

# THE MOSSBACK

He Teaches the Rattle-Brain a Few Fine Points of Small-Town Newspaper Ethics.

By WILLIAM DUDLEY PELLEY.

## PART I.

There was no doubt about it—our little Vermont town of Paris had a second newspaper at last. Young Joe Dicks had carried out the threat made before he quit our employ as reporter. He had purchased Joel Sibley's print shop. He had produced a paper. It lay before us on the exchange table now, smudgy and pathetic and half full of boiler plate. But it was a newspaper, and we of the Paris "Telegraph" crowded around to inspect our new contemporary.

We were still looking it over when Uncle Joe Fodder came in. "Look here, Sam Hod, this won't do at all!" he cried in his cackly voice. "This new paper—right off the bat in the first editorial announcement—is hurtin' folks feelin's. This Dicks boystarts pokin' fun at Dr. Dodd for bein' on the school committee!"

"I know, Joseph—I know!" declared Sam Hod, our editor-owner, sadly. "Alec Patherton's set him up to the whole business, Joseph. It's too bad, too bad! The boy came here, a stranger; and mighty gullible, too. He fell in with Alec, thinking Alec was a bright man. You see, he didn't know Alec like we know him. Each morning he went into the shoe store for items, and Alec urged him over and over to start a paper. He'd stand with him behind the shoe store door, and Alec would classify the liars and double-dealers and scoundrels and thieves and swindlers and publicans and sinners that passed outside. Ever since he came here, the lad's been handicapped by a nonsensical prejudice. Now it's cropped out in this!"

"So Alec's behind it, hey? That accounts for this crack at the school committee. I remember, now, Alec's been sore because they didn't pass that dunder-headed kid of his into a higher grade this winter."

"I tried to warn the boy," went on Sam Hod. "But he wouldn't be warned. He seemed to think I was dead set against having any human-interest stuff in the local columns just because what he wrote had a little gaff in it somewhere to prod into folks and leave a little hurt to their feelings. 'Here's this Broken Jones yarn in particular, Joe,' says I to him, the night he quit us. 'In a little town you can't get away with it. Jones has his friends—lots of them. They know his history, and sympathize with him. Here, in the first place, instead of calling him Ezra Preston Jones, you bluntly term him Broken Jones in print. Now, Broken Jones is what the town calls him, and he probably doesn't resent it, and neither do his sympathizers. But you can't call him Broken Jones in print, Joe. Right off the bat there's a cruel insult."

"Then, all through your yarn," I says, 'you've inferred that if he wasn't half foolish it wouldn't have happened. Maybe he is, Joe. But the little local paper can't come out in this way and say so in print, either. It can't parade the weaknesses of the home folks, never mind how humble they are. It's not only a mighty un-Christian thing, but it's suicidal to yourself, Joe. To get your name in the paper in a little town is a mighty serious thing, Joe—at least, up here in New England. People demand that their names and the reports of their activities be handled with dignity.'"

"But he never saw my point. He said I was a mossback. Poor kid! He's got a few awful jolts coming to him before he succeeds in country-town journalism."

"I should think he'd go slow at first, and sort o' feel his way along—him with a business to build among folks he ain't quite used to, and a wife and baby to support."

"God makes youth supple in heart as well as in body in order to stand the awful bumps that come from experience, Joseph. It's proof of His mercy," commented the old editor sadly.

Sam leaned back in his chair. A far-away look came in his eyes. For he had not missed the fact that the boy's little wife had come on from Springfield, and each day pushed the willow baby carriage down the street and into the print shop, and watched her youngster while she helped out at the case because the "Blade" could not afford a linotype. Perhaps the old editor was thinking of a time, also, when a good woman had kept down his composition bills by helping gratis at a type case. That is the pathos of the country press. Legion are the country editors who could not always make a living if it were not for the sunfish and unpaid assistance of their wives.

"Poor boy and girl!" he said aloud. "Trying to get ahead. It's pathetic, Fodder. I wish I could help him and steer him aright. Alec is a false friend to him, but I'm afraid he'll pay dearly finding it out."

Sam and the old soldier were still discussing the thoughtless insinuations in the "Blade's" school-committee editorial, when the door opened and little Miss Angelina Lasher entered the office.

