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EDITED AND ILLUSTRATED BY J. W. BENGOUGH.

The gravest beast is the Ass; the gravest Bird is the Owl;
The gravest Fish is the Oyster; the gravest Man is the Fool.

A Catechism of Cabinet Ministers.

QUES.—What is a Cabinet Minister?

ANS.—A Cabinet Minister is the (figure) head of a Public Department.

QUES.—What are the duties of a Cabinet Minister?

ANS.—That depends on what sort of a Cabinet Minister he is.

QUES.—Are there more than one kind of C. M., if so, say how many and describe the varieties?

ANS.—There might be a good many varieties, but there are only two great species.

QUES.—Describe them!

ANS.—There is the Minister who is generally to be found at his desk in his department, works hard and endeavours to give the country a worthy return for the salary he enjoys, this is the old fogey species, and is very rare.

Then there is the C. M. who is to be found everywhere else than in his department, draws his salary as far ahead as he can and goes in for a good time generally, this is the enlightened and go ahead species.

QUES.—Is this then a correct definition of the manner in which the members of the two species fulfill their duties?

ANS.—Yes, except that along with his other arduous labors the enlightened head spends a large amount of time in endeavoring to find comfortable places in Government service for party hacks, such as "Thistle cutter on the banks of the Welland Canal at \$1000 per annum."

QUES.—What then becomes of the departments in the absence of the enlightened heads?

ANS.—Oh! they do very well under the supervision of the deputy heads whilst the Minister is inspecting the capabilities of Manitoba, prospecting for lobster traps in the Maritime Provinces, undergoing herculean pic-nicing exertions in Ontario or Quebec, or hurrying off to England on urgent business, and all for the benefit of an ungrateful country.

QUES.—Which is the preferable C. M. for the true interests of the country?

ANS.—The old fogey one, by all means.

QUES.—Then the interests of the country suffer by the continued and continual absences of Ministers from their departments?

ANS.—Yes, but the Ministers' salaries don't!

QUES.—What is the remedy?

ANS.—By public opinion insisting that Ministers should stick more closely to their departments.

QUES.—If necessary, could the number of Ministers not be increased and the work properly done?

ANS.—No, the present number might be reduced one-half by grouping the departments, resulting in a great saving to the country, if

we only had such a Civil Service as we ought, consisting of thoroughly trained and competent men, depending for place and promotion on ability, merit and length of service alone, with a greater amount of responsibility for the inception and carrying out of work, instead of the department being placed on the shoulders of deputy heads and chief clerks.

A Patriotic Minister.

Mr. Crooks as Minister of Education for Ontario has done much during the past two years to check the abominable sins of pride and self-esteem on the part of Canadians. When the Professorship of Classics, and the Presidency of Toronto University were about to be vacated, Mr. Crooks was so self-sacrificing as to undertake no less than two journeys to England for the purpose of importing a genuine English article to fill the positions. With regard to the Presidency, Mr. Crooks failed to induce any competent person to accept the dignity which was thus sent a-begging. But it was not his fault. Positively, no expense was spared. The humiliating fact remains that poor Mr. Crooks was compelled at last to offer it to one who is not only a Canadian, but to one the world-wide fame of whose writings has done much to foster that aspiration for a native Canadian literature which it seems to be Mr. Crooks' special mission to humble and drag through the dirt. But for the classical class Mr. Crooks has really secured a very nice young man, fresh from the Magdalen College, England, and no doubt quite competent to teach our University students a proper contempt for home and Canadian ways. By this appointment a salutary snubbing has been administered not only to many persons of undoubted scholarship, who by birth or adoption belong to Canada, but to those admirable classical scholars whose unrewarded labours have long aided the late classical professor at the University. Let all these persons realize what Mr. Crooks thinks of them, and govern themselves accordingly.

But Mr. Crooks, by his latest action in these premises, has actually surpassed himself. He has made his new juvenile importation from Oxford, not only Classical Professor, but has instituted in his honour a new office, that of Vice-President of the University, the emoluments of which this "Fortunate Yorick" will add to those of his Professorship. The arrangement is, we believe, that when the President dies or resigns, one or both of which in common decency he ought to do without delay, the young gentleman from Oxford will become President. Then all will be lovely.

