

THE TRAGIC SIDE OF POLITICS

By D. W. Higgins, Author of "The Mystic Spring," "The Passing of a Race," etc.



AS in life, so in politics, all is not beer and skittles. It has been remarked that there is a comic side to politics. So there is, as there is much that is pathetic and much that is tragic as well in the game. I do not know a more melancholy spectacle than that of a public man who has outgrown his usefulness—who in the course of a long life has buried nearly all his confidants, and who addresses an assemblage of strange young faces that wear expressions of ill-concealed impatience if not of disfavour, and whose applause, if given at all, is too often ironical. There may be wisdom in what the old man has to say, and if he adopts a humorous vein and applies his jokes to the points at issue he may score a success, but he must be sententious and not prosy—short and concise in his arguments and concrete and pithy in his applications. Old men are not the only ones who weary their audiences with dreary platitudes. Some young politicians fall into the same groove, and in a manner that reminds me of a weeping Niobe or a dripping statue that has been caught out in the rain, proceed to unfold a tale of woe to a bored audience that sets the teeth of the best-natured hearers on edge.

The legislative assembly that existed before the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia were united, boasted of a few members who possessed oratorical powers. Amos De Cosmos always impressed me with his earnestness. That was his chief characteristic. He was seldom eloquent, but he was known on occasions of great public moment to rise to a dizzy height from which he impressed his hearers with his sincerity and won their applause and support. He was easily irritated, and when he lost his temper was an easy mark for the shafts of irony which Dr. Helmcken, the speaker, was wont to cast at members when calling for order. Dr. Helmcken was often eloquent, and he had the knack of saying the proper thing at the right time. It seemed to the reporters as a speaker he was too amiable, and submitted too mildly to invasions of his authority, but he generally brought the disturber up with a round turn in the end and squared matters by his continual flow of good nature. I never saw him really angry but once. That was in 1861, when a writer for a newspaper had libelled him and was haled before the bar of the House. The writer surrendered the names of his informants and humbly apologized for the outrage. In discharging him from custody, the Speaker said that the House would not exert the authority it possessed to imprison the libeller, not because he did not deserve the severest punishment, but because it would be "like setting the machinery of the Leviathan in motion to crush a 1—c." To explain the allusion to the Leviathan it is necessary to mention that that was the name which it was at first intended to bestow on the Great Eastern, the huge steamship which proved so dismal a failure nearly fifty years ago. She was the first of the great Atlantic steamships and was propelled by both screw and paddlewheel. Huge as she was in her carrying capacity she was a mere baby when compared with the present giant greyhounds, and as for speed, she was not at all remarkable.

"Tom" Humphreys was the most eloquent man who occupied a seat in the legislative assembly. He afterwards sat in the Legislative Council for Lillooet and voted for Confederation. He was a violent and incisive speaker. His words cut like whiplash. His voice has been likened to the call of a silver clarion—it was mellow, clear, far-reaching and penetrating. His vocabulary was not large, his "facts" were not always facts, and his quotations were often incorrect, but his quick wit, his brilliant repartee, and his shafts of ridicule and sarcasm were like flashes of lightning. He became a popular idol. On one occasion he made a violent attack on Mr., afterwards Sir, Joseph Trutch, who was then Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works, accusing that official of dishonesty and all sorts of official misdemeanors. The speech was made at a public meeting. The matter was brought up in the Legislative Council and the offender was expelled after he had refused to apologize or withdraw a single word. Humphreys was called before a great public meeting at the theatre in this city, and presented with a gold watch and chain. In returning thanks for the honor and gift he repeated his charges, and defied prosecution. At the election he was triumphantly re-elected and entered the legislative hall breathing defiance to his opponents. In 1876 Mr. Humphreys became a member of the Elliott government for a few months, and was then dismissed. He was succeeded by Mr. Smith, afterwards premier. The next session he joined Mr. Walkem, leader of the then Opposition, and his hostility was probably the cause of the early downfall of the Elliott government, for after a troublous life of two years the ministry fell to pieces. In the Walkem government Mr. Humphreys was made provincial secretary, and it will hardly be believed that that brilliant orator and clarion-voiced debater sat through four sessions in the House without having introduced a measure or made a speech worthy of the name! At the next general election he stood for Victoria District, a district that adjoined this city, and was badly defeated. He afterwards stood for Yale and was defeated in a bye-election. Several years passed before an opportunity again offered. Then death opened a way by removing the sitting member for Comox. The weather was

inclement and while conducting his canvass Humphreys hired a boat to meet him at a certain point. The boat did not put in an appearance and he and a friend were forced to remain out all night exposed to the peltings of a pitiless storm of wind and snow. He was returned, but his health was ruined, and in two years' time he passed away.

