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THE LONELY GUARD,

—BY—

NORMAN INNES,

Author of "The Surge of War" (London Magazine, Eveleigh Nash, 1906); "Parson Croft" (Eveleigh Nash, 1907,)

(Continued.)

She thanked the men, doubtless gave them a full measure for their pains, and set about refilling one and another of the vessels.

Their night's work had been successful, or mayhap it was my capture that they toasted, but whatever the cause, the rogues drank deep in those morning hours. For some time their voices rose harsh and guttural from without as they called to the child, and their cry was ever the same, for liquor. And liquor they had till I looked that the casks would run dry, till at last speech failed these drunkards, and all was silence save for their heavy breathing and the rattle of dice in a cup—two it seemed were sober and gaming.

It was growing hot upon that heap of rags, and I would have given a florin for the dregs from those barrels; the rogues had fed me, but not a drain of their wine had passed my throat. And the child? Had she forgotten me and the service I would have done her and her sire at Kels? An oath rose to my tongue at the thought of the graceless little wretch, this girl, who was, it seemed, the adopted daughter of a band of robbers and outlaws. She had lost a father, whose one virtue lay in his courage, and in two years or three would find a ruffian mate and become a mother of smugglers and bandits to be. But in spite of the trick she once had played me, in spite of her knowledge of this world's evil, I had held that all gratitude and good feeling had not forsaken this child of the golden tresses, that she held some code of honor that demanded the requital of a service.

Yet it appeared she had none as I caught random glimpses of her figure in the patch of sunlight beyond the cave. A thoughtless child on the threshold of a heartless womanhood, she tripped to and fro before the entrance, gathering here a bowl and there a jug from the litter at her feet. Then stooping to pick up a platter that lay just by the cavern's mouth, she slipped within and in another moment was standing, looking down at me from between the two casks.

"Well, child," said I in a whisper, the dice were still rattling merrily without. "Hast thou forgotten me."

"No, Excellency," she replied with a shake of her head, "nor these evil ones about us, and that thou art a prisoner, and other matters beside."

She was leaning towards me with her arms outstretched upon the barrels.

"And how will it go with me, little one?" I had thought that the rogues would have made an end of me ere this, and wondered what death was to be mine.

"Hardly, if I tarry with thee here," came her answer. "Hardly mayhap, for all my pains; but I have thy sword."

"My sword!" I gasped, making neither head nor tail of her speech.

"Aye, 'tis hidden amid the blankets beneath thee, the sword that my father said should be thine."

I fumbled beneath the grimy rags. With a blade in my hand. I should be another man. Nor was it long before I felt the metal chill to my touch and with a strange joy grasped the hilt of the cumbrous weapon that last I had seen in the grip of a dying man.

Then I laughed at this sudden exultation, at the thrill that had stirred my blood. Of what service was a blade, be it the keenest of Toledo,, to one whose limbs were shackled?

"'Tis of little use to me, child, as thou mayest see," I breathed, pointing to the fetters that circled my ankles.

Her answer was all but a rebuke.

'Nay, sir, thou hast thy sword-arm free, and look you, if the worst should befall, stand here betwixt the wine-butts, the passage is narrow and thy blade is long; but one may come at thee at a time. Saints, my sire would have made light of three of these dogs together."

I could but look in the blue eyes of that child of ready wit, the daughter of a shrewd old fighter.

"But they have fire-arms?"

"And sodden powder," she replied, and her voice broke soft in girlish laughter.

It was all I could do to suppress a whistle. Marie Schalk glanced anxiously behind her.

'Now hearken," said she, as doubt for her schemes gathered in my mind.

'Thou must use thy blade as a last resource only, bear all till they seek thy life. Thou wilt know when the time has come, when the issue must be staked upon the weapon; for the rest trust to me."

With that she slipped softly to the entrance, looked round upon the snoring ruffians and disappeared, and no sooner was she out of sight than I would have called her back.

What would she do? What design had she hit on? If she ventured to Rohn and there reported my peril she was like to get nought but thanks for her news from the officer in command. By chance she might fall in with some of my hussars, but the chance was small, besides in the circumstances my men could do little.

Yet in spite of the slender prospect of succour, my heart was lighter, my soul at rest. I had the comfort of the knowledge of the child's devotion, of some last effort in my behalf and besides no sheep's death need be mine with old Schalk's weapon in my hand.

Deep amid the blankets I replaced that sword whence I could draw it in a moment, and lay back with a prayer to heaven that can work by the weak as by the strong, to prosper my little friend.

