

C.C.C. "At Home."

(Under the distinguished patronage of His Excellency Sir C. Alex. Harris, K.C.M.G., and of His Grace Archbishop Roche.)

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16TH.
CONCERT—DANCE—TEA.

Concert begins 8.15 p.m. Dancing 9.15 p.m.

Tickets: Gentlemen, \$1.50; Lady's, \$1.00.

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Feb 12, 21

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Jan 21, 1921

Advertise in the Evening Telegram

The Boycott.

(By P. O'D. in Saturday Night, Toronto.)

Some forty years ago in Ireland a gentleman of the name of Captain Boycott succeeded in arousing the intense dislike of his neighbors—not that this is very difficult to do in Ireland, but Captain Boycott was far more successful than most people. We don't know just what his offence took, but we are under the impression that he tried to collect his rents, a thing which has always been regarded as extreme bad form by our fellow-countrymen—and the boys are right!

The chief interest in the case of Captain Boycott, however, is not so much what he did to his neighbors as what they did to him—or didn't, for they refused to have anything whatever to do with him. They wouldn't speak to him or look at him or give him his mail or his food or recognize his existence in any way. They treated him as a divorced and haughty lady might treat the next wife of her former husband.

You get the idea—no violence, no revellings, no casual heaving of half-bricks in the victim's direction. You just do nothing whatever. If he meets you on the street and asks wistfully if it is not enough for you, or cold or wet enough, or whatever the weather happens to be, you gaze thoughtfully over his head and whistle "The Vamp." If he tries to borrow a match, you take one out and strike it—preferably with your thumb-nail, as old Bill Hart does in Western movies to show his contempt for the villain's pointed gun—and then you light your own cigarette and walk carelessly away.

This is said to be a very terrible form of punishment, something like being left alone on an ice-pan in a winter fog on the Grand Banks, though personally we know a lot of people that we wish to Heaven would try the system on us. We believe we would bear up manfully under it. We would be spared the necessity of listening to a lot of stale stories and punk ideas. But, of course, we wouldn't want the thing to be carried too far. There is our landlady, for instance. Suppose that splendid woman should resolutely ignore us when we asked mildly for our bacon and eggs one of these mornings, or should go in and put a Caruso record on the phonograph when we enquired about our laundry—but let us not think of anything so dreadful.

What happened finally to Captain Boycott himself we have never been able to discover—our knowledge of Irish history is not nearly so complete as our name and face might warrant our friends in supposing. Possibly the gallant Captain had a wife who did so much talking that he was glad of the outside silence and threw under it. Perhaps his neighbors found the strain of keeping mum so painful that they relented and restored him to human intercourse by beating him up or shooting him in a friendly and sociable spirit. Perhaps he tried strategy and went around the village with a full bottle sticking ostentatiously out from under his coat-tails, and it was more than the rest of them could resist. Perhaps—but after all it really doesn't matter what happened to Captain Boycott. In fact our only reason for writing him at all is that we looked the word "boycott" up in the dictionary, and we never let a bit of erudition get away from us until we have wrung the last possible line of "copy" out of it.

The main thing is that Captain Boycott gave his name to a system of social and economic pressure which we are minded to invoke in our own defence in this very year of our Lord and high prices. Our old friend the High Cost of Living has reached an altitude where the air is too rarefied for us to breathe at all, and the only thing left for us to do is to start a boycott.

Of course, it cannot be a complete boycott—we are not yet an angel that we can completely dispense with food and raiment—but we intend to make it as expensive as possible. It is our plan to start in boycotting tailors, hatters, shoe merchants—why don't they invent a good handy word like "shoesters"—and also restaurant keepers. And if we can't get our friends to fall in with our plan of campaign, we will go it alone. But to boycott them we are firmly resolved. Hear us, swear, friend reader,—I—see—and also—!

Take tailors, for instance. We met ours on the street the other day, and looked closely for some sign that he was being adversely affected by the prevailing high prices of everything, but we saw none. On the contrary, we have never seen him looking so rosy and prosperous. He was walking—he explained casually that his new car was in, being tuned up—and he hailed us cordially.

"Hello," he said, "you haven't been in to see me for some time."

As a matter of fact, we hadn't, but it didn't occur to us that he could have been particularly anxious to see us. There had been a certain amount of friction and delay over the settlement of the last account—we treated his bill in much the same way that the United States Senate is handling the peace treaty. We were therefore quite altered by his friendly tone, though

still a little apprehensive. We were afraid there might be a catch in it somewhere, so we merely remarked that the clothes he had made for us before the war had been so universally admired, that since then we had used no others—which latter was no more than the honest-to-gawd truth.

"By the way, how much is an ordinary nice suit worth these days?" we asked as casually as possible.

