

The Evening Times.

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A STARTLING REPORT

The report of the committee on the safety of school and other buildings will shock as well as surprise the citizens. It is practically a condemnation of the appliances now provided to ensure the safety of the children in case of fire. It declares that there is scarcely a fire escape worthy of the name. The report also condemns the practice which relegates the smallest children to the highest floors of some buildings. It is none too great a compliment to be told that our theatres are better fitted with fire escapes than our schools and the public hospital; yet that is the substance of the report.

There will be an instant demand that the necessary changes be made and safeguards and improvements provided. The children must be protected from danger. Whatever else may suffer through lack of funds, this primary duty to the children must be performed. The necessary changes at the public hospital must also be made. It would be criminal negligence if the community, once informed of the needs of these institutions in respect to the safety of the inmates in case of fire, failed to have these needs supplied.

BRITISH POLITICS

It is a heavy task which the Rt. Hon. H. H. Asquith assumes in taking up the British premiership at this time. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, a far more genial though less able man, was unable to hold together successfully the discordant elements at his back when he attained to power, and there have been increasing evidences of disintegration for more than a year past. Now Sir Henry, through ill-health, lays down the burden and Mr. Asquith takes it up. The new premier is a man of great firmness of character, and usually the ablest man in the government ranks, but he assumes the leadership at a time when the results of by-elections indicate a strong tide of public sentiment setting against the administration. Were these by-elections won by the opposition by small majorities it would create little interest, but the majorities have been so overwhelming as to be revolutionary in their significance. While the warring elements within the Liberal party have grown more hostile to each other, the Unionists have been steadily gaining ground, and the death of the Duke of Devonshire has removed almost the last of the powerful Unionist free-traders. These will be far less difficulty in uniting the two sections of this party than the varied interests represented in the party now in power. Mr. Chamberlain may never sit in parliament again, but the work to which he devoted his later life is nearing accomplishment. It seems extremely doubtful if the government can survive the next general elections.

CIVIC AFFAIRS

The civic elections are at hand, and no attention appears to be given to an important question on which the electors are to pronounce an opinion. It is that of the method of electing aldermen whether by wards, districts or at large. The apathy which invariably prevails just before the elections is even more marked than usual. Aside from personal contests in the wards between men who are in and men who want to get it, the campaign is utterly featureless. This is not a healthy state of affairs, and offers no promise of better things. The board of trade is invited to give some attention to this matter of the mode of elections, and certainly no class of citizens should be expected to take a keener interest in the conduct of civic affairs than the members of this board. They represent large and varied interests, such as are directly affected by civic legislation. If there is any prospect of securing better administration by the adop-

tion of a new system the board should express its views and exert its influence in that direction. The time is short, and whatever is to be done to influence public opinion should be done without delay. Neither the ward nor the at-large system has produced satisfactory results, and if there is hope of better things in the district system now is the time to effect the change, as the proposed commission system seems to have aroused no enthusiasm or commanded anything like general support. One of the weak points in St. John city politics is the narrowness of view which so largely prevails. Small issues decide the elections, and the larger ones are ignored. The most progressive and successful men give their time to other matters, and are apparently content so long as they are not asked to take an active personal interest in the conduct of affairs. This is not a healthy condition, nor is it inevitable. The people have the matter in their own hands. They get as good or as bad government as their influence and their votes determine.

GROWTH OF INDEPENDENCE

The Toronto World, whose proprietor prides himself upon his political independence, is much impressed by evidence that extreme partyism is losing ground. The World says: "One of the most encouraging things in Canadian politics today is the growing spirit of independence. There is still much, far too much, of blind, unreasoning conscience-dominating partisanship, but the independent spirit is abroad and is growing. Even men not mentally strong enough or morally brave enough to take a stand themselves for principle, are yet glad to see evidences of courageous independence in others, and are ready, once the way be blazed and the pathway made safe, to follow wherever men of robust honesty and forceful manhood may lead. For the present, and for some time to come, these fearful, ineffectual ones will remain docile followers of political bull-whebers. If in parliament or legislature they continue to say 'aye' or 'no' as leaders may direct, and to surrender their political souls and consciences to the keeping of the dominating force in the party caucus—if in private life they continue to be herded into conventions or driven to the polls, there to shout and vote for candidates selected for them, and do the bidding of party bosses—all this is done, not because it is pleasant to do or that their gorge does not rise at the doing of it, nor yet because they do not aspire to better things, but because they lack moral fibre and mental independence."

