

The Standard

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ST. JOHN, N. B., TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1912.

FROM BEHIND THE SPEAKER'S CHAIR.

Mr. White has made "the latest hit" of the session. The phrase may sound crude applied to such an august assemblage as Parliament, yet, when we consider, the House of Commons has much resemblance to a stage—a stage which has its exits and its entrances, where everyone must play a part, where many a man appears who struts and frets his hour and then is heard no more. The stars and the utilities and walking gentlemen all play their roles and sometimes we even glimpse the villain in the piece. And, let it not be forgotten that as on the mimic stage, we also see in Parliament success and failure. So the phrase "the latest hit" is quite appropriate.

From the Press Gallery that coign of vantage where the critics sit, let us consider the performance of Mr. W. T. White in the role of Finance Minister. He is a novice on this stage, a man who never played the part, nor any part, in legislative drama and who only joined the present company after long and determined pressure.

But Mr. White had certain qualifications for the part he fills. Not long ago he was one of the municipal assessors of Toronto. Later he was the manager of a trust company, which, under his hand, became one of the most prosperous financial institutions in the country. Nominally identified with the Liberal party he was opposed from the first to the trade agreement with the United States and signed the famous letter of protest issued by a group of Liberals in Toronto. When Parliament was dissolved, in order to avoid suspicion that he was acting from interested motives, he resigned the management of the trust company and took the platform against reciprocity. It was freely admitted that the speeches of Mr. White were among the most effective and powerful delivered during the campaign.

When Mr. Borden invited Mr. White to join his company and play the important role of the Finance Minister, it was freely remarked that he was "taking chances." But Mr. Borden is no novice at the game. He realized that this quiet, well-groomed and business-like person had impressed himself upon the country and with genuine courage and sound political judgment he "signed on" the novice and assigned to him one of the most trying of the speaking parts.

Since the session began Mr. White has on more than one occasion demonstrated the wisdom of Mr. Borden's choice. On the debate in reply to the Speech from the Throne he made a most favorable impression, but it was not until the Tariff Commission Bill became the attraction that Mr. White found his opportunity. It was his act and he was in the limelight in the centre of the stage. With the sang froid of an old hand he explained to the House in clear and forcible language the provisions of the bill. His mastery of the subject was evident. There was little more of interest at this stage and the curtain went down on the first act.

The second act, the second reading of the bill, again brought Mr. White into prominence and he went more into detail. Clause by clause he reviewed the bill, showing the advantages which would accrue from a thorough investigation of the tariff and closed with a modest apology for "taking up so much time." The House felt there was no need for apology and Mr. Guthrie, who followed voiced this sentiment, when he said "whatever criticism I might have to offer upon the bill, the second reading of which has just been moved by the Minister of Finance, no one can take exception to the clear explanation which he has given the House." The second reading carried by a vote of 104 to 52.

The test of Mr. White's ability to hold his own came with the next act, the committee stage, during the past week. Boggles and spooks, grim specters of mergers and combines, stalking through the land under the protection of Mr. White and the Tariff Commission, were conjured up by the Opposition and the same threadbare arguments against the measure were repeated again and again. And Mr. White sat still. Then his turn came and he carried the war at once into the enemy's country.

"It is most amazing to me," he said "that all the mergers, combines and trusts in Canada have sprung up since the 21st day of September last. If they existed before that date, why did not the late Government take advantage of the clause in the Customs Act, and take steps to dissolve them? We have had a good deal of talk from hon. gentlemen opposite, but better evidence of their real opinion is offered by what they did or refrained from doing than by what they say. All the capitalizations I have heard spoken of today existed prior to the 21st of September last, and did the late Government take any action on their own initiative to investigate these combines for the purpose of ascertaining whether prices were largely enhanced or not? I heard someone say something about a paper combine. After 15 years of power, that was the solitary instance of Governmental action in regard to combines. All I have to say is that no matter what hon. gentlemen opposite may say today, they were not, when in power, on unfriendly terms with the trusts, mergers and combines of this country."

