

THE STORY OF A STORY.

BY EDWARD D. CUMING.

CHAPTER I.

"Mr. Meadows," said Miss Alicia Malden with a mysterious air, "I want to have a little chat with you as soon as you have finished your tea."

Arthur Meadows hastily disposed of the last fragment of cake, and put his cup down on a knock-knack-laden table near a tete-a-tete with Miss Malden was very dear to him, and hopes of enjoying one for five minutes brought him all the way from his lodgings in Brompton to No. 212 Brook Street regularly every Tuesday.

"Yes, Miss Malden," he said, as the young lady took her seat on the sofa at his side—"yes."

"I've got a great secret to tell you," and she leaned forward to impart it in an impressive whisper. "Mr. Meadows, I have written a book."

Having unburdened her conscience, she drew back to mark the astonishment she expected the revelation would evoke. But Mr. Meadows, whose opinion of her talents was perhaps biased by admiration, manifested no surprise at all. On the contrary, he merely said that he was perfectly sure anything Miss Malden wrote would be well worth reading.

"It's very good of you to say so," she answered modestly, "and you encourage me to ask a great favour."

Arthur Meadows blushed with pleasure, and said that she had only to say what the favour was; he would be only too charmed to do any thing for her.

"I want you to take the manuscript home with you to-day and read it. Then I shall ask you to give me your opinion of it," said Miss Malden with her brightest smile.

The young man's brain whirled; that smile intoxicated him, and he scarcely realised that he was being admitted into his life's most sacred confidence.

"I want your candid opinion, mind," continued Miss Malden. "I have read the story to Gwen Pollock, my dearest friend, and she is delighted with it; but of course she is no judge."

In broken sentences, Arthur Meadows strove to assert his conviction that Miss Pollock's verdict only foreshadowed his own.

"Gwen thinks I ought to get at least two hundred pounds for it," said the authoress carelessly; "but of course I don't expect anything. I scarcely dare trust myself to think of the joy of seeing it in print, even."

"I will do my very best for you, Miss Malden."

"Thanks. If you will come into the library, I will give you the manuscript.—Oh! I almost forgot to tell you. It's a secret from mamma. I am not going to tell her until the book is printed and published. I mean to give her a surprise."

"We must find a publisher, Mr. Meadows," said the young lady as she unlocked a drawer in the library writing-table and took out a bulky brown-paper parcel.

Miss Malden said "Well," Arthur Meadows seized the parcel and pressed it to his heart. "Yes," he murmured ecstatically—"yes; and I wish I could tell you how—how—how!" But he couldn't; the words would not come; so he looked his feelings instead.

"I did think of asking Mr. Wegwood to look at it," said Alicia; "but I prefer to give it to you."

Mr. Meadows slid the package under his arm, caught Miss Malden's hand, and held it while he said a long "good-night." He looked upon Augustus Wegwood as his most dangerous rival, and this signal mark of preference raised him at a bound into the seventh heaven.

Mr. Meadows got into an omnibus at Hyde Park Corner. He was a man of about thirty years of age, who had been brought up with expectations that warranted his choosing a life of idleness. When he was twenty-three, the tide of his father's fortunes changed, and fell with rapidity to the lowest ebb; and at twenty-five Arthur Meadows found himself fatherless and penniless, with nothing but his own unaided abilities wherewith to earn a living. He faced the situation bravely, and fell back on literature; and being possessed of a ready and facile pen, he contrived to keep his head above water by writing for magazines, at which laborious and uncertain vocation he had worked until the time our story opens. And to his consequent knowledge of literary matters and acquaintance with the publishing fraternity he owed in a measure the distinction Miss Malden had conferred upon him.

Mrs. Malden had been a friend of his mother, and had remained staunch through adversity; her house in Brook Street was always open to him; and since Alicia's return twelve months ago from the Continent, where she had received the finishing touches to her education, Mr. Meadows had fallen steadily more and more deeply in love with her. He was aware that the young lady liked him; but as he could not ask a girl who would inherit some four thousand a year to share the two hundred his pen brought him annually, he was compelled to stand aside, while more eligible suitors thronged round to bid for the prize.