I must have slept in spite of my fears, for growing suddenly conscious of the sound of bickering voices, I marked the cavern flooded with sunlight. The heat was all but unbearable; my thirst, forgotten while I whispered with Marie Schalk, had increased tenfold.

Now whether my captors were thirsty as I, or hungry, or both perchance, I gathered that the child had disappeared from the encampment and that they were not a little disturbed thereat.

One was confident that she had but wandered into the woods. Another, acting on this suggestion, with fingers to his mouth whistled shrilly to summon the truant, while others yet cursed her for a laggard servant, and gave it as their opinion that so long as none of the wine had disappeared with her, the company was well rid of a worthless hoyden. Some peered within the cave, others joined in their comrades' whistle, while not a few were content to sprawl at their ease and have nought to do with the bother.

But the leader of the woodsmen, a stout, bearded rogue, who, methought, was none other than he who had felt the weight of my fist in the hunting-lodge when he rode with the ladies from Sondheim, did not waste his breath in curses or whistling. Instead, he strode grimly into the cave, and ere I was aware of it, was scowling at me from above the wine-butts. He said not a word but grunted as I started upright, glanced at the fetters upon my ankles and, assured that the child was not in the cavern, went out moodily.

It must have been three in the afternoon or later, for the sun was westering, and the robbers were evidently uneasy at the girl's disappearance. Now and again, one or another would make a suggestion, and I caught the rough tones of the leader chiding sundry of the band who had been sent to find some clue to the direction she had followed, and had returned without sighting on a trace of the child.

They wasted half-an-hour perhaps in fruitless discussion of the cause or object of her flight, which I had little doubt, the leader of the band suspected was not unconnected with my capture. Some of the men must have been aware that Schalk's daughter had crossed my path before, and more than once some member of that ill-looking crew would saunter into the cavern as if bent on questioning me.

This was the course that their leader at last took upon himself to follow.

"Dost thou know what has befallen the girl?" he demanded, as he stood not a yard from the barrels moodily biting his nails.

"Nay, not I," I answered truthfully enough, adding with a suspicion of guile. "What? Is she gone?"

The man's reply was a grunt of dissatisfaction.

"Gone, aye, these three hours and more. Methinks thy hand's in this, Master Austrian."

I had scrambled to my feet with an ironed foot upon the sword, and shrugged my shoulders.

"I am fettered as thou seest."

"And hast sent her to thy castle therefore."

I laughed; had the man but known it, it was the last thing that would have entered my brain.

"You lie, dog," growled the churl, bringing his fist down upon the head of the tun. "Speak, or by every saint in Heaven I'll find thee an answer. Help, comrades. Hell's curse on the fellow."

(To be Continued.)

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The readers of this paper will be pleased to learn that there is at least one dreaded disease that science has been able to cure in all its stages, and that is Catarrh. Hall's Catarrh Cure is the only positive cure now known to the medical fraternity. Catarrh being a constitutional disease, requires a constitutional treatment. Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system, thereby destroying the foundation of the disease, and giving the patient strength by building up the constitution and assisting nature in doing its work. The proprietors have so much faith in its curative powers that they offer One Hundred Dollars for any case that it fails to cure. Send for list of testimonials.

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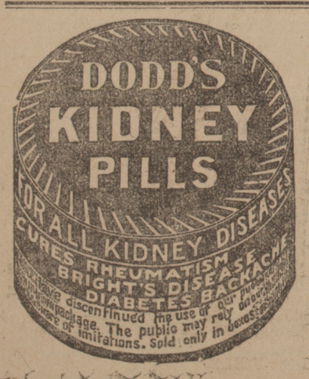

QUEBEC AND ONTARIO ELECTIONS ON JUNE 8

Quebec, Que., May 4.—Hon. Lomer Gouin will be here tomorrow morning when a meeting of the cabinet will be summoned at once.

Your correspondent is authorized to announce that the house will be immediately dissolved and that polling day has been fixed for June 8, or the same day on which the Ontario elections are to be held.

PRACTICAL FROCK OF LIGHTWEIGHT SERGE.

Among the simpler of the house frocks designed for spring and early summer use none are prettier and more practical than those of the even-width stripes of black with raspberry pink, mauve, tan or light blue. Many of them are made up with biased gored skirts with or without tunic drapery or bands simulating that effect and with a jumper trimmed with satin bands and pretty buttons, which is worn over any lingerie shirtwaist. Such frocks are often a portion of a three-piece costume, which includes a natty little jacket for street use.

HON. MR. FLEMMING AND MR. McKEOWN IN DEBATE

Mr. McKeown Criticizes Government Programme and the Provincial Secretary Replies to Him and Explains Several Proposed Reform Measures--- A Number of Bills Introduced.

