

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, JUNE 13, 1891.

HE FOUGHT THE FIGHT.

THE DEATH OF THE PREMIER OF CANADA.

An Estimate of Sir John Macdonald as a Statesman, a Politician and a Man—His Great Abilities and the Reasons for His Success in his Undertakings.

Arising from out the clamor of politics and taking a place in the hearts of the people and in the control of the nation, men sometimes occupy conspicuous places without a reason sufficient to satisfy even those who have been most active in placing them there. An inexplicable affection is born in the heart of the masses, so steadfast and gentle that mistakes are overlooked and sins forgiven, and thus, even when magnified by the frailty of the popular hero, and intensified by the unscrupulous criticism of ambitious rivals, grave errors of judgment make no impression on those who usually are hard to satisfy and easy to make afraid. Words which would be of light weight if heard from the lips of others, are held to be pearls of wisdom as the people's hero defends his cause and outlines his policy. Every movement, every gesture is noticed, remembered and quoted. Other men apparently superior in ability, attainments and virtue, when placed in comparison are ridiculed, defeated or despised until it sometimes seems as if it were useless to oppose or endeavor to direct the enormous power which popular enthusiasm or inscrutable fate has placed in the hands of this leader of the people. Time in its progress, the moon in its changes, the sun in its seasons seems to evolve from the Uncontrollable those things which destroy others while they uplift and make more secure the chosen one, who sometimes seems to scarcely understand and seldom to direct the fortunes of the hour. Unless extraordinary foresight or an instinct akin to inspiration guides such men, we must become believers in blind luck, the fool's fatalism, the despair of those who fight against the Unseen.

Among such men that the gods seem to have made great, Sir John Macdonald is the most conspicuous example in the history of Canada. Unless we believe in the fatalism of the heathen or the God of the christian, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to conceive of the depth, breadth and meaning of so singular a career. I shall not endeavor to add to the vast volume of so-called biography and hazy reminiscence which at the present moment is deluging the country. Of the birth, youth and early struggles of Sir John, every one has had an opportunity to inform himself. All those who have touched his hand or heard his voice have hastened to obscure the true meaning of his life by the repetition of stories and the recital of stale descriptions of trivial events. No man who feels an aptitude for public life or the stirring within him of genius, need fear the censoriousness of a public which forgave so many early mistakes and social errors. Even those things which in a trivial life ostracize men, are nothing but milestones in the history of that virility which leads captive mankind. We may wonder as we watch, we may suffer as we wait, but true courage, persistence and a man's belief in

himself and his possibilities overcome all things. We are born, and whence cometh the mainspring of our life we know not. The things which control us, the circumstances which evolve us, the fates which make us triumph we cannot understand; but the lives of all men who are, or have been great, makes plain the principle that the children of genius cannot for long be obscured by defeat. Nor hath it entered into the mind of man to mark at birth or proclaim at death the names of those who have been especially up-raised.

Amidst changes for which many contended and against which thousands fought, during a reconstruction of constitutions, the confederation of provinces, the control of innumerable diverse interests Sir John held his place. While the chiefs of mighty factions fought and fell, while a new geography was planned, a new constitution created, while a revolution was begun and ended, while questions were discussed and feuds engendered this great man whose greatness was denied by his opponents and admitted without explicable reason by his friends, maintained his supremacy. Promises were made without regard to the possibility of fulfillment. Friends besought him, enemies besieged him, and yet smilingly in the midst of such conflicts the great old man jested with his friends, jeered at his enemies, triumphed when other men would have been overwhelmed and became the idol of the people when men esteemed greater were offered in sacrifice.

It would be unbecoming in speaking of departing greatness to make any attempt to overlook or belittle those special qualities so seldom recognized as the central and controlling influence of a successful life. If skill as a rhetorician were to be the standard by which we judge statesmen, Edward Blake would long ago have superseded Sir John. If capacity for detail, rugged honesty of purpose, a contempt for those things by which ordinary politicians intrench themselves were recognized, Alexander Mackenzie even in his palsied age would be still premier. If being the son of a sect and the apostle of a creed were to make a man supreme, Sir John would have neither attained nor retained the confidence of the people. Then there seems to be something behind all these things, some power to divine that which

should be done and that which must happen. Associated with this phase of life, invariably it seems to me, is the happy knack of making friends, which until the tide

convicted of what should and must come about, is impatient and often unpopular until e is intrusted with the management of affairs and can demonstrate the correct-

affairs. Long continued success, an almost reckless disregard of the opinion of others, a buoyant cheerfulness, an unobtrusive egotism which only betrayed itself

the departure from earth of a spirit such as is not usually confined by so feeble a tenement of clay.

The central feature of his life and policy was his Canadianism. I presume that there has been no observant man who has not thought out or contended for some different course, some more radical method than was pursued by Sir John. Yet after the lapse of so many years it is more or less evident that the imperialism of the premier's idea, the compromises that seemed un-Canadian, the adoption of methods which, had they been used without a grand and glorious purpose, would have been almost indefensible, were absolutely necessary to the fulfillment of a purpose, were a part of the plan of a mind illumined by genius and directed by the sacred fire of patriotism.

