POOR DOCUMENT

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THE WEIGHT OF THE CROWN

BY F. M. WHITE

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CHAPTER XXXVI.

Annette Tells a Story.

Prince Peretori was a by no means an unpopular figure with those who knew him both personally and by reputation. He had in him that strain of wild blood that seems peculiar to all the Balkan peninsula, where so many extravagant things are done. In bygone days Peretori would have been a romantic figure. As it was Western civilization had gone far to spoil his character. Audacious deeds and elaborate practical jokes filled up the measure of his spare time. For some months under a pseudonym he was a prominent figure at a Vienna theatre. It was only when his identity became threatened that he had to abandon his latest fad.

But he was feeling deeply chagrined and mortified over his last escape. It never occurred to him at the time that he was doing any real harm. The King of Asturia, his cousin, he had always disliked and despised; for the king he had the highest admiration. And it looked as if he had done the latter an incalculable injury.

That he had been touched on the raw of his vanity and made the catspaw of others added fuel to his wrath. It would be no fault of his if he did not get even with the Countess Saens. He would take that money and pretend that he enjoyed the joke. But it was going to be a costly business for Countess Saens and her ally Prince Mazaroff.

Peretori had pretty well made up his mind what line to take by the time he had reached the house of the countess. The place was all in darkness, as if everybody had retired for the ight; but Peretori had his own reasons for believing that the countess had not returned home. If necessary he would wait on the doorstep for her.

But perhaps the door was not fastened? With spies about, the countess might feel inclined to keep the house in darkness. As a matter of fact the door was not fastened, and Peretori slipped quietly into the hall. He had no fear of being discovered, if he were he had only to say that he had come back for the reward of his latest exploit. To the countess he had made no secret of the desperate nature of his pecuniary affairs.

The house seemed absolutely at rest, there could be no doubt that the servants had all gone to bed. Peretori stood in the hall a little undecided what to do next. His sharp ears were listening intently. It seemed to him presently that he could hear the sound of somebody laughing in a subdued kind of way. As his eyes grew accustomed to the gloom, a thread of light from under a distant door crossed his line of vision. Then there was the smothered explosion that was unmistakably made by a champagne cork.

Peretori crept along to the door under which the track of light peeped. The door was pulled to, but the latch had not caught. Very quietly Peretori pushed the door back so that he could look in. It was more or less as he had expected. Seated at a table where a dainty supper had been laid out was a man who had the unmistakable hall-mark of a gentleman's servant written all over him. On the other side of the table sat the countess' maid Annette.

"Another glass," the maid was saying. "It is a brand of the best. Nothing comes into this house but the best, ma foi. And no questions asked where where things go to. So help yourself,mon Robert! There is no chance of being interrupted."

The man sat there grinning uneasily. There was no conspirator here, Peretori decided. The man was no more than a shrewd cockney servant—none too honest over trifles, perhaps, but he was not the class of man that political conspirators are made of. It was a romance of the kitchen on Robert's side.

"But risky, ain't it?" he said as he pulled at his champagne. "If your mistress catches us—"

"There is no fear of that, Robert. She is in bed sound asleep long ago. Nothing wakes or disturbs her. She undressed herself tonight; she dispensed with my services. Oh, a good thing!"

"But risky sometimes, eh?" Robert said. "Lor, the trouble that some of 'em give!"

"Oh, they have no heart, no feeling. It is slave, slave, slave! But we make them pay for it. I make her pay for it. And when I am ready to go back to Switzerland, I know that I have not worked in vain. And she called me a liar and a thief tonight."

Robert muttered something sympathetic. He had no wish for Annette to go back to Switzerland, he said. He had saved a little also. Did not Annette think that a respectable boarding house or something select in the licensed victualling line might do? The girl smiled coquettishly.

"And perhaps something better," she said, dropping her voice to a whisper. "I am not dishonest, I do no more than other ladies in my position. Not that the perquisites are not handsome. But sometimes one has great good luck. She call me thief and liar tonight; she say I not tell the truth when I say she was robbed tonight. I show her the real thief, and still she is doubtful. The real thief took those papers. Mind you, they were papers of great value. That is certain. Suppose those papers came into my possession! Suppose I read them,and find them imense importance! Suppose that they don't belong to the countess at all, that she has got them by a trick!"

Peretori listened eagerly. Now that he was au fait of the situation, he knew exactly what Annette was talking about. He blessed his stars that he had come here tonight. Without doubt Annette was talking of the papers missing from the Foreign Office.

"Sounds good," Robert said. "Worth fifty or sixty pounds to somebody else perhaps.

