

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

Reflections on Current Events by the Boarders.

"If the bill framed by George Washington Stephens, which compels a man to vote at Provincial elections, become a law it will revolutionize politics," said Brown, "and don't you forget it."

"Of all the legislation ever proposed in connection with the franchise," replied Sharkey, "this will prove the most beneficial, but that an act of this kind should become necessary shows a want of appreciation of democratic institutions by the large majority of our people and a disregard of the duties of citizenship that is downright criminal. In Russia thousands of men and women—the best, the noblest that that country ever produced—have been sent to the gallows or into an exile worse than death for no other reason than that they demanded this right of citizenship which is here held so lightly. The most rabid Nihilist, who would blow a Czar to atoms with as much composure as if he were lighting his after-dinner cigar, has never, and does not now, demand more than the right to have a free voice and vote in the affairs of his country. To secure this he will sacrifice wealth, and position, and life itself, believing that to be deprived of this right life would not be worth living. Yet we, who enjoy all that he is contending for, have become so recreant to our duties, so indifferent of our liberties, so slothful as citizens that it has become necessary to enact a law to compel us to take advantage of our rights and privileges as free men. Shame upon a people which has morally sunk so low."

"That's all right," said Gaskill; "but to appeal to their honor, to their manhood, to their sense of duty is a mere waste of wind. The system under which we live, the struggle for existence has long since compelled them to sacrifice their manhood and sell their honor, and the man bereft of these two can have no sense of duty left. Modern society and social conditions have left him but one tender spot—his pocket—strike him there. This proposed bill of Stephens' will do that. It will teach him more about the Franchise Act and its privileges and the rights and obligations of citizenship in one election than he can now learn in a life time. Our forefathers fought and bled on more than one occasion to establish the political rights which we enjoy, to make free men of us, and if, after the passing of that bill any man wishes to forego these rights or shirk his obligations, he will have to pay for it, both with hard cash and loss of citizenship, and this is eminently proper. If Stephens succeeds in having this law enacted he will have done more out of Parliament than ever he did while in it, and he claims to have done something."

"But Stephens should not be left to fight this thing alone," said Brown. "Every true reformer, every man who believes in purifying politics, and every branch of organized labor should strengthen his hands. This is something for which we have hoped for years because it will induce a better class of men to offer themselves for public office; it will practically destroy machine politics. When every man is compelled to vote, the ward heeler, with his gang of Judases, will not be able to throw the election to the highest bidder between three and five o'clock on election day. He and his squad of descendants of the left-hand thief will find their occupation gone because they will no longer hold the balance of power in their localities."

"In his letter to the press Stephens says that if it is right to fine a man for failing to do duty as a juror, it cannot be wrong to fine him for failing to do duty as a citizen," said Sharkey, "and Stephens is right. If there is any difference at all it lies in the fact that the duties of the ballot box are of greater importance than those of the jury box, for in the former he acts, indirectly perhaps, but nevertheless surely, as a lawgiver, as a framer of those laws which govern his duties in the jury box. The framing of laws carries with it a greater responsibility than the obeying of them does, and any law tending to bring this responsibility home to the people, on whom it virtually rests, is a step in the right direction, and should receive the support of all right-minded men."

"The whole thing amounts to this," said Phil. "The apathy and criminal indifference of a large section of the community to matters political positively endangers the existence of our democratic institutions. Boodlers, wirepullers and log-rollers—the very scum of society—now practically control politics; with every succeeding election matters get from bad to worse. If this is allowed to go on unchecked and increasing, how much longer do you suppose will it be before all classes will cry out for some 'strong' hand to rule the nation and free it of the horse leeches who now shape its destiny. By all means let us have this law, and more than that, when we have got it, let us see that it's enforced."

BILL BLEDS.

HEAVY GALES AT SEA.

STEAMERS DAMAGED AND DELAYED.

The Captain of the Vancouver and one of his Crew Swept Overboard.