Sir John was a self-contained man. He was hail fellow with everybody; he seemed to lean upon many, counselled with a select few, but after all he stood absolutely alone. Who can fail to sympathize with the loneliness of a life throughout which it was impossible to confide in any man or at any moment to open his heart to the gaze of the multitude, lest a sinister meaning be discovered as the shadow of his worthiest impulse! When we sit together and endeavor to find a good meaning, it is not hard to discover a patriotic purpose, while to those in opposition and anxious to strengthen attack, improper motives first suggest themselves. I do not conceive it to be that empty charity which leads us to speak well of the dying or the dead, when we discover a grand and beautiful purpose, thoroughly Canadian and gloriously great, in the life which is just about to close. Cruel criticism has made the path to these grand aims a penitential progress, and yet there has never been a career without regard to personal comfort, luxury or self-indulgence which did not open itself to the attack of those who cannot conceive of either patriotism or grandeur of impulse in what can be misrepresented as corrupt selfishness or dishonorable ambition. As this great career, lasting through so many years, conspicuous amidst events which might have obliterated us from the list of nations or caused our absorption by voracious neighbors, grew to the highest point of its eminence, those who waited anxiously for it to close proclaimed that the popular appreciation and support which Sir John had received, marked a lamentable degeneracy of public appreciation, the decay of honor, and a putridity of political morals so astounding as to be indescribable.—Don in Saturday Night.

Do Pearls Get Sick?

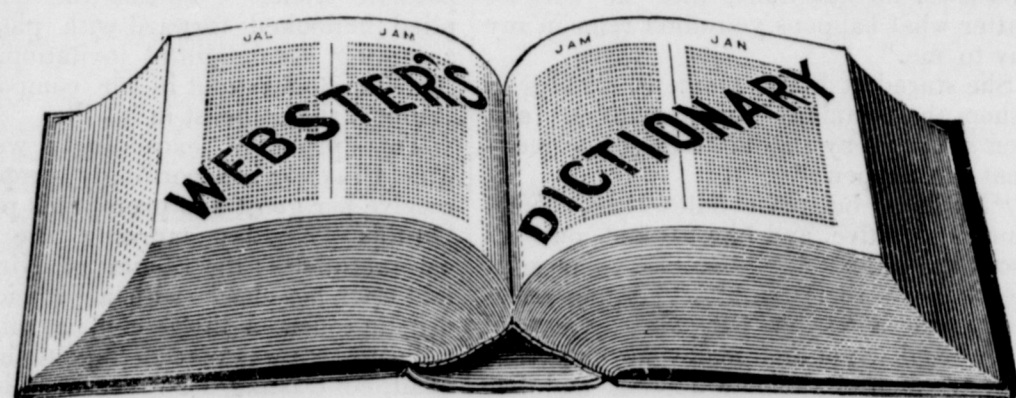
"Do you know that pearls get sick?" said a well-known jeweler. "They do, and, like babies, they require a change of climate when their health is bad, or else they crumble or die. I knew of a case once where a lady went into a jeweler's with a magnificent set of pearls that were losing their luster and beginning to look dead. These pearls are sick," said the jeweler, upon examining them, "and unless you take or send them to a decidedly different climate at once, they will become worthless." They were sent off, and within a month were as bright and pretty again as they had ever been.—Atlanta Constitution.

The Mean Thing!

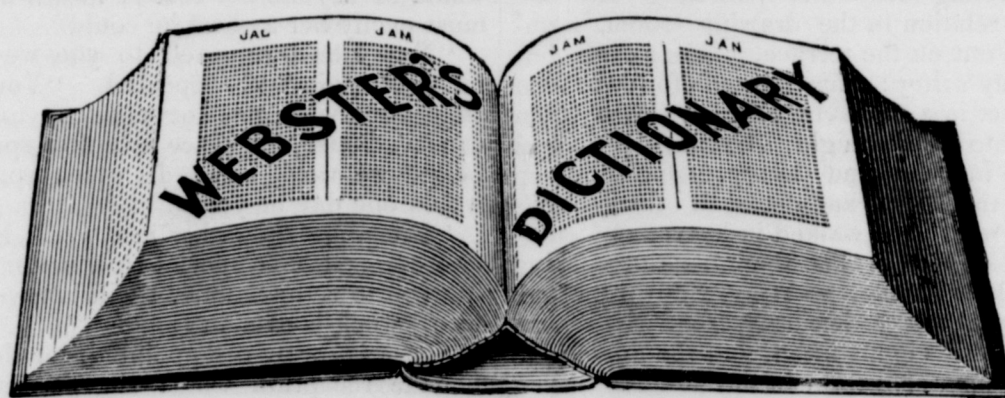
Ethel—I've been engaged six times, and now I am going to marry Charlie Simpson. How many times have you been engaged? Maude (demurely)—Only twice—to Charlie Simpson.