"Worth ten thousand pounds!" Annette went on in the same fierce whisper. "That money with what we have saved, eh? We could take a boarding house in Mount Street and make a fortune, you and I, my Robert. Look you, these papers vanish, they are taken by a lady in a black dress. My mistress she say the lady meet with an accident and is taken to a hospital. The police come in and ask questions—ma foi! they ask questions till my head ache. Then they go away again, and my mistress leave the house again. My head ache so that I go and walk up and down the pavement to get a breath of air."

"Sounds like a scene in a play," Robert said encouragingly. "Go on, ducky!"

"As I stood there a policeman come up to me. I know that policeman; he is young to his work—he admires me. You need not look so jealous, my Robert, it is not the police where my eyes go. But he has heard of the robbery. Not that he knows its importance—no, no! He can tell all about the lady in Piccadilly who was run over. And behold he has picked up a packet of papers!"

"Good business!" Robert exclaimed. "You're something like a story-teller, Annette."

"That packet of papers he show me," Annette went on gaily. "There is an elastic band round them, and under the band an envelope with the crest of the countess upon it. Those papers were to be give up to Scotland Yard, mark you. But not if Annette knows anything about her man. Behold in a few minutes those papers are in my pocket. It is a smile, a little kiss, and the thing is done! Frown not, Robert, I have no use for that soft young policeman."

"You're a jolly deep one, that's what you are," Robert said with profound admiration. "I should like to know what those papers are all about. I suppose you've read 'em?"

"No; they are in French, the French used by the educated classes. The language is very different to my Swiss. But I have a friend who will be able to tell me what they are all about. Meanwhile, the papers are carefully hidden away where they cannot be found. My policeman, he dare not speak; even if he did, I could say that the papers were rubbish which I had thrown away. But the countess she call me a liar and a thief. She shall never see them again. What's that?"

A sudden violent ringing of the front door bell startled the supper party and the listener in the hall. Robert rose and grabbed his hat as if prepared for flight.

"No, no!" the fertile Annette whispered. "Don't go. I'll reply to that bell. It is easy to say that I have not gone to bed, and that I came down. Stay where you are. You are quite safe. It may be a cablegram, they sometimes come quite late at night. Just turn down the light."

Peretori stepped into one of the darkened rooms and awaited events. He saw Annette come into the hall and flick up the glaring electrics. In her usual demure way she opened the front door and confronted a fussy little man who stood on the step.

"Your mistress," he said hurriedly. "Your mistress. I must see her at once—at once!"

"But my mistress has gone to bed," Annette protested. "She is asleep for some time, and—"

"Then you must wake her up," the little man said. "At once. It is no use to make a fuss, my good girl, I am bound to see the countess. Tell her that Mr. Hunt is here—Mr. Hunt of the Mercury, whose business will not brook delay."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Cross Purposes.

Peretori gave way to a fit of silent laughter. Born comedian that he was, he fully appreciated the comedy of the situation. He did not need anyone to tell him why Hunt was here. But there was a serious side to the matter too, and the prince was not blind to that. Hunt pushed his way into the dining-room with the air of a man who is quite at home with his surroundings and put up the lights. As Annette disappeared up the stairs, Peretori fumbled his way to the telephone and gave Lechmere a whispered call. He had an idea that he would be in need of assistance presently, and the sooner it came the better. Then he felt that he could stand there in the dark and watch the interesting development of events.

Annette came tripping down the stairs again presently with a look of astonishment on her face. She found Hunt fuming in the dining-room. He turned upon her sharply.

"Well?" he asked. "You have aroused your mistress? I trust that she will not keep me long."

"But it is impossible that she should do anything else, M'sieu," Annette protested. "I told you that my mistress had gone to bed. I had been out late tonight myself, and there were things to do after I came in. That is why I was ready to answer your ring. I say the countess was asleep under the profound impression that such was the fact. I go to wake up mistress, and behold she is not in bed at all!"

"What does it matter so long as she gets my message?" Hunt asked impatiently.

"But she does not get your message, M'sieu," Annette protested. "She is not there. The countess is not in the house at all. I recollect now that when I responded to your ring the front door is not fastened. It is plain to me that my mistress is not in."

Hunt's reply was more forcible than polite. Annette's face flamed with anger.

"It seems the fashion at present for everybody to say to me that I am a liar," she cried. "I tell you again that my mistress is not in the house. You can wait if you like, and I will not go to bed till she come in. There is no more to be said for the present, M'sieu."