Mr. Meadows left the omnibus at the South Kensington station, and, still hugging that parcel, dived into the maze of streets which lies between the Brompton and Fulham Roads. He bent his steps down one of the less shabby respectable, and drawing a latchkey from his pocket, let himself into a house whose lower windows were adorned with cards bearing the legend, "Furnished Apartments." His own rooms were upstairs, and giving his landlady a call, to announce his return, he ran up to open Miss Malden's manuscript. It looked rather formidable when he had taken off the numerous wrappings that protected it—five hundred and thirty sheets of closely-written foolscap, bearing on the outside, in artistic scroll-work, the title—

AT EDEN'S GATE.
An Idyll in Three Volumes.
By A. M.

"A good name," he muttered—"a very fair name. If the story is equal to it, it will do." The critic was overcoming the lover; for Arthur Meadows was a man of intrinsic honesty, and meant to deal with Miss Malden's book as impartially as he could.

He hastened over his dinner, and as soon as the cloth had been removed, turned up the lamp, drew in his chair, and set to work. He saw infinite possibilities in the future, for he felt that to secure publication of Alicia's novel would go far to turn mere

liking into a deeper channel; and when it became clear that she actually reciprocated his attachment he might—Ah well; there would be time enough to build these castles in the air when he had reached the bottom of the very first page, the eager light in his eye had faded; at the end of the second his jaw fell visibly and his face grew blank; and when he paused to turn over the third, the glance he cast at the huge pile of foolscap beside him betokened anything but a whetted appetite for "At Eden's Gate."

As a matter of fact, dismay and disappointment were already the feelings uppermost in his mind. The most daring efforts at "fine writing" were framed in lengthy sentences, whose construction argued the writer's contempt for the elements of English grammar; the simplest ideas were concealed in wordy shrouds of superlatives; and the spelling was varied with a richness that gave orthography a new interest.

"Never mind the diction," said Mr. Meadows, setting his teeth as he took up chapter two; "I can rewrite the copy for her. Let's get to the story."

But at half past one the devoted man laid aside the twelfth chapter without having detected any thread that all his ingenuity and indulgence combined could call a "plot." The chapters were disconnected incidents; the characters had neither life nor individuality and the conversation, of which there was a great deal, was weak and insipid to the last degree.

"It's a hopeless case!" exclaimed Arthur as he threw down his pen—"utterly hopeless! No editor would read to the end of the first chapter; and I can't imperil my slender reputation by asking any publisher I know to look at it. But to tell her so!" He broke off with a despairing shrug and leaned back in his chair, gazing sadly at the untidy manuscript. He recognised now how delicate was the position in which Miss Malden's cherished confidence had placed him.

"She is in love with the thing, he mused, as he put away the papers preparatory to retiring to bed. "I saw that when she spoke of it; and no matter how carefully I gild the pill, the result is a foregone conclusion. She will never speak to me again if she can't help it. I wish she had given the manuscript to Wegwood instead."

He spent the better part of the following day in reading the remaining twenty-eight chapters of the "Idyll," buoying himself up with hopes that he might yet discover some gem of thought, or happily conceived incident, that would lighten the mass. But he reached the bitter end without having had his attention once arrested by a single line that rose above the level of deadly commonplace.

It will be readily understood that Mr. Meadows was in no hurry to acquaint the authoress with his opinion of "At Eden's Gate;" he thankfully remembered that she would not expect his critique just yet, and he had therefore time to decide whether he should convey it by letter or word of mouth. He was keenly anxious to break the intelligence gently, though fully conscious that however the operation were performed, the consequences to himself would be much the same.

A very depressed and moody Arthur Meadows wandered up to the Junior Carlton Club that evening. Apart from the prospective breach this matter of the novel threatened to create between the girl he loved and himself, more sordid cares were weighing upon him. His exchequer was low, and he had but a few outstanding claims against the magazines; he had no articles in hand which promised to turn out saleable, and no ideas upon which to build others. Altogether, it may be doubted whether any more unhappy young man than our hero walked through the Park and down Piccadilly that May afternoon.

He had been a member of the Junior Carlton since he came of age, having been introduced thereto by his father when money was plentiful and friends were numerous; but though he was almost dependent upon the Club for the society of his own kind, he had latterly been considering the advisability of sending in his resignation; for the annual subscription formed a serious item in his expenditure. He turned in there to-day, telling himself he must screw up his courage to take the step at once; his finances would not stand the tax upon them any longer; but what life would be without this haven of refuge he did not care to contemplate. As he entered the smoking-room he stumbled over a pair of large feet encased in patent leather, whose owner was concealed behind the *Sportman*. The reader looked up as he apologized, and revealed himself as Mr. Augustus Wegwood.

