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BORN.

t Nelson, on February 7th, the Hamilton Byers, of a son.

—At Nelson, on February 8th, fe of J. Schultz, of a son.

ER—At Vancouver, on Febru- th, the wife of H. O. Alexander, on.

At Nelson, on February 8th, fe of H. Genest, of a son.

EL—On February 14th, to the Mr. G. A. Hartnagel, a son.

MARRIED.

N—WILSON—At Vancouver, on ry 11th, by Rev. R. J. Wilson, ck A. Collinson and Miss Eliza- Wilson.

H—ALLEN—At Vancouver, on x 11th, by Rev. C. H. Suther- rthur Goodrich and Miss Lizzie

—McALMON—At Nelson, on y 8th, by Rev. E. H. H. Hol- mes L. Cameron and Miss Sarah lmon.

LLCOM—At New Westmin- February 7th, by Rev. Father l. N. Bond and Mrs. Margaret n.

DIED.

February 15th, at his residence, e road, Captain Francis (Frank) e, a native of Boston, Mass., years and 8 months.

At Vancouver, on February S. H. Holmes, aged 65 years.

At Kamloops, on February 12th t Spencer, aged 8½ years.

—At Fairfield Ranch, near s, on February 11th, James ey, aged 75 years.

Esquimalt road, yesterday Sidney Baden Powell, third dr. and Mrs. Fred Brown, aged

— At Nanaimo yesterday Edith Barlow, wife of G. , aged 30 years, formerly low, of this city.

At Kamloops, Margaret a native of Yorkshire, Eng- rn March 9th, 1818.

—At Fairfield Ranch, near , on 11th inst., James Hum- formerly of Sherbrooke, pro- Quebec, aged 75 years.

t Towan Cross, Cornwall, Eng- the 12th January, 1904, Fran- , late of Victoria, B. C., aged

the family residence, Lin- nue, on the 12th inst., Maria, of Geo. Brook.

t the family residence, No. street, on February 16th, illt, relict of the late Eli ged 50 years.

February 12th, at the resi- John Lawson, at Revelstoke, lam Smith, aged 69 years.

The First Mayoral Dinner

What Dignity Could Not Grasp Impudence Tried to Seize

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By D. W. H.

Hey diddle diddle
The cat and the fiddle,
The cow jumped over the moon,
The little dog laughed to see such sport
And the dish ran away with the spoon.
—Nursery Rhyme.

ONE morning in the month of February, 1890, there appeared in a Victoria paper's advertising columns a notice which ran thus:

'At the instance of Mr. John Colber a writ was yesterday issued from the Supreme Court against Dr. Balfour of this city. The writ alleges slander on the part of the defendant and the damages asked are heavy."

The appearance of the advertisement set all tongues wagging and every man and woman and, for the matter of that, every child who was old enough to understand what a suit at law meant, was anxious to know what it was all about. Colber, was a sturdy Scotch Writer to the Signet (which I believe means the same as barrister here), of about 40 years and had a wife some ten years his senior. When asked for an explanation he shook his head and said, "Go and ask the doctor—he knows." The doctor when appealed to professed ignorance of having given cause for the action and appeared to be as much puzzled as the community in general. In the burning desire for information Mrs. Colber was asked. She was a little Englishwoman, of quick, nervous action, black snappy eyes, and a tongue—as old Willis Bond, the famed colored orator, who once came under its lash, expressed it—"dat cuts hot ways like a knife." Mr. and Mrs. Colber had arrived at Victoria by ship from Australia in 1859. They had some money and built themselves a small shack on Langley street, which answered the double purpose of a law office and a residence. Mrs. Colber immediately began to assert herself as a social leader. She gave little teas (then quite an innovation—and tea was not the only beverage served) which the "best" people attended and at one of which it was decided to form a sort of social guild for the purpose of ascertaining who was who—dividing the sheep from the goats, weeding the society list, so to speak—and admitting only those whose records were unimpeachable to the circle. It was felt that in the hurry and bustle of strangers arriving and settling here some very undesirable persons had succeeded in imposing themselves upon society and were carrying their heads high, when, were the truth known, they should hang them very low. About this time a ball was arranged to be held at the Hudson Bay Company's warehouse, which then stood at the foot of Yates street just behind the present premises of Findlay, Durham & Brodie. It was used for the storage of salmon in barrels pending the annual sailing of a company's packet for London. When the ball was arranged the packet Princess Royal had taken all the salmon on board and the warehouse was empty. After liberal applications of soft soap and water to destroy the ancient and fishlike smell that hung about the place, and the draping about the walls of sails and flags from the naval ships, the room was made presentable and a goodly number of invitations were sent out. There were very few ladies then resident in Victoria. Families were scarce, and a child of tender years was regarded as a rara avis. Now it happened that to the social guild of which our friend Mrs. John Colber was the self-elected leader was assigned the task of selecting the ladies who should be invited to attend the ball. The guild met and appointed a secretary to whom was given the duty of writing the invitations, and an executive committee to check the list was also appointed. In due course the cards were issued, and to the surprise of many the names of Mr. and Mrs. John Colber were not among the elect. A day passed, two, three days, and still no cards for the Colbers. Then arm-in-arm (which was the way married and engaged persons walked at that time) the Colbers proceeded to investigate. They were very wroth and the sharp tongue of the lady cut like a two-edged sword. The unfortunate secretary was the first object of the slighted woman's wrath, and after much persuasion and many threats the secretary explained that she had been instructed by the committee not to issue an invitation to Mr. and Mrs. Colber. To the president of the committee the pair next proceeded, and in that lady they encountered a foewoman who was worthy of the visiting lady's tongue. The word-battle must have been interesting. It was said that Mrs. Colber, like the fishwoman whom Dan O'Connell vanquished in the Dublin market, got the worst of the combat, for she left the place supported by her husband in an hysterical condition.