Little Miss Lasher had been teaching school in Paris for more than twenty years. She is not so cheerful as she was once. She is small and frayed out and gone to seed. We knew

privately that the board had several times considered dismissing her. Yet twenty years before, when Miss Lasher was not old and frayed out and gone to seed, she had been loved by two young men in our town. One was Broken Jones before misfortune overtook him; the other was Jack Sheldon. Angie Lasher had chosen Jack, and had been engaged to him at the time the Spanish War broke out. Jack had died in Chickamauga, and little Miss Lasher's heart had been buried with him. Paris knew the story, and was kind. The school committee continued to change her about from building to building and room to room, and she in time knew that she kept her place out of pity, and tried to bear her disappointment and life tragedy bravely, and not to let it embitter her and come out in her treatment of the children.

"Mr. Hodd," she began awkwardly, not seeing that Uncle Joe Fodder was present on the other side the big office stove, "I wish you'd tell me just what to do; you're a member of the school committee, but you've been a good friend of mine aside from that, and I haven't anyone else to go to. The new paper we've got here has been saying some things lately that are kind of hard to overlook or answer, Mr. Hod."

She stopped because there was a little hitch in her voice, and she could not trust herself to go on until she had better control over it.

"He says, this young man does," she finally proceeded, "that the school committee is letting too much sentiment interfere with the choice of school teachers. I know he means a lot of us who have been here a long time and maybe sort of got into a rut. But, at the same time, it's hard for us to resign—we who have been here and teaching the boys and girls—"

Sam knew, and Uncle Joe Fodder, staring over his spectacles, knew, that what she meant to say was that she couldn't afford to give up her place. It was the only thing she knew how to do to earn the few dollars necessary to keep her off the town. So the old editor broke in and answered:

"I wouldn't take it too much to heart, Miss Lasher—what this young chap says. He doesn't understand the local situation, and he's got a lot of boyish steam in him that he's got to blow off somehow. Just you stick in your place, and don't resign until we ask you to do so. And from present indications, and what you've been to the boys and girls of Paris, that'll be a long time yet, Miss Lasher. Us old folks who are content to keep a slower and more conservative place are still in the saddle."

Tears came in little Miss Lasher's eyes then. She got out her handkerchief with her bony little red hands, and wiped them away, and blew her sharp little nose, and folded the handkerchief and wiped her eyes again, and restored it to her plaid waist.

"Poor Angelina!" mused the old soldier, after the frayed little school teacher had gone out. "I remember a time when she was the daintiest and prettiest girl in Paris!"

(Continued in next issue.)

## Strawberries and Cream and a Moral.

A small boy who did not like to do "home work" was being warned by his mother against the evils that are likely to result from habits of procrastination. The boy asked her to explain quite definitely what she meant, and she replied by quoting the proverb, "Never put off till to-morrow what can be done to-day."

On getting the moral reduced to this simple form, he said:

"Well, then, mother, let's go downstairs at once and eat the rest of the strawberries and cream; there were heaps left over after your tea party."

## Taking a Chance.

The fussy aunt was accompanied to the train by her nephew.

"Are you sure this is the right train?" she asked again and again.

"Well, returned the young man, 'I've consulted five porters, two ticket sellers, the bulletin board, the conductor, and the engineer. They all say it is, so I think you might risk it.'"

The personal equation is the most important factor in a business operation; that the business ability of the man at the head of any business concern, big or little, is usually the factor which fixes the gulf between striking success and hopeless failure. Each man must work for himself and unless he so works, no outside help can avail him.—Theodore Roosevelt.

# Canada's Resources in Wild Game

Our resources in game have a double value: economic and recreational. Under the term "game" are included, in the legal sense, all valuable fur-bearing animals, on which a close season is imposed. The economic value of this class needs no argument, but minks, martens, skunks, etc., are not "game" in the commonly accepted sense of the word. What we usually understand by this term are animals which are hunted primarily for sport. What value have these animals and what claim have they on us for protection?

In the first place, game has a certain value as accessory to the meat supply. It is not of great importance in the aggregate and every true sportsman scorns to be a pot-hunter, yet it is idle to pretend that his appetite is not whetted by the prospect of a well-cooked grouse or a savory venison steak. And this is quite as it should be, for the man who leaves a carcass in the woods to rot is more guilty of wanton destruction than even he who kills for gain. If game breeding were to become as common in this country as it is in Europe, the importance of game in the food supply would be much greater than it now is.