And Annette walked away with her head in the air. There was the sound of shuffling feet in the hall presently as Robert was smuggled out of the house, and Annette retired to her dignified retreat in the small back room. She had hardly regained it before the hall door opened and the countess came in. Annette, with an air of wounded dignity, proclaimed all that had recently taken place. As the light flashed on the face of the countess, Peretori could see that she was visibly disturbed.

"Go to be, Annette," she exclaimed. "I will see this gentleman who comes at so strange a time."

The countess passed into the dining-room, and as she did so Peretori saw the handle of the front door turn very quietly, and Lechmere crept into the house. He stood motionless just for a moment, then Peretori stepped out of the little room where he was listening and beckoned to him.

"Come in here," he whispered. "I sent for you because I have an idea that I shall require your assistance a little later on. Hunt is in the dining room. Ah, the quarrel has begun!"

"I tell you I have been fooled," Hunt was saying passionately. "Fooled like a child. You promised me that you would manage that the Mercury should contain an interview with the King of Asturia."

"Well? Did I fail in my promise? Did I not send the king to you in a condition when he was prepared to say or do anything? Won't it be all there tomorrow morning?"

"It is all there now," Hunt said with a groan. "Already the country editions of the paper are on the train. A large proportion of the town impressions have gone out also. And you have fooled me purposely."

"What is the man talking about?" the countess cried impatiently. "Anyone would think that I had some object—"

"In making a fool of me. So you have, if I could only understand the reason. As a matter of fact, I have been hoaxed in the most shameless manner possible. The man who came to me was an impostor, a fraud, an actor, and you knew it. When the whole story comes to be told my paper will be ruined, and I shall be laughed out of London. The real King of Asturia—"

"The man is mad!" the countess cried. "The real King of Asturia was with you tonight."

"It is utterly false, and you know it. You are playing this thing off on me for your own ends. I have just had it from the same source that the real King of Asturia, accompanied by Captain Alexis and another gentleman, have left for Dover by a special train an hour ago en route for Asturia. The information came to me from a lady journalist who actually saw the departure from Charing Cross. The lady in question makes no mistakes. I have never known her to be wrong. What have you to say to this?"

For once in her life Countess Saens was absolutely nonplussed. In the face of this information it was utterly impossible to keep up the present fraud any longer.

"So you have got the best of me?" she laughed. "It was a daring thing to do, but I thought that it would pass muster. It cost me a thousand guineas into the bargain. Mind you, I had not the slightest idea that the king would take such strong measures as these ,and I am obliged by your priceless information. Now,what can I do to put matters right?"

Hunt made the best of a bad bargain. As a matter of fact he was not quite blameless in the matter.

"Those papers," he said. "Get me those papers. I dare say I can bluff the matter through. We can suggest that somebody is personating the real king. But I must have those papers."

"Ay, if we could only get them!" the countess said between her teeth. "We have clever people to deal with, and you may thank the way I have been fooled tonight for the suggestion of the way in which I have done my best to damage the cause of Asturia. But I am on the track now, and I am going to get to the bottom of it. The first thing tomorrow morning I shall go to Charing Cross Hospital."

"What for?" Hunt growled. "You are talking in enigmas so far as I am concerned."

"Never mind. The enigma will explain itself in good time. I tell you that you shall have those papers. I'm sorry for the trick I played on you tonight, but there is a great stake in my hands. It never occurred to me that the enemy would play so bold a game."

"You hear that?" Lechmere said to his companion. "Now whatever scheme you have in your mind, my dear prince, it must be abandoned to the certainty that the Countess Saens does not go to the hospital at Charing Cross tomorrow. You have a pretty good idea of how things stand, and I look to you to prevent that. Can you possibly manage it?"

Peretori whispered something reassuring. If Lechmere would stay here for a time and watch over the progress of events, he might be able to manage it. Lechmere expressed himself as ready to do anything that was required.

"Very well," Peretori replied. "I am going to slip away for a time. I shall be back in ten minutes at the outside. But don't leave the house, because we have business here later on. There will be a real danger and peril before us presently."

Lechmere nodded in his turn as Peretori stole softly away. The murmur of voices from the dining-room was still going on. The conversation had grown desultory.

"I repeat, I am sorry for the trick I had to play you tonight," the countess was saying. "But you have only to stick to your guns and stand out for the genuiness of your interview. Under ordinary circumstances it would have passed muster. But what possessed the king to take that decided step? I understood that his nerve was gone. I had it from a sure source that he never dared set foot in Asturia again. And to have gone off in that determined manner! What does it mean?"

Lechmere could have answered that question, as he smilingly told himself. He could tell from the sound of the voices that Hunt was getting nearer and nearer to the door. Presently the pair emerged into the hall. It was fully a quarter of an hour now since Peretori had departed, and Lechmere was getting anxious. At the same moment there was a knock at the door so sharp and sudden that the countess started, as did her companion. The former opened the door.