The outcome of the visit was the issue of a writ for heavy damages, as I have explained, against the husband of the president of the executive of the social guild. What provoked the action I never knew positively; but it was reported that a gentleman from Australia had known Mrs. Colber while there and had said that she had a Past. Now to say that a person has had a Past is not actionable in itself. We have all had Pasts. Some of us would gladly erase the record from the slate and think of it no more if we could. But to say that Mrs. Colber had a Past and to strike her name from the list of eligibles because of that Past, was decidedly actionable.

The ball came off and proved very successful. There were ladies present; but the gentlemen outnumbered them in the ratio of six to one. The moment a lady entered the dancing apartment she was pounced upon, so to speak, and her "card," which was written upon a half-sheet of note paper, was filled almost at once. A young American who accompanied me to the ball got one dance the whole evening and I fared little better, the naval officers bearing off all the honors. The costumes were rich and varied. Of course, the enormous crinoline was much in evidence and in sympathy with the hoops the gentlemen wore baggy trousers wide from the hips to the ankles where they suddenly narrowed and were drawn closely in. There was about as much fit in trousers then as there is in pajamas now. Looking back I can recall nothing so grotesque as the male and female costumes of that day—and yet we thought them graceful and fetching and altogether lovely! "What fools we mortals be," to allow ourselves to be dragged to such ridiculous ends by the dictates of Dame Fashion. The supper was all that could be desired. I remember that Governor Douglas, Captain James Reid and other heads of families, with their lovely young daughters were present, and that they made very pretty speeches in which they referred to the company in a pleasant manner. Admiral Baynes, then in command of the station, and his staff were also present and he, too, made some appropriate remarks—the San Juan war having just been settled everybody was feeling happy. The affair passed off pleasantly and the cocks were crowing their welcome to the rising sun before the company dispersed.

"Do you intend to push the case against the doctor?" I asked Colber one morning.

"Yes," he exclaimed with emphasis, "to the bitter end—to the death, if necessary."

"Won't you accept an apology?" I continued.

"No," chimed in his wife, and her eyes snapped with excitement, "Never—never! If he lay dying and asked me to forgive him I never would."

Within two weeks from the date of that conversation Dr. Balfour was dead. His death was encompassed in this way. It seemed that he worried much over the action and saw no way out of the suit except by flight. A little Chilian brig called the Florencia was loading for Chili. On this brig Dr. Balfour, to escape the action, secretly took passage. Off Cape Flattery the brig encountered a fearful gale and went over on her beam ends. Amongst those who were swept off and never seen more was poor Dr. Balfour. He was truly followed to the bitter end—to death.

