

# TRUTH.

OLD SERIES—17TH YEAR.

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## TRUTH'S MUSINGS.

Mothers-in-law appear to be the most unfortunate institution in all our domestic system. From the way that a great many writers refer to them, one would be led to suppose they are a class of beings little less dangerous than human monsters. What is the cause of all this fault finding and difficulty? TRUTH cannot tell.

The difficulty is not really a sentimental one, nor does it exist in imagination only. Justice Duffy, of New York, has recently given his experience in regard to this matter. He said: "Since I have been on the Bench I have had before me over one thousand cases of abandonment, and in almost every instance the mother-in-law made the whole trouble." TRUTH would now like to hear from some of our Canadian justices on the matter. Surely it is not so bad here, but enough cases keep constantly cropping up to convince the most skeptical that a great deal of domestic difficulty here arises from the same source. What is the true solution of the difficult problem? Will some wise man rise and explain. Solomon must have had a good deal of mother-in-law experience, but if he had any trouble from that source he was wise enough not to say anything about it. But Solomon did not live in the nineteenth century.

The poor people, especially the laboring women, will be great sufferers because of these hard times. The amount of compensation many of these poor creatures receive for their hard work is something pitiable to think of. A New York paper states that in that city women are now making "hickory," or coarse, shirts often at as low a rate as one and one half cents each; and better classes of sewing are paid for at absolutely starvation rates. It can hardly be possible that any such prices are at all general, but they may be a good deal more general than many suspect. God help the poor women who are struggling to keep the wolf from the door at any such rates as these! It is not probable that matters have come to any such pass as that in Canada yet. No doubt, however, many men and women are working hard for very inadequate pay, and many others cannot get work to do at all. Little wonder that, under such circumstances, so many are tempted to drown their troubles by whiskey, or to resort to theft, or even to suicide. During the present winter persons of benovolent hearts will find ample opportunities of usefulness all over the country.

There is evidently a good deal of difficulty and dissatisfaction among certain members of the Orange body in Canada just now; but as it is a sort of family difficulty TRUTH will not pretend to put its nose in. Certain men have evidently attempted to use the organization for political party purposes, and to outsiders it

looks as though they had been pretty successful in their attempts. One hears a good deal more said about parties than about creeds in connection with Orangeism these days. There can be no doubt a great many look upon the organization as a political rather than a religious one. It is now announced that a schism has occurred in consequence of the dissatisfaction existing, and a "Loyal" Orange order is to be established. Whether the movement has its origin with certain "sore heads," such as are sure to turn up in the ranks of any such institution, or whether the feeling is pretty widespread, TRUTH does not pretend to know. Time will tell. If the organization is being perverted from its legitimate purpose there should be a cleansing effort made. But the doctors differ about that particular question, and TRUTH will not undertake to decide.

One thing is evident enough:—The party leaders during the past three or four years have been doing their very best to use the Orange question to further party ends. TRUTH does not now refer to the members of the Order, but to the party wire pullers outside of the organization. The Incorporation bills have been, in turn, made a source of embarrassment to the leaders of both parties, and the end is not yet. Outside of the actual politicians, probably few would object to the legal incorporation of the Order, but so long as it may serve as such a fruitful source of political agitation and some political profit, so long will the partisans on both sides keep up a lively fight. If the Order itself does not yet receive serious injury out of these lively skirmishes of the politicians over its situation, TRUTH will be a good deal surprised.

Lennox is to have another election protest—the third within one year! Lennox county seems to have more than its share of political squabbles, and that is saying a good deal. Last year Sir John was elected for the constituency and his election was voided, on protest, because of bribery by agents. A few weeks ago Mr. Allison was elected in Sir John's stead, and now a protest has been made against him. With in a year Mr. Roo was elected for the Local Legislature and there was a protest, but at the trial the court decided in his favor, and from that decision an appeal was made to the Court of Appeal, and the case is now pending. Besides all these there are seventeen cases for damages for personal bribery now entered against Mr. Roo in connection with Sir John's election, and the lawyers are just now raising the usual number of legal technicalities to prevent the cases coming to trial. These election trials are, no doubt, great fun for the lawyers. They usually strike a rich well paying vein down in the bottom of them, but they are not much satisfaction to anyone else. The habit of resorting to appeal in connection with every election must have become a nuisance to

the courts, and it has certainly become a serious burden to the country. There is, undoubtedly a good deal of vexatious litigation of this kind, tending more to gratify political spite and personal spleen than to further the ends of justice. However if bribery and corruption exist pretty generally, and cannot be stamped out in any other way, let the political dogs of war be let loose. Somebody will have a big bill to pay for all this sport.

