

The Evening Times.

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THE EMPIRE

Last evening members of the Canadian Club heard Principal Peterson's discussion of the true imperialism. In the papers which this morning reported his address appeared also a summary of Lord Milner's article on the wider patriotism, which appeared in the first issue of the Standard of Empire.

Principal Peterson and Lord Milner convey the same message, in different phrase. Both stand opposed to what has been defined as independence in alliance with the empire. Both insist that while there may be independence in a very wide and true sense there must also be a vital and working partnership, in which each member is loyal to the interests of the firm. If, asks Dr. Peterson, Canada becomes an independent nation, and Australia, New Zealand and South Africa follow her example, what empire will there then be to which to be loyal? The question is an effective reply to the independent alliance argument.

We do well to meet and greet these men of the wider outlook. There is more than mere information in their message. It is an inspiration.

RAILROAD SITUATION

The Railroad Chronicle states that the railroad gross earnings of the United States for March reached \$141,103,819, a decrease of \$21,531,081, and net \$30,328,523, a decrease of \$6,543,631, as compared with the corresponding period a year ago. It is anticipated that conditions will slowly improve. A New York paper give a somewhat depressing statement of the number of idle cars, although in this respect also there is some improvement.

A report issued last Saturday showed a decrease of about 9,000 in the number of idle cars between April 29 and May 13. There were at the latter date 404,375 idle freight cars on the lines in the United States and Canada reporting their car service figures to the committee on Car Efficiency of the American Railway Association. This small reduction in the number of idle cars still leaves the freight car surplusage greater than at any time prior to April 29 last, when there was reported a total of 413,338 idle cars. This is the second decrease in the number of idle cars reported since freight business began to decline last fall. From the beginning of February to the middle of March there was a falling off in the number of idle cars from about 342,000 to 296,000. The car surplusage again increased after the middle of March, until at the end of April it exceeded 413,000 cars.

A SOCIAL REFORMER

A recent Dublin cable stated that quite a sensation had been caused in Stewartstown by the programme mapped out by a new medical officer. Appearing before the district council he presented a list of the things he wanted—and wanted at once. They included a motor ambulance, a disinfecting chamber, an apothecary, an abattoir, a model lodging house and a public bath. He also recommended that all habitual drunkards should be sent to inebriate homes, that provision should be made for the supply of new milk, butter, milk and butter to the children of the poor, that the laborer who kept his cottage cleanest and his children neatest and healthiest should get his cottage rent free for the year, that prizes should be given to the second and third best cottages and that the worst three should be fined, and that tramps and beggars should have their clothes burned and should be provided with new clothing for which they should be compelled to work.

The Times commends this medical officer's list of reforms to the thoughtful attention of the St. John board of health and city council. We have an ambulance, although it is sometimes made the subject of complaint, and there is perhaps no special need of a disinfecting chamber or an apothecary. The need of an abattoir was strongly urged some years ago, and seemed almost within easy attainment,

but the subject dropped entirely out of sight.

With regard to habitual drunkards, there should be a provincial prison farm for such persons, and for vagrants, where they would be compelled to be sober and industrious, for as long or short a term as their conduct merited. The suggestion concerning clean and neat cottages could not be carried out in St. John, but a course that would result in greater cleanliness and neatness in some sections of the city would be good for the health and the morals of the people, especially the children.

This Irish medical officer is a genuine social reformer. There is need of such. May his kind multiply and flourish in the land, and may his example be an inspiration wherever the list of requirements he submitted to the district council is read and pondered over by the people.

HIGHER STANDARDS

Gov. Hughes, of New York, in a recent address, made these pregnant statements concerning political conditions in the United States:

"The inquiry is not that there is a boss, but that behind the boss is some special interest. We must have men elected who are accountable to the people. We want to see politics in such shape that the highest standards of life will be those of politics, that men keep their promises, and that no one will ever dare to say to an elected officer, 'I gave you your job, and you've got to do as I say.'"

