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When Murder Is Done.

The tragic death of Mrs. Margaret Mick, matron of the Toronto municipal jail farm, is as unusual as its circumstances are sordid. As a result three girls, one of them twenty-one and the other two sixteen, face a charge of murder. It is already argued that the three girls who sought to escape did not intend to commit murder, but when they found the matron resisting their efforts it was necessary for them to use more force than they had anticipated. That reasoning is very much the same as the claim that a man who robbed a bank would not have shot the teller and the manager if they had held up their hands like good fellows and handed over the money. The bald fact remains that three girls tied and bound the matron, choked her into silence, and departed. When she was discovered some hours later doctors said death had taken place shortly after the assault.

Affairs of this kind have generally been associated with men with either a record for desperate acts or a determination to commit them at the first opportunity. There is something so revolting in the idea of three girls being responsible for the murder of a woman who had done no wrong that it opens a crime door that the general public would much prefer had remained closed.

That there were women only in the jail probably was responsible for the fact that it was possible for this matron to have been assaulted, bound and killed Sunday evening and no discovery made of the crime until the following Monday morning. People do not like to think of girls and women having to be surrounded with all the methods employed in the safeguarding of hardened criminals. There is a feeling, perhaps it is one of chivalry, extended to women and girls whose actions lead them within the grasp of the law, yet it refuses to regard them as criminals in the usual sense of the word. Even when they go wrong they remain, in popular imagination at least, on a different plane than men.

This Toronto case, where the jail matron was done to death in a way that was as revolting as could have been conceived or carried out by hardened master criminals, simply because she stood between three girls and freedom, brings in a new phase of Canadian criminal history that the authorities will have to recognize whether they wish to or not. Murder and murderous intent are none the less real because they become the property of women or girls.

Plain Charges Made.

Meetings of church courts in this district have heard outspoken denunciation of the shipment of liquor from Canadian points, presumably for export. Some of the speakers have made the positive declaration that these shipments are not for export at all, but are landed at some other point farther along the lake shore and in this way made available for those who engage in bootlegging. It is hardly probable that these definite statements would be so openly made if the men making them were not certain of their grounds.

There is another angle to the question, and that is if it is proper for this country to sanction the shipment of liquor to United States points when it is a well-known fact that United States has declared these imports must not enter. The republic is spending large sums of money in the maintenance of a fleet of vessels and officers at sea and lake ports to keep liquor from being landed. If the tables were reversed and United States was allowing an article to be forced on us that our laws declared should not enter, and which we were being taxed to exclude, we might see things in a very different light.

From a Political Standpoint.

The St. Catharines Standard, independent in most political affairs, but with occasional Conservative leanings, believes that from the point of practical politics Premier Ferguson made a mistake with his modification of the O. T. A. The Standard goes back to the days of the last provincial election, and remarks that there are many members who are "today sitting on the anxious seat" because their election was made sure in the first place on the ground that the government would "do something" for those who wanted the return of liquor in some form or other. The Standard continues:

"Thousands of voters in the last election, who thought of only one issue, that of the O. T. A., went out to support whatever party gave some promise, covert or otherwise, of amending the rigors of the prohibition act. The voters knew that Messrs. Drury and Raney would do nothing for them, so it was good billiards for Conservative candidates to pass the word around without committing themselves from the open platform that prohibition would be repealed. The period of reaction has set in. When the government appeals to the country again there are indications that the same furore which drove Sir William Hearst from public life will prevail against Mr. Ferguson and his supporters. . . . It doesn't make any difference how honestly the Conservatives have tried to deal with the problem since prohibition came in force in the province, it is a fact that the same furore has been established, which consists of thousands of voters, who think only in terms of wet or dry when they mark their ballots."

For the man who measures events in terms of political action only, the government has not pleased the wets with its new beer. It may be claimed that it is only the thin edge of the

wedge, and that more changes will follow, but of that the man who likes his liquor harder has no guarantee. If the deduction of the St. Catharines Standard is correct, he voted for something which the government has failed to deliver.

This attempt to live up to the reputation of "doing something" for those who were opposed to the O. T. A. has earned for the government the distrust and suspicion of the dry forces. They know that they had a majority on October 23, and that in spite of the vote the government went ahead and altered an enactment they had voted to have left intact. Mr. Ferguson and his followers have very little reason to expect much support from that section when the time comes to go to the country.