"Well, now, to an old customer like yourself, I could give a very nice suit, nearly all wool, for about seventy-five dollars."

He lowered his voice as he said this, as though he didn't want anyone else to hear him cutting prices down in this reckless fashion—practically giving the clothes away, you understand.

"And how about an overcoat," we persisted, "one of those medium-weight coats with a velvet collar, for instance?"

"A Chesterfield—now, let me see"—and he passed to figure out the lowest price he could possibly demand and keep out of the poorhouse—at least that is the impression his manner made on us—then in a burst of generous confidence he told us the glad tidings: "I could let you have a nice plain Chesterfield for one hundred and fifteen dollars," he said, "but, of course, that wouldn't include a silk lining. A silk lining would be . . ."

Right there and then we stopped him. We told him that we didn't care a darn what the silk lining would be, that we had lost all interest in the Chesterfield when he mentioned the hundred and fifteen, and that for a sum like that we would expect at least a couple of Chesterfields made of mahogany and brocade. We advised him to take a good look at us, for he wasn't going to see us by our consent for at least two years. We said we were going to wear our present habits till they fell off us, and the neighbors started making representations to the authorities. Then, having placed him at the head of our boycott list, we stalked majestically away.

The same applies to the gentleman from whom we buy our hats and our shoes—we call them "gentlemen" but so were Dick Turpin and Claude Duval. Already two young ladies have stated definitely that they will not be seen in public with us so long as we insist on wearing the battered old hat which usually protects our hoary and venerable head from the weather. But we can't help it. The kind of hat we have worn for years now costs about ten dollars, and we refuse to pay ten dollars for any hat. We'll wear our old panama all year round first, and give up women entirely.

Bad as hats are, shoes are even worse. Not that our taste in shoes is at all gaudy—no fashionable brogues or grey suede tops for us—rather do we lean to a dignified simplicity. It is true that our feet are of a size to require a considerable amount of leather for their proper protection; but one ought to be able to buy a pair of shoes as large as a couple of Ford Cars for the prices the dealers are asking now.

Therefore, the boycott for shoe-merchants as well as hatters! We will go on having our present pair resoled just as long as there is anything left to fasten the new sole to. And when they are past the power of cobblers to renew, we intend to fall back on a pair of knee-high elk-hides which we got years ago for hiking through the woods. They may be a little out of place at tea-parties and

JAMES P. CASH,
Tobacconist.

dances, but what are mere social amenities to a man who feels that he has a sacred mission to start a new crusade against the profiteer?

Restaurant-keepers and food-pirates generally offer a more serious problem to an earnest young boycotter like ourself. After all we must live—regrettable as this may seem to some of our less friendly readers—and to live we must eat. This is where the restaurateur gets his chance to gouge poor celebrities like ourself, who are compelled to pick up our grub on our way to and from work. Of course, we might sit in the public parks and furtively consume things out of paper bags, but the weather recently has been somewhat unfavorable to this form of dining out, even if one happens to own a fur coat. Besides, the Park Commissioners have thoughtfully removed all the benches for the winter.

One thing we can do, however, and that is to simplify our dietary. People unquestionably eat too much—there is all sorts of first-rate medical authority for this—and they eat the wrong foods, the foods that cost too much, that is. This idea of dropping in to a restaurant and ordering a porterhouse steak is entirely wrong. No wonder the bill looks as though one were buying an option on the business. We are assured by scientists who ought to know, that a piece of cheese and a few nuts are quite as nourishing. We don't see just how they work this theory out—it has something to do with carbohydrates and protein and other unappetizing things—but, at least, it is possible to live on the stuff, if one considers it worth while to go on living under such circumstances.

Take the Scottish people—(no, no, girls, you don't have to unless you want to)—for generations that hardy and acquisitive race has subsided mostly on oatmeal porridge. It does not seem to have injured them physically or mentally—not seriously, that is—whatever effect it may have had on their temper. But in case one should be nervous about the danger of getting to look and act like the Scotch from a too close adherence to their national diet, there is the example of the Irish, who have grown in strength and beauty and pugnacity on potatoes and buttermilk. You can have your choice.

No serious observer—and if there is anything we do seriously it is observation work—can doubt that people nowadays eat too much of the wrong things. There is sugar, for instance. People always did eat a lot of sugar in this country, but the way they are plunging into the old sugar bowl these days is going to make every nigger in Cuba a millionaire. We sat beside a friend of ours the other day and watched him put six lumps in his tea.

"Do you know that stuff is likely to cost thirty cents a pound before long?" we asked with emphasis.

"Well, they say it ferments in the stomach and produces alcohol," he explained, "so I'm givin' it a try. It's cheaper than whiskey at that, but it hasn't much kick."

"But it will give you diabetes," we urged.

"That's nothin'—I've had it." Now, what can one do with people like that?

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