

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A "BOER WAR VETERAN"

(From the Normal Light.)

It was a town in dear old England where I first saw the light of day. For some time my life was one of dull monotony, witnessing the ordinary routine of a department store, day after day. But one day a change occurred; the listless, unsympathetic despatch became one of excitement, groups of people talking everywhere. At last I learned from their conversation that a great war had broken out, and, as I afterwards found out, it was the Boer war. How my heart beat with joy, and for the next week I lived in hope, for I felt sure that I would be needed, and would be called into active service. My anticipations were realized, and I and some of my comrades found ourselves stationed in a barracks training for the front.

The training! Need I describe it? With what joy did I arise each day to renew my work; with what eagerness did I drink in every instruction of our dear commander, and what a thrill it caused my heart to realize that each day brought me nearer my goal—the fighting zone. These few weeks passed happily, but too slowly, for we were eager to be off. But then came the parting—that sad parting, for during this time I had formed many friends. But then the best of friends must part, and so with cheery countenances we said "good-bye." It was amid a volley of shouts and the beating of drums that I bade farewell to my native land.

Soon I found myself among the fighting columns. Oh! how I loved the din of battle, the smoke of the powder, even the sharp report of the cannon was pleasant to me. I looked the enemy straight in the face, through thick and thin, for was I not fighting for my country, my dear motherland? The scenes of horror and bloodshed I shall never forget! Many of the brave young men who had left loving homes were to return to them no more, while to others fate was less severe, and sent them home maimed for life, not to think and worry over worldly tasks, but to know and realize that they had done their duty to their country. Many days did the sun rise and set and find me still at my post. Then came an unfortunate day, a bullet pierced my side and badly wounded my master. My poor master! What little hope I had for him when I saw him struggling under its first torture, but then I knew he would live, if there were any hope, to fight again gloriously for his country.

Time found us in a comfortable hospital, where my master's wound was soon dressed. But what of me? For once I was neglected, and what lonely days I spent till my master was well again, eager for active action once more, and longing to know the results of the battles. My master, when recovered, resumed his former place again, but I soon realized that our first misfortune was only the beginning of our troubles, for twice before that awful war was finished we spent days of poverty and suffering in cold dark prisons. At the end of this time our side had fairly won their peace, and as victors we gladly returned home. The glories of the battlefield are small in comparison with the joy which each one feels on setting foot on his native soil again, and to each one of us, I think, came the words of the poet:

Breathes there a man with soul so dead,
Who never to himself hath said,
This is my own, my native land."

Many years have passed and I am old now. I have seen much of life; yes, lived to regret the day that I am not young again. For some time I again lay in obscurity, forgotten, but not forgetting, for still I remember my place in life, and what glorious days I have witnessed. The blood of youth flamed again in my veins when my dear master looked me and my comrades up at the beginning of this great war. But, sad fate, my days were numbered, the vicissitudes of battle had completely disarmed me, for the life of a brass button is limited. Still, there is some pleasure in life for me, for I live realizing how great a part brass buttons are playing and must ever play in the affairs of mankind.

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THE GRIEVANCE.

Burglar—The only thing I'm kicking about is bein' identified by a man that kep' his head under the bed-clothes the whole time. That's wrong.—London Opinion.

HIS ASSETS.

"I see Jones has failed. Has he any assets?"
"Nothing of any value. The inventory which he filed with his petition in bankruptcy shows that he had 230 wedding presents."—Brooklyn Citizen.

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Opposition Platform

The following platform was adopted at the Opposition Convention held in St. John recently:
In the event of the Opposition being returned to power, we pledge ourselves:—

NO PARTIZAN CONTROL OF CROWN LANDS.

1. We pledge ourselves to completely reorganize the Crown Lands Department, so that its administration shall be entirely severed from politics and administered on sound business principles under systematic plans by a non-partizan commission specially appointed for that purpose, responsible to the Legislature and working in co-operation with the Dominion Commission of Conservation.

TAKE THE HIGHWAYS OUT OF POLITICS.

2. We pledge ourselves to take the highways out of politics, giving the expenditure of the money collected from the people and the control of the labor, together with the Government appropriations, into the hands of supervisors, chosen by the people of each parish, to whom a detailed and audited account must be rendered every year at the annual meeting, and a duplicate thereof forwarded to the Department of Public Works, the work of the supervisors to be under the inspection of a competent provincial engineer.

We also pledge ourselves to set aside the money collected from the licenses upon automobiles and other motor vehicles, together with an equal appropriation from the revenues of the Province each year, to pay the interest upon the bonds to provide for permanent roads, which shall be constructed as rapidly as possible.

PROHIBITION PROVINCE WIDE.

3. We pledge ourselves at the first session of the Legislature to pass a law prohibiting the sale of intoxicating liquors within the Province to the fullest extent allowed by the Constitution, and within three months after the passage of said Act to submit the same by referendum to the electors of the Province, and should the majority of votes cast be in favor of the said law, then to bring the same into force by proclamation within one year thereafter.

ELECTION LAW.

4. (a) To amend the electoral law so as to make it impossible for members of the Legislature to traffic with the Government and still retain their seats.

(b) To make it possible for young men, when they reach the age of 21 years, to register their names and be placed forthwith upon the voters' lists, instead of waiting for the tedious machinery of revision as it now exists.

(c) To divide the counties into electoral districts which shall each be represented by one member.

(d) We will also consider amendments to the election law to make bribery in municipal as well as provincial elections impossible.

PROVINCIAL FINANCES.

5. To obtain at once a correct statement of the financial condition of the Province in order that the people may have definite knowledge of the vastly increased public debt and the enormous obligations of guaranteed bonds they will be called upon to pay; and to so reduce the cost of the administration of affairs and the number of useless officials as to avoid the necessity for direct taxation now confronting us.

AGRICULTURE.

6. To give the farmers all the practical assistance that the resources of the Province will permit, to improve agricultural methods and the quality and quantity of the stock upon the farm; to reduce the enormous salary list in the department, and to spend the educational grant received from the Federal Government without regard for political patronage.

VALLEY RAILWAY.

7. To complete the Valley Railway from a point on the Trans-continental Railway at or near Grand Falls, to St. John, and insist upon the Dominion Government carrying out the terms of the original legislation and allow the Province forty per cent. of the gross earnings thereof.

EDUCATION.

8. To always maintain and improve the educational service of the Province and to co-operate with the Federal Government in carrying out the recommendations of the commission upon technical education.

IMMIGRATION.

9. The inauguration of a vigorous immigration policy to properly place before intending immigrants, whose number will be large after termination of the war, the advantages of the agricultural possibilities of New Brunswick.

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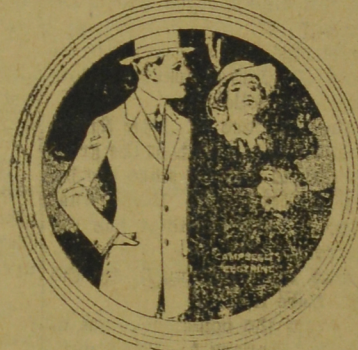
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