"Evening, Meadows," he said languidly. "Come to dine?"

"Not to-night.—What are you doing here?"

"Loafing, as usual," replied the brewer, throwing aside his paper with a yawn. He was a stout, red-faced young man, carefully attired in frock-coat and the last fashionable necktie. His habitual expression was one of bored indolence. "Oh by the way, Meadows," he continued with sudden animation, "I heard of something this morning that might suit you. Just ring the bell, and have some tea with me while I tell you about it."

Arthur Meadows touched the electric button nearest him, and, nothing loth, sat down to hear what the "something" was. Mr. Wegwood was not the man to whom he looked for aid to find him such, nor was he one to whom he cared to place himself under a heavy obligation.

"You had a long talk with Miss Malden yesterday," remarked Mr. Wegwood presently, through a mouthful of buttered toast.

"I was waylaid by Mamma; she kept me at her side the whole afternoon."

"She was asking me about a book," replied Arthur indifferently. "But let's hear what you were going to suggest for me, a few minutes ago. I'll take anything that pays decently."

"Ah! I was forgetting," said Mr. Wegwood, whose thoughts were somewhat flighty. "I don't know if you will care about it; but Mrs. Malden told me you wanted a post of some kind, and I said I'd bear it in mind."

"Very good of you," said Arthur.

"Not at all. This is how it is. Half-a-dozen fellows with whom we have business occasionally, are forming a syndicate—sort of

Limited Company, don't you know?—They are going to buy up the properties of a lot of hop-growers in Kent, and they want some one to act as Manager and Secretary. They want a fellow they can trust to look after their interests, don't you know? Not a practical man, who understands hops, but a fellow whom they can rely on to write regularly and tell them how things are going on. That sort of thing suits you?"

"I could do the work, if that's all.—What's the salary?"

"Watson, who told me of the scheme, talked about three hundred a year," answered Mr. Wegwood; "but of course I told him he could not get the class of man he required for such a pittance as that. I said to him: 'It's ridiculous, don't you know, Watson?—ridiculous.' I said."

The brewer's own income, derived from a sleeping partnership in "Wegwood's Entire," ran a long way into five figures, so his monetary ideas were naturally large.

"I'll take three hundred gladly, if that is their limit," said Arthur, after a pause. "Will my work be in London, if I get this appointment?"

"No," replied Mr. Wegwood with decision. "You would have to be in B—; awful hole, B—; I go down sometimes to see an old aunt who's got a place there."

"Any port in a storm," quoted Arthur with rather strained cheerfulness.

"I may safely say that Watson will give you the berth, on my recommendation. The matter lies in his own hands, and he will do anything to oblige me—the firm, that is."

Arthur Meadows thanked him again, and left the Club, carrying a lighter heart than he had brought into it an hour before. Mr. Meadows was a little surprised to find awaiting him at his lodgings a note from Miss Malden requesting his presence at No. 212 on the following day.

"I'm afraid you will think me very unreasonable and impatient," she wrote; but you would forgive me if you only knew the value I attach to your opinion of my book. If you have finished reading it by to-morrow afternoon, come at three, and tell me what you think of it. I shall remain at home to see you."

He tied up the manuscript, once so precious, now so hateful, and sat down to consider how he might convey his idea of "At Eden's Gate" in the least distasteful manner; but he could not do more than sketch out a general line and leave the occasion to find him words.

"I'll run down my own taste in books, and the publishers, and the public's," he decided; "in fact, I'll abuse everybody and everything but the book itself; and if I can't convince her that the public taste, and not her story, is at fault, I must tell her the truth as kindly as I know how."

Three o'clock the next day saw him in the drawing-room in Brook Street. The afternoon was sunny and warm, and when Miss Malden, looking her prettiest in a most becoming spring dress, came, an overwhelming wave of love and sorrow swept over the young man's being.

"Have you read it?" she asked her eyes sparkling with eagerness.

"Yes, Miss Malden, I have read it all."

"Then tell me in one word; 'Will it do?'"

The lovely face bent so anxiously towards his own dove all plans of disclosure completely out of his head. He laid down the parcel of manuscript, and under pretence of unfastening the string which secured it, strove to delay and collect his thoughts.