The Outlook, in its comments on the situation and on the governor's speech, says:

"The issue which Governor Hughes raises in the paragraph cited is the most fundamental issue in American politics. It is far more vital than anti-gambling bills, railway rate regulation, or tariff revision. It is the fundamental issue behind those issues. To permit special interests to control the nominations, and allow the people only to choose between those whom the special interests present for their suffrages, to elect Senators who act, not on their own independent judgment, nor yet on the expressed judgment of their constituency, but on wired instructions from a boss, political or otherwise, is to make a mockery of representative government. The appeal which Governor Hughes is making against this political false pretense deserves the hearing and response it is receiving. And the voter can render to the state and to the nation no better service than by voting against a candidate, whatever party he belongs to, and whatever policy he professes, if there is good reason to believe that he is the representative, not of the people, but of a boss who is in turn the paid agent of special interests."

Canada has not suffered to the same extent as its neighbor from the cause referred to by the Outlook, but special interests have had their advocates not only in the country but in the government itself. No greater service can be done the country than to elect to representative positions men who are incorruptible, and who carry into public life the same standards of honorable conduct that mark their personal intercourse with their neighbors. There should be no special interests where the public welfare and the public treasury are concerned.

An exchange gives the following interesting information about the supervised playgrounds in the city of London, England: "The London play centres are not for vacation season only, but for vacation hours of every day. The public school buildings and grounds are used, and the hours are from 5.30 to 7.30 p.m. each school, and from 10 to 12.30 a.m. on Saturday. Instructors, or, as they are termed, game masters and game mistresses, are provided, and play in all forms of handicraft gymnastics, games and art is encouraged under wide and kindly direction. Twelve schools are in present use in London as play centres. Over 15,000 children under fourteen were regular attendants last year, and 20,000 are anticipated next winter. The Board of Education give the buildings readily for the purpose; but the chief expense is in securing and paying suitable game instructors."

The Montreal Star has the following dispatch from Ottawa: "When Mr. R. L. Borden's attention was directed to a despatch in the press announcing a campaign tour by him in the latter part of June, he said that no definite arrangements had been made for any such tour at the present time. It is regarded as being more than likely, judging from the present outlook, that parliament will be in session, not only during June, but a considerable portion of July."

Concerning changes in South Africa, it is interesting to note that the number of Chinese employed in the Rand gold mines has been reduced from a maximum of 33,500 in January, 1907, to 24,000 last month. Kafir workers have increased from 80,000 to 131,000.

TO BE DISTRICTED.

(Washington Star.) Senator Tillman, at a banquet in Washington, said, in a humorous defence of outspoken and frank methods: "These people who always keep calm fill me with distrust. Those that never lose their temper I suspect. He who wears under abuse an angelic smile is apt to be a hypocrite."

"An old South Carolina deacon once said to me with a chuckle: "'Keep yo' tempa, son. Don't yo' quarrel with no angry pesson. A soft answah am always best. Hit's commanded an', furthermo', hit makes 'em maddah'n anything else yo' could say.'"

MEET AT HARVEY'S

St. John, May 30th, 1908.

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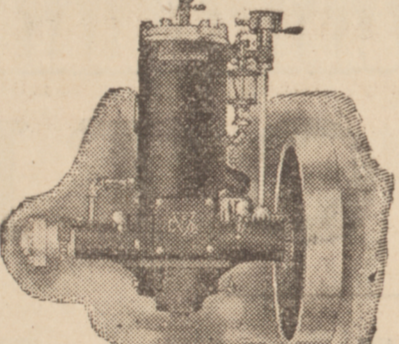
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THE HEART KNOWETH

(Charlotte Wilson, in McClure's.) Sometimes my little woe is lulled to rest, Its clamor shamed by some old poet's page— Tumult of hurrying hoof, and battle-rage, And dying knight, and trampled warrior-great, Stern faces, old heroic souls unblest, Eye me with scorn as they my grief would gauge, A mere child, schooled to weep upon the stage, Tricked for a part of woe and sombre-dread, "Lo, who art thou?" they ask, "that thou shouldst fret, To find, forsooth, one single heart undone?" The page thou turnest there is purple wet, With blood that gushed from Caesar over-thrown! Lo, who art thou to prate of sorrow?" Yet, This little woe, it is my own, my own!