There was no answer to that and none has been attempted. It was literally true. Then Mr. White turned to deal with Hon. Frank Oliver, who is much addicted to sound and fury signifying nothing. "We have heard talk," he continued, warning to his work, "about almost everything in the Heavens above and the earth beneath and the waters under the earth in reference to this bill. The hon. member for Edmonton (Mr. Oliver) has traversed almost the known universe but has failed to debate this bill on its merits and he knows it." And Mr. White went on to show that the farmers, whom Mr. Oliver is supposed to represent, would benefit most by the work of the Tariff Commission which would enquire into the tariff on all agricultural products. "It is an absolute perversion," he declared, "to say that this bill does not provide for the case of the farmer. This bill meets the case of every class of people in Canada. It is designed to meet the cases of all the population of the country and it is an absolute perversion to read anything else into it." And the House cheered.

New Mr. Oliver had more than insinuated earlier in the debate that Mr. White was the representative of mergers and combines and this is where, if the test may be permitted, the Finance Minister gave him back a Roland for an Oliver. "My hon. friend this afternoon," said Mr. White, "his eye on the member for Edmonton, 'paid me the compliment of again saying that I am the representative of interests. Let me tell him that I am a representative of interests. I am here as the representative of the public interest. I represent the interest of the people of Canada, and while I am here I shall endeavor to discharge this trust and if the hon. member keeps as free from sinister influences as I do he will do well. I said

"before and I say now that I never had and I have not now any connection with any trust, merger or combination, and I defy any man in Canada to prove that I have."

There was fire in Mr. White's eye and anger in his voice. He was roused at last. His reference to "sinister influences" told as few points have told in the House this session. Mr. Oliver flushed and there was a feeling of tension in the air as the House listened. But there was no come back. Mr. Oliver quibbled that he never made any insinuation against the Finance Minister of having any interest in any trust, merger or combine.

"You said I represented the interests—" began Mr. White, wrathfully.

"And I adhere absolutely to that statement," returned Mr. Oliver, viciously, and was promptly met with cries of "take it back."

"I say," went on Mr. White, firmly, "I am not the representative of such interests, and that I am quite capable of discharging my duties in an impartial manner, and I think the hon. member for Edmonton might very well omit these suggestions although I take it from him that he has withdrawn anything in the nature of a personal allusion."

"I never made any or wished to make any," was Mr. Oliver's humble response.

"You said it," retorted Mr. White.

Mr. Oliver: "Not personally, no."

Thus did Mr. White effectually vindicate himself. But he did more. He told the House something it was curious to know. His ability as a man of business had already been recognized, his power of lucid speech and explanation was admitted—but could he fight? Could he give an opponent who smote him something to remember and then some? Both parties in the House respect a fighter. In that one speech Mr. White, the novice on the parliamentary stage, earned his place as a star in Mr. Borden's company. He has arrived.

THE CANADIAN SENATE.

The Toronto News referring to the attempt of the Canadian Senate to prevent a proper investigation into the workings of the department of the Government under the Laurier Administration, says:

"The Canadian Senate is an irresponsible body representing only Sir Wilfrid Laurier. It is an adjunct of an Opposition, discredited and crushed at the polls and out of harmony with public opinion. The Liberal press has declared again and again that the British House of Lords had no right to block the legislation of the Commons. In distinction and public spirit the House of Lords is so far ahead of the Canadian Senate that the latter is not worthy of mention in the same day. The stern denunciation of the Laurier editorialists concerning the situation at Westminster might be warmed over and used once more with the application aimed at our own Red Chamber. But a great moral question of a year ago in England will be a matter of no moment today. The Liberal press will be no longer concerned over 'the declared will of the people.' So easily adjustable are some views of morals and political honor.

"The Canadian Senate will commit a serious tactical blunder if it plays the party game too far. People in the constituencies are not greatly in love with the institution. It is recognized as an expense and little more. Abolition has been advocated by fervent spirits in both political parties. The movement towards the revision of our constitution in this direction might easily become formidable if the Senators played too strongly the hand of the Opposition. A deadlock would be the height of folly, both for the Senate and the Liberal party."

Current Comment

(Toronto World.)

President Taft got a good reception in New York and in the other cities which he visited, but his speeches upon this tour read like the speeches of a beaten man. Even Mr. Taft's own state is aflame for Roosevelt and everything now indicates that the latter's nomination is more than a possibility. The Democratic hosts already feel that there is only one man in their great ranks who can be pitted against Roosevelt. The recent demand for a congressional investigation of the money trust has virtually put W. J. Bryan at the head of the column. Mr. Bryan may not seek the nomination, but it will come to him at Baltimore, as the Republican nomination will come to Roosevelt at Chicago. It will be a battle of the giants and a triumph for progressive policies whichever wins.