Fredericton, N. B., May 4.—The house met at 3 o'clock.

Hon. Mr. Hazen introduced bills to legalize certain marriages and amend the probate court act. The latter bill he explained, was designed to remedy certain difficulties which might occur owing to the death of a judge of probate. At the present time there did not appear to be any power in registrars to adjourn the court in the case of the death of the judge and this bill was to enable that to be done. It also might include provisions for dealing with the accumulation of fees arising from the probate courts which were greatly in excess of the amount required to pay the salaries of the judges and registrars.

Hon. Mr. Hazen introduced a bill to amend the succession duty act, which, he explained, was designed to render the residents of other countries, who might hold shares or lumber interests in this province, liable to pay succession duties which they were not now compelled to do.

Hon. Mr. Flemming presented the report of the trustees of the Hotel Dieu Tracadie, also the report of the Provincial Board of Health; Hon. Dr. Landry presented the annual report of the Dept. of Agriculture; Hon. Mr. Grimmer the annual report of the Crown Lands department.

Hon. Mr. Hazen introduced a bill to correct an error in the valuation of the County of Sunbury.

Hon. Mr. Hazen presented the petition of T. D. Leger and others against the Leger Corner Water Company and bill.

Mr. LaBillois gave notice of enquiry as to the office of superintendents of highways for Restigouche County.

Mr. Byrne gave notice of inquiry as to what were the items making up the amount of the suspense account due the bank of B. N. A., appearing on page 4, auditor-general's report.

Mr. LaBillois gave notice of enquiry with reference to the passenger bridge over the Restigouche at Metapedia.

Mr. McKeown in rising to continue the debate on the address said:—"There were some things in the speech to which reference had been made on many occasions, both in the house and in the campaign, which had recently closed, upon which it was desirable for him to say a few additional words and make several corrections. Reference had been made to the great growth of the export trade of the city of St. John and to the enormous benefit not only to the city of St. John, but also to the remainder of the province. If the conditions which are represented as existing at St. John are as favorable as has been made out were not the workers who had brought about that condition entitled to some credit? It was all very well for the hon. gentlemen to say it was good to find conditions as they are today, but what about Messrs. Blair, Emmerson, and Pugsley?—the men to whom those conditions were due and who had been so severely and unjustly criticised.

He trusted the two hon. members who moved and seconded the address would pause and consider what Mr. Pugsley was now doing to increase the facilities at St. John as one of the greater ports of Canada and that they would give him credit for the efforts which he was putting forth on her behalf and not allow party spirit to rise above patriotism.

One of the most important items in the equipments of the city as an export centre was the structure put up in aid of cold storage.

That structure had been referred to in language which was certainly anything but complimentary by the hon. gentleman who had preceded him and in order that those hon. gentlemen who were new to the house and therefore were not so familiar with the circumstances might thoroughly understand them he would go into the matter a little more fully than otherwise.

The question of cold storage was one of the most important not only to the city but to the whole of the province. The structure was one of the largest if not the largest in Canada. When it became apparent that the cost of building this structure was likely to be between $100,000 and $200,000 and that the promoters were not able to complete the work out of their own private means the act provided for assistance being given to them. The act provided that any company which would undertake the building of the cold storage plant and would carry it through should receive assistance to the extent of $60,000.

A great deal had been made out of this guarantee, but he would like to call the attention of the hon. gentleman to the fact which all of them appeared to overlook and that was that when any grant or guarantee was made to a private company under circumstances such as happened in that case the company were required to transfer and make over the whole of that property in respect of which the grant was made to the government as a security. It was just the same in fact as a mortgage. The facts were that there was a cold storage plant in existence now in St. John which cost between $150,000 and $160,000, towards which the government had already guaranteed bonds to the extent of $60,000 and they had proposed to increase it by $30,000 more.

The promoters had put into the undertaking of their own moneys no less than $18,000 and before they could get their money back or even the interest on it, the government must be paid the whole of the interest on the bonds guaranteed. It might be that those men would never get their money back and no interest might ever be paid to the government and under these circumstances the promoters would lose all the money they ever put into it.

He submitted that if private individuals were willing to put their money into a business of that sort and then hand the property over to the government where would they get hold of men who would be willing to do such a thing as that unless they were quite certain that they had got hold of a good thing? Personally he thought it was a most wise investment. The property of the company stands in the name of the King as representing the province of New Brunswick. That being so there was nothing serious to be criticized in the position taken up by the late government in the matter. Before going out of office they undertook to bring in legislation to increase the guarantee from $60,000 to $90,000. Such a transaction was on the same line as increasing a loan on mortgage and he did not think it would be running very close to the wind in advancing on property of that value a loan of $90,000. The petition that he took was that the province was to all intents and purposes the owner of that plant and from a financial standpoint the government had done nothing that did not deserve applause but from a national standpoint no province could be said to be properly equipped unless it had a proper cold storage plant.