"You don't want to look at it now, Mr. Meadows," said Miss Malden, laying a preventive hand upon his. "If you have read my story you must have formed some opinion about it. Be honest with me," she pleaded; "I must know what you think."

The earnest appeal of those clear gray eyes forbade shuffling; Arthur threw himself straightforwardly. "I'm afraid it will not print," he said.

Miss Malden drew herself slowly upright and played with her rings for a few moments before she spoke. "Why not?" Her voice was steady, but the colour had left her cheeks and her fingers trembled visibly.

"I hardly know how to tell you, answered Arthur miserably; "your writing!"

"On, if it's only the English or the spelling, I don't care," interposed the young lady, "because I know you would put them right if I asked you."

Had that been all, I should have asked you to let me rewrite it," he said; but I'm afraid it would do no good."

"Then where is the fault?" demanded the authoress almost pettishly. "In the plot?"

"You have no plot, Miss Malden; no sustained interest."

"What about the characters?" she inquired with a little ring of triumph in her voice. The most exacting critic must have a good word for Lord Brownsover, Colonel Gansdale, and Lady Helen, she thought. Were they not drawn from real life?

"They lack individuality, Miss Malden. If I may speak quite plainly, they are all exactly alike; you can't tell one from the other."

This was the last straw. Miss Malden hastily picked up the parcel which lay between them on the sofa, said "Tha—ank you, Mr. Meadows," and fled from the room to hide her tears; leaving Arthur a crushed heap of misery, with scarcely enough mental power to feel himself a heartless, hypocritical brute.

Half an hour later he found himself on the steps of the Club, without any very clear idea how he had come there. As he pushed open the swing-doors, his arm was seized from behind, and he turned to behold Mr. Wegwood smiling upon him with unusual affection.

"I congratulate you," he said; "that is, if it is a matter for congratulation, don't you know? You've got it. Three-fifty. I told Watson he must raise his figure, and though he made a favor of it, he did go fifty more. Don't thank me," said Mr. Wegwood, waving a heavily-ringed hand in deprecation of Arthur's expressions of gratitude. "I'm awfully glad if you are. Only thing is, they want you to take up the bill at once. That's a serious difficulty; I can't leave town in middle of May; it's impossible."

"The season does not affect me much, nowadays," smiled Arthur. "I can go at once."

"You are a fellow," said Mr. Wegwood, half in awe and half in pity. "Do you mean to say you could go so soon as, say, Monday?"

"Why not?" asked Arthur shortly, for he had little patience with the affectations of this gilded youth.

Mr. Wegwood shook his head solemnly at the idea of a fellow leaving town like that in

the "Season," but readily undertook to write to Mr. Watson; and a few other details having been settled and explained, he got up to leave.

Now that the heavy load of pecuniary troubles in the present and the dark uncertainties of the future were thus satisfactorily dispelled Arthur Meadows could bring his thoughts untrammelled to bear upon the events of that half-hour in Brook Street. He had muddled the business badly; a pleading look, an appealing word, had wretched him into telling not only the plain but the ugly truth; and now it was too late, all the pretty phrases in which he might have offered it came upon him at once. Presently, he rose and went to a writing-table, where he sat down, bent on putting forth all his powers in the composition of a letter to the disconsolate Alicia which should soften the blows she had wrung from him. "I must tell you," he wrote, "what I had no opportunity of saying when I saw you. It is that another reader may feel able to give a more acceptable opinion of your book than I have done. I think, knowing you so well, I may have expected too much, and judged too harshly; but I confess I am still convinced that you could produce work of a higher order, if you give yourself a fair chance and do not attempt too much. The opinion of some one who reads many novels—which I do not—may prove a more reliable guide than mine."

"I hope that will break the fall a little," sighed Arthur as he closed a letter full of such judicious insinuations as the specimen we give above. "I shall see her before I go. I suppose. I must write and tell Mrs. Malden that I'm off, and she is safe to ask me up there on Sunday to say good-bye."

He wrote accordingly, not forgetting to mention that he believed he was indebted to her for Mr. Wegwood's exertions on his behalf, and expressed a hope that he should find her at home when he called to bid her adieu.

He received an answer by return of post; but though Mrs. Malden's note was couched in terms of the sincerest kindness, it offered him no encouragement to pay a farewell visit.