(Montreal Star.)

The British Empire is quite well, thank you. On January 18th there was a family re-union at the Kennington Theatre, London, which was nothing less than an Imperial event. Mrs. Cornfield of Lincolnshire, with her twenty-one sons, went to see the pantomime "Cinderella." The eldest son, 43 years of age, who came from Australia, saw his three youngest brothers for the first time. Eight of the boys are in His Majesty's service; two live in Western Canada, and the whole family is fairly well scattered throughout the Empire. Asked if there had been any daughters, one of the sons replied, "None, but a dozen or so have been adopted."

(Ottawa Journal.)

The remarks of Sir R. Baden-Powell on the objects and ideals of the Boy Scouts movements as conceived by himself should put a final quietus on the often expressed objection as to the military character of the organization, creating a war-like spirit that may lead many of the boys to seek a military career. Like many fine practical soldiers, Baden-Powell has no love of war for war's sake, and his emphatic repudiation of warlike ideals for and on behalf of the scouts should remove the last apprehension in this respect.

(New York Globe.)

One almost feels like paraphrasing the agricultural departments head into desiccated potatoes. There is something wrong about the sound. Even "dried potatoes" seems an unnatural word combination. Why should anyone dry potatoes? They keep well enough as it is. Perhaps dried potatoes can be boiled, but they certainly cannot be baked, or mashed, or made into Saratoga chips, nor can they be French fried.

(Bridgetown Dominion.)

The Buffalo bride of a day left her husband, declaring she could not live with a bald-headed man. We are afraid the bride has made a mistake, for we know it to be a fact that bald-headed men make splendid husbands and every bald-headed husband will stand by this statement.

(London Advertiser.)

Forty Australian boys are being sent round the world via the United States. There may be a side-trip to a single Canadian city, but the organizers of the tour show a lack of Imperial thinking when they made a side-show of this country.

(Lethbridge News.)

Twenty-eight of the 31 Scottish curlers who are now attending the Winnipeg bonspiel are testotaters. The three exceptions must be pretty busy keeping up their national reputation.

(Ottawa Citizen.)

An aviator named Coffyn is doing all sorts of risky things in his machine down New York way. Evidently Mr. Coffyn thinks there's nothing much in a name.

THE YOUNG-ADAMS CO. AT THE OPERA HOUSE

A Good Performance Particularly Strong in Specialties—
Italian Grand Opera Trio an Excellent Feature.

The Young Adams Company opened a week's engagement in the Opera House last evening when they presented the Russian drama, Under the Bear's Paw, before a large and well pleased audience. Between the acts there were specialties and these in particular proved excellent. One feature alone is well worth the price of admission, viz: the Rambolla Trio, Italian opera singers. These talented people sang selections from Italian opera as it has been seldom rendered in St. John. Singing in the original the words were unintelligible to the audience, but there was no mistaking the quality of the music. Their first two numbers were well calculated to display the wonderful range and quality of their rich voices and their concerted work was particularly good. The third number was lighter in quality, but nevertheless rendered with all due appreciation of its possibilities.

Another excellent feature of the specialties was the Gregory Trio in a very clever exhibition of hoop juggling and rolling. Their act was really of high class quality. The Groom Sisters, too dancers, gave a good exhibition of the art which pleased the large audience.

The drama in which the Young-Adams Company appeared was a typical and exciting incident. In the role of Capt. Radloff Mr. Young was manly and convincing and gave a very good presentation of his part.

Miss Margie Adams in the role of Bessie Grey, an American girl, fulfilled all the requirements of the part admirably and won much praise with her good work. Miss Hazel Stevenson made a striking Princess Petrovsky, while the other members of the company were capable in supporting roles. The play was well staged and dressed and with the excellent specialties the whole evening's entertainment was an enjoyable one. The same bill will be presented tonight while for Wednesday and Thursday evenings St. Elmo is underlined, with Thorns and Orange Blossoms for the closing bill of the week. There will be matinees this afternoon, on Thursday and Saturday.