An attempt is now being made to have the Scott Act repealed in Prince County, Prince Edward Island. The necessary number of electors have signed a petition asking that the question of repeal shall be submitted, and the Government proclamation has been published, ordering the vote to be taken. The Scott Act has been adopted in every municipality in the Province of Prince Edward Island, and the law has been in force throughout the entire island for some years. A good deal of interest will now be felt in the result of the repeal vote. The reports have been that the law has not been well enforced there, and if these statements are correct there need be no wonder that it is not popular. Most license laws are proverbially poorly enforced, but not much noise is made over that fact. Something else however, is evidently expected in regard to a prohibitory law. Up till this time the Scott Act has never been repealed in a municipality where it was adopted. An attempt was made at repeal at Fredericton, N.B. last year, but it failed.

TRUTH rejoices at the announcement of the fact that the long pending Boundary Award difficulty is to be settled at last. There have been years of unnecessary delay, and thousands and thousands of dollars of the public money unnecessarily spent in the fruitless endeavors to settle the question—if endeavors they could be called. Both the Dominion and the Provincial Government have pretended to be anxious for a speedy settlement of the whole difficulty, but it is as clear as noon-day that both were not honest in the matter. Had they been, some means of getting at it could have been reached long ago. Let us hope there will not now be any unnecessary delays or subterfuges resorted to. The interests of the people of the disputed territory, and the interests of the public generally, are suffering because of the delay.

The fact is, Ontario has been rather shabbily treated in connection with this Boundary dispute business. Years ago there was an agreement entered into, in undoubted faith, between the Dominion and the Ontario Governments to settle the whole question by arbitration. Tens of thousands of dollars of the public money was expended in connection with that arbitration, and three men of honor and ability earnestly applied themselves to the task, never doubting but their decision

would be accepted. To have the result of the whole work kicked over as "illegal," after so much pains and expense, was not just the thing to be expected. Under the circumstances it was a pretty serious thing to repudiate such an award, and that between two and three years should be allowed to pass between making the award and making the announcement of its illegality, if the case was so clear as some now inform us it is.

Many of the friends of Sir John's Government, and some of its members—the Hon. Minister of Customs, for example—have not hesitated to say on public platforms that our province is entitled to more territory than even the Award specifies, and yet, five years after such has been made, Ontario has not received consent to occupy one acre of the land peaceably. There may be legal technicalities; it may be that the decision of a Court would look more like the lawyer's way of doing business than a friendly arbitration by men of equal ability to those constituting the tribunal of the Court; but to the great body of laymen it looks like a small reason for backing down from an important agreement, on a greatly important question, that the decision was reached by an Arbitration and not by a Court.

Mr. Mowat certainly has made a plucky fight of it in the interests of his Province. Whether the course he adopted was the wisest and best, under the circumstances, is a matter of doubt among even our ablest public men. In his position as Premier of Ontario it is his duty to guard faithfully the interests of his native Province, and whether he could have done his whole duty in this instance and yielded to the demands of Sir John is a question TRUTH will not undertake to determine. Probably he acted on the best of his judgment, all things considered; and very probably Sir John would have found little difficulty in meeting the case half way, or at least far enough to have reached an amicable settlement. Have not the cries, on both sides, been so loud and so fierce that any kind of compromise has been made as difficult as possible?

It now looks as though Mr. Mowat has gained a good deal he was fighting for in this case. The matter goes to the Privy Council, it is true, but it goes in such a modified shape as to make a settlement much less difficult than it would have been under other circumstances. The question of the legality of the Arbitrators' Award is first to be submitted, and should that be decided favorably to Ontario the case need go no farther. In case the question has to be decided on its merits the evidence, already obtained by great labor and expense for the Arbitration, will be accepted on both sides, and no long delay need be made in getting the facts ready. Ontario is to remain in possession of the most important portions of the territory pending the final settlement and in joint control of much of the rest. It is to be hoped before the coming year expires the much vexed question will be forever set at rest.