"Phew!" whistled Arthur. "The English of this is that she has told her mother the secret, and Mrs. Malden has taken offence too.—Well, well; I'm sorry, for she has been a good friend to me; it only gives me another reason for cutting Town as soon as possible."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A Timely Warning.

There are evidences which go to show that the visit of H. M. Stanley and the story of his thrilling experiences are beginning to fire the ambition of many American young men to adventure upon similar expeditions of discovery. Realizing its responsibility as one of the guardians of the nation, and fearing that if it maintained silence now and failed to warn these impulsive youths of the dangers and difficulties involved in such an undertaking it might afterwards suffer the tortures of an accusing conscience, the New York Sun thus admonishes those who would win deathless renown by playing the rule of the discoverer: "Well, there are vast regions in Africa yet to be explored, and we have no doubt that important discoveries will yet be made there. But it had better not be forgotten that there are dangers for adventurers in Africa; that the climate in some parts of the dark continent is not as healthy as it is in this State; that many of the black natives there are not friendly to white intruders; that wild beasts prowl around African forests, and that good victuals are not to be found by the traveller who penetrates into the interior, toward the equator. We would not discourage ambitious persons who are determined to follow in Stanley's tracks, or go to places that Stanley never saw; but it is proper to remind them before they set out on their travels, that they are not likely to have a pleasant time after leaving Yambuya."

The Stranger in Russia.

Hospitality to visiting foreigners is not one of Russia's distinguishing virtues—if indeed, the "old bear" has any characteristics worthy of praise. At least Mr. Higgins, of Higgins & Mutchler, grain dealers, Indianapolis, is not likely to think so. According to a London correspondent, this is how Mr. Higgins fared on a recent visit to the land of the czar. "From Stockholm he went to St. Petersburg. Here he was promptly arrested by the police for an error in his passport, was in prison five days, and then liberated, but ordered to rectify the omission. He bent all his energies to this end unsuccessfully. The hotel proprietors looked at him askance and would not keep him more than a day. He stopped at most of the hotels until he got tired of moving, and was finally advised to try Moscow. He did so, with a similar experience. Finally his sole desire was to leave Russia, but he could not. His passport was not ship-shape. Then Higgins swore because he had no right to go or to stay. After three weeks of this sort of thing, he bought a Russian official for 50 rubles. The official smuggled him out of the country. Higgins hardly breathed freely till he reached England, and has no further use for Russia." This interesting bit of biography contains a moral to which all do well to take heed—be sure of the sufficiency and validity of your passport.

A Worthy Deed.

The heartfelt thanks of Canadians are due to Toronto's worthy citizen, Vice-Chancellor Mulock, for the liberality he has shown in volunteering to bear all the expenses connected with the visit of Prof. Ramsay Wright to Berlin to investigate and familiarize himself with the new consumption cure of Prof. Koch. On the principle that he gives twice who gives quickly, and that an unsolicited generous deed is of superlative worth, the value of Mr. Mulock's offer is greatly enhanced by its promptitude and spontaneity. Nor should thanks be withheld from the Medical Faculty of the University who, though they will greatly miss their energetic helper, with commendable readiness and heartiness acceded to the Vice-Chancellor's request for Prof. Wright to be released from his college duties. No doubt all will join in the wish that the Canadian Professor, who goes fully equipped with letters of introduction which will be certain to secure for him every privilege necessary for the prosecution of his work, may be eminently successful in his mission, so that whatever virtue there may be in the remedy it may soon be placed within reach of the thousands of our suffering fellow-countrymen.

ARMOR FOR WARSHIPS.

Improvement in Ironclads—Interesting Experiments in Armor Plating.

And still the preparations for war go on, and men continue to rack their brains in order to devise weapons, offensive and defensive, that will ensure to the armies supplied with them certain victory. Tests, not of skill in their use only, but of their power and efficiency, are the order of the day. Just now the soldiers who do battle upon the waters are greatly exercised over the question of armor for their warships. Since the year 1855 when the French launched the "Tonnante," a floating battery clad with 43 inches of iron on an oak backing 8 inches thick, the improvement in ironclads has steadily gone on, resulting in the evolution of the modern cruiser, with hull of steel and coat of armor varying all the way from 12 to 18 inches in thickness according to the character of the material used. In the British navy the armor latterly employed is what is known as the compound plate, and which consists of a backing of iron, usually about 8 inches thick, with a 4-inch facing of steel. Experience has shown that flat plates of compound armor 12 inches thick are more effective against iron and steel projectiles, fired normally, at high velocity from a 9-inch gun, than plates of iron 14 inches thick. But a rival to the compound plate has entered the field, and bids fair to establish itself in the place of preeminence, indeed it has not already done so. This is the all-steel plate, or the steel with nickel alloy.