IN LIGHTER VEIN

WITH INTEREST, TOO.

(Nashville American.) A kiss should never be purloined, No gentleman should steal a smack, But if he does and she objects He should politely put it back.

JUST SUPPOSING.

Supposing a great office came around one summer day, And wept big tears and talked about its sorrow and dismay, And clamored to be rescued from an uncongenial crew, Would you have the heart to spurn it if it came a-seekin' you?" —Washington Star.

THE TIME TO SPEAK.

"Gee whiz!" said George for the twentieth time, "it makes me mad every time I think of the \$10 I lost to-day. I actually feel as if I'd like to have somebody kick me." "By the way, George," said the dear girl, dreamily, "don't you think you'd better speak to father this evening?" —Philadelphia Press.

HIS RECEPTION.

The isthmus mosquitoes gathered enthusiastically around the genial secretary of war. "Here's a candidate," they hummed, "exactly to our liking!" At the succeeding banquet it was agreed by all present that a very enjoyable time was had.

RHODES AND THE EMPEROR.

The German Emperor, says a contributor to St. James' Budget, had a very high opinion of the late Cecil Rhodes. "I wish you were a German," his majesty once said to the great Englishman, "for I'd appoint you director of my foreign affairs." "That," said Rhodes, "is a great compliment, sir, but I respectfully assure you that if you had been an Englishman I should have engaged you as my general manager."

USELESS SOCIETY.

Mrs. Jones often declared that she really enjoyed a little chat with their fish dealer, because he was a man of such original ideas, but one day, says London Opinion, she returned from market somewhat puzzled by his remarks. "I said to him, just in the way of conversation," declared Mrs. Jones, "that I had heard that a man becomes like that with which he most associates. That's ridiculous, Mrs. Jones!" he answered. "I've been a fishmonger all my life and can't swim a yard."

WOMAN EQUALS MAN IN FINLAND

Maybe Policeman, Judge, Mayor or Member of Parliament.

Finland is a record-breaker. Since the emancipation of that country from Russian rule, since it was granted autonomy two years ago, it has acted promptly and emphatically on great social problems. As soon as the power was conferred upon them the people adopted universal suffrage and made women equal to men in all respects in the body politic. There is no distinction of sex whatever. A woman may hold office in Finland except one, that of governor-general, which is filled by the appointment of the czar, for it is the only remaining link between the autocracy and the democracy. A woman may be a policeman or a judge, or the mayor of a town, and there are 32 women in parliament, where they have shown a remarkable amount of activity and ability and determination in the enactment of radical legislation. They have proposed and carried through several reform measures of the very greatest importance. Fifty-six per cent. of the votes were cast by women at the first national election, and only 44 per cent. by men, and it is probable that they will have a larger number of representatives in the next parliament—a fair representation of their voting strength. There are 200 members of that body at present and only 32 of them are women.

The most recent act of general interest is a law passed by an almost unanimous vote totally abolishing the liquor traffic. It closes every saloon, every distillery, every brewery in Finland. It prohibits the use as well as the sale of beer, wine and spirituous liquors of every kind. It applies to private individuals as well as to hotels and restaurants, and under a heavy penalty forbids the importation or the use or even the possession of distilled and malt liquors. It even forbids the use of wine at communion service in the churches, and the sale of liquor for medicinal purposes is placed under the same restrictions and regulations as the sale of poisons. Spirits used for medicinal purposes must be so doctored upon their importation into the country that they cannot be used for a beverage.

The police are given unprecedented power. They have the right to search private dwellings on the information that liquor is concealed there or is in the possession of the occupants. The penalties are very severe. The minimum is a fine of \$20 and the maximum is penal servitude for three years. No provision is made to indemnify distillers, brewers, rectifiers, dealers or private individuals whose property may be confiscated or rendered useless by the law. Every distillery must close forever, and the loss on the investment falls upon the owner without any indemnification whatever from the government. This is the first law ever passed by a national legislature prohibiting the use of intoxicating drinks.

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