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The Puzzling Pretty Widow

"Then don't you think," purred Mrs. Rose, with the eagerness of one who scents a scandal, "that she is a widow?"

There was a pause. And Mrs. Bonnington spoke next, with the deliberation of one who has a great duty to perform:

"I should be very sorry to have it said of me that I was the first to start a rumor which might be thought un-Christian or unkind," she said, with a deprecatory wave of the brown cotton gloves she wore in the mornings, "but I have thought it my duty to make inquiries, and I deeply regret to say that I have found out several things which lead me to the conclusion that this person has settled down in our midst under false pretenses."

"You don't say so?"

"You shall judge for yourself. In the first place, although she calls herself Mrs. Dale, the initials on some of her linen are "D. M." Now, M does does not stand for 'Dale,' does it?"

"Perhaps her maiden name began with M," suggested Mrs. Rose.

"My informant tells me," went on Mrs. Bonnington, as if offended by the interruption, "that in her old school books and works of that sort, there is written the name 'Dorothy Leatham," so that she seems to have passed already by three different names. I leave it to your own common sense whether that is not a curious circumstance, considering that she is still young."

"It is certainly curious, very curious. And—and——"

Mrs. Rose hardly liked to ask on what authority her visitor made these statements, which savored strongly of the backstairs. She had hardly paused an instant before Mrs. Bonnington rushed into further details.

"And now here is another thing which is very strange—her servants have none of them been with her long. They were all engaged togetaer, three months ago, in London, not by Mrs Dale herself, but by an old lady, whose name nobody seems to know. Now, isn't that rather remarkable? They all came down here, and had the place ready for their mistress before they so much as saw her."

Mrs. Bonnington leaned back in her chair, and drew on her brown cotton gloves further. Mrs. Rose wondered again as to the source of this information. She felt a little ashamed of listening to all this gossip, and was less inclined than her friend to take a suspicious view of the case, strange though it was, so she contented herself with murmured interjections, to fill up the pause before Mrs. Bonnington went on again:

"However, I have got a clue as to where she came from, for a van-load of furniture came down before she arrived, and it came from Todcaster."

"Todcaster!" echoed Mrs. Rose. "Then we shall soon know something more about her. Mr. Rose's old friend, Mrs. Haybrow, is coming to see us early next month. She lived near Todcaser when she was a girl, and she often goes back to the old place, and keeps in touch with all the people about there."

"Well," said Mrs. Bonnington, rising from her chair, and speaking in a rather more stilted tone than at first, with the consciousness that her news had hardly been received as she had expected, "I sincerely trust we may find we have been mistaken. No one will rejoice more unfeignedly than I if she proves to be indeed what she gives herself out to be. Indeed, if she had received me frankly at the outset, I would have shown her such Christian sympathy as one soul can give to another, without asking any questions. And it is only in the interest of our young people that I lift up my voice now."

The vicar's wife then took her leave, and went on her way to complete her morning rounds. She was rather a terrible person, this little, faded, middle-aged woman, with the curate's wife and the curate's manner, uniting, as she did, a desperate interest in other people's affairs with a profound conviction that her interference in them could only be for good. But she had her good points. A devoted, submissive and worshipful wife, she modified her worship by considering herself the vicar's guardian angel. A parish busybody and tyrant, she never spared herself, and could show true womanly kindness to such of her husband's parishioners as were not of "a froward spirit."

Unluckily, she had not the power of conciliating, but had, on the contrary, a grand talent for raising up antagonism in unregenerate minds like those of the unfortunate Mabin.

The young girl had been both sorry and ashamed at her own loss of temper. Not that an outburst such as that she had indulged in was any unusual thing. Like many young girls of spirit under injudicious rule, Mabin was in a state of perpetual friction with those around her. Her stepmother was not intentionally unkind; but poor Mabin had to suffer from the constant comparison of her unruly and independent self with her quiet and insipid half-sisters.