Just for a moment Lechmere craned his neck to see. But all he noted was a district messenger boy, who handed an envelope to the countess and preferred his pencil for a receipt. The door closed, and the countess tore open the envelope eagerly.

"A thick envelope," she said. "Merely my name printed on it in large letters. What have we here? A visiting card with the name of the Duchess of Dinon on it. That is the nom de plume adopted by the Queen of Asturia when travelling. Ah, here is the gist of it! Listen:

"'Meet me tomorrow night Hotel Bristol, Paris, at 9 o'clock. Ask for Mr. Conway. Am watched. Am anxious to escape. Do not fail me. Erno.'"

The countess waved the little slip of parchment in triumph over her head. "From the king!" she said. "From the king to me. He desires to escape, and that plays my game. Give me the timetable that is on the hall table behind you."

CHAPTER XXXVIII

On Broken Ground.

Jessie opened her eyes and looked languidly around. She could not grasp the situation at first. She was in a large room exquisitely furnished; the silken draperies rustled in the breeze from the open window. Whence came all this luxury, the girl wondered? As she lay there with her hair sweeping over the laced pillow, the events of the previous evening began to come back to her. Fresh and vigorous now after her night's rest, Jessie could smile as she thought of it. It seemed almost impossible to believe that she had gone through so much, that any girl had the pluck to go through such a series of adventures without breaking down.

And yet she had done it And Jessie thrilled with a little pardonable pride as she dwelt upon the part she had played. At any rate, it had been better than slaving in the shop of Madame Malmaison, without the slightest prospect for the future. Jessie felt that now she had gained powerful friends there was no chance of further genteel starvation. Prince Mazaroff's disgraceful conduct had been a blessing in disguise.

And best of all, it had brought Ronald Hope back to her. Jessie flushed with happiness as she thought of Ronald. She was thinking, too, of her sister. What would Ada imagine had happened? She must find time to send Ada a message. If Vera Galloway was in a position to be moved from the hospital, then she might resign her part and go home. She would have to keep out of the way for a bit—out of the way of those who were likely to draw their own deductions from the knowledge that Vera Galloway had a double.

Jessie was still turning these things over in her mind when the door opened and a neat-looking maid came in with a dainty breakfast set out on a tray. When this was despatched the maid volunteered to help her to dress, from such things as had come from Vera Galloway's wardrobe. But Jessie preferred to dress herself. She managed very well with a plain skirt and a loose flufy blouse that looked as if it had been made for her. The queen was already up, and would see the young lady at once, the maid said. Not without some feeling of nervousness, Jessie went downstairs.

She bowed profoundly to the queen,who advanced and kissed the girl.

"You are my friend," she said, "my very good friend. Would that I had others like you. We will talk it over presently. Meanwhile, I have many letters to dictate. How fresh and sweet you look! I wonder if I shall ever feel what it is to be young again! Meanwhile, you are to wait here. There is nothing for you to do but to take care of yourself."

"Indeed, there is a great deal more for me to do, madame," Jessie protested. "I had meant to be up and doing long before this; it is already ten o'clock. I have to go to the hospital and see Miss Galloway. She must be removed before the Countess Saens takes any steps."

"I had forgotten that," the queen admitted. "There is so much to be done that one is apt to forget. You will manage that through Dr. Varney of course."

Jessie explained that such was her intention. She meant to go and see Dr. Varney at once. After that she would go to the hospital if necessary. Only it would be just as well if she wore a veil. Jessie thought. There was no reason why the attention of the hospital authorities should be drawn to the likeness between the patient and the visitor. The matter of the veil was adjusted without the slightest difficulty, and Jessie left the hotel.

Dr. Varney was not to be disturbed, so his man said. It required something very urgent indeed to interrupt the doctor at this hour. Jessie ignored the suggestion, and, pushing by the astonished man, walked boldly into the dining-room. Varney was not in the least angry.

"So it is you!" he said. "I rather expected this. How bright and fresh you look this morning! So you have not had enough of adventures yet? What are you going to do now? Don't mind my smoking a cigarette, do you? I always do after breakfast. That, between ourselves, is one of the reasons why I don't allow myself to be disturbed. What is the next move."

"To get Miss Vera Galloway home—or rather, to get her out of the hospital," Jessie said. "If we don't we shall have Countess Saens finding her there. She is certain to call at the hospital some time today—probably this morning. If we can be first, well and good. If you can go down with me on pretence of business and profess to recognize Miss Galloway for somebody else so much the better. Then you can say that she is fit to travel ,and there is an end of it."

