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MR. McISAAC, M. P., MAKES GOOD

Mr. James McIsaac, M. P. for Kings County, has made a considerable impression on the House of Commons as a debater of more than ordinary ability. The Government, always on the alert to discover talent among new members, has frequently during the last two sessions invited Mr. McIsaac to reply to opposition criticism. In the debate on the Grand Trunk Bill, Mr. McIsaac made a most telling speech and created such a favorable impression on the House that the leader of the Opposition, Mr. D. D. McKenzie, himself undertook to reply.

Mr. McKenzie was at a disadvantage however, in so far as Mr. McIsaac had the data at his finger ends and could give chapter and verse for all his quotations. Mr. McKenzie condescended to make disparaging remarks about Mr. McIsaac's ability, sure indication that he himself had a bad case.

In a subsequent reply to Mr. McKenzie, Mr. Meighen made such an exhibition of the leader of the Opposition that the latter called out for quarter and said "It may be that I was wrong to that extent, but the bargain is bad enough for my purposes," to which naive confession Mr. Meighen rejoined:

"Certainly, because the honorable gentleman's purposes are purely political. The hon. member for Dorchester (Mr. Cannon) favored us with some quotations from Virgil or Horace, I know not which, but as I thought of the blind and confused gyrations through which the hon. gentleman is leading His Majesty's Opposition on this and other great questions of policy, I was reminded of the famous apostrophe of our won bard:

'Man proud man,
Drest in a little brief authority,
Most ignorant of what he's most assur'd,—
Plays such fantastic trick before high Heaven
As make the angels weep.'

Mr. McKenzie—"It is the privilege of the Hon. gentleman to say these things, but I have nothing to be ashamed of in the course which I have followed.

Mr. Meighen—in regard to this case the honorable gentleman's mistakes were real errors and might be forgiven. I am not so sure that having regard to his whole course as leader in the conduct of other debates there has not been something to be ashamed of."

Mr. McIsaac is to be congratulated upon the progress he has made since he entered parliament and it is hoped that further advancement awaits him.

MR. KING'S MAIDEN EFFORT.

Mr. William Lyon Mackenzie King is a very charming gentleman, says the Ottawa Journal. He talks and writes learnedly in a general way on many difficult subjects. He speaks impressively, also in a general way, and he enumerates beautiful ideals, likewise in a general way. Mr. King made his first speech in the Commons yesterday since he was elected leader of the Federal Liberal party. He had an attentive audience and he spoke with his usual impressiveness. He chose for his maiden effort the Government scheme for acquiring the Grand Trunk Railway. For any budding statesman we should have thought it was a good subject; but after reading Mr. King's speech we are forced to the conclusion that it was not a good subject for Mr. King. The topic required treatment other than in a general way; Mr. King made an attempt to treat it in a specific way. The result must have been somewhat of a surprise to his loyal followers—those who are not sad are probably splitting their sides with laughter.

Mr. King thought he was disclosing with pronounced impressiveness a great misapprehension entertained "not only throughout the country but in this Parliament in regard to the Grand Trunk scheme." In all kindness we must say that what he was disclosing was really a great misapprehension entertained by many people as to Mr. King's ability to understand an elementary principle of business.

Under the Government's schedule the present owners of the Grand Trunk will lend the Government at 4 per cent. interest the money which the Government will require to purchase the Grand Trunk. The present owners, if the deal goes through, will have no concern about or control over the road so long as the 4 per cent. interest on the money advanced to the Government to buy them out is paid. They are to hold a mortgage on the road without voting power until the Government's indebtedness to them is liquidated.

The thing is simple; it is done every day. Such transactions are familiar to even the unintiated in business affairs. A man buys a house for $3,000. The vendor doesn't particularly require the cash, so he accepts $500 in money and a mortgage for $2,500 at a certain rate of interest. In the latter case who owns the house? Why, of course, the purchaser, and the vendor has no further interest in it so long as the agreement regarding interest and capital payments is carried out.

But under Mr. King's reasoning the purchaser would not own the house until he had paid off every cent of his indebtedness. Mr. King's great discovery is that if the Government buys the Grand Trunk and gives a mortgage for the purchase price it will not own the road!

Now supposing the man who purchased the house decided to borrow at 5½ per cent. from some other source the money which the vendor was prepared to lend him at 4 per cent., what would be said of him? To purchase the Grand Trunk the Government must get the money from somewhere. It must either seize it in the shape of taxes or borrow it. If it borrows it in the open market it will have to pay 5½ per cent. and give a mortgage on something. But the present owners of the Grand Trunk offer the money at 4 per cent. for a term of 30 years. Does anybody think that within that time the Government will be able to borrow money at less than 4 per cent.?