And the worst of it was that her father was even less indulgent than his wife to her waywardness. A stiff, strait-laced, narrow-minded man, accustomed to be looked up to and deferred to by the female members of his household, he disapproved in the strongest manner both of the erratic moods of his eldest daughter and of her longing for independence. It was from him, indeed, that Mabin chiefly suffered. She looked upon the cold, handsome, aquiline face of her father with something very much like horror, and the mere fact that he approved only of submissive, "womanly" women seemed to goad her into the very rebelliousness and independence which shocked him so deeply.

At the same time that he disapproved of her, however, Mr. Rose did not hesitate to avail himself of his daughter's bright wits; and if any task requiring a little thought or a little judgment presented itself, it was always upon Mabin's shoulders that he put the burden.

He had even gone so far, protesting loudly the while against the "unfeminine" practice, as to allow Mabin to ride a bicycle; and it was on this machine that the girl was expected to go into Seagate two or three times a week to fetch him his books and magazines from the local library.

As Mrs. Bonnington descended the steps of the big stone house, and, emerging from the portico, made her way down the broad gravel path to the gate, she met Mabin coming out by the side gate among the evergreens, with her bicycle by her side.

Now, if there was one thing more detestable in the eyes of the vicar's wife than another, it was a bicycle. But this detestation increased tenfold when the rider of the obnoxious machine was a woman. It was her one grievance against upright Mr. Rose that he allowed his 19-year-old daughter to "career about the country" on the abominable thing.

She uttered an involuntary "Ugh" of disgust as the thing almost touched her uplifted skirts.

"I beg your pardon. I hope I did not run against you—I am so clumsy," said Mabin, with studied politeness.

"You can't expect to be anything but culmsy while you use such a thing as that" said Mrs. Bonnington, severely. "I wish, for your own sake, it would get broken, that you might never be seen in an attitude so unbecoming to a gentlewoman again."

"Is it you who tell your sons to throw stones at it when I am riding past the vicarage?" said Mabin, trying to speak civilly, while the blood rose to her cheeks. "Walter struck the hind wheel two days ago, and now I have to walk as long as I am within stone's throw of your garden wall."

"I have heard nothing about it," said Mrs. Bonnington, icily.

"Of course you wouldn't," said Mabin, keeping her tone in check. "But I see Rudolph has taken to riding one, too, since he's been back; so if they throw stones at me I can have my revenge upon him," she concluded, darkly.

"If girls unsex themselves, they can't expect to be treated with the chivalry they used to receive," said Mrs. Bonnington, as, not caring to continue the encounter with the rebellious one, she turned her back and went down the hill.

(To be continued.)

Adventure With a Canadian Bear.

Cornwall, April 6.—John Holmes, of Winchester, was returning home from Ormond the other night, and while driving through a swamp where the water was running over the road, had an exciting adventure with a bear. The first intimation he had of Bruin's presence was when his horse with a snort of fear bolted into the ditch. The bear, which was a very large one, was also surprised, and rose upon his haunches in a defiant attitude. Holmes was anxious to get home and tried to scare Bruin by waving a buffalo robe. But Mr. Bear would not scare worth a cent. Holmes was obliged to return to Ormond for the night and went to Winchester next morning.

The flag under which all women should march is the banner of good health. A woman owes it to herself, her husband and children to enlist under this flag. If she does not do so she will live a life of wretchedness herself, and unless her husband is an exceptionally good man, he will become indifferent to her, her home will be unhappy and her children will be puny and sickly.

Ill-health in a womanly way may almost invariably be traced to weakness and disease of the feminine organs that are the vestibule of pain and life. No woman can enjoy good general health who is dragged down by constant pain and local weakness. Troubles of this description utterly unfit her for wifehood and motherhood. Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription gives health, strength, elasticity and vigor to the special organs concerned. It makes a woman strong and healthy in a womanly way. It gives the nerves a rest from pain and an opportunity to build up. It makes motherhood safe and comparatively easy. It transforms weak, sickly, despondent women into happy, healthy wives and mothers.

