

THE BUSINESS MAN AND HIS RELATION TO POLITICS

(Dr. Andrew McPhail in Montreal Witness)

The common demand is for the 'hard-headed business man' in politics. This demand is caused by a thickness of head in those who make it. The prevalent theory of democracy is that a man who may know nothing of anything also necessarily knows all about the science of government; that business is the greatest thing in the world; and that some knowledge of business qualifies a man to deal with all matters of legislation.

I should say rather that a training in business was the worst possible qualification for public life; because the ethics of business is love of money, whilst the ethics of politics is love of men. Therefore the two are in direct antithesis. The business man looks at questions in narrow detail not absolutely in relation to the well being of the community. Between these two conceptions a great gulf is fixed.

A man with the characteristics of a trader is not remarkable for that enlargement of mind which alone enables him to deal with questions in the abstract. Political problems are so vast and so far-reaching in their results that they cannot be dealt with in such summary fashion as may suffice for quoting a price upon an article of commerce. The one is an affair of figures and of a computation based upon known factors. Political problems deal with the lives of men and demand of their solution an acquaintance with the whole history of the race and an imagination to surmise the future.

Self-interest is a sure guide for business, and a man whose whole life is governed by that principle must be utterly lost in the world of politics where abnegation of self-interest is the first requirement. The difficulty cannot be overestimated of putting off the old nature, and putting on a new. It is this difficulty I think, which lies at the root of much which is evil in public life.

The business man is trained to deal with each situation as it arises, applying to it his own experience. When he becomes a legislator, he is guided by the same rule no matter how honest he may be, rather than by those great principles of reason and equity and the general sense of mankind, which, Burke declares are the only rules by which a legislator may be bound. He is even unaware that such great principles exist, and is apt to deal with the people as if they were employees who were com-

pelled to submit to a multiplicity of perplexing and teasing regulations.

Although these general statements are true we must take account of the exception, which Burke also noted, that, where there are business men with the sentiments and abilities of great statesmen, there are also persons in the rank of statesmen with the conceptions and characters of pedlars knowing even less of politics than they do of business. Political problems are great problems, and are ill-solved by minds accustomed to deal with small things. A business man who would not tinker his kitchen clock is quite willing to try his hand at mending an act of parliament.

I should say that the government of the United States affords the best illustration the world has yet known of government by business men. When Mr. Lorimer wanted a seat in the Senate he bought it in the market, and a man who buys the people will sell them again. When the insurance companies of New York required legislation in their interests they bought it with money at current rates. When corporations feel the need of protection against their competitors they make contributions to campaign funds. They have even discovered that justice may be made a subject of barter and they have entered the courts of law with moneybags in their hands. The Athenians had a wise law that any one who interfered in the assemblies of the people by the infamous practice of purchase, was punishable by death. This application of business methods to politics, as Lock affirms, cuts up government by the roots and poisons the very fountain of public security.

Public affairs are not so simple as they seem. Ignorance is only a little less dangerous than dishonesty. Knowledge and wisdom are only a little less necessary than probity and a nice sense of honor. Engagement in business does not necessarily create wisdom. On the contrary, 'He that hath little business shall become wise. How can he beget wisdom that holdeth the plough, and that glorieth in the good, that driveth oxen and is occupied in their labors, and whose talk is of bullocks. He giveth his mind to make furrows and is diligent to giveth kine fodder. So every carpenter and workmaster that laboreth night and day, all these trust to their hands and every one is wise in his work. They shall not be sought for in public counsel, nor sit high in the congregation; they cannot declare justice

and judgment.'

I am not saying that an assembly of lawyers should succeed any better than an assembly of business men. Lawyers are bound strictly by their own rules, and are incapable of that exercise of imagination which is necessary in dealing with future events. More ominous still many lawyers have abandoned their proper function of applying general principles to particular cases, and are become the employees of corporations seeking special privileges under the guise of ministering to the public good. When they gain entrance to parliament they represent not the people but a particular class whose interests are often divergent from those of the people at large.

The worst calamity which can befall the people is that a place in their assembly should become distasteful to a civilized member of the community by being deprived of the dignity and power which properly belongs to it. When the last safeguard of the people is gone, and the assembly is left to the baser members who are willing to scramble for their bellies' sake.

A university finds no difficulty in filling its chairs with men of fine personal honor and high attainment, because the candidate has the assurance that his merits will be carefully considered, and the struggle is not an ignoble one. If the people were to make a candidature attracting, they would find no difficulty in securing the best man in the community to serve them.

