



A LEVELLING GAME.

A MAN from the town of Kenora, formerly known as Rat Portage, was recently telling how the ancient and honourable game of curling is played in that part of Ontario. The enthusiasm which has always been displayed over the "stones" has a wholesome tendency to make all citizens equal on the rink. On a certain occasion, said the man from Kenora, that Scot of ancient lineage, Lord Aberdeen himself, was taking part in a game. A well-known local curler was showing the Governor-General the various spots of vantage throughout the game and the directions were as follows:

"Now, my Lord, if you'll just step over here—" "Here's the place, Aberdeen, an' ye can show them how." Finally his interest in the contest overcame all other considerations and he exclaimed: "Here ye are, Ab, an' it's a grand chance."

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PROBATIONARY EXPERIENCE

A CLERICAL correspondent says: As a Methodist probationer for the ministry, I was out calling and passed an old man cutting wood. I stopped to speak with him and, in the course of conversation, he remarked:

"Say, I like to hear you preach." I was gratified that someone seemed benefited and showed it in voice and manner as I answered:

"I'm glad to hear that."

"Yes," he continued, "I always like a little antidote in a sermon." I have not had so many stories since.

I wasn't very old then and, maybe, will be pardoned for a great desire to laugh at a dear good old man who was thoroughly devout but somewhat mixed in his English. He prayed: "Lord, forgive us the sins that we have omitted and committed."

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A RISING POLITICIAN.

IT was at Ottawa last week, at one of the small festivities following the "Opening," that a charming young woman, who is a Liberal in politics, expressed an opinion which was startlingly heterodox. Someone had commented with regret on the absence of Mr. W. L. Mackenzie King and this sprightly lady replied:

"I'm glad he's not here. I hope he'll stay in Shanghai for ever so long."

"But why?" urged an astonished friend. "He is such a perfect gentleman and so clever and has got on so well for such a young chap and—"

"That's just it," was the impatient retort. "He reminds me of the story of Sir Gilbert Parker. Don't

you remember about the poor Englishman who protested a few years ago that, wherever he went, he heard a certain ominous sound. Whether he went to African forests or Indian jungles, he would awake in the middle of the night and hear a strange noise and stir and would find that it was only Gilbert Parker climbing, climbing upward in the night! Well, Mackenzie King is just like that! He's everything that's admirable but he's distressingly successful. A man who writes books, belongs to the Cabinet, arbitrates telephone disputes and Japanese riots and goes to anti-opium conferences has too much executive ability for the ordinary understanding."

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ALTRUISM.

IN the February number of the *Smart Set* is a poem with the above title by Helen A. Saxon, a Canadian writer of extensive renown.

When cream is ninety cents a quart,
And new laid eggs are soaring,
And butter—of the milder sort—
Necessitates ignoring,
We say, askance, "Just think of that!"
And eat our bread with bacon fat.

But when our neighbours come to dine
We don't consider prices,
But give them courses eight or nine,
From oysters up to ices.
You'd never dream the purse was limp
Or how we'd have to save and skimp.

For then we buy us cream galore,
And mushrooms out of season
And fatted birds—though prices soar
Beyond all rhyme or reason.
Champagne and festive fizz abound,
And hired waiters gallop 'round.

'Tis thus that we exemplify
The love we bear our brother,
And cheerfully ourselves deny
That we may feed each other,
Obeying both the Golden Rule
And modern altruistic school.

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NO ALIBI FOR HIM.

IN Philadelphia they tell a story of a man whose wife had arranged an "authors' evening" and persuaded her reluctant husband to remain at home and help her to receive the fifty guests who were asked to participate in this intellectual feast. The first author was dull enough but the second was worse. Moreover, the rooms were intolerably warm. So, on pretence of letting in some cool air, the unfortunate host escaped to the hall, where he found a servant comfortably asleep on the settle.

"Wake up," sternly commanded the Philadelphian in the man's ear. "Wake up, I say! You must have been listening at the keyhole."—*The Argonaut*.

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NO COMPLIMENT.

Stubb: "What's the matter with the writer's husband? He looks angry enough to chew tacks."
Penn: "And he is. She dedicated her latest book to him."

Stubb: "Gracious! I should consider that a compliment."

Penn: "Not if you knew the title of the book. It's 'Wild Animals I Have Met.'"—*Chicago News*.

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ASIDES.

The *Ottawa Journal* remarks: "A man drops dead in a Brantford bar. If he had had time to think he

probably would have chosen some other place to drop dead in. The moral is obvious."

The *Ottawa Journal* also proceeds to attribute the following to the *Toronto News*, but the *News* repudiates the quotation: "Mr. George H. Gooderham is the new exhibition president but that does not mean that there will be Gooderham in the exhibition sandwiches." This is the very worst pun which the year, 1909, has known.

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CURIOUS ABSORPTION.

MR. VICTOR ROSS of the *Toronto Globe* staff recently had the opportunity of seeing the advance performance of "The Vampire," in New York. The play introduces an unpleasant hero who goes about "getting" ideas from other people in a literal and cruel fashion. One of his cheerful little methods of procuring these bits of brain power is by rubbing the heads of those whose grey matter he wishes to absorb. As the "special" audience was leaving the theatre, a critic on one of the great dailies said to the *Toronto* visitor:

"That trick is easy enough. I suppose the writer means to say that if you pat a dog on the head, you'll begin to scribble doggerel."

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WOMAN THE EVER-READY



The Wife (with great presence of mind): "Keep hold of him, Horace, while I try and find a policeman."—*The Sketch*.

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THE SECRET OF SUCCESS.

THE motto of success was given in this tale, told at a banquet:

A Swede among the miners in the west was noted for always striking pay dirt. His fellows thought that there must be some secret to the unusual success of the Swede and questioned him as to how he always succeeded in finding the spot where the gold cropped out.

"Vell, Ay don't know ef Ay can tell anytang 'bout dat," answered Ole. "Ay only know dat Ay yust keep on diggin'."—*Milwaukee Free Press*.

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THE BISHOP'S REPLY.

CAPTAIN FORETOPP tells a story of a certain noted divine who was on his steamer when a great gale overtook them off the Oregon coast. "It looks pretty bad," said the Bishop to the Captain.

"Couldn't be much worse, Bishop," replied Foretopp.

Half an hour later the steamer was diving under the waves as if she were a submarine and leaking like an old door.

"Looks worse, I think, Captain," said the Bishop. "We must trust in Providence now, Bishop," answered Foretopp.

"Oh, I hope it has not come to that," gasped the Bishop.—*The Wasp*.



Urchin (to friend who has gone in): "Bi-i-ll! Lend us yer skates, you ain't usin' 'em."—*Punch*.