Another very able legislator was Leonard McClure, a young Irish editor. When elected for the city he edited the Colonist, then the property of Mr. De Cosmos. Mr. McClure is the man who made the sixteen hour speech in the Vancouver Island legislature, a feat that is always referred to as having been performed by Mr. De Cosmos. Dr. Helmcken was speaker all through that dreary night. McClure held the floor and successfully fought the passage of a bill to repeal a certain tax. When 12 o'clock noon arrived the speaker announced that the bill was unnecessary, as the tax was confirmed by the failure of the legislation. The effort cost McClure his life. He lived for two years and died of Bright's disease at San Francisco.

A man of excellent judgment and considerable tact in debate was Hon. Wm. Smith. This gentleman was a native of the north of England. He came here in 1862 and took up a farm at Cowichan. He then went to California and became a reporter on the San Francisco Chronicle. Returning a few years later he again settled in Cowichan and resumed farming. He was elected to represent that district and led the opposition from 1878 to 1883. He was returned at the general election in the latter year, and upon the retirement of Mr. Walkem (the premier) to accept a judgeship, and the resignation of Hon. Mr. Beaven, Mr. Smith was called upon to form a government, which he undertook to do. After a caucus of the opposition members he was accepted as the leader, and a new ministry was formed. He enjoyed his political preferment for about five years, when he went down to the grave. His untimely end was greatly regretted.

A. E. B. Davie, who at that time represented Lillooet, succeeded Mr. Smith as premier. He was a quiet, amiable gentleman of correct habits and a pleasant personality; but he did not possess the force and vigor of his brother Theodore in debate, although when impressed with an idea that a measure was not in the public interest, he could be firm and unyielding. I have known him to leave a government caucus and declare that rather than allow a certain bill then under discussion to pass he would resign his portfolio. To placate him the bill was amended by the caucus to meet his views. He was the author of much useful legislation. When he died on August 1st, 1889, of consumption, he was succeeded by Mr. Robson, who, as has been stated in a previous article, was a gifted orator and an able

party organizer. It has been said that he lacked tact, but the fact that he guided his party safely through the rapids and shallows is the best evidence of his ability and wisdom. In early life he was an editor and originated the British Columbian at New Westminster, which he afterwards moved to Victoria. In 1869, The Colonist and Columbian amalgamated to secure Confederation and to breast back a spirit of annexation which had begun to manifest itself among the local politicians. The result of this amalgamation was seen in the adoption of the terms of union with Canada, under which the province secured Confederation. Mr. Robson sat for Nanaimo at the time and to his exertions were due in a great measure the success of the Confederation movement. After he assumed the premiership a project for settling a colony of Scotch crofters on the West Coast was laid before the House and certain lands were reserved for the purpose on the West Coast.

The House approved of the policy and the premier proceeded to London to interview the British government in furtherance of the scheme. I well remember the grief that was expressed when a few weeks later, a cablegram was received announcing Mr. Robson's sudden demise at London from what seemed to be a very slight accident. The London Times of July 2, 1892, thus referred to the death of Mr. Robson:

The Strange Death of Mr. Robson

On Monday afternoon, at the St. Clement Danes Vestry-hall, Strand, Mr. John Troutbeck, the coroner for Westminster, held an inquiry with reference to the death of Mr. John Robson, aged 58 years, the Premier of British Columbia, who died under extraordinary circumstances on the 29th ult. Miss Kathleen Macfarlane Laszars, residing at the Norfolk Hotel, Harrington-road, South Kensington, identified the deceased as her uncle, and stated that she was his secretary. She last saw him in good health on the morning of Monday, June 20, when he left his hotel to transact some business with Mr. Goschen, at the Treasury. On his return she heard that he had met with an accident in Whitehall. When she saw him later on he told her that he had hurt his finger while driving in a hansom cab. The injury had been dressed at the Westminster Hospital before he returned to the hotel, and no doctor was called in till the following Sunday, Dr. Ogilvy then attended him, and was with him when he died. Major William Clarke, in the Canadian Service, stated that he was with Mr. Robson on the 29th ult., and they drove in a cab from Northumberland-avenue to Parliament-street. They had an appointment with Mr. Goschen at the Treasury at 12 o'clock, for the purpose of negotiating a Government loan. On their drive, in the cab, the door of the Treasury Office, pulled sharply round by the refuse in the middle of the road, and in so doing caused the right hand door of the cab, which was open, to close suddenly. Mr. Robson had his right hand resting on the door near the hinges at the moment, and the top of his little finger was crushed. By the coroner, the work of the session in British Columbia had been very heavy and had tried Mr. Robson very much. The trip to England was on official business, but was also made by Mr. Robson for the benefit of his health. Mr. Robson was exceedingly nervous, and he suffered very much pain from the injury. Dr. George Ogilvy, physician, residing at 22, Walcott-street, Cavendish-square, said that he was called in to see Mr.

Robson on Sunday evening, the 29th ult. He found him very ill in bed with a temperature of 102 degrees. On examining the injury to the finger he found that absorption had taken place. He consulted Dr. Watson Cheyne, of King's College Hospital, who saw Mr. Robson on the following Monday, and in consequence of blood-poisoning having supervened, it was determined to amputate the finger. This was done, but it was found that the poisoning had affected the entire system, and death resulted in consequence on Wednesday last. The coroner said the case was an extraordinary one, and the jury returned a verdict of "Accidental death."

The remains of the distinguished man were brought back to Victoria and a public funeral was accorded them.

Death was busy in the ranks of the government of that day. Hon. Robert Dunsmuir, who filled the position of President of the Council, without portfolio, in the Davie government, was stricken with a deadly complaint early in April, 1889. Mr. Dunsmuir, with his able counsel and skilful management, had been one of the mainstays of the government. He was a generous, patriotic and enterprising man, and at the time of his death was considering a proposition to construct a railway to Beechy Head and establish a railway ferry across the Straits of San Juan to Port Angeles or Port Townsend, where the Northern Pacific was expected to build a branch line to connect with their overland line. After his death the project was abandoned, and has never been revived, although often mooted. As a debater Mr. Dunsmuir was keen and sarcastic. He was always listened to with respect and a feeling of confidence. His tilts with Tom Humphreys were often amusing and sometimes exciting, and the president of the council was not often worsted. On one occasion at the Philharmonic hall, Mr. Humphreys declared that Mr. Dunsmuir had been trying for five years to drive him out of the country. At the next meeting Mr. Dunsmuir produced Humphreys' demand note for \$400, which amount he had loaned his antagonist twelve months before. "This is the way, gentlemen," said Mr. Dunsmuir, holding up the note, "that I have tried to drive Mr. Humphreys from the country." It is needless to say that the Humphreys party was defeated at the polls. Mr. Dunsmuir was a remarkable man. Starting with a small capital he prospered for and discovered the celebrated Wellington seam of coal near Nanaimo. The coal commanded a very high price at San Francisco, and in a few years Mr. Dunsmuir was several times a millionaire. When he died, on April 12, 1889, his remains were accorded a public funeral. All places of business were closed, the flags drooped sadly at half-mast, and the hearse was drawn to the cemetery by his workmen, of whom there were several hundred here and at Nanaimo.

Among his great public works was the construction of the Esquimalt and Nanaimo

railway, which is now the property of the C. P. R. For building this line he and his associates—Charles Crocker and H. E. Huntington—received a cash subsidy of \$750,000 and nearly 2,000,000 acres of lands on Vancouver Island. This line, with the lands, are now the property of the Canadian Pacific Railway company. It has been often remarked that the province paid a high price for the short piece of railway from Victoria to Nanaimo; but that line has proved an important factor in opening up the island, and the extensions now proposed by the C. P. R. will bring Victoria into close touch with the Alaskan trade when a short link now in process of construction on the American side of the straits and a seventeen-mile ferry shall have brought us in close touch with the American transcontinental system. This connection will complete the late Mr. Dunsmuir's scheme, which he had in contemplation when death robbed the province of its greatest and most enterprising son.