Incoming steamers report fearful gales on the Atlantic during the past week, by which the trip was unusually prolonged, and two or three of them suffered considerable damage and had a terrible experience. But the saddest event of all to be recorded is the drowning of Captain C. J. Lindall, of the R. M. S. Vancouver and one of his quartermasters, who were swept from the deck by a huge wave, which carried away the bridge and chart room at the same time. The following are the particulars as far as can be learned:—

The R. M. S. Vancouver arrived at Father Point on Tuesday morning at six o'clock, and had a terrible experience to relate. Her brave commander has at last gone down before it, and with him the quartermaster of the ship at duty's post at the wheel. The second officer, who was also on duty on the bridge when the sea struck the ship, managed to hold on to the only fragment of the bridge that remained, and was brought below and tenderly cared for; his injuries, though severe, are not considered dangerous. Several passengers and members of the crew got a severe shaking, but nothing serious. The passage was made through one continuous storm, increasing in intensity as the ship steamed westward. The captain had to remain on the bridge all the time, never changing his clothes and having his meals brought to him on the bridge or in the chart room. On Friday morning about six o'clock he went into the chart room and threw himself into a chair, after ordering the steward to bring him some hot coffee and some food, and telling the chief officer, whom he left in charge of the bridge, to call him if he was needed. He had only gone down a short time when the officer, wanting to speak to him, went down in the saloon, thinking he was there, but on the steward informing him that the captain was in the chart room, he was proceeding there, when a fearful wave struck the ship on the starboard quarter, and threw the vessel right on her beam ends, broadside to the sea, sweeping her decks from stem to stern. Nothing was seen of the captain or quartermaster after they were swept overboard. The first officer took charge of the ship, and the steering gear was hurriedly repaired as quickly as possible in such an emergency, the ship was rounded to the storm once more, and after three days more arrived five days behind her usual time.

Captain Lindall, although a Swede by birth, had so long sailed under the British flag that he always spoke of being a subject of the Queen and considered himself a true British tar. He was one of the most genial and kind-hearted commanders crossing the Atlantic, and his care and fatherly attention to ladies travelling by themselves and to children was appreciated by all who have had the pleasure of travelling under his charge. The captain appeared to great advantage at the concert given in aid of the Liverpool Orphans' Asylum and of the Montreal Sailors' Institute, in which he always took part, being an accomplished musician and fine vocalist.

He leaves a widow and three daughters, who reside near Liverpool.

The quartermaster's name was McLaughlin. He was 28 years of age, and has a wife and two children in Liverpool. He is said to have been a true seaman, and no higher praise could be awarded him.

The Thomson Line steamship Gerona also experienced the force of the hurricane which proved so disastrous to the Vancouver. She had part of her decks carried away, and Captain Anderson sustained serious injuries by being swept off the bridge by the heavy seas. He very nearly shared Captain Lindall's sad fate.

Three Allan steamers—the Brazilian from London, the Corean from Liverpool and the Sarmatian from Glasgow—as well as the Beaver Line steamship Lake Huron, should all have been heard of ere this. They are all overdue, and it is expected they have experienced the terrific weather of the past week.

THE LAWYER WAS DISSATISFIED

And Addressed the Court in Strong Language.

When Judge Wurtele decided the other day that the case of Lafontaine vs. the city should go on in the afternoon, Mr. Barnard remarked that he could not be forced to proceed, that there were many means to stop the case, and that he was ready to adopt them. However, through respect for the Court, he felt bound to give his motives for such a decision. Among those motives was the allegation that in the Lepine case Mr. Roy was not sincere in his pleadings, that his sole object was to deceive the Court, and the proceedings of that and the previous day showed that he had gained his object. His Honor in the whole course of the proceedings had shown such prejudice against the pretensions of the plaintiff and such an inclination in favor of the pretensions of Mr. Roy, to the extent of refusing the plaintiff's attorneys to prove a number of facts which appeared to them more or less essential, that they had come to the conclusion that they would not be justified, in the interests of their clients, in submitting to the tribunal the case of Lafontaine, because the rulings in the case of Lepine would apply in that of Lafontaine, and a serious enquete would, in their view, be impossible.

In reply His Honor said that he knew Mr. Barnard too well, and had too much consideration for him to take notice of what he had said. This, however, he might state: that if, after what had been said, he allowed the case to be suspended, he would thereby recognize himself as unworthy to sit on that bench. Consequently the Lafontaine case would have to proceed in the afternoon.

When in the afternoon Messrs. Barnard and Doherty desisted from proceeding in the case, Mr. Ethier, City Attorney, moved that the case be dismissed with costs, which was done at once by the Court.

The case has since been reinscribed, in the hope, it is presumed, that it will come up before another judge.

As an illustration of a bright child's ingenuity in evading the issue, a clergyman tells the following (his little daughter at the table was reproved): "Virginia," said her father, "stop spluttering in your cup." "Papa," was the quick reply, "papa, you 'staken; 'taint a cup, it's a glass."

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