Of Mr. A. J. Dawson's project, relative to the Standard of Empire, the Vancouver World says: "The premier of British Columbia, we are glad to say, was favorably impressed, and we hope to hear very shortly that the government of this province has undertaken to use at least as much space as Ontario. The cost is but a few thousand dollars a year, and we know of no better form of advertising nor is there any province to which such advertising will prove more useful than British Columbia. For our appeal is to the investing classes more than to any other."

The Ontario government is looking into the question of ensuring a better attendance of children at the public schools. In the legislature last week, Major Craig, in advocating an amendment to the truancy bill, made the startling statement that there were 100,000 children in the province who never attended school.

Railway earnings continue to reflect duress in business. Canadian Pacific earnings for the last week in March showed a decrease of \$265,000 compared with the like period last year, and Grand Trunk earnings showed a decline of \$239,000.

THE GRAFTERS

(Montreal Witness, Lib.)

There is nothing easier than to formulate sweeping resolutions—nothing more difficult than to expel favoritism and ingrained corruption from the actual administration. We have, for instance, oratory demanding that business methods be followed by the departments at the very time when the system of favoritism, which is but little used in business, is offered as a universal rule. All this, however, does not hide from the public mind the known fact set forth by the civil service commission, with brutal clearness, that buying is done on the basis of a patronage list, and that, whatever prices the goods may or can be bought at, they are sold to the government at a maximum. There are no doubt many people in the country—not the people of the country, but the party friends with whom party politicians have most to do—who would greatly prefer that the service that is corrupt should be corrupt still, and that those who are unjust should be unjust still. These were frankly expressed by Mr. Roche, of Halifax, who unmasked the long years when the Liberals were barred from the civil service, and thought they ought to be allowed to enjoy it now that it was their turn.

Marion, who had been taught to report her misdeeds promptly, came to her mother one day, sobbing piteously. "Mother, I—I—broke a brick in the fireplace."

"Well, that is not very hard to remedy. But how on earth did you do it, child?"

"I pounded it with father's watch."

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Would be read by thousands every evening

THE TRAIN DOGS

Out of the night and the north; Savage of breed and of bone, Shaggy and swift comes the yelping band, Freighters of fur from the voiceless land, That sleeps in the Arctic zone.

Laden with skins from the north, Beaver and bear and racoon, Marten and mink from the polar belts, Otter and ermine and sable pelts—The spoils of the hunter's moon.

Out of the night and the north, Sineavy, fearless and fleet, Using the pack through the pathless snow, The Indian driver, calling low, Follows with moccasined feet.

Ships of the night and the north, Freighters on prairies and plains, Carrying cargoes from field and flood They scent the trail through their wild, red blood, The welsh blood in their veins —Owen E. McGillicuddy, in Outing.

IN LIGHTEN VIEN

RUBY'S DESSERT.

Ruby, who was dining with her elders, was given her choice of dessert. "Which will you have, Ruby, ice-cream or jam?" her indulgent father asked.

After a moment's hesitation she said: "Give me a little of each, and a lot of both."—Lippincott's.

FOUND OUT.

The Rev. Dr. Somers was in the habit of addressing his wife, Sarah, in polysyllables when he wished the children to leave the room. He never dreamed that they understood; until 9-year-old Jack, recovering from measles, was one day enjoying the dear privilege of hearing his mother read aloud.

The doctor ventured in and began softly: "Sarah—"

Up rose Master Jack in bed. "Sarah, quoth he, 'eliminate the obnoxious element!'"—Lippincott's.

