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Richmond Hill and Vicinity

The Negro and the Tramp.

In the days of a generation ago we had in our village a celebrity known to the youngest lad as well as to the oldest inhabitant, a stalwart negro, dark as ebony, known as "Black Walker." He had come to the place forty years before and had seen the erection of almost every building the village contained. To every Fair celebration and public festival Walker added his individuality as one of its component parts. His profession was hunting—his gun and his garden kept him from his shanty. Strictly honest and upright in his dealings, kind and obliging to his neighbors he had not a known enemy in the world. Notwithstanding the lowness of his position and his general poverty he was much respected and frequently received the nod of familiarity and the pleasant remark of "Well John" from those who were much above him in station to which he invariably as courteously replied. A man of no education, yet his remarks and sayings were often shrewd and sometimes witty. The following will do as an illustration. On a public holiday a number of people were watching the staggering antics of an individual whose potations had been extra on that occasion. Walker passing and being sober walked up to the reeling object of observation and passing his arm through that of the other straightened himself up and said "Gentlemen which is now the better man the negro or the white man?" Like many a man, however, whose intellectuality far exceeded that of "poor Walker" as he designated himself he was addicted to drink knew his fault but failed to correct it. Day after day he came from his cabin home a sober man and returned a reeling drunkard. His was a peculiar case. Strong drink crazed him. In those days there was no sympathy for the erring, no consideration for the weak. Liquor was sold indiscriminately to all who laid down the money. There were those who knew that as soon as he partook of intoxicating liquor that his brain would turn and he would be transformed into a blaspheming maniac. They knew that when they poured it into his glass that he would make the way to his home discordant with his appalling yells, yet for the sake of a few paltry cents they fired that brain until outraged nature could stand the strain no longer the brittle thread of life was snapped asunder—in all the horrors of delirium the waves of eternity swept over him. A lost soul! He went to stand before his God with the brand of the Almighty Judge of all the earth upon his brow—No drunkard shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

When the late Mr. Alexander Scott of Barrie ran the Herald newspaper in our village he had for a foreman a journeyman printer by the name of Mowat. He was a steady, industrious fellow well-read but somewhat reserved in manner. Boarding at the hotel opposite the office formerly known as the Whitehart inn, now the Grand Central he gradually got into dissipated habits and was soon found no longer required for his responsible position. Travelling from office to office obtaining situations which his habits would not allow him to keep, descending lower and yet lower in the scale of respectability he took upon himself the role of tramp. He is now a professional in that line and one of the dirtiest kind. For upwards of twenty years he has tramped this province until he knows every town and village with accommodations for gentlemen of his persuasion. During his travels he has picked up a great deal of information on men, places, and things generally, and discourses with considerable intelligence. When last here he called on the writer. He calls for old acquaintance sake and a nickel—mostly the nickel. He aired his knowledge profusely on the political aspects of the country and gave his views with the authority of a statesman. Had he been offered the contract there is no doubt he would have assumed the responsibility of running the machinery of the Universe. Contrasting his present with his former respectable condition, his appearance most dilapidated.

"He showed how far a man may sink. A moving spectacle of the curse of drink. The above poem is original. Copy-right reserved. He comes to Richmond Hill about once in four years. If "our traveller" has not meandered off this mundane sphere, by "shuffling off his mortal coil" he must be now en route for our town. He generally gets a notice in THE LIBERAL among the personals. N. B.—Mr. Mowat is only a name-sake, not a relative of His Excellency Sir Oliver Mowat, Governor of this province.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Our Ottawa Letter.

No event of recent years has occupied so large a place in the attention of the civilized world as the Conference now deliberating in Quebec and it is most encouraging to notice that, while there is a general recognition of the many difficulties to be overcome, the attitude of all parties to the Convention is one of great hopefulness and confidence. The work of preparing the way for such a gathering has been going on for years, the persistent manifestation of a desire for a better understanding between the two great branches of the Anglo-Saxon family, which has been so assiduously shown by both the Imperial authorities and the Liberal party in Canada, has been the chief factor in bringing about such a condition as makes the meeting possible, and the same good sense and good feeling will be the main factor in arriving at such definite results as may be secured.

BWARE OF CANARDS.

Of course when so much is at stake the public may be prepared for desperate attempts in some quarters to enmesh the Commissioners and nullify their efforts to reach the desired goal, but too much attention should not be paid to these statements. Such an announcement, for instance, as that which appeared on Wednesday, to the effect that one prominent American Commissioner has intimated that Canada must renounce the Preferential trade arrangement with the old country before any reciprocal tariff with the United States could be considered is most preposterous upon the face of it, and it is hard to believe that it would deceive any one. There is every reason to believe that each individual Commissioner goes into the Conference Chamber with the sincere desire and honest intention to support every effort looking to a complete understanding between the participating powers, and it may be safely added that they will not be turned aside in this desire by any such canard as the one referred to.

THE LUMBER QUESTION.

The action of the Michigan lumber men in sending Mr. Don. M. Dichenon to watch their interests at the Quebec Conference places this much vexed question in a somewhat novel light. The Michigander appear to be laboring under the mistaken impression that the timber rights of the Dominion vested in the Federal Government whereas the B. N. A. Act most clearly declares, that "the management and sale of the public lands belonging to the province and of the timber and wood thereon" are among the acknowledged rights and powers of Provincial Governments. Although no one questions the accuracy of this contention it would be unwise of the Province to allow so influential an advocate, to urge a policy inimical to its rights, without having a competent representative to look after its side of the controversy, and Hon. Mr. Hardy has therefore very properly announced that he will keep an eye on the proceedings, and take such steps as he may find necessary in the interests of the Province.

