

THE EVENING TIMES.

ST. JOHN, N. B., JULY 10, 1907.

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CONTRASTS

On the verandah of a cottage almost surrounded by trees, some four or five miles out of town, yesterday afternoon a group of children were playing. The balsamic odor of the firs and spruces was in the air about them, and it was but a step to the tangled underwood or the green grass, spangled with buttercups and daisies. There was health in the air, and that in the surroundings which appeals to the imagination and delights the spirit of the child. There, as Edward Everett Hale wrote recently, one could see what the good God is doing in the world today.

On the sidewalk near an alley off one of the city streets yesterday afternoon a group of children were playing. The fog and the rain had made the pavement wet and the street muddy. The children's hands, their bare feet, faces and clothes were very dirty, and the surroundings were very wretched in appearance. The whole outlook was indescribably depressing. There was no inspiration, no appeal to the imagination, no possible joy of the spirit save that which may rise superior to circumstances and conditions. But even the muddy, gloomy street may have been preferable to the interior of the home on such a day, and the tired mother may have been glad to find rest for a little, despite the dirty hands and faces and clothing to be reckoned with in the evening. And when there is no mud there is the dust, and always the ill-smelling alley, the unlovely street, and the general aspect almost of hopelessness.

"I sometimes wonder," said the police magistrate yesterday, "I sometimes wonder when children are brought before me, and I see and question them, and know the localities whence they come, who is most to blame and what can be done." So we need playgrounds in this city, so much of which was built without backyards, or front yards or grass plots, or trees, or anything to relieve the cheerlessness of home surroundings? Do we need that fresh-faced, clean, bright, happy women with time to spare should think of these little ones and their homes, and try to do something to awaken the dormant love of beauty and music and orderly living? This is Canada's century. Is it? What of the next generation? What are we doing for the children? Do we stop to think about them? We rush daily to our tasks and hurry to our pleasures. And all the time the wistful, solemn eyes of a pinched and narrow childhood peer out at us from the alleys and street corners, and young minds receive impressions to be stamped at a later period indelibly upon the national life and character. Are we not money or pleasure-mad, seeing not the deeper things of the spirit?

THE SCHOOLS

At a meeting of the treasury board yesterday afternoon Mr. Coll, of the school board, stated that the schools of the city are overcrowded. Dr. Bridges said that the Leinster street school building is quite inadequate; that the fourth floor of the Victoria school is unsatisfactory because of risk in case of fire; and that there are a thousand more children in the city schools now than formerly attended. Mr. Maxwell and Mrs. Skinner also urged the need of better accommodation. Mr. Russell said a new building was absolutely necessary. Ald. Bullock said that the situation as regards housing the children is alarming.

Having this authoritative statement before them, the members of the treasury board turned down the school board's application for consent to increase the debt limit from \$20,000 to provide for the new school building on the Weldon lot.

This is an extraordinary course to be pursued by the aldermen of a professedly enlightened city. It is true that the present is not as favorable a time to float bonds as former times were, but there is no likelihood of much improvement in that respect for a year or two—perhaps for a number of years. What, in the meantime, is to be done? The school board after thorough enquiry and examination of estimates say in effect that it would be folly to erect a \$40,000 building, which would be wholly inadequate to meet future needs. Ald. Frink says that the city is not larger than it was thirty years ago, but Dr. Bridges replies that there are a thousand more children at school than formerly, and the directory statement given in today's Times proves that there has been a notable increase in population.

The action of the treasury board must be reversed, or such an arrangement made as will speedily provide a satisfactory new school building on the Weldon lot.

THE ASSEMBLY ROOM

An alderman yesterday doubted the value of the assembly room in school houses, called music a fad, and described some unmemorable things as "rot."

Comparing Canadian school buildings with those in England, Inspector Hughes of Toronto, who has just returned from a tour of English and continental schools, said in an interview this week:

"The English buildings generally included one special, and I consider, commendable feature. This was an assembly room for each department. There physical exercises, singing, lectures, etc., take place before the various departments. Each is equipped with a piano, for the English pay special attention to what some of our sarcastic critics would be-

pleased to term 'frills.' An ordinary school would contain one or two of these instruments, and singing exercises are a regular feature of the curriculum."

These statements are commended to the thoughtful attention of St. John aldermen.