The passing of Dr. Balfour gave quite a shock to the little colony, for the deceased was well liked, and the social position of the Colbers was rather lowered than heightened by it. Shortly after the sad event the couple became involved in a bitter warfare with W. B. Smith, owner of the brick building on Government street where the well-known firm of Hall & Goepel have long carried on business. The Smith lot on Government street extended to the line of Colber's lot on Langley street. The latter always insisted that the Smith fence encroached three or four inches on their lot, and the wordy wars were many and numerous. The active spirit in the Smith establishment was a young clerk named Hicks. After the passage of numerous fiery epistles Mrs. Colber cowhided Hicks on Yates street and was fined £5. Next Hicks and Colber met and Hicks pulled his antagonist's nose, for which luxury he paid £5. Then Colber printed a card in which he referred to Hicks as a man who had been publicly cowhided. Hicks retorted with a letter in which he referred to Colber's nose as having been tweaked on the public street. In the absence of a theatre the controversy created the keenest amusement to the residents and while one party would pat Hicks on the back and advise him to keep it up, another section would tell the Colbers to give it to him. On one occasion Hicks found a dead cat in Smith's back yard. Naturally supposing that his enemy had thrown it there he hurled it over the fence into Colber's yard. Now it chanced that the little woman with the fiery temper and snappy eyes was engaged with a tapeline and an Indian boy in measuring the ground to ascertain how many inches of land had been taken possession of by Smith, and the defunct feline landed full on her head, giving her a severe nervous shock, and causing her to imagine that a wild animal had leaped upon and was about to devour her. Loud screams brought the husband to the spot, and after he had soothed his wife he seized the dead cat by the tail and darted round the corner to Smith's store. Hicks was standing in the doorway. He was a bit of a dandy and very vain. As Colber, carrying the cat, approached Hicks tried to escape; but he was overtaken and Colber nearly wore the animal out on the head and shoulders of his enemy. The town went wild with delight. They had watched the clash between the two forces for some weeks. The comic side of a controversy always appeals most strongly to the popular mind, so the funny incidents of the cat and the use that was made of it took the public by storm. Nothing else was talked of for many days and the "Twick him, boy!" tactics were continued by the friends of both.

The boom consequent on the discovery of gold in Cariboo struck Victoria in 1862. The buildings were of insufficient capacity to accommodate one-tenth of the people who came to Victoria to make this the starting-point for their long journey to the mines. Hundreds of new newcomers pitched tents on vacant lots and the streets were crowded with people from every part of the world and goods were in such demand that the steamers from San Francisco could not carry one-half the freight that offered. Real estate in Victoria rose rapidly in value and nearly everyone became a speculator. The Colbers bought two lots on Pandora avenue and sold one of the two immediately afterwards for a sum equal to that which they had paid for both. They then had a two-story frame building erected on the corner of Langley and Bastion streets.

In the summer of 1862 the city of Victoria was incorporated and Mr. Thomas Harris, a leading business man and a generous, public-spirited citizen, was unanimously chosen mayor. Amongst the town councillors elected was John Colber who, in spite of his unpopularity, received the highest number of votes and consequently became senior councillor. The Prince of Wales (now King Edward), attained his majority on the 9th of November, 1862, and a public holiday was proclaimed here. A procession was formed and headed by a band marched through the streets. In the afternoon there were sports at Beacon Hill Park, and in the evening an illumination of the public buildings, the mayor's and several other private residences. For the evening a banquet had been arranged at the Lyceum, a hall that stood on part of the site now occupied by Spencer's great store. A few minutes before the guests were to sit down the fire bells rang and the wholesale store of J. S. Harrison, at the corner of Bastion and Wharf streets was discovered to be in flames and was partially destroyed. After the fire came the feast. About 200 guests appeared at the table over which Mayor Harris presided. On his right was Sir James Douglas, the governor, Captain Richards, (afterwards Admiral) of H.M.S. Hecate, Captain Pike of H.M.S. Devastation, and Chief Justice Cameron. On his left the Lord Bishop of Columbia, Rt. Rev. Bishop Demers, M. Mene, French Consul, Hon. Henry Rhodes, Hawaiian Consul, Colonial Secretary Young, and Attorney-General Cary. In the gallery were a number of ladies who had assembled to "see the lions feed," and who were served with wine and sweets. Full justice was done to the excellent menu provided by Sere & Manciot of the Hotel de France, and the usual patriotic toasts were drunk with enthusiasm. Then followed a number of toasts of a local character and all went pleasantly. There was not the slightest reason to suspect that a storm cloud lurked in the air—that the peaceful scene, almost pastoral in its serenity and calmness, was soon to be changed into a roaring, seething maelstrom of disorder and confusion where men would lose their heads and shout and strike out wildly and fair woman's screams would add to the din. Yet so it was. The rest of the occasion was a toast to "The Mayor and City Council." The Attorney-General having proposed it the Mayor responded for the Mayor in a pretty little speech which was applauded. When Councillor McKay rose to respond for the City Council he found himself forestalled. There was another Richmond already on his legs who had begun a reply. The usurper was John Colber.

