

THE CHARLOTTETOWN GUARDIAN

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NEWSPAPER INFLUENCE.

Newspapers, like many other blessings, are fully appreciated only after they have been withdrawn. This has seldom, probably never, occurred in the history of any Canadian city until it occurred in Winnipeg last week, when every newspaper in the city was obliged to suspend publication because of the want of newsprint.

Newspapers are often charged with circulating unfounded rumors. This may occasionally happen but it is nevertheless true that newspapers are the greatest steadying influence in the world and the unfounded rumors they may inadvertently circulate are nothing to the wild rumors and unrest which would circulate without them.

SOLDIERS' PENSIONS.

In a recent issue of the Guardian we published a comparative statement showing the amounts paid as pensions to soldiers and dependents in the different belligerent countries.

It is gratifying to know, notwithstanding the political misrepresentation indulged in, that Canada is more generous in this respect than any other country in the world. For the totally disabled man Canada pays forty-seven shillings and eleven pence weekly as against forty-shilling paid by Great Britain, New Zealand and South Africa, twenty-eight shillings and ten pence by the United States and smaller amounts by the other belligerent countries.

It will be remembered that when recruiting was in progress the most solemn promises were made to those volunteering that the wounded and the dependents would be looked after, that they would be wards of the government as long as they lived. This was and still is the earnest desire of all Canadians and although no money grant will repay either those who were disabled by wounds or the dependents of those who fell, there is consolation in knowing that the Canadian Government has gone to the limit of the country's capacity and far beyond what any other country did, in providing for them.

It will be remembered also that certain political busybodies worked overtime to make it appear that the government had done less for its soldiers than it should have done. The government admits and the whole country admits that the soldiers, wounded and unwounded, were justly entitled to more than they received, justly entitled to more than the country's financial capacity could afford, but the financial capacity had been reached and even exceeded.

While it is a matter of pride to all Canadians that our soldiers have fared better than those of any country in the world, not only in pensions but in being given assistance wherever possible, it is recognized that the soldiers' claims have not yet been liquidated and that it is up to all true Canadians to do what they can for them, materially, morally and spiritually. We are their debtors for all time to come.

AT THE GATES OF INDIA.

It seems as if Britain will have to fight the Russian Bolsheviks with British troops, says an exchange. Since the armistice the Motherland has spent hundreds of millions of dollars for supplies for Denikine, Kolchak, Yudenitch, and other Russian anti-Bolshevik factions. These have been overcome, and Kolchak has vacated his post in favor of General Semenov, and Denikine has been replaced by Romanovsky. But the perilous situations remain in Siberia and South Russia, and Bolshevik troops have been able to extend southward to the Caspian Sea and Persia. It is announced that they have entered Bokara, north-east of Afghanistan, coming from northern Persia. The Ameer of Bokara tore up the railway leading to the Caspian Sea, but apparently is powerless to resist. A junction of the Bolshevik and Afghan forces seems probable, and though the Afghans were reduced in short order to begging for peace, they will, under Bolshevik direction, be a constant menace. The danger is that emissaries of the Bolshevik Government will find plenty of inflammable material in India among the impassioned natives there. Small forces of British troops are at Baku, and other British troops occupy strategic positions for the defence of entrances to India. But the menace remains, and will probably be worse before it is better.

NOTED AMERICAN COMPOSER DEAD

Reginald De Koven, most popular of American composers of light opera, died suddenly last week at the age of 58. There was no reason to doubt that he had many years of successful work before him. Indeed his most ambitious composition, "Rip Van Winkle," about to be produced in Chicago. Mr. De Koven looked forward to it with the keenest interest, since he hoped and expected that the success of "Rip Van Winkle" would cause critics to revise their earlier opinion that he was incapable of writing grand opera, his previous efforts in that line having been unsuccessful. It may be that De Koven could not write grand opera. Not many people can, but he was undoubtedly a melodist, and with the exception of Victor Herbert, was probably the author of more unexcelled pieces than any other American composer. It will naturally be for what he could do than for what he could not do that he will be remembered. Certainly a nation that largely depends on its Colmans, its Irving Berlins and its Pete Wendlings for its music can ill-afford to lose a composer of the rank of Reginald De Koven.