The premier has indulged in a daring experiment, and signs are beginning to accumulate that he has made a rather serious political blunder.

Paying Income Taxes.

"Who pays the income tax in Canada?" was the question again discussed at Ottawa, and as usual no conclusion was arrived at other than the answer that a survey of the figures will disclose. Mr. Ryckman considered it strange that such a small proportion of it was paid by farmers, and the reply of Mr. Forke was that if the farmers were not paying income tax it was because they were not making enough to come within range of the taxable figures. There was really nothing new in either Mr. Ryckman's insinuation nor in Mr. Forke's reply, because both points have been covered many times by others.

An analysis of some of the 1923 income figures shows that out of 281,182 income tax payers no less than 208,360 were registered as "employees," that being 75 per cent of the total. Of this number 52 per cent had incomes under \$5,000 a year, and their total contribution was \$15,529,949. Those coming next were merchants with \$5,474,256; professional men paid \$2,663,900, the manufacturers \$870,261, and the farmers \$473,049.

The employee is in the least favored position when it comes to paying taxes on the last dollar he makes. The tax office can secure from his employer the payroll on which the employee figures. In this way the necessity of having to pay to the last cent and the virtue of belonging to the largest class of taxpayers become closely allied. No matter whether it is through force of circumstances that successfully discounts any attempt at evasion, the employee is in a position to ask that others contribute on the same basis.

The Edmonton Journal considers that the employee class is in a position to protest against the extent to which the levy falls on him. "Those who are compelled to pay up to the last dollar," says the Journal, "have a well-founded feeling that the law is being administered inequitably. They have a right to complain when, after being mulcted to the limit, they find that many whose incomes they have reason to believe are larger than their own are either going scot free or paying much less than they do themselves."

Cause and Effect.

Captain C. E. Gower, president of the Chief Constables' Association of England and Wales, in an address at the international police conference at New York, said that with a population of 38,000,000 the police of the two countries had to deal with only seventy-one murders in 1923. He did not say so, but it is a fact that nine times out of ten convictions were recorded, and in all but three cases executions followed. Right there is the most apparent reason of the low criminal record of England and Wales.

By way of contrasting that record with crime figures of United States, the Utica, N.Y., Observer remarks: "There were 300 unsolved murders in New York city last year, which probably isn't any worse than catching the assassins and then making heroes of them."

British courts follow plain, fearless administration of justice—its very low crime record is the result. United States has allowed a form of slobbering sentimentalism to elbow its way into court, and its crime record, the largest in the world, is the answer. If the U.S. authorities have learned from these British representatives who have been in New York the real difference between the two plans, then it has been a worthwhile conference.

Note and Comment.

Looks as though the members of parliament had just about decided to take up their residence permanently in Ottawa.

Motorish ran over a pig on the holiday near London. That's the worst of driving in the country, pedestrians are so scarce.

One Iowa woman has had six husbands, and in California another has had seven, showing that they regard hubbies as hobbies.

The world has forgotten that fool song "Yes, We Have No Bananas," but the man who wrote it continues to live on the interest of his money.

Manitoba Free Press: "This much ought to be said for the skunk; he doesn't try to keep you from knowing what sort of a fellow he is."

A chap up our way who has had two tomato patches frozen this season says there's not sufficient kick in Ontario's beer to drown a sorrow such as his.

Reports of Woodbine races continue to appear on the sporting pages, whereas many a man instinctively turns to the financial page to see how he and the horses made out.

Grand Duke Nicholas is willing to risk his life to drive the soviet rule out of Russia. Before he starts he should nail up a sign telling what he intends to establish in its stead.

Two farmers are dead in Alberta because they shot each other in a quarrel over whether wheat or oats should grow in a certain field. Instead of compromising on buckwheat they used buckshot.

Too Old—Too Young

In which we speak of folks at church, who busy much their wigglin' tongue, a-claimin' preachers is too old or else contendin' they're too young.

I was just listenin' to a chap who spoke of preachers that he knew, he was a-tellin' twenty things what they should not or else should do. And he was likewise talkin' of the men whose course was nearly run, because he feared in ancient years they couldn't draw or hold the young.

And then he turned from them a spell to preachers who were startin' out, declarin' they should hide a while to know just what they spoke about.

So from his views there be two kinds who shouldn't get or take a call, the young men and the old ones too, they shouldn't have a chance at all.