"Mr. Mayor," he began, "As senior councillor the duty devolves on me to reply to the toast of the City Council."

"You are out of order, Councillor Colber," said the Mayor.

"Oh, no, I'm just in order as senior councillor."

"But you are not down for this toast. Councillor McKay is and I can only hear him."

"Begging your pardon, Mr. Mayor," replied the senior councillor, while a sweet smile swept over his broad face, "The duty devolves on me to answer, and I'll not shirk my duty. It is a source of great gratification—"

Cries of "Order," "order," sit down," "chair," arose. The glasses danced and jingled in response to vociferous thumping on the table and the fireworks began. The noise was deafening, but high above the din could be heard the tempestuous voice of sturdy John Colber as he repeated over and over again the words, "Mr. Mayor, Mr. Mayor," and rising higher still the shrill soprano of an excited female rent the disturbed air as it called out, "Stand your ground, John! Don't be put down, John! Fight for your rights, John!" Guests who turned their heads in the direction whence the female voice came saw a little woman with a very pale face and snappy black eyes leaning half over the front of the gallery and swinging her arms frantically as she called to her husband at the top of her voice. The woman was Mrs. John Colber.

On the floor of the hall the disturbance grew more and more pronounced. One man, a little fellow named Briggs, managed to burst through the throng and reach Colber.

"John Colber," shouted he, "You're a hass—a feckless hass!"

"A little louder, Mr. Briggs," cried John with a seductive smile.

"I say you are a feckless hass, John Colber."

"Actionable, Mr. Briggs, actionable. You hear him, gentlemen? I'll make a note of those words."

"Look out, Billy!" cried a voice from the crowd. "He'll sue you and get them three lots of yours."

Billy turned as white as a ghost and shot out of sight.

The cries of "Sit down" and "order" continued to resound through the room; but Colber refused to sit down or be sat upon.

The Mayor at last lost patience, for the Governor and his staff, the naval officers and the consuls had left the room. His Worship cried out, pointing to Colber, "Will no one remove that nuisance?"

At this a rush was made for the senior councillor. A dozen hands were laid upon him and a mob of thirty men closed in upon the "nuisance" and threw him bodily out of the hall. As he struggled to release himself the high soprano of his wife was again heard as she rained an orange, an apple, a cake and a plate upon the guests below, and then dashed down the stairs and throwing her arms about her husband led him towards their home, calling down heaven's maledictions on his assailants as they went.

The Colbers decided to erect a brick dwelling on their remaining lot on Pandora avenue. It was to be a double house and two stories in height. When the walls were nearly up a difficulty presented itself. The Jewish community resolved to build a synagogue next adjoining the Colber lot on the west. The synagogue was to be bigger and higher than the Colber mansion and would throw it into the shade. The Colbers would not submit to be overshadowed in that way so they added another story to their structure "from the roof of which," said the lady, "I can always command a fine view." During the progress of construction Mrs. Colber was frequently present and one day as she was climbing up a ladder "to get a view" from the unfinished roof, a little unslacked lime fell from above and entered her eyes. The pain was excruciating. She walked home and means were employed to remove the stuff. But relief came too late. The lime had slacked in her eyes and the light had gone out from those snappy organs forever. From that day till the day of her death the unfortunate woman was totally blind. The building which was erected at a greater elevation than had been originally intended still stands. Other eyes have feasted on the view to be had from the roof, but the lady for whose pleasure the elevation was increased never saw again!

The devotion of John Colber to his blind wife was marked and touching. Her temper, never of the sweetest, grew worse under her great misfortune; but Colber put up with everything and was accustomed to lead her with an exemplary tenderness and patience through the streets for an airing or to and from church.

The last time the couple came before the public was in the summer of 1867. As a barrister Colber had sued Dr. John Ash on behalf of John Nicholson, a well-known contractor, for work done at or near Sooke. Judgment was rendered for about $1,500. The money was paid into the barrister's hands on Saturday, too late to be deposited in the bank. So Colber put it into a sort of apology for a safe, which was in reality only a wooden box enclosed in sheet iron of about one-fourth of an inch in thickness. On Sunday evening the pair went out for a stroll and were absent about an hour. On their return they found that the iron and wood box had been cut through with a cold-chisel and every dollar was gone. No trace of the thieves was ever discovered, and thus Mr. Nicholson after winning his case lost his money.