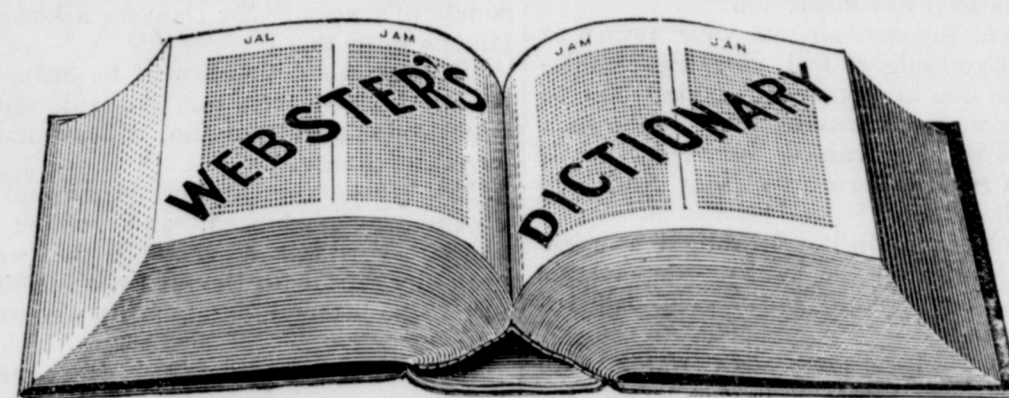
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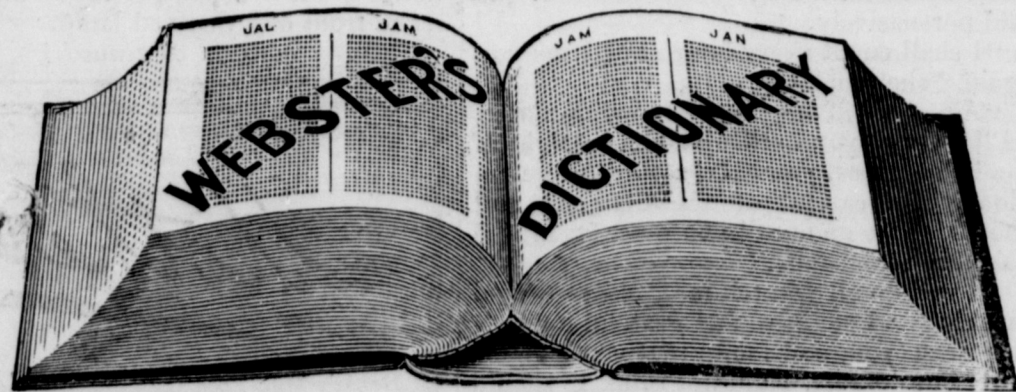


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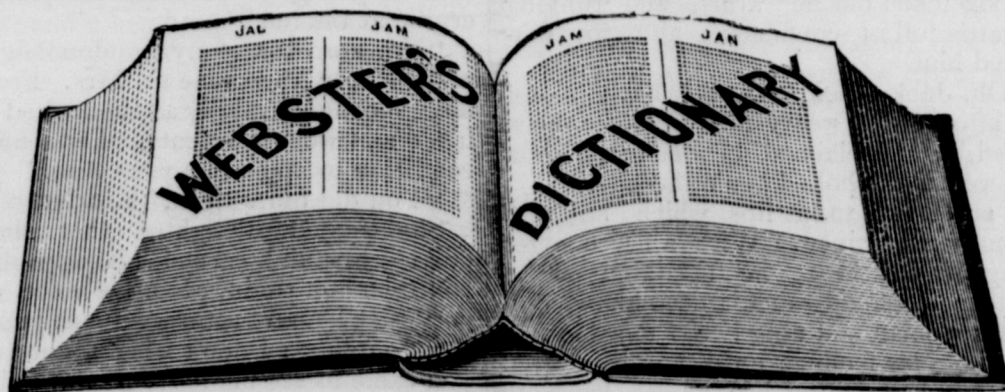


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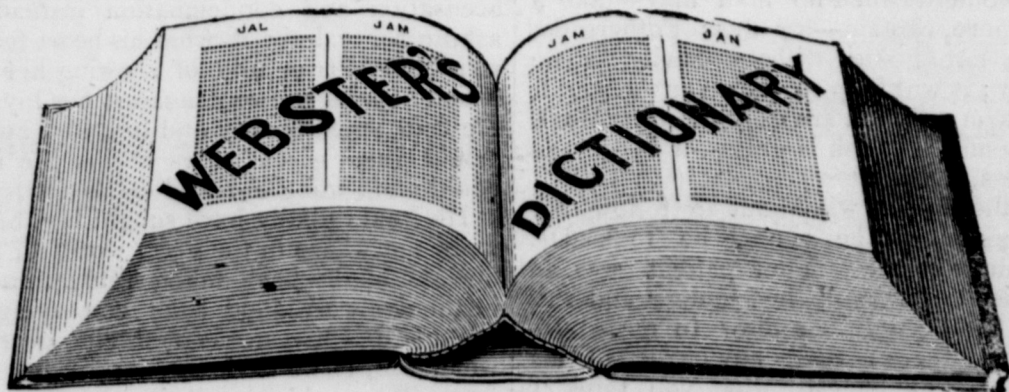
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