Of more importance from an economic standpoint is the revenue derived from the non-resident sportsman. He pays for his license a fee which bears some relation to the valuable privileges conferred and puts a little money into the Provincial treasury to help defray the cost of game protection. (In Ontario a non-resident's license costs \$25, while a resident pays only \$5 for moose and caribou and \$3 for deer.) In addition, he spends a good deal of money for supplies and services and the money thus brought in by tourists—to many of whom sport is the main attraction—is in the aggregate considerable. In British Columbia, it is estimated that each head of big game is worth \$1,000 to the Province in trade, due directly to the spendings of wealthy hunters. Neither are hunters the only class of tourists attracted by game. Holiday seekers love to find a bit of real wilderness where they can see wild animals, free and untramed, in their native haunts. Thus, the Dominion parks in Alberta, where no firearms are allowed to be carried, attract thousands of tourists annually.

Speaking of revenue from tourists leads naturally to the subject of the recreational value of game. What the alien or non-resident considers valuable enough to pay out his good money for, should certainly be preserved for the enjoyment in perpetuity of our own people. Nothing is more invigorating than close contact with nature, but what are the woods and fields, lakes and streams without wild life to lend them interest? Are we to exterminate our glorious fauna and leave posterity an earth on which no life will have survived outside of the human race, except domestic animals and pests that refuse to be exterminated?

To give the wild things a chance is clearly for our own benefit, but, apart from that, have they no right to live? Is mankind to be the most blood-thirsty tribe of all creation, extirpating all other species, wantonly and uselessly, by senseless slaughter? Surely, if an animal is doing us no harm, we can at least let it alone.

## Responsibility of Hunters.

The plain fact is that many of our most valuable game animals are being headed fast towards extinction, and the people chiefly responsible are the very class who should be most interested in game preservation, namely, the hunters. Many of these are prone to regard the game laws as a nuisance, as something arbitrarily imposed by a higher authority, though, as a matter of fact, in this democratic country, the game laws are just about what the sporting fraternity will stand for. If they are not drastic enough, it is because the man with the gun is determined to shoot, even if it means that his boy will never have anything to shoot at. Yet it is certain that the health-giving sport the father so much loves will be utterly denied to the son, unless the present generation imposes more restraint upon itself. Game, if game there be, will be artificially reared and will be the monopoly of the rich who can afford to maintain game farms and private shooting preserves. Thus, Canadians who oppose game laws and their adequate enforcement are helping to bring about the undemocratic condition which exists in England, where sport with the gun is an aristocratic privilege.

As an example of a retrograde step, brought about by the pressure of public opinion—which, in the case of game, means sportsmen's opinion, as the rest of the public, unfortunately, is not interested—may be mentioned the repeal of the prohibition of the sale of game in New Brunswick. At the National Fur Industry and Wild Life Conference in Montreal last February, Hon. E. A. Smith, in seconding a resolution of the late Dr. C. Gordon Hewitt in favor of the prohibition of the sale of game, said: "Two years

ago, I had the temerity to secure the passage of an Act, prohibiting the sale of wild meat in New Brunswick. But it was repealed. I found that I had got ahead of public sentiment. However, I have every confidence that it will only be a short time before the sale of wild meat is again prohibited in New Brunswick."

At the present time, Manitoba and Saskatchewan are the only two provinces in Canada where the sale of game for food is entirely forbidden. Nova Scotia forbids the sale of deer and upland and shore birds, Alberta of upland game birds and Ontario and British Columbia of all migratory birds. The last-named province only allows the sale of other game under special regulations. The general practice in all other cases is to permit the sale during the open season of all game legally killed. Unfortunately, this opens the door, in spite of bag limits, to the commercialization of wild game and its slaughter for the market. In Ontario, for instance, venison can be had in almost any hotel or restaurant during November and December. The Provincial law does not require a deer to be killed by the licensee; a group of persons hunting together may kill one deer per license. This practically means that a good shot can kill as many deer as he can get licenses for. Not only that, but they do not even take a sportsman's chance as to whether they get the deer or not. At the National Conference on Game and Wild Life Conservation, held at Ottawa in February, 1919, Mr. S. Harris, of the Essex County Wild Life Conservation Association, stated: "Books of licenses, which get into the hands of various parties, are issued indiscriminately," so that a hunt club may go to hunt with one member in possession of one of these books, and, if they are successful in obtaining game, they attach a license or tag to it and pay for it on their return, but, if they are unsuccessful, they return the book." A fine example of betting on a sure thing!

