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WHEN THINGS GO WRONG.

And It's Difficult to Rectify Them

(By JEREMY BENTHAM, JR.)

ARTICLE II.

There are one or two things I should like to point out. You don't often get the truth told in print.

THE HUNTER PROPOSITION AND THE REMOVED ELECTION.

As I write, a report reaches me to the effect that the Hunter Proposition—or promises very shortly to be accomplished, and that a General Election will be held in November. I am not quite prepared, just at present, to accept this rumor without reservation; but, these days, the people would do well to be ready for every contingency. Any way, if "happy chance" should make it possible for us to obtain some new and improved material for our next House of Assembly, I might be in a position to avail myself of it. Members of the newly-organized Reform Party, and all those who have yet ranged themselves under its banner, but who are in sympathy with the general principles of political reform, should make it possible for us to obtain some new and improved material for our next House of Assembly, I might be in a position to avail myself of it. Members of the newly-organized Reform Party, and all those who have yet ranged themselves under its banner, but who are in sympathy with the general principles of political reform, should make it possible for us to obtain some new and improved material for our next House of Assembly, I might be in a position to avail myself of it.

form Association. It is hardly necessary here to point out the importance of individual action in every constituency. Questions which affect the chances of success of either political party are always looked after by the respective caucuses. The whole machinery of the party is always used, and often strained to advance the questions which are believed to have a practical bearing upon party success. Other questions, from which no party capital can be made, are too often left neglected.

SUBJECTS TO BE KEPT TO THE FRONT.

It is, therefore most desirable that those who have a keen interest in social and moral questions, should see to it that in the strife of the coming election the subjects in which they are interested should be kept well to the front. It is impossible, of course, to prescribe any definite way in which citizens should bring their convictions before the attention of those who seek to be their representatives. If only one earnest elector in every important settlement of a district could be found to press upon the candidate, whether by question at public meetings or by conversation in canvass, the necessity for carrying out the measures upon which every one is agreed, but for which no

one particularly cares from a party point of view, a great deal might be done to give a better tone to the next House of Assembly. This duty lies especially at the door of those who are in a position of influence, whether in pulpit or in press or otherwise; and it may be well to emphasize here what might be done in this matter, especially by "men of light and leading."

WHAT IS AN ELECTION?

In answer to the question, What is an election? let me say that an election is the appeal which the country, whether in her totality or any of her sections, makes to the individual elector for his advice and counsel as to the conduct of her affairs. Before the ballot-box every elector is a sovereign, but unfortunately many electors are as indifferent to the obligations and responsibilities of the sovereignty as ever was a worthless despot who deserted the throne and council-room for the harem and the wine-cup. On the eve of an election, before the selection of the candidates, it is found advantageous that intelligent and patriotic voters within the electors area should meet to consider in what way they can best discharge the duties that devolve upon them as good citizens and use the opportunities afforded by the election to educate the electors as to the moral and financial issues involved in the election; and I contend that what is financially and politically wrong is morally, wrong, as well!

JUSTICE AND POLITICAL PURITY.

If the party seeking the country's support were organized as a unit for the furtherance of the cause of justice and political purity, it would find no difficulty in securing from every constituency, before any candidate was chosen, a clear enunciation of the following principles: (1) That in the coming elections the citizens should inflexibly refuse to select as their candidate for any position of trust a dishonest, corrupt or otherwise unsuitable man, it being contrary to sound policy and to the first principles of good Government to elect a law-breaker to be a law-maker. (2) That in the conduct of the election both parties should be constantly reminded that a party fight itself need not abrogate the ninth commandment, nor is charityless of a virtue during an election than at any other time. At present, to such a pass have charity, passion and reason come, that there are many prominent men in Church and State who, by their practice, show that they believe the commandment, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor," does not hold in times of election. (3) That in deciding now to vote, conscience should be the supreme arbiter, and all effort to induce citizens to vote on one side or the other—not in defence to argument addressed to the reason, but by intimidation, corruption, or other base motives which appeal to self-interest—should be regarded as unworthy of a civilized community and dangerous to a pure democracy.

HOW TO FURNISH THE POLITICAL AIR.

It strikes me that if the foregoing three principles were insisted upon in all the pulpits and on all the platforms on the eve of the coming election, whether it be in November next or November of next year, it could hardly fail to purify the air, and raise the election to a higher plane than that to which it is at present too often degraded by the wire-pullers and candidates, who often make a Dutch auction of principles, if by any means they can catch votes. The question as to what can best be done by right-minded members of the community towards promoting this cause, is one which should be decided locally. It is to be feared that in most cases there is not sufficient consciousness of a common bond of union among citizens of all parties to render it possible to realize the ideal in this matter. Party spirit runs too high for what will become, I am convinced, in a few years, the rule, namely, the assembly of all the representatives of the moral, social and political organizations in every constituency, independent of party prejudices, before the nominations are made, in order that there may be drawn up and pressed upon all candidates a policy both for electioneering and for legislation which would command the support of the best people in the various districts, and would therefore inevitably secure the adhesion of the candidates of all parties. Unfortunately, the intensity of party strife here renders such a simple solution of the most pressing of our difficulties all but impossible. Therefore, we must all do the best we can, each in his own constituency, under the circumstances.