HOTEL ARRIVALS.

Royal.
A D Smith, Halifax; A H McLane, Truro; A W Wilkinson, D Jackson Hoggie, Sheffield, Eng; F W Denlock, Toronto; A L Mackenzie, Halifax; Rev Macdonald, Hamilton; G D Osgood, Sussex; J C Saunders, F Greerson, Ottawa; John Weddall, John Kilburn, C K Palmer, Fredericton; J H Grant, Bridgeport, Conn; S Cahn, N Y; P Dagano, Montreal; W D Leitch, N Y; A G Vallar, Campbellton; John Mack, Montreal; Frank Corner, Montreal; Thos J Gallagher, Moncton; M M Tait, Montreal; G H King and wife, Chipman.

Park.
J H Force, Joe Robison, San Francisco; Geo Irving, F G Thompson, J K Brown, Montreal; H Wilmet Young and wife, H W Young, Jr, H H Claffie King Cole, Massena, NY; G Williams, J Cutting, R Currie, Boston; F G Boone, James Day, H Harrison, New York; G Henderson, L Tyner, L G Moore, London; G Parker and family, Truro; A S Hubley, Halifax; S B Lane Wew; Hopper, W S Sweet, A McDonald, Truro.

Victoria.
J M Flewelling, St. Stephen; W M Thurott, Fredericton; S S Wetmore, W L Crocker, G G Merritt, Clifton; G H Tapley, Clifton; J A McIsaac, Halifax; M B Dixon, Riverside; W F Gerding, New York; N W Baker, Middleton; W J Cooney, Megantic; J C Anderson, Fredericton; J C Glinis, Moncton.

Dufferin.
E R Woodill, Halifax; Thos A Ward, Montreal; C L Tracey, Stracey Sta; J E Angeline, Hampton; J A Bain, Sussex; W E Sharpe, Pictou; A Loudon, Ottawa; B E Dakin, Digby; E M McDowall, Shediac; W T Anderson, Moncton; P B A. DesGrose, Moncton; C J Jackson, Oxford; O P Wilbur, Moncton; H H McLean, St George; Dr A J McNally, R J Cook, Berwick; R A Diplock, Montreal; M Farrest, Manchester; H E Williams, Fredericton; J M Graham, A DesGrose, Montreal; D J Rupert, Montreal; James Burgess, Grand Falls; J P McGrath and wife, Boston; N Sabbath, A Sabbath, Montreal.

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Port Daniel West, Bonaventure Co., Que., Feb. 19.—(Special)—Bonaventure County is ringing with the great work done by Dodd's Kidney Pills, and on every side people are telling their neighbors of aches relieved and ill cured by the great Canadian kidney remedy. To the great mass of evidence already published is now added that of Mrs. Norman L. Dow of this place.

"I can recommend Dodd's Kidney Pills as an excellent remedy for rheumatism and palpitation of the heart," said Mrs. Dow. "After using one box I was greatly benefited. Dodd's Kidney Pills cure rheumatism and palpitation of the heart, because they both come from the same cause—impure blood. Dodd's Kidney Pills make the kidneys right, and when the kidneys are right they strain all the poison and impurities out of the blood. Cure the kidneys with Dodd's Kidney Pills and you can't have such diseases as rheumatism or palpitation of the heart."

Temperance Federation.
The St. John Co. branch of the Temperance Federation will meet this evening in Christadelphian Hall. As the prohibitory bill will be brought before the government on Friday of this week a large attendance is requested at tonight's meeting.

STEEL BILL MADE BIG CUT IN PROFIT OF LEAD DEALERS

Washington, Feb. 19.—The price of lead has declined four-tenths of a cent a pound since the Underwood Steel Tariff Revision Bill passed the House according to lead producers who appeared before the senate finance committee. They said the profit of a pound of lead was only one cent so that already their profits were cut almost in half.

THEN ALL HE'LL NEED WILL BE A BROGUE

Washington, Feb. 19.—President Taft today told Mayor Fitzgerald of Boston that he would pin a shamrock to the lapel of his coat, look around for a good shillelagh and ride at the head of St. Patrick's Day and "Evacuation Day" parade, when he visits Boston Monday March 18.

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