The doctor grinned with a comic expression of dismay.

"Well, you are a nice kind of young lady!" he said. "A pretty proposition truly to a man in my exalted position! Why, if the truth came out it would ruin me. But I supose you expect to get your own way. Only you can't take Miss Galloway home.

"I don't propose to take her home," Jessie said eagerly. "Lord and Lady Merehaven think that their real niece is staying with the Queen of Asturia for a day or two in the place of an absent woman-in-waiting. To take Vera home home would be to spoil eevrything. Besides, we should have to account in some way for her sprained ankle, and it is quite imperative that nobody should know of that."

"What a clever girl you are!" Varney muttered admiringly. "I begin to see wha you are driving at. Go on."

"There is very little more to say," Jessie murmured. "I shall pose as a relative of Vera's—calling myself by my proper name of Harcourt, of course. Dressed in her plain black—or rather in my plain black and veil—I shall convey Vera to the queen's hotel and there change clothes. I shall just walk out of the hotel and there vanish for the time being, and there you are! The real Vera will be with the queen. She can nurse her ankle for a day or two, and nobody will be any the wiser."

Varney loudly applauded the sugestion. It was just possible, he said, that he was going to get himself into serious trouble, but he was not going to back out of it now. If Jessie would go down to the hospital and see Vera Galloway, he would folow after a discreet interval,

It all fell out exactly as Jessie had hoped. There was little the matter with Vera save for the fact that her ankle was very troublesome, though one of the house surgeons dismissed the idea of the patient being moved for the next day or two. When the discussion was still on Varney came in. He approached the matter in his own quick and breezy fashion.

"Well, young lady?" he cried. "I thought that I recognized you last night, only I wasn't sure. Miss Harcourt's father was an old friend of mine, Cattley. Wants to go home, does she? Well, I don't see any reason why she should not. Matter of a cab, nothing more. Yes, yes."

And Varney moved off as if he had already washed his hands of the matter—a mere incident in the life of a busy man like himself. Jessie hurried on Vera's preparations with a shaking hand. It was just possible that the countess might turn up at any moment. But the operation was finished at length, and the cab was ready at the door.

Pull your veil down as I have done with mine," Jessie whispered. "You never know who may recognize you. And now lean heavily on my arm, and walk as if nothing was the matter. Ah!"

And Jessie drew a sigh of relief once they were safely in the cab. The cab was dismissed in Bond Street under pretext of shopping, and another engaged. It was just as well to take all precautions, Jessie declared. Vera was looking very faint and worn, but she expressed her warm thanks to Jessie.

"It is really nothing," the latter proceeded to explain what had happened "As events turn out, everything is going most fortunately for you. As I have told you, by sheer good luck I managed to escape from Merehaven House without suspicions being excited. Lady Merehaven thinks that you are with the queen and in a very short time you will be with the queen. Then you have only to nurse your ankle and get well. As to me, I am going to discreetly disappear from view for the time."

"But you have no money," Vera protested. "You told me last night that you were desperately placed, and that if it had not been for the money you would not have come to me at all. Of course that was all nonsense, because you would have done what you did me or any other poor girl in distress. Perhaps some day I may be able to properly thank you, dear Jessie. But without money! . . . And I have none."

"I am going to leave London," Jessie whispered. "I shall be quite safe in my lodgings. And it is very little money I want. What I am looking for is some situation—"

"Situation!" Vera cried scornfully." As if I should ever permit you to take a situation again! And what is Ronald Hope thinking about? If he really cared for you—"

"He really does care for me," Jessie said with a fine color. "And if there is any need for you to thank me for bringing Ronald and myself together. . . . But here we are at the hotel."

(To be continued.)

ACADIA COLLEGE CLOSING EXERCISES

Many Graduates in B. A. and B. Sc. Courses—The Prize Winners.

Wolfville, June 6—The programme of the commencement exercises of Acadia College, held in College Hall this afternoon, was as follows:

Address by members of the graduating class.

Canada for Canadians—F. Stewart Kinley, Port Lorne (N. S.)

Have We Still Need of Poetry?—Alice P. DeWolfe, Bedford (N. S.)

Vocal solo—The Bells of St. Mary's (Rodney), Frank Adams.

Friends in Field and Forest—George R. Bancroft, Barton (N. S.)

To What is Social Progress Due—Raymond D. Colpitts, Forest Glen (N. B.)

Announcement of Honor Certificates:

Raymond D. Colpitts—History and Political Economy.

Joseph E. Howe—History and Political Economy.

