire to retrieve to some extent England's failure in the recent international matches as the attitude of the Hurlingham club in regard to those matches caused dissatisfaction among military poloists, who object to the management of Hurlingham being left practically in the hands of horse dealers. The Miller Brothers, the biggest dealers in polo ponies in England, have control at Hurlingham and Rugby besides at Hurlingham, where the elder brother is polo captain. About sixteen ponies played by the Meadowbrookers actually were bought from or thru the Millers, giving the Americans better chance to place his ponies, which are the best in England, at the disposal of the Englishmen, but absolutely refused unless his brother Charles, who is manager and proprietor of the Hurlingham Club, was given a place on the team. Charles consequently was chosen, but was injured in a trial game and incapacitated. Captain Wilson played in the first match against the Meadowbrookers, and then was dropped for Harry Roch, who is a horse dealer. There was general discontent among poloists over the action of the Miller brothers, which probably will result in Hurlingham in the future playing second and third class ponies, which will be shipped to New York in May with the pick of the other members' ponies.

Bound For Leper-Land. Among many interesting appointments announced at the Commissioning of Cadets at Clapton last week, the most interesting, probably, was that of Cadet Annie Beckley, who was promoted to the rank of captain and given marching orders for the Leper Settlement in Java. Captain Beckley is wise enough to

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