Jas. Caswell, Esq., of Ocheltree, Johnson Co., Kans. (P. O. Box 61), writes: "My wife was troubled with prolapsus, or 'female weakness,' for several years. She was not able to do her work, she had such bearing-down pains and pain in her back. Her periods were irregular, varying all the way from two to six weeks. At those times she would have fainting spells so bad that I thought she could not live. She was attended by the best doctors in the country. They did her no good and she grew worse all the time. I thought I would try your medicines. By the time she had taken four bottles of the 'Favorite Prescription' and two of the 'Golden Medical Discovery' and two of the 'Pleasant Pellets' she was completely cured."

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Canada's Financial Standing.

(Continued from page 2.)

others the duty ranged from 6d to 5d per ton. In Jamaica the duty on flour was 8s per barrel. Cheese in Jamaica has to pay a duty of a penny a pound. In other of the islands it ran up to 20 per cent. On the whole, however, the duties on the different food products could not be regarded as protective. In view of the various considerations that presented themselves; in view of the desire to extend our trade to the West Indies and the difficulties presented by the present situation there; with the desire to assist the Imperial Government in reaching a solution of these difficulties, and without waiting for further negotiations or seeking concessions from our somewhat hard-up neighbors in the West Indies, the government proposed, after Aug. 1 next to give full play to the policy of

PREFERENTIAL TRADE

by extending the policy to all the British colonies in the West Indies. (Loud cheers.) Our principal imports, he continued, would be sugar and fruits, while we would export fish, lumber and other food products, such as cheese, flour, butter, hams, etc., which should be exported from Ontario and the west. Indeed, sufficient attention has not been paid to this West India trade in the past, it being the practice of merchants to consider almost anything good enough to send to the West Indies; but if proper care were taken to ascertain the requirements of the country, and to send the proper class of goods, there was room for a considerable extension of trade. At present the steamship line plying from Halifax and St. John to Jamaica, Demarara and British Guinea, by reason of having so many calls to make on their immediate course, was not giving satisfaction to importers at the southern end of the voyage, and it was desirable to have a quick, direct service to the principal centers alone, namely, Barbadoes, Trinidad and British Guiana. That question the government would deal with with later. At and rate some effort should be made, and the best thing Canada could do was to give the West Indies the benefits of our preferential tariff, without any bargain whatever, hoping that when the time comes and they can afford it, they will meet us in the same spirit.

CHANGE IN SUGAR DUTIES.

The present sugar duty was a flat rate of one-half cent per pound, which, by reason of the low grade of the West India raw sugars, bore heavily on these products. The United States imposed their duty by the polariscope test, which made it a graduated duty. This plan the government proposed to adopt, and, beginning with the low grade, testing 75 degrees and under, at 40 cents per hundredweight, add 1½ cents for each additional degree. The general average of good raw sugar being 92 degrees, the new duty would be 62½ cents per hundredweight on that quality, as against 50 cents at present. But the preferential tariff would deduct one-fourth, making the duty on raw sugar of that grade from preferential countries 49½ cents, as against 50 cents per hundredweight under the existing tariff. Of course, sugar from outside of the British West Indies would pay the small increase of 15½ cents per hundredweight over the present tariff. In estimating the duty fractions of a degree, less than five-tenths would not be counted, but over five-tenths would count as a degree. The effect of this new sugar duty upon the revenue was a very difficult question to deal with, and could only be guessed at, as it depended entirely upon how much sugar might come in under the preferential rate. But it was hoped there would be a large increase in the consumption of West Indian sugar. At present, out of the total consumption of 230,000,000 pounds, we only receive 25,500,000 from the British West Indies and British Guiana. With respect to the duty on refined sugar, it also would be levied by the polariscope test, taking 75 degrees as the starting point. The duty on refined sugar would be $1 08 per 100 pounds. On sugar testing 88 degrees or below and for every additional degree 1½ cents were added per 100 pounds. On yellow sugar testing 88 degrees this would give an increase of duty amounting to 8 cents per 100, and on granulated sugar the duty would be $1 24½ per 100 pounds, as against the present duty of $1. In other words, the increase of duty on refined sugar would vary from one-twelfth of a cent per pound for yellow, to a quarter of a cent per pound for granulated.

A BRIGHT OUTLOOK.

