



ONE encouraging feature of this campaign is the emphasis put upon character. People seem to care more than they have at some elections about the character of the men who are asking their franchises. Political opponents take more pains to attack character—to expose facts which cast a baleful light upon character—while political friends feel the necessity of defending character. The old lie that the private character of a public man is nobody's business, will not survive this election. Of course, the private character of the man whom we are asked to lift up before our young men, as the most conspicuous and most honoured "successful man" in the district, matters very seriously. If his character is bad, his immunity from punishment for it will preach a more convincing sermon than all the ministers in the county can preach on all the Sundays of the year; and the text of it will be, "The bad man has an easier path to success than the good man." Yes, easier; for things which would damn a good man, because of their revelation of pharisaism, are only laughed at in a frankly bad man.

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WE should never forget that—while, to battle-scarred cynics like ourselves, the member of Parliament is anything but an awe-inspiring figure—he does cut considerable "dog" in the eyes of the coming generation. The boys look him over to see how a great public man is built. They would like to get the plans and specifications. They are thinking some of being great public men themselves. They hear a lot of talk from molly-coddles who never get on very well in life, about the absolute necessity of keeping away from vicious pleasures; but here is the member of Parliament and the most popular alderman who go in for a good time and never bother with the "old women" of either sex. So, hurrah! boys! The path to glory leads through the mire. What is a drunken spree or two, or a silly girl or so damned for life, when a man is in the making who is to keep solid with "the boys" and swagger his way into Parliament, into the Administration, into power and fame? I tell you the voter who, for the sake of his party, helps a blackguard into Parliament will be himself to blame if his son follows that blackguard into the abyss.

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MEN do not rise by their vices. Some men are strong enough to rise in spite of them. But the trouble is that the inexperienced boy takes more note of the apparent contradiction of all the teaching of his youth, which is shown by the success of the vicious man, than he does of the more solid qualities which really command his success.

Then what is the use of talking nonsense? Vice is to the young much more tempting than virtue. If it were not, vice would disappear from the world; for it has a terrible reputation of after-results to cope with. Vice is giving the passions and the appetites free rein; and the animal in us is always clamouring for that. And never so much as in full-blooded youth. We need all the checks that prudence can devise to keep the feet of the young men in the straighter paths of virtue where only the more ethereal flowers border the way. The flaring colours flaunt elsewhere. But if we crown with the people's approval men who have wantonly dared to pluck the passion flowers of vice, the voice of prudence fades on the ears of youth, and Success beckons toward the lush pastures that grow on miry ground.

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HEIGH-HO! You will be taking me for another minister who has deserted the pulpit for the pen. But I am nothing of the kind. I am only a worldly chap who loves boys and does not like to see them misled. I may add that it is also essential that public men be men of ability. The honest soul of modest equipment has his place in the community, and it is an important place; but it is not in Parliament. There the honest fool is very likely to be a tool. The easily hoodwinked man will be a tool, indeed, even when he is not too honest. In fact, if he has a notion that honesty is only a poor man's policy, he is quite certain to be a tool; for the master hand will readily deceive him by pointing to some apparent chance to get an easy and safe "profit." Canada, as a matter of fact, sends too many good-natured "dubs" to Parliament. There are too many back-benchers. It is not only that they are useless. They are a danger to the country; for they are clay in the hands of the potter.

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WHAT we want at the front are men of ability, honesty and courage. We have had such men; and we have some now. Edward Blake was such a man. Sir John Thompson was such a man. I believe that Mr. Fielding is such a man. Mr. Ames is such a man, though he lacks worldly knowledge and tact. Mr. Borden has ability and honesty; but it sometimes looks as if he is wanting in courage. Sir Richard Cartwright had all three; but his judgment became warped by a profound belief in the essential viciousness of "the Tory party." Sir James Whitney is such a man. Sir Wilfrid Laurier has all three qualities in the superlative degree; though Ontario has paid itself the poor compliment of failing to perceive it because he is of another race and religion. Henri Bourassa is another man who has all three, and who will be heard from. That is a pretty good showing; but yet both parties are bedevilled by men who have courage and ability without honesty, and from whom their colleagues are not able to shake themselves free.

Ni Importe

A LONG DISTANCE CONTEST IN TORONTO



The Start of the Ward Marathon, Toronto, October 10th, in which 150 runners took part—Won by Thomas Longboat.