It seems to me it must be hard to please a critter such as him, who's lookin' round to find excuse to get riled up beneath his skin. He scoffs upon the burning youth with fire a-blastin' in his bones, he thinks the old should shuffle off and dwell down there with Davy Jones.

A man what's preached for forty years and watched the wicked in the land, who's seen the saints and sinners pass and topple from this mortal strand—it seems as how a man like that should listen to his voice and honor him his wealth of years.

But as the world wags now there's them who'd shove gas shells into their gun, and blaze upon his silver locks because he couldn't hold the young.

And then they turn on fiery youth that seeks a chance to prove its worth, that's keen to add its share of toll to build the kingdom's wall on earth. They flay him for the years he lacks, his wisdom be an untried sort, and they would lead him from the door and laugh him from the outer court.

For he is green in pulpit work, he can't eternal views unfold, he hasn't made a record yet, and he's too young to please the old.

Too young, too old, too loud, too soft, too fearless and too something more, the critics stand and watch the race, in terms like that they mark the score.

Small wonder that the man outside he's not much taken with their talk, nor much concerned to change his pace and travel as such church-folks walk. Small wonder that he asks if they be meanin' what they say or not, and wonderin' why they don't dig in to boost the preacher what they've got—ARK.

Editorial Opinion

ONTARIO AND ITS 44 BEER.

(From La Patrie, Montreal)
MR. FERGUSON'S beer—"Fergie's foam," as it is being familiarly called—has not yet proved its merit. Those who claim beer with a "kick" have been led to hope that, in spite of the 44 restriction, the liquid may be "improved" by the ingenuity of the brewers and become really thirst-quenching and stimulating. If the beer that Ontario has, or will have, should become to possess the same qualities of the beer of the province of Quebec, Ontario will have to cede to this province its prize for virtue, for it will be our turn then to profess to be scandalized at the manner in which Ontario regulates its distribution of liquor. It is not the government of Quebec or the liquor commission which permits the taverns to be opened at 7 o'clock in the morning, as is the practice in Ontario. Neither do we tolerate women, and even girls, acting as cup-bearers in the taverns. Whoever would have thought that Toronto would descend to such a level?

THE PUNISHMENT OF TWO CASES.

(Wm. Rathby in Petrolia Advertiser-Topic)
THE following is a copy in part of the report of a trial held in Petrolia, Tuesday, 12th inst., that appeared in your valued paper last week. Names are omitted: " . . . was charged with causing the death, by reckless driving of an automobile, of . . . nine-year-old boy, . . . on Saturday night."

"His Worship—Having elected to be tried by summary trial, in this court, how do you plead?" "Accused—Guilty."

"Sentence—Three months in the Ontario provincial prison, with a further indeterminate term of six months."

The following from Toronto papers, Friday, May 15:

"Two young men, charged with stealing chickens from three different people, pleaded guilty to two of the charges, but denied the third. They were found guilty of the three. Sentence: Two years, less one day, in the Ontario reformatory on each charge, the sentences to run concurrently."

Apparently it is a much more serious offence to interfere with the chicken coop than to destroy the home.

Lighter Vein

AN ESSAY ON THE COW.
A SCHOOLMASTER in a little country school in England set his pupils the task of writing an essay on cows. One of the bright pupils solemnly handed in the following, but it is suspected his bachelor uncle had assisted in writing it:

"Cows have an annual regatta, yet the cow is not a nautical animal."

"The cow is a good mother, and will look after her calf most lovingly. By the cow is the milk made. I know this to be true, for I have seen the milk-maid by the cow."

"Also there is an old song about the cow entitled Fur Heifer and Heifer."

"When a cow goes lame a pair of crutches can be obtained from the veterinary surgeon, but they are called by a special name, which is accowtiches."

"Cows are very fond of resting; they will lie in fields but not on cowches, they don't go sofa as that."

"As a whole cows appear to do very well, for even when they are dead they generally make both ends meet; but it has been found that at times many calves die young. Why this should be so I can't say, but perhaps the butcher might reveal the secret."

HE UNDERSTOOD.

The trig little woman with the horticultural display on her head stepped upon the pay-right-now-while-we've-got-you-car.

The conductor held out the box for his fare. "You'll have to wait until after I get inside," she told him.

"Oh, no," insisted the fare-taker. "You have to pay right here on these cars."