For in truth the business of the legislator at his desk is much like that of a professor in his chair. Both are concerned about getting at the rights of the matter in hand, for the sheer pleasure which there is in the inquiry. What is most needed in all democratic communities is an assembly entirely composed of men who make politics a profession, as Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Mr. Borden, men of leisure and of contemplative minds who are not especially concerned otherwise about making a living or at all about becoming rich.

For such there are many inducements in Canada to enter public life. The future of the country lies open for the entrance of good or evil. The possibilities of doing good are boundless and the people are more ready than ever to listen to an appeal to their interest. They are tired of the force of which their candidates are chosen for them in some secret conclave.

The requirements of the election law, which govern the attempt to enter public life are very simple and specific. They do not demand that a candidate shall belong to this party or to that. They do not insist that he have the constant approval or support of any body of managers or the aid of any convention or machine. Any man may be a candidate for the Dominion Parliament who is in possession of the hundred dollars and is able to secure the names of

twenty-five electors to a requisition that he become their representative.

If the most suitable man in each constituency in Canada were to follow this courageous course, even if all were to fail at first, such an impression would be made upon the public mind that we should soon have a legislature composed of men to whom politics is a profession instead of government by such ideal ethical standard as prevail in the profession of law, medicine and the church, and not by the rules and customs of a mercenary trade or business.

SEVERAL INJURED IN FIRE AT DUNKIRK, N. Y.

Dunkirk, N. Y., Nov. 8.—Several firemen and a little girl were injured here today in a fire thought to have been of incendiary origin. Four business blocks were partially destroyed. A number of persons in one of them narrowly escaped cremation. Overcome by smoke, they were rescued by firemen one of them and an eight year old he was carrying fell from a ladder. Both were seriously injured. The property loss is about \$50,000.

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BIG GAME HUNTING IN NEW BRUNSWICK

Mr. David X. Coughlin, a former well-known St. John printer, contributes to The Boston Globe an interesting illustrated article on Moose Hunting in New Brunswick. Mr. Coughlin says:

New Brunswick has become one of the popular places of North America for big game hunters. This season American hunters have had excellent luck and, it is said, not one of the many sportsmen from this side of the border has been unsuccessful.

New Brunswick received a large indirect revenue through its handling of big game, but the sportsman receives a good return for his expenditure.

The writer, recently returned from a hunting trip in northern New Brunswick, found big game plentiful and was fortunate to be in at the kill of some big bull moose, one having a spread of over 62 inches.

With two friends, residents of Canobie, just after the season opened, the writer made the trip to Tagues Lake, with the hope that some big game might be encountered, and was not disappointed.

Hardly two-thirds of the journey had been traversed when one of the party, who had gone some distance in advance, returned with the information that something unusual was taking place not far away. After listening a few moments, the conclusion was reached that a big bull moose fight was in progress. Cautiously pushing forward in the direction from which the uproar came, we soon arrived at a clearance, and from the shelter of the big growth of wood which fringed it, a grand view of a terrific battle to the death between two bull moose was the reward.

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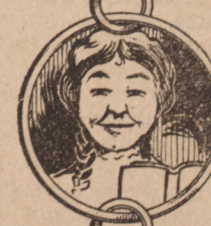
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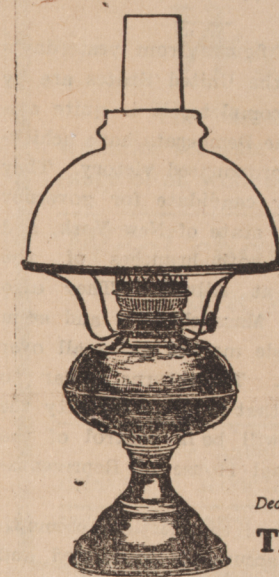
Don't use a small, concentrated light over one shoulder. It puts an unequal strain on your eyes. Use a diffused, soft, mellow light that cannot flicker, that equalizes the work of the eyes, such as the Rayo Lamp gives, and avoid eye strain.

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About midway in the clearance the animals, one extremely large, the other younger and much smaller, were roaring and plunging, locking horns and pressing each other first one way then the other, backing away from each other, pawing the earth, and then coming together again with a roar of rage and an impact that seemed to make the ground tremble.

The terrific battle continued for some minutes, and it seemed that the larger animal was slowly but surely gaining the mastery, but the other and younger one was fighting with the ferociousness known to its nature when enraged, and each time it was crowded back or aside by its more powerful antagonist, would return to the combat with even greater fierceness than before.

How long the battle would have continued and what its termination, is, in some measure, problematical, for the hunters, who had by this time pulled themselves together, agreed to bring the conflict to a close.

When dressed the meat of both animals weighed 1,422 pounds, the largest (Continued on page seven)

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