In conclusion the finance minister dealt glowingly upon the present condition of affairs and the outlook for the future. The question, he said, which had tended to create trouble between the different races and creeds in Canada had been so happily settled that it was now scarcely mentioned. Never were the people more hopeful; never did greater business activity prevail; never was the agricultural industry in better shape. Ships had come to our ports during the year in carry away our products, and even shipyards abroad were now busy constructing ships to carry the trade of Canada. Railway enterprise had received a stimulus, fishermen were doing well, mining development was making wonderful strides, while in that hitherto despised ice-house, the Yukon district, we had opened up the most famous gold mining country in the world. (Cheers.) He was not so foolish as to say that all this was the outcome of the government's policy, though if the conditions were reversed the government would surely be blamed for it. Still, the government's policy had certainly inculcated the hope and confidence necessary to profit by those conditions. (Cheers.) Never was there a tariff policy so strongly indorsed in the country, or one that elicited to such a degree the sympathy of the empire at large. (Cheers.) It had been commended by her majesty in the speech from the throne; the press had eulogized it, and Kipling had embalmed it in poetry. Why, the colonial secretary, in an official dispatch, expressed to the Canadian Government the deep appreciation felt by her majesty's government, and the gratitude entertained by them towards the government and people of Canada because of the preferential tariff, recognizing that it was calculated to unite more firmly the bonds of imperial unity. Now the government had enlarged the scope of that preferential tariff by including the British West India Islands. Only one step more remained, and that was to bring in not alone the mother country and the colonies mentioned (India and New South Wales), but every colony and possession in her majesty's empire. (Prolonged cheering.)

Sir Charles Tupper said that owing to the absence through illness of Mr. Foster, he would move the adjournment of the debate.

Sir Richard Cartwright said he was sorry to hear of Mr. Foster's indisposition. He consented to the adjournment, which took place at 9:25 p.m.

The Tariff Resolutions.

The following are the chief resolutions submitted by the finance minister in the above speech:

PROHIBITED GOODS.

That it is expedient to repeal section 6 of "The Customs Tariff, 1897," and to substitute the following secteion therefor:

6. The importation into Canada of any goods enumerated, described or referred to in schedule C to this act, is prohibited; and any such goods imported shall thereby become forfeited to the crown, and may be destroyed or otherwise dealt with as the minister of customs may direct; and any person importing any such prohibited goods, or causing or permitting them to be imported, shall, for each offense, incur a penalty not exceeding $200.

THE PREFERENTIAL TARIFF.

That it is expedient to provide that section 17, of "The Customs Tariff, 1897," shall be repealed on and after the first day of August, in the present year 1898, and that the following section shall be substituted therefor:

17. Articles which are the growth, produce or manufacture of any of the following countries may, when imported direct into Canada from any such countries, be entered for duty or taken out of warehouse for consumption in Canada at the reduced rate of duty provided in the British preferential tariff, set forth in schedule D to this act:

(A). The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

(B). The British colony of Bermuda.

(C). The British colonies commonly called the British West Indies, including the following: The Bahamas, Jamaica, Turk's Island and the Caicos Islands, the Leeward Islands (Antigua, St. Christopher, Nevis, Dominica, Montserrate and Virgin Islaneds), the Windward Islands (Grenada, St. Vincent, and St. Lucia), Barbadoes, Trinidad and Tobago, British Guiana.

(D). Any other British colony or possession the customs tariff of which, on the whole, is as favorable to Canada as the British preferential tariff herein referred to is to such colony or possession. Provided, however, that manufactured articles to be admitted under such preferential tariff shall be bona fide manufactures of country or countries entitled to the benefits of such tariff, and that such benefits shall not extend to the importation of articles into the production of which there has not entered a substantial portion of the labor of such countries. Any question that may arise as to any article being entitled to such benefits shall be decided by the minister of customs, whose decision shall be final.

2. The minister of customs, with the approval of the governor in council, shall determine what British colonies or possessions shall be entitled to the benefits of the preferential tariff under clause D of this section.