A little later Mr. and Mrs. John Colber's names appeared in the passenger list of an ocean-bound vessel and I heard that she died in Australia and he went back to Scotland.

THE WRAITH OF THE HUMORIST

By Charles Battell Loomis.

THE other night I had been reading a compilation of wit and humor, and the names of John Phoenix, Artemus Ward, Josh Billings, Bill Nye and many others were dancing before my eyes, so hard had I read and so long.

And, my chair being easy and the hour being late, I closed my eyes and thought pleasant thoughts of the many men who in times past have lightened the burdens of hard working Americans.

Then suddenly I became conscious of the fact that I could see through my closed lids, and there stood two men before me. One was plainly the Average Man, but the other seemed like a composite of all the humorists I had been reading. He was rather above the medium height, his eyes were brilliant and deep sunken, his eyebrows shaggy, his nose aquiline and long, his lips full and mobile, but his expression was exceedingly sad.

"Who are you?" said the Average Man and the other, answering, said:—

"I am the Typical Humorist, and I have sought you out to tell you what my days are like. I know that if I stand here long enough you will say, 'How does it feel to be funny?' and so I am going to save your question."

I, in my comfortable chair, could not conceal my joy, but I knew enough to keep my eyes shut. I have lost many a pleasant fancy through opening my eyes too soon.

"Tell me why you look so sad," said the Average Man.

"I knew you'd ask that," said the Humorist. "I look sad because I never forget in the course of time I must die and cease to be a humorist."

He heaved a sigh and went on. "Of course the life of a humorist is one glad, mad frolic and rollick beneath his mask of sadness. His one idea is how to get the most fun out of existence, and despite the fact that he looks sad from the cause just mentioned, he is inwardly bubbling over with joy from the time he opens his eyes until he closes them in sleep.

"When he arises in the morning he jumps out of bed with a glad cry and a handspring and a merry jest which the angel of sleep gave him in the night and of which he must deliver himself. In his pajamas—if he is a modern, otherwise in his flapping nightshirt—he steps to the bookshelf and eagerly seizes on a book of humor penned by a brother in the craft. Loud and long is the laughter it evokes, and his children come flocking from every room in the house to hear the joke and laugh with him.

"At breakfast he never opens his mouth except to crack jokes, and his children laugh so immoderately at them that they eat practically nothing, and thus the butcher's bill is kept down.

"If he says nothing serious to any one so also no one says anything serious to him. He is the cause of jokes from men who no one would suspect of a sense of humor, and his progress is punctuated by ripples of laughter. That is a mixed metaphor, and nothing is so dear to the heart of a humorist as a carefully mixed metaphor. Just as the worse a pun is the better it is, so the more you mix a metaphor the better the flavor, it being like a salad in that.

"But to return. It is all his pastor can do to avoid joking in his pulpit when he is in the congregation, and to save his pastor's feelings he stays away from church. If he is introduced to a stranger who knows of him by reputation the stranger's features relax into an expectant smile and, say what the humorist may, the laugh is there to greet it. He is funny; therefore he is funny. But should the stranger not know his reputation he may crack his merriest jokes without danger of evoking a smile. In this world labels are necessary, and reputations are labels that are pasted on a man to save the rest of the world from too much thought."

"Ha!" said the Average Man, thinking it was up to him to do something.

"Thanks," said the Humorist. "To continue: He may like pictures, and asks an artist friend to send him a ticket on the opening day of an exhibition. Rest assured that he will not be allowed to flatter himself that he likes beautiful pictures; that his eye is ravished by the counterfeit presentment of a landscape. No, indeed! His artist friend will hunt for a humorous picture and will take him to it and say, 'That's where I hit you! Now say something funny about it.'

"Oh, how he has to enjoy that funny picture! He comes back to it, accompanied by his artist friend, and makes a new joke about it each time and laughs until his lungs are entirely exhausted of air, and then he steals a glance at a bit of wizardry in marine painting, but his vigilant friends says: 'Here, you won't care for that. I think there's another funny picture in the next room.' So they go into the next room, and he has to shake his sides with laughter at a humorous bit of genre painting and make new jokes about it which double up those who know he is a humorist. The others remain single.

"Should he take a walk by himself in the woods his constant desire is to find something humorous in the hang of a limb, or the shape of a cloud, or something eccentric in the workshop of Dame Flora."