A BOY POLICE FORCE

Council Bluffs, Iowa, has discovered a new and simple way of dealing with unruly and mischievous boys, without the services of a modern juvenile court. According to the New York Tribune one of the most novel law-and-order forces in the country has recently been tried out in this Iowa city. The institution is known locally as the "kid police force," and so popular has the movement become that practically every boy in town has put in his application for membership. Juvenile crime has almost entirely disappeared, and the "young man" criminal class finds no recruits to the depleted ranks. The capitan and originator of the force is George H. Richmond, chief of the city police force. He is said to have based his working plans on the almost universal desire the average boy has to be a "copper." The Tribune explains the genesis of the boy policeman as follows:

"The 'kid' force was organized among street Arabs, newsboys, bootblacks, and boys who would naturally be expected to oppose just such a movement. Four years ago Chief Richmond was arranging a schedule of his men for the Fourth of July. Already the boys were beginning to shoot off giant crackers, and the chief had ordered that any boy caught setting off fireworks before the hour which ushered in the Fourth should be arrested."

"A policeman entered, half-dragging, half-leading a dirty-faced little fellow, who was wiping his eyes on his sleeve."

"Caught the kid shooting a giant cracker. Here's the cracker itself as evidence," said the policeman.

"All right. Put the kid over in that chair," said the chief.

"Chief Richmond is a friend of boys, and understands them."

"Jimmie," he said, "what do you say to helping me make the 'gang' behave themselves tomorrow? I need a good boy, and I believe you are the very one I want."

"Not me," answered Jimmie. "I ain't goin' to tell on none o' me pals."

"No, I don't want you to tell on your pals, my son," said the chief. "I'll make you a regular policeman, and you can arrest any boy just like a regular policeman can."

"And kin I have a star?"

"Yes, I'll give you a badge," answered Richmond.

"All right, I'm wid yer," and "Jimmie" was there and then made a special, and started out to keep the other boys from shooting off crackers."

"The 'kid' force is changed completely for the different occasions upon which it is used. In this way, the writer points out, the chief gives every boy a chance to become a policeman, and the heaviest disgrace that can come to a Council-Bluffs boy is for one who has been a member of the force to be arrested."

FOOD PREJUDICES

The controversy regarding the best way of meeting the sparrow plague, now so much discussed in England, leads the Glasgow Herald into a discussion of national prejudices with regard to food. Beginning with sparrows, "our national margin of subsistence would be appreciably widened, and having once made a start, the Scotch people might in time free themselves from the reproach that in diet as well as theology they are the narrowest and most exclusive people in the world. Having swallowed a sparrow, England would doubtless strain no longer at haggis, porridge, and singed sheephead; and we in the North could not refuse to extend a reciprocal welcome to boiled shrimps, curried prawns, rook-pasty, and even eel-pie." Both eels and salmon seem to have been at one time rejected in Scotland. The stomach of the seventeenth-century Scot, which in its normal condition indignantly rejected eels and even salmon, was considered capable in a sickly state of assimilating fried earthworms and the pressed juice of slaters. These enticing dainties of course were for invalids only, the seventeenth-century equivalent of beef tea and chicken broth. There is an authentic instance, however, of a Scottish youth who, not content with the gastronomic raptures of the bread-and-butter "piece" where-with his gnawing appetite was stayed between meals, was in the habit of placing the said piece, butter downwards, upon a populous ant-hill, and using the inhabitants thereof as a species of caraways.

The Missionary's Service to Commerce



SAVAGE or barbaric people are no benefit to the manufacturing world. Their few and simple wants are supplied in a rude and primitive manner. Missionaries have done more to open the way for the products of the factories than any other class of men. The missionary is the pioneer of civilization. He blazes the path amidst primeval darkness for the manufactured goods of modern civilization. The missionaries convert men and women to Christianity. These converts then imitate their Christian leaders in dress, habits and mode of living. Thus the process of civilization is carried on by the creation of more and higher wants. The world must be Christianized before it can be civilized. Christianize Asia and Africa, and there has been added to the world 1,000,000,000 people desiring the products of civilization.

The preaching of Christ in Natal turned the thoughts of the natives not only into spiritual and moral, but industrial channels as well, resulting in the ordering of 500 American ploughs in one year. The business world owes a debt of gratitude to foreign missions. The missionaries are largely responsible for making a market for all kinds of agricultural implements and machinery. Listen to the testimony of different people concerning what foreign missions have done for them.

The chemist: "The most valuable of all drugs is quinine. It was discovered by a missionary."