"But I tell you I can't pay you until after I get inside," repeated the little woman.

"Yes, but—"

"Here!" interrupted a big man who had climbed on behind the woman. "Just take her fare out of this. I know how it is. My wife carries her money that way."

Looking At the Foreign Office

In This, the First of Six Articles, the Reader is Introduced to the Atmosphere of Downing Street.

By H. SOMERVILLE

62 Chatter Road, London S.W.

LONDON—In size Downing street

is one of the smallest streets in

London. It runs off the main thoroughfare called Whitehall and ends

in a cul-de-sac except for some

steps leading down into St. James' park. On the north side there are

the two famous dingy little houses

which have put it on record as the

prime minister and the chancellor

of the exchequer. On the other

side are the colonial office, entered

by a small door from the street, and

the foreign office, which has a more

imposing gateway and a quadrangle

with a appearance of some grandeur

though disguised by temporary

huts put there during the war and

still used for office accommodation.

The name of Downing street, however, is more often used to stand for

an institution than a location. Mrs.

Asquith has put it on record that

she found a taxi driver who

knew where it was. In England the

journalist speaks of Downing street

when he refers in an impersonal way

to the prime minister and his entourage.

In Canada, Downing street is

taken to be the seat of the British

government, and the term has come

to be rather expressive of those

powers and activities of the British

government in relation to the dominions

which the dominions regard with

rather qualified approval.

Dealing Direct

The tutelage of the colonial office is

a stage from which Canada has

long passed. If Canada today has

any objections to this department it

is not that it any longer makes

pretensions to dictate, but that it is a

superfluous intermediary. If Canada

has business to transact with the

foreign office it is annoying to have

the circumlocution of communicating

via the colonial office.

The foreign office is the one

department of the British government

where are now centered the more im-

portant unsettled questions of em-

pire relationships. The great prob-

lem is to reconcile dominion auton-

omy with empire unity. At one time

it was considered impossible to have

empire unity without a common

fiscal system, but nowadays separate

and independent tariffs in different

parts of the empire are taken as a

matter of course. Can the empire

also dispense with a common foreign

policy, and can it remain an empire

or a real unity, under whatever

name, without diplomatic unity? It

is to be feared that as much popular in-

does not arouse as much popular in-

terest as a cross-word puzzle. Mr.

N. W. Rowell recently said that he

doubted whether there was any real

public opinion in Canada on the

Geneva protocol. Yet the world is

not so safe for democracy that

democracy can afford to let these

questions go by default.

Features Biblical Verse.

The present building which serves

as the British foreign office is in the

style of a Venetian palace. On the

roof of the great staircase it is written:

"Let the people praise Thee, O

God; yea, let all the people praise

Thee; for Thou shalt govern the folk

righteously and govern the nations

upon earth."

Was it hypocrisy, or empty con-

vention, or was it sincerity to inscribe

such a prayer in such a building?

Diplomats are often considered

crafty, cynical beings, plotters of

war and not preservers of peace. An

eminent British diplomatist wrote in

an autograph album "an ambassador

is an honest man sent to lie abroad

for the good of his country." It was

a punning jest, for the word "lie"

was meant in its old sense of "re-

side," but people persist in taking it

for a cynicism.

To anyone with imagination there

is an awesome feeling on a first visit

to the great departments of states.

The shade of Bismarck, sacrosanct

himself and sternly demanding sac-

crifice from others, still seems to be a

presence at the war office. There is

a thrill in looking from the street at

the admiralty, for over the dome

which caps the building are the

masts and wires from which mes-

sages are flashed to the British fleet

wherever its units may be in the

seven seas. The sense of history in

the making is movingly felt as one

treads the corridors of the foreign

office.

The Romans had their temple of Janus which was opened in times of war and closed in times of peace. The foreign office has been compared to the temple of Janus, and it has been remarked that in ordinary times the foreign office and the mass of the people have stood peculiarly aloof. Despite the march of democracy through all the nineteenth century and in our own day, it has been the rule for the foreign office secretary to be a peer. As Mr. Algernon Cecil says: "A veil was, in fact, allowed by mutual consent to fall between the mass of the people and the statesman to whom it was given to open and shut the doors of the temple of Janus. Neither did the nation desire to be disturbed in its ignorant bliss, nor the foreign secretary in his delicate business."



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