"Oh, please, Mr. Humorist, say something funny," said the Average Man.

I leaned forward to hear the jest, and through force of habit opened my eyes and found myself quite alone in the room. And, yawning prodigiously, I went to bed.

DINGAAN'S DAY

Lord Milner's Return.

Written for the Sunday Colonist.

THE last fortnight has been filled with interesting events in Johannesburg. It witnessed the biggest public meeting held on the rand since before the war, but as the subject of that meeting is still an open question it will be dealt with later.

Last Wednesday was celebrated for the first time under British rule an old established Dutch holiday. The Dutch were tremendously flattered by the attention to their sentiments, and the English were no less delighted to receive an extra holiday, now that the really hot weather is coming on. As the Transvaal Critic puts it, "December 16th is proclaimed a day of prayer and thankfulness when all good Britons should play cricket."

To explain Dingaan's Day, Old Dingaan was a powerful Zulu chief, who allowed his warriors to exercise their fancy of swinging poor white kiddies by the heels, and allowing their heads to come in contact with some hard substance to the utter destruction of their owners. Naturally, the Boers didn't like him. Nevertheless, when he professed repentance, sixty of them came to his feast of—regeneration, shall I call it?—but the sad result that they were all massacred. This reprehensible conduct on the part of Dingaan aroused the righteous wrath of the old worthies. They arose in their might and fought long and bitterly until they had wiped Dingaan and his warriors off the earth.

It does one good to read of the time when the Boers did really fight courageously and successfully.

The town of Johannesburg couldn't celebrate the holiday too joyfully because there was no race meeting. The go-as-you-please race from Pretoria was the longest item, 35 miles. We were driving six or seven miles out on the Pretoria road when we met the leaders. Two of them were jogging along fairly comfortable, attended by several bicyclists, three mounted men, and a conspicuously large bag. After that they straggled along in various stages of perspiration and exhaustion. The pacers brought along one man at quite a fair trot until he paced two others. Every now and then one had to hop off his bicycle to rub the runner's muscles free from cramp.

One poor chap was left all to himself. We thought we'd cheer him on his way by a drink. We shook up the sparkliest bottle, but there was no fizz, so there was a wild scramble in the tea basket for a fresh sparkler. Then we wondered whether to risk giving him a "tummy" ache with sourest lime juice, or weakening his knees with whiskey. He settled the question by jogging up sucking a lemon, and said he'd had enough to drink. He stayed just long enough for us to get a snap-shot, then continued his lonely journey.

The funny part of the race occurred about 6:30 p.m. On our homeward journey we passed several grumbling men and two motor cars. The men were the judges of the course, but their vehicles had done nothing but break down all the way from Pretoria. One was out of action completely, the other had given it a tow line. After fearful steam curses they managed to do the first slope of the hill, then stopped again. The last we saw of them the motor men had commandeered a trolly and eight good government mules to pull them up the hill. Chimnie Fadden's name of "snuffer" ought to be changed to "shover" for the men who attempts to run an automobile in this country.

Lord Milner's return was the topic of interest for the week's end. There are many people in Johannesburg who will tell you that the High Commissioner is not a popular man. The chief root of bitterness seems to be that all the government offices are being filled by nice young chaps from home. There are thousands of men here who fought during the war, or occupied high positions in the concentration camps or the repatriation department, men who know the country, its ways and its needs. These are left lamenting while the nephew of Lord This, and the cousin of the Marquis of That are brought out to receive fat salaries—not to earn them. The consequence is that the government departments are in the most deplorable condition.

Doubtless, it's the time-honored way for young men with aristocratic connections to be put upon their feet, but it's deuced rough on the men who have done hard work, and who knows how to do more.

However, even the bitterest critics of the government have joined hands to welcome back the man who represents the King, and more than that, the man who refused an offered promotion to come back and help this poor country out of her difficulties.

The railway station was as pretty a bit of decoration as I ever saw. It is a big place with various rooms detached down the centre, surrounded by a platform, all under one roof. The pillars all the way down either side were hung with Union Jacks and Stars and Stripes, forming a continuous archway. There were Royal Standards and all sorts of ensigns about the central spaces, roped off and carpeted for the reception. All along the outside were ropes of greenery, and red, white, and blue, with palms at intervals. The motto, "A glorious sacrifice for their country," greeted Lord Milner as he alighted from the special train; while the big green and white arch that formed a gate bore the words, "Welcome Home."