ABOUTING A HEALTHIER SENTIMENT.

At this moment I cannot say, positively, what effect the present agitation will have in the way of arousing a healthier sentiment in the popular breast. A great many intelligent people, in their despondency, seem to regard the situation as a hopeless one, while others urge the immediate adoption of such measures as the emergency may require, followed by a stirring appeal to the patriotism and independence of the people. I certainly fall in with the latter idea, gloomy and all as the outlook now appears to be.

AN APOLOGY FOR POLITICAL WRONG-DOING.

The fallacy of "Whatever is right" is too often invoked as an apology for



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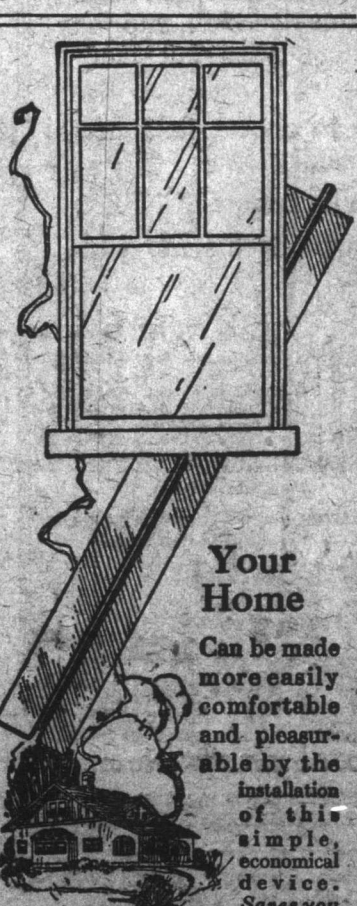
political wrong-doing. Pernicious practices in public life are exalted above those principles by which such practices are condemned. Political bigots and all who are selfishly concerned in the existing system may close their minds and hearts to the message of truth in this connection. Thus it has been here for the past decade or more—at all events since 1908! Nay, more. There is often an irritation excited by the presence of truth in public life; and men who are ordinarily kind and charitable, forget their kindness and lose their charity towards the unaccustomed stranger—Truth! Harshness, neglect, intolerance and dishonesty ensue. Savages could hardly live in greater distrust of each other than do some of our party politicians of the present day.

WHERE PUBLIC OPINION IS POWERLESS.

In a community like ours, where, under the most favorable circumstances, responsible government only exists in name, where there is no vital public opinion, or where that public opinion is powerless to affect results, the play of conducting a constitutional government without an opposition is only a farce with no fun in it. Why? Because a government is exposed to the pressure of such debasing influences that a good, strong opposition is really its best friend. Recent experiences here have proved that a government cannot of itself interpose sufficient moral resistance to stem the tide of drifting circumstances and the clamor of unprincipled outsiders. Therefore an opposition is provided for in the theory of responsible government, the system being incomplete without it, and not only useless and unsafe as a system of government to the state, but absolutely intolerable and impossible to the very men who constitute the government themselves.

RESPONSIBILITIES THAT CANNOT BE EVADED.

Certain it is that we never find in any adequate system of government a factor provided for that is not wanted, nor any function implied that can safely be done without. Of course there are men who, for purposes of their own, try to get rid of these restraints; but such do themselves the greatest injury thereby. And why? Because such men do most manifestly declare that they are not honest at heart. Sometimes, perhaps, the result is brought about by some conjunction of circumstances that is sudden, unexpected and beyond human control.



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But then, as I have already intimated, no time is lost by an honestly-intended and conscientious government to terminate the abnormal position and fulfill the implied conditions of responsible government. If they should hesitate to do it from a public point of view, they would do it for their own sake, just as a man who was suddenly called upon to handle large sums of money in trust for others would insist upon it that some one else should be appointed to count the money after him.

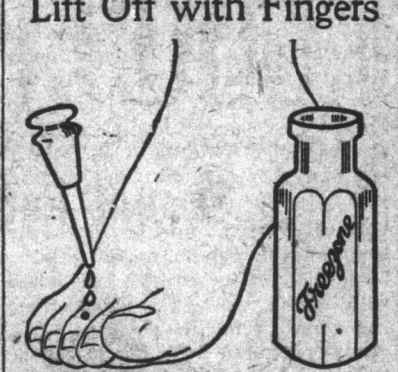
THE REMEDY AND HOW TO APPLY IT.