Frederick Porter—English Literature.

Announcement of Certificates for Abreviated Science Course:

Walter E. Bradshaw, Moncton (N. B.)
Walter P. Copp, Sackville (N. B.

Conferring of Degrees.

Exercises in connection with retirement of the president.

Addresses by distinguished visitors.

B. A Degrees.

The degree of B. A. was conferred on the following:

Gordon P. Barse, Dartmouth (N. S.)
Nora McL. Bentley, Wolfville (N. S.)
George R. Bancroft, Barton (N. S.)
Frederick A. Bower, Shelburne (N. S.)
William H. Coleman, Moncton (N. B.)
Raymond D. Colpitts, Forest Glen (N. B.)
Walter P. Copp, Sackville (N. B.)
Alice P. DeWolf, Bedford (N. S.)
William T. Denham, St. John (N. B.)
Clayton E. Gardner, Brooklyn (N. S.)
Harry B. Havey, Bridgetown (N. S.)
Joseph E. Howe, Hillsdale (N. B.)
F. Stewart Kinley, Port Lorne (N. S.)
Celia G. Kierstead, St. Stephen (N. B.)
C. Elton Lewis, Westbrooks (N. S.)
Frederick Porter, Fredericton (N. B.)
Ernest Robinson, Kentville (N. S.)
David H. Webster, Cambridge (N. S.)

B. Sc. Degrees.

Candidates for the degree of Bachelor of Science, conferred by Acadia for first time:

Ross F. Caldwell, Gaspereau (N. S.)
Ralph K. Strong, B. A., Kentville (N. S.)

M. A. Degrees in Course, as follows:

Mabel E. Archibald, of the class of 1895, in History.

Victor L. O. Chittick, of the class of 1905, in English Literature.

C. DeBlois Denton, of the class of 1904, in Mathematics and Political Economy.

Prizes Awarded.

The special competitive prizes were awarded:

Gold medal, presented by Nothard and Lowe, of London, England; awarded to member of graduating class who has made the highest average upon the regular work of the sophomore, junior and senior combined—Frederick Porter, Fredericton (N. B.)

Silver medal, presented by Governor General; awarded for second highest average—Raymond D. Colpitts, Forest Glen (N. B.)

Gold medal for excellence in oratory, presented by Rev. Kerr Boyce Tupper, D. D., LL. D., of Philadelphia—W. H. Coleman, Moncton (N. B.)

Scholarship of $60, class of 1901; awarded to sophomore who has made highest average in freshman year—John S. Bates, Amherst (N. S.)

Three of the five prizes go to New Brunswick, whose students have taken a foremost place in both the classrooms and on the campus. Among the other popular men is William T. Denham, of St. John, whom students and professors alike speak of as "a first class all-round man." James A. Estey, of Fredericton, of the sophomore class, is also a fine student and is spoken of as a next year medalist.

Andover Methodist Church Roll Call.

Andover, N. B., June 5—The trustee board of Andover Methodist church met on May 25. At the call of the roll five members answered to their names and two new members were added in the usual way, viz., Benjamin Kilburn and James Stewart.

It was resolved that the trustee board of the Andover Methodist church place upon record its deep regret at the death of the late Mrs. Cameron, of Milwaukee, and its hearty appreciation of the liberal bequest she made to the church of this place.

A unanimous invitation to return for a second year was extended to the Rev. Charles W. Squires.

Personal righteousness will be the source of any permanent reform.

ENTHUSIASTIC OVER SASKATOON

E. B. Ross Sounds a Booming Note for the Prairie City--Easterners Who Are There and Thereabouts.

To the Editor of The Telegraph:

Sir,—I have received so many inquiries about Western Canada that I decided the interest of your many readers would justify my writing to you at some length on the development and prospects of this part of the Dominion. I have traveled over the whole wheat area so far as it is possible to do so by rail and I am delighted with the great prosperity and rapid development which are so apparent in this whole country. The incoming trains are crowded to the very doors and are often broken up into two, three and sometimes four sections. To get accommodation in a hotel the traveler must wire ahead for a room.

The story of one of these progressive cities is the story of them all. There are two and perhaps three cities whose geographical position ensures them a great future. Winnipeg and Saskatoon have been dealt with most beneficently by nature. There is, however, this difference between these two prairie cities. Winnipeg is at the entrance of this country while Saskatoon is in the very centre from which radiates busy railroads to all parts of the rich wheat growing areas.