WHY SOCIALISM SPREADS

One can scarcely credit the story that is told of child-labor and sweat-shop methods in some English cities, and yet the story is told by a factory inspector. We quote from a review in a recent letter from London:

Miss Squire, a lady inspector of factories, giving evidence touching the evils of home-work before a committee of the British House of Commons, said that the employment of children was very prevalent in the lace trade in Nottingham. It was quite a common thing at the dinner-hour to see children busy with lace work, without having stopped to take off hat or jacket. The children were given something to eat on the way back to school. It was said that children started work at four years of age, and she herself had seen children working at six years old. Children twelve years old were found earning several shillings a week on their own account. In the Birmingham metal trade children were employed at home some of the small articles they could be seen at night picking out hooks and eyes, and their little fingers were very clever at the work. Children in the past had been largely employed in the match-box trade. That was dying out as a trade, owing to the introduction of machine-made boxes, but similar boxes were found earning several shillings a week with the help of children. Much of the work could hardly be done even by the very poorest unless it were done by the children sitting with their mother. The witness said that 2d. was paid for making boys' knickers, from 4d. to 6d. for men's coats, from 5d. to 8d. a pair for trousers. Spoil work was charged against the out-worker. In one case she knew of a coat, for which 4d. would have been paid for making, being spoilt, and the worker was charged 8s. for it, that being the cost of the materials and cutting. At other times the selling price would be charged against the worker. For finishing a dozen pairs of trousers 2s. 6d. was paid, or 3s. 6d. for superior work. The price paid for making shirts was as low as 6d. a dozen. One case which came under her notice was that of a widow who was left with two young children to support. She found her making shirts at 8-10d. a dozen, and she had to provide her own cotton, a 4d. real making three dozen shirts. Her earnings varied from 5s. to 8s. a week. Match-boxes were paid for at 2d. per gross, or 13-14d. without sandpaper. Materials cost the worker 13-14d. for seven gross, and, in addition, the worker had to keep the room warm for drying purposes, and tie the boxes up neatly in packets. Blisters on the boxes caused their rejection. Corsets which sold at 1s. 10-12d. to 1s. 11d. were made by home-workers for 10-12d. a dozen, and in this way a woman was able to earn 1s. 8d. in three days.

It is of some interest in St. John just now to note that at Champlain, N. Y., on July 4th, a statue of Samuel de Champlain, the first memorial to the great French explorer to be erected in the United States, was unveiled with impressive ceremonies and in the presence of delegates representing the French population throughout New England and from across the Canadian border. The monument is of striking design. The pedestal is richly embellished with relief work and suitable inscriptions. Surmounting it is a statue of Champlain of heroic size. The cost of the monument was contributed by the French people of New England and New York state.

The city council should lose as little time as possible in securing a director of public works. Nobody professes to believe that at present the important and costly public works in hand are being looked after as they should be. It would be sheer folly to pretend that the aged city engineer can look after all the work.

Ald. Baxter says he was once a child. From the bitterness with which he assails playgrounds, music and other essentials of a happy and healthy childhood, one would hardly suppose that the alderman had ever been other than a cranky and sordid old bachelor man.

The claim of Mr. McNeill, of the agricultural department, that more apples should be grown in the St. John valley is in agreement with the emphatic statement of one of the best known and successful orchardists of the Annapolis valley.

Premier McBride, of British Columbia, has made the important statement that he may enter federal politics and oppose Hon. Mr. Templeman. That would be a battle royal.

Is there no means by which the city can hasten work on west side contracts? Is the city council really helpless?

BRIGANTINE ASHORE

HALIFAX, N. S., July 9—(Special)—A despatch received this afternoon states that the French brigantine Yonne, Valentine, with a cargo of salt from Nantes, France, struck on the rocks at Point Island Channel, Newfoundland. The wrecking steamer Aphelie, owned by Larder Bros., and which is now undergoing repairs, is twelve years old. Repairs on the marine railway here, will leave for the wreck tomorrow. The

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LIFE

Between the budding and the falling leaf
Stretch happy skies;
With colors and sweet cries
Of mating birds in uplands and in glades
The world is rife,
Then on a sudden all the music dies,
The color fades,
How fugitive and brief
Is mortal life!