Diobbs—"Yes; he literally lives on the fat of the land." Slobs—"What business is he in?" Blobs—"He's an insurance agent, 'eliminate the obnoxious element!'"—Lippincott's.

TOMMY'S "BOOMP."

"For goodness sake!" exclaimed mamma, returning from a shopping trip. "What's the matter with little Tommy?"

"He had boomp he got, ma'am. 'Ye know ye told me I was to let him play upon the piano, and unet whin he was slidin' on the top of it he slid too far, ma'am.'"

He wears his once proud look no more. His egotism has departed. In fact, he seems morose and sore. Who once was jaunty and light-hearted.

He wears the look we know as drawn. His tones are tintured with regret. A quarter of the leap year's gone. And not a girl has asked him yet. S. D. Kiser.

FUNNY-BONE JOGS.

"But surely you are the man to whom I gave some pie a fortnight ago?"

"Yes, jolly, I thought p'aps you'd like to know I'm able to get about again."

Stranger—What sort of a man is your neighbor, John Bragg?

Native—Oh, he's all right, but he has a telescopic imagination.

Stranger—How's that?

Native—Yes, he can't even tell the truth without getting it at least two sizes larger than it is.

STANLEY MCGUIGGAN, BASEBALLIST; DEAD

Stanley R. McGuigan, who did good work for the St. Joseph's and Father Matthew baseball teams as pitcher in the inter-society league contest here, died on Sunday after a short illness of pneumonia. He was in his 16th year, a son of the late Policeman Thomas McGuigan. He is survived by his mother, five brothers and one sister, Miss Mary McGuigan, at home. The brothers are William, Allan and Leo, at home; Thomas of the Boston street railway and Stephen, who played ball with the Brockton (Mass.) team last year and is now in Brockton. Many friends will regret to hear of the young man's death.

SUGGESTS NEW METHODS FOR CHILD TRAINING

(Toronto World.)

Prof. H. T. J. Coleman of the faculty of the Toronto University, addressed the delegates of the Sunday school and Epworth League convention, now in session in the Metropolitan church, Friday afternoon from 4 to 6. His subject was "The department of the Sunday school and Epworth League provide an orderly developmental course of study and training for the formative period, between the years 5 and 21? If so, how do they?"

Prof. Coleman would have no signing of pledges for children, on the ground that the prohibitive nature of the pledge made the child want the thing prohibited much more than if they were not forbidden at all. He would have the child trained to suit to environment and period of life. He would not teach temperance to a child, that is, abstinence from alcoholic liquors, but he would teach him to control his temper and keep from fighting with his playmates. He would have each child taught to beware of the evils peculiar to each period of development.

SHE WOULD NOT SWIM WITHOUT STOCKINGS

Chicago, April 4.—The best swimmer of the Woman's Athletic Club refused to enter a contest today because the rules demanded that she take off her stockings. She is Mrs. Frederick Tyler. "I wouldn't take me stockings off for anything before all these women," she answered when asked to disrobe for the swimming event. This robbed the exhibition of much of its interest.

The contest distance was fifty yards and before it was finished tea had been served and absorbed. Miss Florence Chapin and Prof. Debeauvoir of the Chicago University, put up a thrilling bout with duelling swords. Miss Chapin is said to be the only woman in this country who can fence with these weapons. The contest was a draw.

All the entries in the hammer-throwing, sprint, &c., failed to put in an appearance, and so a series of fancy dances were given. No one but women was allowed in the swimming pool.

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Our third shipment of Wall Papers has just come to hand; prices: 3c., 4c., 5c., 6c., 7c., 8c., 10c., 12c., 15c. roll. Remember we have best values in Canada.

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1c., 2c., 3c., 4c., 5c., 10c., 12c., 15c., to 25c. each.

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Clay Marbles, 15 for 1c. Glass Marbles, 4 for 1c.

Bargains in Skirts

Ladies' Cloth Skirts at reduced prices to make room for new goods: 95c., \$1.25, \$1.50, \$1.75 to \$2.00.

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