Mr. Crockett asked Mr. King if he would advise the Government borrowing money at 5½ per cent. in order to pay the Grand Trunk owners in full now. This is the weird answer Mr. King gave:—

"This is not a good time to borrow money. The Government will be well advised if it does not enter into any more schemes for borrowing money than are necessary. What is needed above anything else in this country today is economy and some regard for public expenditure."

It is not strange that Mr. King's wonderful argument found no supporter on his own side of the House, and that his great disclosure of misapprehension created more merriment than anxiety.

THE NOTED AMERICAN WHO BECAME A PEER

William Waldorf Astor, Viscount Hever, one of the richest men in the world, and at one time one of the most discussed, is dead. This was the Astor who shook the dust of America from his feet and became a British subject. For nearly thirty years he pursued his ambition to enter the peerage, despite any discouragements and rebuffs. It was not until the war came and he opened his deep purse to his adopted country that the King saw fit to honor him, and it must be said that Viscount Astor was deserving of honor. He gave millions, and not only gave but showed that here was at least one British subject of German blood who was intensely loyal to the land of his adoption. Nevertheless, when he was created a Baron there was much criticism of this act of royal favor, on the ground that other men equally generous had been passed over. However, the country was then in the throes of the war and not a great deal of attention was paid to an incident so trifling, but the comment showed that the old prejudice against Astor had not died, though it was far from being as strong as when it made life in England not much more pleasant than it had been in the United States.

Richest of Astors.

William Waldorf Astor was the son of John Jacob Astor, the third, and inherited the bulk of his fortune. He was probably the richest of the Astors. From boyhood he was trained in the management of the huge estate that was one day to be his, but this was irksome to him, and he turned to politics. He was elected to the New York Assembly and later to the Senate. When he offered himself as a candidate for Congress he was defeated, and it is said that this was a blow from which he took a long time to recover; but his pride must have been appeased when shortly afterward President Arthur appointed him Ambassador to Italy. While there he amused himself as an author and produced a couple of novels now forgotten, but probably what one might have expected from a millionaire. He also showed some interest in art, which he had inherited from his mother, she being a woman of unusual culture and charm. After his term of office he returned to the United States and suddenly displayed a keen interest in society. He built a great establishment at Newport, and made no secret of the fact that he and his wife were the dictators of American society, and were prepared to meet all comers in defence of their title.

War With the Press.

It was about this time that he ran foul of the American newspapers. It appears that another Mrs. Astor was the pretender of the social throne, and she also lived at Newport. One day Mr. Astor informed the Postmaster that all letters that came addressed simply to "Mrs. Astor" should be forwarded to his wife. The newspapers commented derisively on this news, and also on the fact, or alleged fact, that Mrs. William Waldorf Astor had actually copyrighted the name "Mrs. Astor." Another cause of offence and on which more readily entitled Mr. Astor to sympathy was when the Charlie Ross case was recalled as the result of an alleged confession, and a New York newspaper indulged in speculations as to what ransom would be demanded if the eldest son of the Astors should be kidnapped. This story was widely copied and gave Mr Astor deep anger, because he and his wife both feared that the idea of kid napping their son might be thus planted in the mind of some desperate man. Indeed, it was said that worry over the possibility seriously impaired Mrs. Astor's health.

"Not Fit for a Gentleman."

Then it was that Mr. Astor announced his intention of going to England to live, because "newspapers made the United States unfit for a gentleman." His remark was treated with jeers, and it is to be admitted that when he established himself in England certain newspapers there were not more kind. The Astors, however, soon introduced themselves to English society, and bade fair to enter upon a brilliant career when Mr. Astor had the misfortune to get himself "in Dutch," as he said, with King Edward. It appears that one of the King's intimates was Admiral Sir Barclay Milne, and one night the admiral, after dining with some friends, went with them to an Astor reception. The admiral had not been invited, but it was and is an English custom for invited guests to take with them their own dinner guests to after-dinner functions. Whether Mr. Astor was aware of this custom or whether, as is suspected, he had previously been snubbed by Sir Barclay, is not exactly known. At any rate he demanded a check or ticket from the admiral, and his inability to produce a definite and legally binding invitation led to his being asked to withdraw.

Displeased the King.