Whatever might be said against the highway act passed by the late government it was at any rate an honest and fair attempt to put the roads in a fair condition and it seemed to him that the act which had just been introduced seemed to be only a kind of political engine for the advancement of party purposes. The supervision of the highways used to be under the control of the chief commissioner. Why take them out of his control and put them into the department of the attorney general?

There were many things not in the speech which we expected to find there. One of these was the question of prohibition. The hon.orable member for St. John was greatly interested in that subject and he looked upon his presence on the executive council as a guarantee of legislation along that line.

Another matter on which he would like the opinion of the president of the council was the central railway. It was said there was going to be a commission appointed for the purpose of looking into and investigating the affairs of that railway. He joined most heartily in the idea and the more full that inquiry was the more satisfied would he be and he hoped there would be no delay in commencing business. He was full of faith for the future of that road and there was nothing that would shake his belief that the road would in years to come be one of the best paying investments the province had ever had.

It had been said, too, that one of the late commissioners had been paid a sum of $6,000 for his services. Such was not the fact. He had been paid only $3,500 the other $2,500 was for something quite different. When the commission gets down to business he trusted that every person who knew anything about the railway would make a point of attending on the commission and saying what he knew.

The hon. gentleman who seconded the address made some remarks about the sum of $60,000 which had gone where it should not. He hoped that the hon. gentleman would go before the commission and say where he got his information.

Another matter he would like cleared up. It had been freely stated that Senator Thompson held $100 worth of stock in the old company which he had sold to the government for $12,000. The hon. gentleman should also explain where he got this information. If they could only gather up all of the misstatements which have been made about that railway there is no book in the world big enough to hold them.

The government's sole purpose was to develop the interests of the province by opening up the mines of Sunbury and Queens and he, the speaker, hoped to see the road pushed through to Fredericton. When the hon. gentleman, the leader of the government, came to be fully acquainted with the objects of the work he would have a much better idea of the value of the road.

Hon. Mr. Hazen—The hon. member forgot that his leader said last year that there was no occasion to carry this road through to Fredericton.

Mr. McKeown said he was not here then so he did not know what was said.

With reference to the proposed workmen's compensation bill which he supposed would be left to the fatherly care of the gentleman sitting behind him, Mr. Hatheway, he was glad to see the government were following in the footsteps of the last administration and they might depend on the heartiest support of himself and his colleagues.

Turning to the question of school books, Mr. McKeown said if the leader of the government was able to carry out his pre-election promises no one would be more pleased than himself, but he would like to make a suggestion and that was that a comparative statement be prepared by the education department as to the cost of the books used in common by all the provinces. Such a statement would be an authoritative one and one he would gladly accept. Nothing was more deceptive than to take the cast off books of Ontario as a standard.

Mr. Hazen said he would show his hon. friend a letter he recently received from the Canada Publishing Co., in which they say that they were still printing and publishing the same reader at the same price.

Hon. Mr. Flemming said he would like to crave the indulgence of the house for a few minutes. The speech that they had just listened to took in all the matter which had fallen from him in the recent campaign. The hon. gentleman must have been in doubt whether he had at that time made the best presentation of his case so he evidently took the opportunity, as the first which had occurred, to treat them to a rehash. For the information of the new members he might say that it had taken the late premier 151 days to find the hon. gentleman who had just sat down. He would not like to say, but what he might have been found in less time.

He wished to refer briefly to what had just been said in reference to the growth and development of St. John which was much more in excess of former years. He was sure that that would meet with the approval of everyone in the province. The interests of St. John and the interests of the province were inseparably bound up and they admired the public spirit displayed by the citizens of St. John in their efforts to develop the city. The interest of the C. P. R. followed along the same lines as the city of St. John and they, too, had done their part to assist, but very little had been done by the Dominion government. Recently, however, they had started dredging and no doubt that was a very worthy object as far as it went. But he wished to point out St. John was one of the great natural ports of the country and it was the duty of the government of the Dominion to look after it. They were not generous enough to St. John and not until they recognized that city's true position would they do full justice to it.

Hon. Mr. Flemming said he did not remember any man on the other side of the house attacking the city of St. John. Why did not the hon. member say when and where these attacks were made? Why if the hon. gentleman was such a valiant supporter of the city of St. John, where he lived, did he not contest the vacancy which occurred a short time ago instead of seeking what he considered to be a safer seat in the county?