A Brilliant Student.

He was born in Connecticut, his father being a prominent clergyman, who took up his residence abroad when Reginald was a boy and who prepared his son for Oxford. On both sides Reginald De Koven came of cultured stock and it was no surprise that early in his career he gave promise of unusual musical gifts. In 1879 when De Koven graduated from St. John's he was the youngest B. A. of his year. Previous to his Oxford career he had studied the piano at Stuttgart, and thence he returned after graduating to piano and composition. Later on he went to Frankfurt and studied harmony and counterpoint, after which he went to Florence where he studied singing under a competent teacher. It will be observed that De Koven differs from his popular rivals of today in that he believed it was necessary that one should study music before trying to compose. This prejudice continues to persist in some quarters, but it is generally recognized that it is rather a handicap to have studied music if one aims to produce a popular success.

Working for Success.

In 1887 his first opera, "The Begum," appeared and was an immediate success, though who nowadays remembers it? Previously he had written, "Cupid, Hymen and Co.," but it was not produced owing to financial difficulties of the company entrusted with it. Once more De Koven proved that if he could not write acceptable serious music he was at least serious in his efforts to write acceptable light opera, for after the success of "The Begum," he returned to Europe and studied composition under a famous Viennese master, or maybe it was a maestro. In the course of his stay abroad his third opera, "Don Quixote," was produced by the "Bostonians," which was then the strongest operatic organization in the United States. Next year, 1890, there appeared "Robin Hood," regarded by many as his best work. "Robin Hood's" popularity has not entirely waned, and even yet it is periodically revived, somewhat after the fashion of the

Daily Selections For Guardian Readers

Furnished by W. S. Louson NIGHT AND MORNING

Let me tonight look back across the span Twixt dawn and dark and to my conscience say Because of some good act to boast or man, The world is better that I lived to-day.

E. W. WILCOX.

ALWAYS MORNING

Remember too, 'Tis always morning somewhere, and above The awakening continents from shore to shore, Somewhere the birds are singing evermore.

Wayside Inn

A DUTY

You add unto life's sadness, By being sad, You could add to its gladness, By being glad, Wherefore I say When days are dull and gray, We all should strive To keep good cheer alive, And add what stores of Joy we can To lift the clouds from off our fellow man.

Others View Point

"EXAGGERATIONS"

(Westminster Gazette) Sir Horace Plunkett shares the experience of reading his own obituary notices with Viscount Grey. On the death of Earl Grey the German papers came out with long columns of abuse of our Foreign Secretary. Lieutenant Colonel J. W. Hills, M. P., for Durham City, can also claim fellowship in this respect. News was received that he had been killed in action, and the usual notices appeared in the papers, the minute bell of the Durham Cathedral was tolled, and his family left for London in anticipation of funeral arrangements. And then came a telegram from the "corpse," saying: "Please contradict report that I have been killed in action; was never better in my life." Then again, Mr. Justin McCarthy, when he was an esteemed contributor to the "Daily News," was astonished one day by a deputation from the staff who had come to inquire as to the circumstances of his death! But Mr. T. P. O'Connor holds the record perhaps, for although he is still very much alive, his "ghost" has been seen in the House of Commons. Mr. Swift MacNeill saw it one night in 1897, when "T. P." was in Ireland at the bedside of a dy-

Gilbert and Sullivan operas. It was the first American opera admitted by European critics to measure up to the continental standard.

A Famous Song.

It was in "Robin Hood" that "G Promise Me" was introduced. For many years it remained the most popular of American songs, rivaling "The Rosary," and having some such vogue as "A Perfect Day," was later to enjoy. The curious thing about this song is that it was published some years before "Robin Hood" was written, and De Koven himself remarked that it fell at flat as a flounder when first placed upon the market. Introduced in "Robin Hood" its success was instant, its popularity prodigious. It would not be surprising if it should remain the last of the De Koven songs to fall dull upon the popular ear. "Robin Hood" was followed by "The Kickerbockers," which is described as a melodious and interesting work and the brilliant and useful "Fencing Master," which took the name of De Koven to heights hitherto unrequented by any American composer. Then came "The Algerian" and then "Rob Roy," which was as popular as "Robin Hood," and is held by experts to be a better work, especially as regards orchestration. Lillian Russell appeared in "The Tsigane," which was successful. Other of De Koven's operas are "The Highwayman," "Maid Marian," "The Wedding Trip," "The Beauty Spot" and "Her Little Highness."