HARD TO PLEASE SOME PEOPLE.

It would have been supposed that such action on the part of the Provincial authorities could not possibly be taken exception to, and yet we find the objection raised that it constitutes a virtual admission of the right of the Federal Government to deal with Provincial lumber. Apart from the absurdity of such a contention it surely should occur to the objectors that even were the Provincial Government taking this view of it, it would not affect the jurisdiction of the Commissioners whose duties are in no sense those of a judicial court. The fact of the matter is that the Opposition have been so persistently declaring that the Hardy Government was giving away Ontario's timber rights that they have come to actually believe it, and are now unable to appreciate the fact that they have been fooling themselves.

SOME INTERESTING THINGS.

In connection with the relative effects of protection and free trade upon the export business of Canada some significant figures are given in THE GLOBE of Thursday last, which show that the effect of a high restrictive tariff in the United States has been, to cut down Canada's trade with the republic to less than one-fifth during the decade ending last year, and to develop our export business with Great Britain to nearly one-half times the original volume in the same period. Taking the five important items of horses, barley, eggs, hay and sheep:—In 1887, Canada exported to the United States \$10,930,124 and to Great Britain \$673,976; in 1897, the United States received only \$2,103,135 while Great Britain took \$3,014,846.

THE EFFECT OF PROTECTION.

These figures demonstrate to a remarkable degree how this tariff, confessedly established for the purpose of injuring Canada's trade and driving the Dominion to seek annexation, has

had the effect of teaching our farmers to develop the British market, and as a necessary consequence has driven the colony into such closer relationship with the Mother-land, that, whatever slight mutterings of discontent and leaning toward annexation, may have existed ten years ago, not a vestige of it remains to-day. When to this is added the further fact that in several instances, the heavy duty has seriously hurt many of these home industries, for example in the case of the barley industry, where protection has killed the business of the New England farmers, our United States friends will not find it hard to realize the advantages of a more equitable and less restrictive trade arrangement.

As a further indication of the manner in which the British market is developing, it is worth noting, that, whereas in 1887 the total value of Canada's exports to Great Britain in cattle, cheese, butter, bacon and wheat was only \$15,750,173, in 1897 it was \$34,321,403, while the grand total of exports to Great Britain in 1897 was \$104,787,000.

THE LOCAL LEGISLATURE.

The three weeks special Session of Provincial Legislature is over, having accomplished the purpose for which it was called together. It is not a matter for surprise if the public are more or less under a misapprehension as to exactly what that purpose was, for so many and conflicting have been the statements made thereon in the columns of the rival political press. Stated very simply and briefly the sole purpose of the Session was to straighten out a technical tangle into which the legal minds of the politicians had worked the election law; in other words, to make clear beyond any possible question an enactment which some profess to find ambiguous. There was no intention of interfering with the work or prerogatives of the courts of justice nor has anything of the kind been attempted.

A SLAUGHTERED INNOCENT.

Dan, the famous ram, of the Opposition menagerie had a short but somewhat eventful existence. Naturally the Opposition feel solicitous for the welfare of the Minister of Agriculture, for their inability to bring their latest prodigy to maturity shows a decided falling off from the days when the "Calf with the Cough" lasted for some months, and the "Humber Pig" in spite of his tuberculosis supplied food (for the Opposition speeches) for a whole Session.

Men and Women

Who need to make money can do so without risk or capital, by soliciting orders for our memorial edition of "The Life of Gladstone," by Castell Hopkins, with introduction by the honorable the Minister of Education, Dr. Ross. This book is a Canadian classic. The story of his life is told with thrilling interest. His death and imposing national funeral will both be described and illustrated. 512 large quarto pages. It measures 8x10x1 1/4 inches. Retail \$2.50, worth \$4. Magnificent binding, profusely illustrated. Prospectus 75 cents. Liberal terms. BRADLEY-GARRETSON CO., Limited, Toronto.

Canada's Great Fair.

Great preparations have been made for the holding of Canada's great Industrial Fair at Toronto, which is now in progress. To give practical effect to the good feeling which at present prevails between Great Britain and America, the management have arranged to present illustrations of incidents in the Spanish-American war, in which British troops will be shown fighting side by side with Americans. By permission of the Imperial and Canadian military authorities the Royal Engineers, now stationed at Halifax, and the Dominion Artillery from Kingston, will lay sub-marine mines, blow up ships, one of which will represent the Maine, storm forts with quick-firing and Maxim machine guns, sink the Merrimac, destroy Cervera's fleet, and bombard Santiago. Toronto's Exhibition grounds lying on the lake front lend themselves admirably to these operations, especially as Stanley Fort is close by. And these naval and military displays form but a small part of the special attractions, which will also include horse-racing every day (trotting, pacing and running), horse-jumping, band playing by thirty bands, including the 65th of Buffalo, and Cleveland's Uniformed Band, bicycle racing, a big societies' demonstration, with a drill competition by uniformed corps, open to the world, international dog show, with \$2,800 in prizes; Independent Foresters' celebration, with \$2,000 in prizes on August 31st; horseless carriages, the famous diving elks, Pianka's performing lions, the greatest acrobats and trapeze artists of the day, many character sketches, dog and monkey circus, trick donkeys, and mules and scores of other features. Excursion rates will be given on all railways.