Pretoria bridge, on the way to the Wanderers' grounds, was also decorated with flags, as was the driveway up to the stand.

We climbed a sandy hill, passed the covered stand, and made our way by a series of skips down a slippery hill to the seats facing the rostrum. Hundreds more ladies did the same, also one unfortunate man. He was ignominiously fished out from the shelter of skirts and parasols and escorted by a big bobby to stand upon his weary feet outside the ropes.

We were over an hour ahead of time, so had plenty of opportunity to watch the others skip down the hill. People kept coming and coming and coming until it seemed there couldn't be any more left to come. First, it was nothing except a mass of parasols in front of the sinking sun, then the shade crept over, the parasols were closed, and those on the back seats could see the platform. The stand was a lovely mass of palms, swinging baeqets of flowers, flags, pretty gowns, frock coats and tall hats. The long wait was enlivened by the S.A.A. band, and by the sound of the guard of honor being put through their paces. The ambulance corps provoked some smiles when they carried their stretcher across the open, but soon they proved their usefulness by removing a fainting man. Maybe he hadn't had anything to eat all day. There are many like that in Johannesburg these days.

At last we heard the train whistle, the cheers of the crowd at the station, the sharp command of the officers of the guard, the clatter of mounted men, and volley after volley of cheers.

That was behind the stand. When the High Commissioner came in sight the crowd in front took up the cheers as if they'd never stop. From the side ropes people crowded in closer and closer, until the whole space was one mass of men, women and cameras. They were on their feet to welcome him long before the national anthem announced his arrival.

The seventeen towns of the Transvaal had sent delegates and addresses, but only that of Johannesburg was read. It contained the hope that His Excellency's health had been completely restored, the gratification felt that he had refused the honor of the Colonial Secretaryship to complete the task here. The closing paragraphs were these:

"We look to you with confidence to guide South Africa through its present and future difficulties, whose magnitude and complexity we recognize; but we feel assured that no one is better fitted than yourself to overcome them and to establish a good government, and consolidate the interests of the Empire here and throughout South Africa."

Lord Milner came to the front of the rostrum where he could be seen by everybody. Now the cheering broke forth afresh, even more heartily than before. The High Commissioner is much greyer than he was eighteen months ago when he spoke before the teachers' conference. He hasn't exactly a worried look, but it looks that seems to sum up all the difficulties and to be pressing for their solution. His eyes make me think of that most excellent Captain Evans, who was a kind father to us Canadian teachers in our first ten days from home. As the cheering increased in volume he looked really pleased, smiled and bowed most cordially.

He began very simply by thanking the many people who had come to welcome him. He noted, as a fact of happy augury, that it was the first occasion in the history of the country when a number of local bodies acted together, all of which derived their authority from popular election. "It was a milestone on the road to constitution making, and had been reached with encouraging rapidity."

Lord Milner's health is better, and, although never a strong man, he thanked God that he generally had strength enough to carry his appointed burden, and he hoped that the strength would continue a little time longer. With distinct emphasis he recognized that his task was an arduous one and the times difficult. "But," he said, "that is precisely why I am here to lend a hand."

It's a fine spirit in the High Commissioner to come back to "lend a hand."

He said as he was the captain of the ship he certainly did not intend to resign in a period of rough weather. He confidently went on: "I expect, with your help, to see the ship safely through myself, and, in any case, I know that she will come through."

This was received with tremendous cheers. Dear knows, people here need badly enough to hear somebody with confidence in the country, somebody to cheer them up."

He went on to extract items of comfort from the facts that this had always been a country of rapid ups and downs, that the cause of the trouble had been found, and that it needed no occult power to apply the remedy, though the process of recovery might be slow; that the efforts to overcome the troubles of this long-continued depression should bring all sections of the people together.

Then he gave a moving description of the rough weather he had gone through in the early part of his passage out, in spite of wich he was back to face the buffetings here without any loss of heart or change of mind. Finally he was glad to get back in the sunshine of South Africa, among so many old friends, to be cheered and stimulated by the magnificent welcome of that great assembly.

It was an encouraging speech, it was a plucky speech, and it was an honest speech. The man was in it, not mere words. He never pretended than everything was lovely here, nor was he cast down because everything was pretty bad. But he was determined to go on, without loss of heart to "lend a hand."

The last we saw of Lord Milner he was entering his carriage, in the flicker of sunlight and shadow under the tall blue gum trees, driven off by servants in green and white livery, sheltered by double row of mounted guards, acclaimed by thousands of people, away off to big, lonely Sunnyside, that looks out over the mountains.