3. The minister of customs may, with the approval of the governor in council, make such regulations as may be deemed necessary for carrying out the intention of this section.

That it is expedient to provide that schedule D to "The Customs Tariff, 1897," shall be repealed on and after the first day of August in the present year 1898, and that the following schedule shall be substituted therefor:

Schedule D—British preferential tariff—On articles the growth, produce or manufacture of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, or of any British colony or possession entitled to the benefits of this preferential tariff under section 17, the duties mentioned in schedule A shall be reduced as follows: The reduction shall be one-fourth of the duty mentioned in schedule A, and the duty to be levied, collected and paid shall be three-fourths of the duty mentioned in schedule A. Provided, however, that this reduction shall not apply to any of the following articles, and that such articles shall in all cases be subject to the duties mentioned in schedule A, viz.: Wines, malt liquors, spirits, spiritous liquors, liquid medicines and articles containing alcohol, tobacco, cigars and cigarettes. Provided, further, that reduction shall only apply to refined sugar when evidence satisfactory to the minister of customs is furnished that such refined sugar has been manufactured wholly from raw sugar produced in British colonies or possessions.

THE SUGAR DUTIES.

That it is expedient to repeal items 435 and 436, of schedule A to "The Customs Tariff, 1897," and to substitute the following therefor:

435—All sugar above number sixteen Dutch standard in color, and all refined sugars of whatever kinds, grades or standards, testing not more than 88 degrees by the polariscope, $1 08 per 100 pounds, and for each additional degree 1½ cents per 100 pounds. Fractions of 5-10 of a degree or less not to be subject to duty, and fractions of more than 5-10 to be dutiable as a degree.

436—Sugar, n. e. s., not above number sixteen Dutch standard in color, sugar drainings or pumpings drained in transit, melado or concentrated melado, tank bottoms and sugar concrete testing not more than 75 degrees by the polariscope, 40 cents per 100 pounds, and for each additional degree 1½ cents per 100 pounds. Fractions of 5-10 of a degree or less not to be subject to duty, and fractions of more than 5-10 to be dutiable as a degree. The usual packages in which imported to be free.

That it is expedient to provide that items 445 and 446 of schedule A, to "The Customs Tariff, 1897," shall be repealed on and after the first day of July in the present year 1898.

THE TOBACCO DUTIES.

That it is expedient to provide that on and after the first day of July, in the present year 1898, the following items shall be added to schedule B to the customs tariff, 1897:

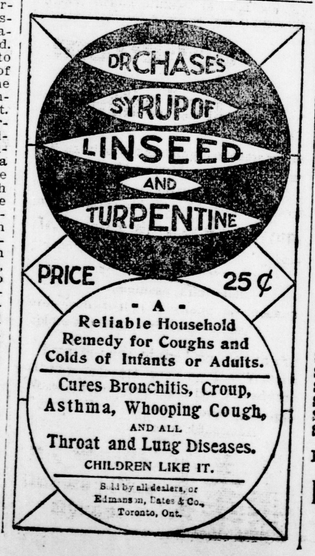
826—Tobacco, unmanufactured, for excise purposes under conditions of the inland revenue act.

That it is expedient to provide that on and after July 1, in the present year 1898, in addition to the excise duties at present levied on manufactured tobacco, cigars and cigarettes, there shall be levied and collected the following excise duties, that is to say:

(A) On all foreign raw leaf tobacco, unstemmed, taken out of warehouse for manufacture in any cigar or tobacco manufactory, 10 cents per pound.

(B) On all foreign raw leaf tobacco, stemmed, taken out of warehouse for manufacture in any cigar or tobacco manufactory, 10 cents per pound.

Provided that the weight upon which such duty shall be computed shall be with reference to the standard mentioned in paragraph C of section 247, of the inland revenue act.



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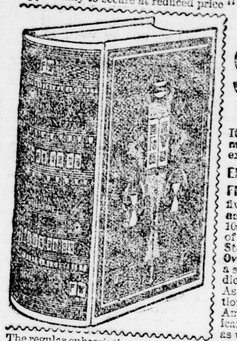

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