Saskatoon is also more favored than other prairie cities in the beauty of its location. The great Saskatchewan flows almost through the centre of the city. The banks of the swiftly flowing river—for that is the meaning of its name—are covered with a rich growth of trees and there are many scenes which are scarcely surpassed even in the land of Evangeline. Saskatoon will be famous not for its beauty alone, but also as the commercial and railway centre of the whole wheat-growing area of Western Canada.

The remarkable grawth of this city during the last few years is a good index of its future. Three years ago there were less than 200 people here, while today the population is slightly over 6,000. This growth is not the result of an artificial boom, but is the natural and normal result of the wonderful influx of immigrants into the rich prairies which stretch almost immeasurably in every direction. Saskatoon is the natural centre from which all the golden wheat fields can be most easily tapped—an advantage which the railways have been quick to recognize.

The divisional point of the secondary main line of the C. P. R. to the coast via the Peace River pass will doubtless be located here. The main line of the G. T. R. will pass through the city and it will no doubt be the principal divisional point of this great system west of Winnipeg. The C. N. R., a third transcontinental, will run a branch from their main line, a few miles north, into this city. The Q'Appelle, Long Lake and Saskatchewan Railway has its main divisional point here. The Great Northern will enter Saskatoon as soon as the main line from Winnipeg to the coast is completed. There are many branch lines projected, but the three transcontinentals will give this city a competitive freight rate which will make it the most profitable city west of Winnipeg for the wholesale men.

Manufacturing will also be one of our strong points. The ease with which water and fuel can be obtained is attracting the attention of eastern capitalists and it is thought that the two mills already located here will soon be supplemented by many others of various character.

The best index to the prospects of any city is the value—not the price—but the actual amount shrewd business men are willing to pay for business sites. Four years ago a lot on one of the principal streets was sold for $30. That same lot was bought a few days ago for $15,000. A certain corner which was sold three years ago for $750.50 is now worth $20,000. Business sites on principal business streets cost the buyer $300 per front foot. A large brick hotel has just been completed at a cost of $50,000, and is to be opened June 1. The National Trust Company are erecting a stone office building which will cost about $30,000. Several other financial institutions have built or intend building in the near future.

Among the New Brunswick people I have met are W. H. Coy, W. P. Taylor, H. E. Rideout, Page W. Rideout and the Townsends of Woodstock.

Mr. Coy, who was for some time traveling auditor of the C. P. R., both in the east and in the west, has an extensive real estate business in Saskatoon and is a most enthusiastic westerner and has great confidence in the future of Saskatoon. W. P. Taylor, formerly of Fredericton, is associated with Messrs. Lougheed and Bennett, of Calgary. H. E. Rideout has spent a prosperous year in Calgary in the building business and has removed to Saskatoon to look after his extensive interests in this city. Page W. Rideout is at Regina. He spent the winter in British Columbia.

There are many other Down Easterners in Saskatoon, which, in fact, appears to be the objective point of all from the Maritime Provinces who have a keen eye for good opportunities.

Thanking you for your space, I am,

Yours truly,
EDWIN B. ROSS.

Saskatoon, Sask., May 29. 1906.

The editor of one of the papers in Indian Territory has made arrangements to have a photograph taken of each paid-up subscriber.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

[The opinions of correspondents are not necessarily those of The Telegraph. This newspaper does not undertake to publish all or any of the letters received. Unsigned communications will not be noticed. Write on one side of the paper only. Communications must be plainly written; otherwise they will be rejected. Stamps should be enclosed if return of manuscript is desired in case it is not used. The name and address of the writer should be sent with every letter as evidence of good faith.—Ed. Telegraph.]

THE ROADS AND THE ROAD LAW

To the Editor of The Telegraph:

Sir,—Perhaps it is wearisome to your many readers to hear so much said pro and con re the new road law; but "Alden," of Oak Bay, needs to be set right in one point at least. His illustration as regards a "far-seeing business man" of his neighborhood overseeing an enterprise in St. John does not touch the question at issue by any means. We would like to ask "Alden" to point us out one single superintendent who resides sixty miles from any one portion of the road over which he has control. Such a statement, on its very face, either displays ignorance, or else is made to deceive voters who have not taken the time to look the matter up.

Talking with a citizen of Uncle Sam's domain only the other day he informed me that our present road law was very similar to what they had over there. To return to the old system would be tantamount to trigging the wheels of progress, and this we must not do. The law is all right if the officials will only see to it that it is properly carried out; and this I feel confident they will do.

D. E. MANN.

Baillie, June 1, 1906.

PROF. BRITTAIN ON SCHOOL BUILDINGS

To the Editor of The Telegraph:

Sir,—I hand you a letter received from Dr. Brittain which explains itself. As it refers to matters of general school interest, our board thought that, with the writer's consent, which has been obtained, it would be well to give it general publicity.