Between the budding and the falling leaf!
O, short-breathed music, dying on the tongue,
Ere half the mystic canticle be sung!
Who, if I were his to choose, would know
Again
The bitter sweetness of the lost refrain,
Its rapture and its pain?

Though I be shut in darkness and become
Insistent dust blown idly here and there,
I hold oblivion a scant price to pay
For having once had held against my tip
Life's brimming cup of hydromel and rue
For having once drawn woman's holy love
And a child's kiss, and for a little space
Been hoot companion to the Day and Night,
Fed on the odors of the summer dawn,
And folded in the beauty of the stars.
Dear Lord, though I be changed to senseless
clay,
And serve the potter as he turns his wheel,
I thank Thee for the gracious gift of tears!

—Thomas Bailey Aldrich.

IN LIGHTER VEIN
THE AGREEABLE WAITER.

"We haven't any deviled crabs, sir," said the waiter. "I can offer you some very nice deviled eggs."

"Um! I presume if you were out of mock-turtle soup you'd suggest some very nice mock oranges?" retorted the diner.

"Yes, sir," answered the waiter, calmly. "At least I would suggest that you give them a mock trial."—Harper's Weekly.

NOT LIKELY TO MOVE.

"Have you lived here all your life, friend?"

"Not yet. But if I don't get money enough to move, I reckon I'll have to!"

AT THE FUNERAL.

First Old Lady—"What kind of a time did you have at the funeral?"

Second Old Lady—"Well, I've enjoyed myself more at other funerals."

NECESSARY TO MULTIPLY.

Boarder—"You can divide a chicken with mathematical accuracy, Mrs. Hashington."

Mrs. Hashington—"Dividing it is easy enough. I wish I could multiply it."

ONLY ONE SIDE.

Mr. Uxor—"But, hold on! There are two sides to every question."

Mrs. Vick-Sen's Husband—"Not so. When my wife takes one side of a question there isn't any other side."

TRUTH GOES UNPUNISHED.

Little Ethel—"Mamma, don't people ever get punished for telling the truth?"

Mamma—"No, dear, why do you ask?"

Little Ethel—"Cause I just tooked the last three tarts in the pantry, and I thought I'd better tell you."

THE USUAL PRICE.

Motorist—"I say, I'm awfully sorry. You must let me settle for this, as it was really my fault. What shall I pay you?"

Irish Farmer—"What d'ye usually pay?"

NOT GOING TO HOLLAND.

Little Ella—"I'm never going to Holland when I grow up."

Governess—"Why not?"

"Cause our geography says it's a low, lying country."

USELESS TO WORRY.

She—"I hope, dear, that you are not going to worry about my exceeding my allowance this time."

He (brightening up)—"You don't mean to tell me, dearest, that there isn't any necessity for it?"

"Certainly not. What's the use of worrying about something you can't help?"

MARCONI IN CAPE BRETON

Wireless Wizard to Install New Plant at Big Glace Bay.

(Sydney Record.) Among the passengers on board the Canadian Pacific liner Empress of Ireland, were Mr. and Mrs. William Marconi, accompanied by Mr. Brown, who expected to land at North Sydney on route to the wireless station at Big Glace Bay. Mr. Vyvyan, local manager of the system, was in the city last evening awaiting the arrival of the wireless wizard.

It is understood that Mr. Marconi will undertake upon his arrival the installation of several improvements at the local station, machinery and apparatus for which he has brought over with him. It is probable that at no distant date important announcements will be made in connection with the operations at the Cape Breton station and the system generally.

MORE GENERAL DISPLAY OF OUR COUNTRY'S FLAG

At the quarterly meeting of St. George's Society held last night the following resolution was unanimously adopted:—

Whereas, The more frequent display of flag in this city should be encouraged; therefore

Resolved, That the St. George's Society are of the opinion that the national flag should be displayed daily throughout the year on all dominion, provincial and civic public buildings, and school houses, and on Sundays and anniversaries by private citizens generally; and further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution be published in the newspapers, and sent to the heads of departments concerned.

DEATH OF AN M.P.

LONDON, July 9—During a division in the House of Commons this evening Sir Alfred Blison, member for the north-west division of Staffordshire suddenly died.

The work on the new Salvation Army Citadel, Charlotte street, is progressing well and the corner stone will be laid with appropriate ceremony on Friday afternoon next at 4 o'clock.

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