Serious Opera.

Two years ago "Canterbury Pilgrims," a serious opera, was produced in New York, but met with a cool reception, although De Koven is said to have considered this the best grand opera since "Carmen." He probably solaced himself with the thought that "Carmen" was rather a washout when first produced, and it was to vindicate his belief that he could write serious opera that he undertook "Rip Van Winkle," which is to have its premiere in Chicago at the end of the month. De Koven was a man of unusual industry. He founded the Washington Symphony orchestra been the musical critic for several publications, holding this position on the New York Herald at the time of his death. It will be counted to him for righteousness that he strenuously fought against ragtime and the "jazz" and "blues" atrocities of American music. Indeed, he believed that the musical comedy stage had become untenable for a man with moderate intelligence and with moderate respect for composition.

ing parent. Mr. MacNeill knew nothing of "T. P.'s" absence, and on entering the House looked for his friend in the usual seat—and saw him sitting there! Upon inquiry, however, he learned to his astonishment that Mr. O'Connor was in Ireland! And he was not alone in his vision for the "ghost" had also been seen from the Press Gallery.

THOSE GAY CLOTHES FOR MEN

(Brooklyn Eagle)

When one recalls what London tailors have been able to do with "checks of bold pattern," but with the color scheme confined rigidly to blacks, browns and grays, one may well shudder at the proposal of such checks enlivened with streaks of bright orange, or purple, or grass green or crimson. Is one to be able to tell a Londoner from a Highlander only by the length of his "brecks"? And if traveling Americans fall for the new color schemes, is one to witness at the gangplank of returning steamers a rival to Byron's scene where

The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold, His cohorts all gleaming with purple and gold?

We suspect that when autumn comes we shall be delivered from the gleams of purple and gold. Americans have stood for fuzzy green hats, and a few weeks ago a man in a well-tailored suit of Alice blue walked down Washington street without having anything more harmful than stares thrown at him. But the suit of that daring spirit was all of one color. If it had been striped with green or yellow we should hate to answer for the consequences. That suit has never come back, although the man may walk that pavement daily clad in normal garments. The American in Europe may take flyers in various sorts of extreme toggery, but about the time he sights Sandy Hook he begins to long for normal clothes and pumpkin pie. "Old friends, old times, old manners, old books, old wine" and old clothes are just as lovable now as when Goldsmith wrote of them.

Spenders Hurt More than Reds.

(Capper's Weekly.)

Ten and a half million dollars of precious stones were imported into the United States in October. For the ten months ending with October the importation of gems had reached the enormous total of \$87,900,000. This country in no like number of months ever bought more pearls and diamonds and precious stones. And this is only one item in a year of unexampled extravagance. It is due to this orgy of reckless spending by the very rich and those who have made fortunes or easy money out of the war, that prices have soared so high and remained up so long, to the hardship of those who are finding these are hard times in which to make both ends meet for them. There never was a time when it was more imperative and more sensible for all classes to try to live sanely and providently than now. The very rich especially

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should set this example. It is their ill-gotten millions spent so lavishly at this time of high living costs which have helped to make Bolshevists in this country, and has made the people tolerate the 4500 Red propagandists the Government has just rounded up, as less evil than the profiteers. The medicine the country needs at this hour is for everybody to get to work and produce more of the essentials we are so greatly needing. And this duty comes home just as much or more to the idle rich than it does to the workers.

A DAY TO BE REMEMBERED

(New York Sun)

The Supreme Council has fixed Jan. 16 as the date on which the League of Nations shall hold its first meeting. That day will live forever in American history. Not a man or woman now living, scarcely a child, will ever forget this heroic day. Each anniversary of Jan. 16 will recall the epoch-making occasions with which the day will always be associated; and long years from now men will say, "Ah, yes, the League of Nations! It held its first meeting on the same day the United States went constitutionally dry!"

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