Yours truly,
J. A. FREEZE.

Sussex, N. B., June 2.

Woodstock, N. B., May 8, 1906.

Dear Mr. Freeze:—

It afforded me the kneenest pleasure to see a few days ago the beautiful and spacious site which the school board of Sussex have secured for their new school building.

When these fine grounds are laid out into playgrounds for the boys and girls, with a school garden and orchard and planted with trees and shrubbery, they will form a most valuable part of your educational equipment—a place where the boys and girls of Sussex will find healthful recreation and acquire healthy tastes, and which I am sure they will respect and look back to with pleasure.

At your request I venture to make a few suggestions in reference to the science and nature study arrangements.

I hope your architect will find room for a good sized laboratory with tables for work in chemistry and physics—and supplied with a sufficient number of sinks and water taps. The laboratory should be conveniently placed in reference to the class room of the science teacher, whose room should contain cabinets for apparatus which would be injured by the acid fumes of the laboratory. The laboratory tables may be quite simple in construction, but should have plain, narrow shelves extending lengthwise over the middle of the table for reagent bottles and drawers below for apparatus for individual use. The tops of the tables may be made of thick pine boards filled and stained black, then coated quite thickly with sufficient paraffine wax to protect from acids. The water taps in the tables should be over the sinks. Sinks are lined with lead. At the side of the laboratory the cabinet doors below may be made of wood—above of glass. Supplies should be stored below—chemical apparatus above. The tables may be used for physical experiments—including electricity—as well as for chemistry. All the furnishings of the laboratory should be plain, but care should be taken as to details such as height and length of tables and shelves, depth of sinks, etc.

As to the sanitary arrangements, as the best architects now urge, they should not be placed in a low, dark or inconvenient situation, but where they can be well lighted, warmed and aired, and where they are easily and quickly accessible by pupils and teachers. At the consolidated school in Florenceville, the water closets for the girls and little boys are on the second floor at the back of the main hall, suitably screened, and are to be under the supervision of the lady teachers who will have no excuse for neglecting them, as they are so easily reached. The condition of the closets has a very great deal to do with the morals as well as the health of the children.

The school garden, if well managed, will be a valuable but not an expensive adjunct to the school. One of the male teachers, preferably the science teacher, should have the general charge of it. If the board could secure a man as caretaker of the school building who has some taste for garden work he could keep the garden in proper condition during the vacation, and might be rewarded in part at least by allowing him a piece of ground for his own use. I will not trouble you now with a discussion of the value of school garden work, but will supply the board with some literature on the subject.

Yours very truly,
JOHN BRITTAIN.

STMR. EMPRESS OF IRELAND MADE OVER 20 KNOTS ON TRIAL

Glasgow, June 6—The Canadian Pacific Railway Co. have every reason to be satisfied with their ocean liner Empress of Ireland, sister ship to the Empress of Britain. Interviewed on board the vessel as she lay at the tail of the bank near Greenock today, Arthur Peers, chief of the marine department of the C. P. R., stated that things were as satisfactory regarding the trials of the vessels as one could wish for in every respect. Yesterday the Empress of Ireland essayed her progressive trials, that is to say, trials of speed at different knotages per hour over a measured mile on the Firth of Clyde at Skelmorlie. Two runs each were made at twelve, fourteen, sixteen and eighteen knots, and afterwards four more runs at full power, when a maximum speed of twenty and a quarter knots was attained, thus showing one knot more than was guaranteed in the contract. Considering that these trials were carried through with one boiler held in reserve, the results indicate that the Empress of Ireland is fully and adequately equipped as regards horse-power.

The fact that the vessel is built to carry 6,500 tons of cargo besides her 1,800 passengers of all classes, must also be taken into account when comparing her speed with that of other trans-Atlantic steamers.

Following upon the progressive trials, the Empress left Greenock late last night on a twelve-hour run with a view of testing her coal consumption at eighteen knots speed. The passage accomplished was to Isle of Man and back, and was completed about noon today, when the Empress was conspicuous from Greenock on account of her size and distinguished lines.

The ship left Greenock again this afternoon on another twelve-hour trip, the object on this occasion being to test her speed and coal consumption at nineteen and a quarter knots, and this completes her trials.

Next Tuesday the Empress will sail for Liverpool, leaving there for Quebec with her first complement of passengers and cargo on the 29th inst. The vessel is under the command of Captain Carey.

Mr. Osler's Generous Gift.

Toronto, June 5.—(Special)—B. B. Osler, M. P., presented the home for aged men and women on Oxford street with $10,000. This is a Church of England charity.