King Edward, when he heard of the incident, was indignant, and the unfortunate Astor was made to feel the weight of his displeasure, for society naturally took its cue from the King and for a time it appeared that the Astors' social ambitions were a closed chapter. Later on King Edward with his proverbial good nature, relented, and was several times seen in company of Mr. Astor, who was then a naturalized British subject. He bought a couple of newspapers and the Pall Mall magazine, to the latter of which he contributed fiction of almost incredible inferiority. He also raised a laugh by publishing the Astor genealogy, proving that they were descended from a well-known Spanish family of the tenth century. Since everybody knew that the Astors were first discovered in Waldorf, Germany, about a hundred years ago, this effort deceived nobody. Another error of judgment was made when he bought at auction the flag of Chesapeake, which had been captured in the famous battle with the Shannon, and presented it to a British museum.

BRITONS ALL!

A Song For the Times.

(By Arnold Galsworthy.)

We've got to stick together, now the
Peace flag is unfurled,
For there's a lot of work ahead for
us to do;
We've got to put some patches on this
maimed and battered world,
And that's a job for all of us, for
him—for me—and you!
Our King and country need us as they
needed us before,
We've got to make amends for what
has gone;
There's a motto for the workshop and
the study and the store—
It's the one the soldiers gave us—
"Carry one."

Refrain

So let us roll our sleeves up, every
one,
And finish off the job that we've begun,
We are not going to forget,
And we'll show the old world yet
That Britain's watchword still is—
"Duty done!"
We can have our fun to-morrow, but
there's work to do today,
And it's up to all of us to see it
through;
We've got to help each other and to
stick it anyway,
Though it's not perhaps the work
we want to do.
But the land we love is calling us each
one to do his bit,
Though thorny be the path we tread
upon,
So give a British cheer, and show
your good old British grit,
And shout a glad "Aye, aye, Sir!"
to the order, "Carry on!"

PIGEONS OF LONDON

The pigeons of London are one of the sights to which the attention of visitors is always drawn. St. Paul's Churchyard is a great place of gathering, and here the birds flock down for the more lavish mid-day meal spread for their benevt, now that relations are less vigorously controlled, says an exchange. They feed out of the hands of their benefactors, perch on their shouldrs, and flap and glitter in the sunshine as they fly up and down. Pigeons seem to belong to certain places. Admiralty arch is another fovorite resort, but all over the city the birds have small colonies, and crowds of faithful friends. In Venice and in Florence the pigeons are as much a part of the picture as the greatest buildings, a finishing touch as it were, with which nobody can dispense.

Daily Selections for Guardian Readers

Furnished by W. S. Louson

LOVE AND WORK

Love involves work. It is no passive principle, but the most powerful dynamic. The man that really loves is alive, awake, eager. Many an idolent, easy-going youth has fallen in love with a good girl, and it has aroused an ambition that has made a man of him. Love's greatest antagonism is selfishness, and selfishness means indolence and pleasure.

The real reason for the presence of so many childish adults in the world is selfishness. Their highest aim has been to take things easy, to live without toil, and amuse themselves. All this is childish. Youth that indulges himself in these things, never grows up.

Oh, yes, his body may acquire height and weight, but this is not manhood. One spark of real love is enough to burn up all laziness. When the active principle comes into a life, play and pleasure have to step down.

How little it costs, if we give it a
thought,
To make happy some heart each
day,
Just one kind word, or a tender smile
As we go on our daily way.

WELSH COAL

Less than a century ago Welsh coal was scarcely known outside Wales. The natives had burned it for 550 years, but only in a small way, for they preferred the more readily procurable peat. In 1829 the London Smoke Act was passed, and a demand for a smokeless coal arose. Two dealers, one of whom became afterwards Sir James Duke, hearing that such a coal was to be found in Wales, set out to investigate. In due course they came to Merthyr, where they found Mrs. Lucy Thomas in a hut near the mouth of a pit of which she was the owner. When they told her that they wanted to buy a shipload of her coal she was utterly incredulous. She demanded 4s. a ton and money down, and was absolutely dumfounded when both conditions were promptly agreed to. The coal was conveyed by mules to Cardiff, thence by sea to London, where it was sold to eager purchasers at 18s. a ton. Thus began the Welsh coal trade.

SEEMED LIKE WASTED TIME

Markets for a short time during the war were not doing any delivering. Mary, age five, one night at bedtime was saying the Lord's prayer. Coming to the part "Deliver us from evil," she exclaimed: "Mother, what is the use of praying for that, they won't deliver a thing in this town."