The sunlight he had in his welcome, but there will be plenty of shadow in the work ahead.

WINNIFRED J. PLOWDEN.

Johannesburg, Christmas Eve, 1903.

The Winter Housing of Poultry.

Written for The Colonist.

By Alice Turner.

ONE would suppose that the question of "Profit and Loss" would be enough to make most poultry keepers careful of their birds, but somehow it is not so. I feel sure that many of the people who "keep a few hens" are doing so at a dead loss all the year round, except in the most favorable weather when any hen will lay. Those who have got to make it pay study these things, but they are in the minority.

Now, I may be wrong, but I think probably at this moment the condition of many of the pretty things will be this: They are standing in their houses or under any shelter they can find, huddled together for warmth, with their shoulders up to their ears, so to speak, and their tails drooping dejectedly. Their houses have either bare board floors, or worse still, damp earth. Being a stormy day, perhaps the house has not been cleaned, perhaps, indeed, they never are cleaned more than once or twice a week; they may have dropping boards, or they may not, if not, they are still more to be pitied. Their food has been thrown to them, and they have picked it up out of the filth lying under their feet. The odor in the house is sickening, and they are shut in with it all night.

I might just stop to say here that breathing such air is so irritating to the nose and throat that it is more than likely to produce a disease.

If you were to pick up one of your birds when they are huddling together as I describe, you would find the poor feet icy cold, and feel the trembling of the little feathered thing. It would really grieve you to own a living thing in such misery as that, but the fact is you don't know anything about it. The servant cares for them and he may know a little about chickens, or he may not, he may like them and be kind to them, or he may not care a pin about them, so they take their chances, and they look like it. All this is not a pretty picture, but let us look at the other side.

It is not much trouble to make your birds happy and comfortable, especially in a country like this where it is never extremely cold. Believe me, if you do it you will be much more happy and comfortable yourself. If you "don't care," you ought not to have them, that's all. First of all, let the house be built well, do not have cracks here and there where you see the light come through. If the houses you have are defective however you can improve them by pasting newspapers over the walls, and then giving a good thick coat of lime wash. I know nothing better than plenty of lime wash for filling up the innumerable small crevices the red mite loves to creep into. And do make your house large enough. If there are fifteen or twenty fowls give them room to move about on the floor. Make the floor or flooring boards, as tight as your own floor if possible, and well up from the earth that it may be quite dry. About eighteen inches from the floor should be the dropping boards, made of ship lap, so that it may also be tight and no cracks, and it should be wide enough to catch all the droppings. Eight inches above that place the perches. A good large window about six inches from the floor is best so that every gleam of sun helps to warm the floor. The nests may be any sort you please, only not too high from the ground, and as much in the dark as possible. Now when the house is ready, it is so easy to make it comfortable.

Before the rain begins in the Autumn have at least five or six inches of dry earth put in, fine garden soil is best. I prefer not to put ashes or gravel. Put this over the whole floor and don't be stingy, put more rather than less if convenient; then throw in a good layer of clean straw, a good thick layer. The straw gets broken quite fine in time, and then it is necessary to put in a new supply. Give any lot of hens you like a house prepared in this way, and I promise you they will delight your heart. The only care needed for that house the whole winter will be a daily cleaning of the droppings boards, which will not take more than five minutes, if done daily, and occasionally painting the roosts with coal-oil.

You will find then that there is never a bad odor. The birds will scratch about in the straw, if you throw them a little wheat into it daily, the dry earth will deodorize everything, and every time the sun shines you will see the biddies boring holes in their floor, raising clouds of dust, and having the very happiest time. On a day like this they will be so contented at home that they will not attempt to go out, and instead of being disconsolate about, they will be scratching busily for what you give them, and talking at such a rate that you cannot hear yourself think.

Now, if I am fortunate enough to induce anyone to better the condition of any uncomfortable hens, I shall indeed be glad. But you will say, "What am I to do for dry earth now?" Well, if there is no sheltered spot where it may be found, could you not dry enough in the oven to fill a fairly large box. Put it in the best place under the window, just see how they will enjoy it, and give them plenty of straw. It is, I feel sure you, a very good investment upon the interest in the increased number of eggs the grateful things will lay.

REMEDY FOR BURNS.

Take equal parts of olive oil and cold water, beat them to a cream and apply to the burn on a piece of soft old linen. Change the dressing as soon as it becomes dry.