During the past season three different tests have been made, in each of which the Schneider armor, an all-steel plate has come off victorious. The last trial was recently made at Ochta in Russia. Three competing plates were tested, the Schneider, an all steel; the Brown, a compound; and the Vickers, an all steel plate. All three plates were of the same thickness—10 inches. They were attacked by 6-inch breech-loading rifles with chrome steel projectiles. Five rounds were delivered at each plate. The initial velocity of the first two shots was 1,900 feet a second, and that of the last three 2,100 feet per second. The Schneider plate stopped and held all five projectiles, allowing penetrations of nearly nine inches for the first two and of about eleven inches for the last three. That is to say, the projectiles at the lower velocity did not quite get through the plate, while the points of the three at the higher velocity entered the backing to the depth of about an inch. The plate at the end of the trial showed only fine cracks, and three out of the five projectiles had been broken. The Brown compound plate allowed the first two projectiles to penetrate about 13½ inches, or, in other words, the points went 3½ inches into the backing. But the last three shots, delivered with an initial velocity of 2,100 feet per second, went completely through both the plate and the backing, and were found a long distance beyond. The plate itself showed broad cracks, and it was again demonstrated, as at Annapolis, that the severer the tests are made by high-muzzle velocities and tough projectiles, the more decisively is the superiority of the homogeneous steel plate shown. The Vickers steel plate did better than the Brown, but at the high velocities the penetrations were 21 inches, or about 11 inches into the backing."

It should be borne in mind that at the Ochta test the victorious plate was an all-steel, manufactured by the same firm as supplied the steel and the nickel-steel plates for the Annapolis trial of Sept. 18 and 22; and that at Annapolis the all-steel plate was considered to be a little inferior to the steel with nickel alloy. If then the all-steel plate has been shown to be superior to the compound armor how much more is the nickel-steel to be preferred for rendering ships of war invulnerable. And now that the superiority of this new plate has been so fully established, it is fair to conclude that hereafter the ships constructed by those nations which pretend to contest the seas, will be clad with the most efficient armor. And this means that nickel of which Canada has such an abundant supply, and apparently a virtual monopoly so far as America is concerned, will soon be in demand by all the leading nations of the world. In view of these things it is impossible even to conjecture whereunto this new industry will grow. Doubtless unto very large proportions, unless nations shall speedily learn war no more, and shall consent to "beat their swords into plough-shares and their spears into pruning hooks." And this last is a consummation which, though it might render less valuable one of our national resources, would be hailed with rejoicing by multitudes whose hearts sickened at the very thought of war.

The discovery of a nickel mine in Queen's county Nova Scotia lends strength to the presumption that there are yet other places on this continent besides those already known where this important metal exists. This fact should be borne in mind by those who are clamoring for an export duty on nickel, inasmuch as such action on the part of our government would be almost certain to stimulate our neighbors to greater diligence in searching for mines within their own territories. In that case we would have killed the goose that lays the golden egg.

A Montreal exporter, who since October 22 has shipped to London 27000 dozen eggs, is reported as stating that his net returns are 22½ cents a dozen, and that had he shipped to Boston instead, where eggs are selling at 26 cents, he would have netted only 18 cents a dozen. In other words, the difference between the London net price and the Boston is only one-half a cent less than the additional duty imposed by the McKinley tariff. And even this slight difference will, no doubt, be wiped out when the egg trade with Britain once becomes fairly established.

Seizing upon the earliest moment, Mr. Balfour has already introduced his Irish land bill. The present draft differs in several particulars from that of last session, being framed with a view to incorporate some of Mr. Parnell's suggestions (made at the close of the last session) which in a general way, commended themselves to the Chief Secretary's judgment. This readiness to accept a good idea, even though coming from a political opponent, is worthy of all praise. Were it more frequently manifested, the confidence of the people in the sincerity of their representatives, and in their honest purpose to promote the best interests of their country would be greatly strengthened. No single individual or party possesses a monopoly of brains; and even the wisest may profit by the hints and suggestions of those least informed.