The explorer: "The most recent and valuable explorations in China, Africa and South America have been made by missionaries."

The printer: "Metal type was brought into China by a missionary. A missionary reduced the Chinese language, despite many dialects, to writing."

The stenographer: "A missionary made possible a typewriter for the Japanese and Burmese languages."

The lexicographer: "I make dictionaries. There are 150 important dictionaries in the world today. The missionary made the original from which each one is compiled."

The philologist: "A missionary discovered and reduced to a language the Gothic tongue, from which all Germanic tongues are an outcome. The missionaries reduced the present German language to writing. The Coptic Bible was the work of a missionary."

The geographer: "The English Academy of

Sciences has accepted the report of Redmond and Craft, foreign missionaries, for 1,000,000 square miles in Africa. In this report they tell how they discovered the sources of the Nile."

The botanist: "The only thorough botany of Assyria is the work of a foreign missionary."

The anthropologist: "All our first-hand discoveries are made by missionaries who are on the ground."

The biologist: "Many important discoveries in our work have been made by foreign missionaries."

The archaeologist: "A missionary in Luxor, Egypt, has for years been the buyer for the British Museum. All contributions to the museum pass through his hands. The Moabite stone and estorian tablet were discovered by missionaries."

Robert Blantyre, a foreign missionary in Africa, sent to Scotland for three coffee plants in order to give his converts employment. Two plants died on the way out. From the one that survived have come the rich coffee plantations in South Africa. A sawmill at Rangoon was started by a missionary for the same purpose. It has been a blessing to all Burma.

During the Crimean war a missionary started a bakery in order to keep alive the soldiers who were dying by the score because of insufficient and unwholesome food. A wealthy man seeing the loads of fresh bread on the street, was struck by the missionary's good sense and made him a present of money with which to establish Roberts College. Here the young men of Persia and Turkey are receiving a modern education. There is a saying in Turkey today that Christianity added a second story to their houses.

Nine-tenths of the 300,000,000 people of India are agriculturists. The greatest need of India is agricultural missions. Women and children are skilful with their fingers. The expensive Oriental rugs are made for the most part by little children. A movement is needed to protect childhood and to put this industry on a firm foundation. The missionaries are doing good work in this direction.

Africa is behind the other continents because its rivers are not navigable. There are too many rapids. The country is a high plateau in the centre. Through the efforts of the missionaries with electrical experiments, instead of last, Africa will be first some day.

The world is fast becoming one. The missionaries are the strongest agency in bringing this to pass. When the native people become Christians a demand is created, at once for work. Frequently their conversion shuts them off from previous means of support. They soon want and need homes, clothes and wholesome work. Often, too, a convert cannot conscientiously continue in his old work. There is a need for large industrial companies. The missionaries can form them, but they cannot carry them on when they grow to any size. Why? Because all the achievements mentioned in these notes are carried on outside the main work of the missionary. They are often merely a hobby. They never become more than an avocation.—Blanche G. Loneridge, in the Standard.

He sneaks through the darkened alleys, his motions are scared and quick; and ever he seems a-dodging a blunderbuss or a brick; he hides in the shady corners, or creeps by abandoned walls, or, hearing the sound of foot-steps, seeks refuge in vacant halls. He's pelted with mud by children, men chase him with butcher knives; and always he hears the shrilling of furious maids and wives. The fear in his heart is killing, the dread in his eyes is sad; and he moans as he hunts for safety, "O surely the world is mad!" And never an Eastern leper, who cried in the wilds "Unclean" was lonelier than this outcast, in the world of men, I ween; and never a shipwrecked sailor, adrift by a barren shore, found heaven and earth so empty, found life such a brutal bore. O weep for the modern outcast, as he sits on his stovepipe hat! He's only a railway owner, a bondholding plutocrat!—Emporia Gazette.

A young broker in Boston, while visiting a certain household in the Hub not long ago, encountered a number of young women graduates whose conversation suddenly turned to a discussion of the development of the English novel.

The dealer in stocks and bonds speedily found himself "out of it." Presently, during a lull, one young woman asked him:

"What do you think of Fielding, Mr. Brown?"

"Oh, fielding is important, of course," quickly responded the broker, "but it isn't worth much unless you've got good pitchers and men who can hit the ball."

THE GARDEN CA

Prepare Borden weeks by deeply Perennials, Roses early.

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