That there must continue to be some clashing of interests between the different parties is obviously true. That each party, in maintaining its position and policy, must make some sacrifice of its peculiar interests is almost as obvious. But the question to be answered is, not whether such sacrifices are made, but whether they are not compensated by the advantages resulting from the retention by us of the power to administer our public affairs along the lines of the best form of constitutional government in the world. For many of the inexcusable abuses that exist in our public life, we have ourselves to blame. The remedy, however, is still in our own hands. Its application may involve much sacrifice—it may mean political extinction in some cases; but posterity will be grateful, and the names of the new Reformers will be held in high esteem by their fellow-countrymen for all time.

"For Humanity sweeps onward; where to-day the shanty stands, On the morrow crouches India, with the silver in his hands; While the hooting mob of yesterday in silent awe returns to History's golden urn."

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The Last Great Pirate.

ROBERTS, THE DANDY.

It is two hundred years ago that Bartholomew Roberts, who was, according to literary tradition, the original of Scott's Cleveland in "The Pirate," perished in battle on the quarterdeck of his own Jolly Roger flagship, the Royal Fortune. He was one of the last, if not indeed the very last, of the great romantic pirates.

Robert's career was a short one. He "began pirate" in 1718, and he died on February 28th, 1722. He was mate of a ship that was plundered by pirates on the Guinea Coast in 1718, and he joined his captors, succeeding to the command of the band when their leader, Howell Davies, died. He was as bold a man as Davies. He emulated the latter's feat of taking James Fort, the British Royal African Company's stronghold on the River Gambia, by capturing Bunce Island Fort in Sierra Leone within a few weeks of his election to the command. He followed that up by the capture of a hundred merchant ships in twelve months, and the Company raised so much clamour at home that Captain Ogle, with the Swallow and Weymouth, was specially detached to round him up.

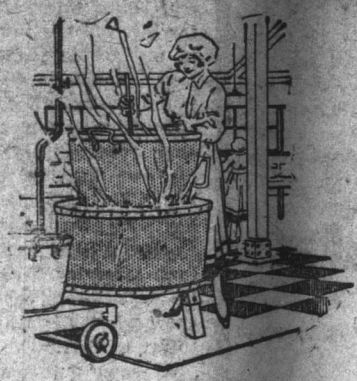
He was found at anchor in Cape Lopez Bay by the Swallow, the Weymouth being away searching another part of the coast. Roberts had with him the Royal Fortune and the Ranger, which was commanded by a Welshman named Skymme. Ogle, standing off to avoid a sandbank, gave Roberts the impression that he was afraid, and the pirates contemptuously sent his smaller ship to deal with the Swallow. Ogle drew off until he and the Ranger were out of sight and sound of the Royal Fortune. Then he turned and, after two hours' fighting, captured his pursuer. Roberts's contempt for his adversary was so great that when the Swallow returned he refused to believe that she could be anything but the Ranger coming back victorious. When he was at last convinced of his mistake he slipped his cable and, with double-shotted guns, made for her. He made, we are told by an eyewitness of the fight, a gallant figure, "being dressed in a rich crimson damask waistcoat and breeches, a red feather in his hat, a gold chain round his

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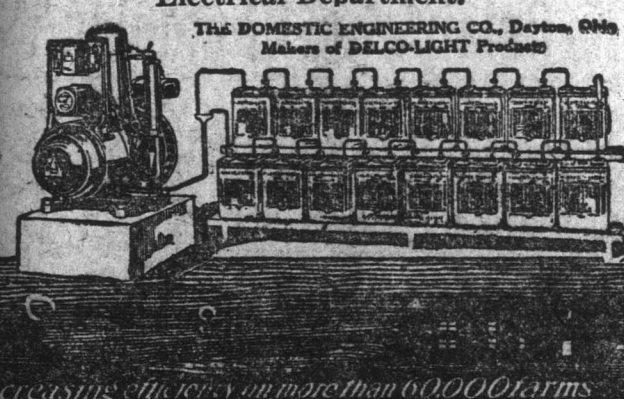
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neck with a diamond cross hanging to it, a sword in his hand, and two pairs of pistols hanging at the end of a silk sling hung over his shoulders (according to the fashion of the pirates)."

The Last Fight.

After the first exchange of broadsides the Royal Fortune bore away, Roberts's intention being, apparently, to run her ashore and let his men escape. But a shift of the wind, or

bad steering, foiled him. The Royal Fortune was taken aback and the Swallow was quickly alongside again. The second broadside ended the career of Roberts. He was struck full in the throat by grape-shot, and fell dead on the tangles of a gun.

His men threw the body overboard with his arms and ornaments on, but his flag (with the figure of a skeleton on it and a man with a flaming sword in his hand, intimating a

defiance of death itself) was planted under the fallen masthead, and was taken by the Swallow's men when they captured the ship.

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