We learn that the entire staff of Professors in the University have shown their appreciation of the course taken by Mr. Crooks by resigning in a body. This gives Mr. Crooks a fair opportunity to import a complete assortment of Oxford Professors, even if a little second rate. Anything, you know, is better than a mere Canadian.

A Recent Conversation

BETWEEN CAPTAIN JOHNY OF H. M. S. CANADA AND SIR JOSEPH PORTER.

SIR J.—A very fine ship and crew you have here, Capt. J.

CAPT. J.—Yes, Sir JOSEPH.

SIR J.—I hope you treat your crew well, and that there are no complaints, Capt. J.

CAPT. J.—I do my best to satisfy them all, and I hear of no complaints, Sir J.

SIR J.—On my last visit of inspection there were a good many complaints, Capt. J.

CAPT. J.—Ah, yes, Sir Jos., but then the ship was under the command of Capt. MacKENZIE.

SIR J.—Oh! and those troubles have passed away. The crew are now all well fed and with plenty of employment?

CAPT. J.—Oh, yes, Sir Jos., all the crew are now so well cared for, that we are able to make

handsome donations in aid of the destitute members of other portions of H. M. fleet.

SIR J.—Happy captain! beneficent crew! and all your crew, fully occupied, and thus well cared for, there have been no desertions?

CAPT. J.—Oh, no, Sir Jos., my crew have every advantage, are always fully employed and they never desert, Sir Jos.

SIR J.—What, never?

CAPT. J.—Well, hardly; that is very seldom—never.

SIR J.—I am glad to hear you say so, Capt. J., for I had heard that lately you had been suffering severely from desertions, and these your smartest men.

CAPT. J.—A vile slander, Sir Jos., got up by my ill-tempered predecessor and his friends. We may have lost a few, but not many I assure you, Sir Jos.

SIR J.—Your assurance is very refreshing, Capt. J., but have I not heard that you are making special exertions to increase your crew at considerable expense.

CAPT. J.—I am endeavoring through our recruiting agent at London, to obtain a draft from that overmanned part of H. M. fleet, Sir Jos.

SIR J.—Would it not be better to expend some of those funds in endeavoring to keep the men you have already got, Capt. J?

CAPT. J.—But that would not be pursuing an enlightened and energetic policy, Sir Jos., and my policy is nothing of not enlightened and energetic.

SIR J.—Very well, Capt. J.. I only hope your crew may not also become energetic and enlightened, or like Capt. Mack. you will find yourself superseded shortly.

A Song for the Central Committee

OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, ONTARIO, CONCERNING INSPECTOR HUGHES' UNAUTHORIZED SCHOOL MANUAL.

To the Central Committee 'twas HUGHES that thus spoke,
"Though the laws may forbid us, the laws can be broke,
So each High School Inspector in fact may make free,
To publish unauthorized manuals like me."

To fill up my purse I will do what I can,
To concoct the writings of some other man;
Bad grammar, bad English, bad spelling agree
With the High School Inspectors of this Committee.

The unauthorized books of MACLELLAN and HUGHES,
What public school teacher shall dare to refuse?
If he dare, he shall find himself in the wrong box,
For the book-ring Inspector is cute as the fox.

CHOICES.

"So fill up my purse, I will do what I can,
To concoct the writings of some other man, &c."

Though we can't wash our hands in a kettle of pitch.
If you herd with book-pirates you soon will be rich.
They may call us bad shepherds—at least we have CROOKS
For the plunder of parents, the pillage of books.

So fill up my purse, I will do what I can,
To concoct the writings of some other man;
Bad grammar, bad English, bad spelling agree
With the High School Inspectors of this Committee.

CHARLES DANA of the New York Sun says,
"the way to save yourself from a burning shop
is by keeping cool." Does he do so in the Sun
office? PRATTON tried it and failed. We're
glad he's safe.

"This is a nice time of night for you to be coming in," said a mother to a daughter, who returned from a walk at ten o'clock. "When I was like you," she continued, "my mother would not allow me out later than 7 o'clock." "Oh, you had a nice sort of a mother," murmured the girl; "I had, you young jade," said the mother, "a nicer mother than ever you had."—*Lowell Sun.*