Mr. Tweeddale.—Why did not the leader of the government who also lived in St. John seek a seat for that constituency?

Hon. Mr. Hazen asked the hon. gentleman if he would have him desert for no reason whatever the constituents who had stood by him so faithfully for so many years.

Referring to the matter of the guarantee of the bonds of the cold storage company in St. John, Mr. Flemming took the view that more public money was being given than was essential to the success of any sound business enterprise. It was stated that the total cost of the building and plant would be about $160,000. The Dominion government was pledged to give a bonus of 30 per cent. of this and the former provincial government had agreed to guarantee bonds to the extent of $90,000, a total assistance of $138,000. This would leave a very small investment for the owners of what was expected to be a profitable business undertaking. Moreover, there was serious doubts as to whether the cost was correctly estimated. Instead of employing a builder to make the estimate of cost, the government had secured a gentleman who had no practical experience in that direction.

Continuing Hon. Mr. Flemming referred to the remarks of the member from St. John in regard to the highway act. That gentleman stated the government had deserted the position taken by the party, when in opposition, in regard to the placing the control of the road in the hands of the people. He, the speaker, could see no justification for this criticism. Members of the government, when in opposition, had taken the ground that the control of the highways should be placed largely in the hands of the muncipalities. They had carried out this view in the new act which provided that the highways should be under control of a board, two members of which to be elected by the people as county councillors and one member appointed by the government. This arrangement he thought was placing the control just as close to the people as it could be placed.

In answer to an interrogation, Mr. Flemming said the government would appoint one man upon the highway board because they proposed to hand over all the money given by the province for road expenditure to the highway board. They objected to divided authority. It took three members to make a competent board and this board would have complete control of all appointments connected with and expenditure upon the highway act. Nor was this arrangement making a large number of salaried officials to be paid by the municipalities. The government would pay their appointee upon the board in the same way as they paid the revisors appointed by the government.

He was more than surprised that the hon. gentleman who preceded him should have joined so heartily in the idea of having an investigation into the Central Railway. He was pleased with the change of heart that had come to the hon. gentleman for when the opposition in years gone by had asked for a royal commission to investigate this road, he and his associates, supporting the then government, voted down an amendment to provide for such an investigation.

The Hon. member from St. John had tried to justify the attitude taken by his party during the campaign on the school book question. The government was not now in a position to state just what could be accomplished nor would the people expect them in the short space of time since they assumed office to complete such important negotiations. A committee had been appointed to investigate the matter and the government hoped to be in a position to make a satisfactory statement at the next session of the legislature. Every effort would be made to give the people these school books which they are forced to buy at the cheapest possible cost of production. This might necessitate doing away with a middleman, but in any case an honest effort would be made to get the cheapest possible books for the people.

The house then took recess. The house met after recess at 8 p. m. Mr. Tweeddale moved the adjournment of the debate. Hon. Mr. Hazen moved that further consideration of the address in reply to the speech from the throne be made the order of the day to-morrow. Hon. Mr. Hazen said that he had just been informed of the death under very sad circumstances of a gentleman who had been for over thirty-five years a valued official of the province and for a very long time deputy surveyor general. He thought that under the circumstances the hon. members would not feel like going on with the business of the house and moved the adjournment.

Mr. McKeown in seconding the motion said he quite agreed with the premier's remarks.

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Mr. H. Langley, Hamilton, Ont., writes: "I have used Burdock Blood Bitters as a spring tonic and I find it the best thing I can take. It builds me right up and I use it every spring. It is excellent for the blood."

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Miss B. Bradley, Hamilton, Ont., writes: "Last spring I used three bottles of Burdock Blood Bitters, as I had indigestion and very thin blood. I tried everything before taking the B. B. B., which I think is an excellent spring tonic."

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FISHERY BULLETIN

NOVA SCOTIA.

Digby—Cod and haddock fair, herring and lobsters scarce.

Salmon River—Lobsters and trout fair.

West Arichat—Few lobsters and herring reported.

Arichat—Lobsters fair.

Petit de Grat—Herring and lobsters fair.

Port Hood—Lobsters fair.

P. E. I.

Georgetown—Herring and lobsters fair.
Bloomfield—Herring fair, lobsters scarce.

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The Canadian visitors from the maritime provinces registered at the office of the high commissioner in London during the week ending April 21st were: A. Ritchie Yeoman, Mrs. J. and Miss Morrow and F. J. Cragg, Halifax.

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