Practically every state in the Union now prohibits the sale of game. Maine, Massachusetts, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia and the District of Columbia permit the sale of venison under certain restrictions. The sale of game birds is allowed nowhere in the United States, except imported game or birds raised on game farms. Some states forbid even the sale of rabbits and squirrels, animals that we scarcely consider as game at all.

If there is a demand for the flesh of game mammals and birds as delicacies, this market should be supplied by animals raised on farms, as sheep and poultry are. It is the height of folly to exterminate our wild game merely to gratify the taste of epicures. It is not difficult to tag game artificially reared so as to render it easy of identification.

## Remedy in Hands of the Public.

The great remedy for the serious game situation in this country is an awakened public conscience. To this end, associations consisting of sportsmen, naturalists, and others interested in wild life, should be formed in every district. These associations would pledge their members to abide by the spirit as well as the letter of the game laws, to secure their better enforcement, to inculcate the best traditions of real sportsmanship, to study the natural history of their neighborhood, to influence public opinion in favor of wild life conservation and to press their views upon the government as to ways in which the game laws may be improved. Some very successful and enthusiastic associations of this character are already in existence, but more are needed.

If you love the wild things and the great outdoors, do something to preserve their life and beauty. Find some neighbors who are like-minded and form a Wild Life Conservation Association. Sportsmen, it is up to you. Dr. W. T. Hornaday, of the New York Zoological Park, says: "If our sportsmen can endure the extinction of sport, I can."

There are all sorts of ways in which the game of Canada can be not only saved but greatly increased, if the sporting public really wants to know about them. But it is useless to give advice that falls on deaf ears. The Dominion and Provincial Governments have their experts, who are ready to help, if their help is requested. For general information, covering the whole country, probably the best official to consult is James White, who is Deputy Head of the Commission of Conservation and Chairman of the Advisory Board on Wild Life Protection, Ottawa.

## Boot Heels From Persia.

Boot heels are of Persian origin, and were originally attached to sandals in order that the wearers might keep their feet above the burning sands.

Minard's Liniment Relieves Colds, etc.

## A Ride in a Pampas Coach.

If you ever take a ride in a pampas coach, your journey may be uncomfortable, but it is not likely to be monotonous. For the pampas stage driver, says a contributor to the Cornhill Magazine, uses his horses as some people use stimulating drinks.

If one hitch of four horses does not produce the effect he desires, he adds another four and then four more, and so on indefinitely. The first four horses are in harness and usually abreast; on rare occasions the second four are also in harness and abreast. All further additions are in the nature of "led" or "ridden" horses that are attached by means of a long rope or a chain to the end of the pole or to the doubletrees.

Suppose you are starting out on a morning after a hard storm of wind and rain has reduced the surface of the earth to an endless succession of sticky quagmires and hard-bottomed, steep-sided gullies. The driver rounds up all the spare horses and Gauchos in the village. He acts as superintendent while a long line of horses is attached to the stage. Any horses beyond the number deemed necessary for immediate use are herded on behind as reserves. Then off you go, and by sheer force of numbers the lumbering vehicle is hauled along at an astonishing rate of speed. There is much jolting, and the landscape dances before your eyes in a dizzy blur.

The advantage of the open-order arrangement of horses becomes apparent at the first gully. Though some of the horses may be belly-deep in mud, and others may be pawing helplessly for footing against a sharp bank, thanks to the extreme length of the formation there is always a sufficient number of animals on firm ground to pull the coach through. Over and through small sink holes and barrancos the coach rushes like a bull at a gate, finally to bring up in an arroyo, with wheels wedged by storm-felled trees. That is what the driver loves; and, with eyes that glow from the joy of combat, he leaps up on his seat and calls for more horses.

The reserves are promptly driven in, more rope and chain are brought out, and every animal directly or indirectly is attached to the stage. Then the big show begins. Some of the ropes run back to the hind axle, some of them run even to the wheels, and a number of the horses pull at right angles to the line of advance. The operation sends shivers through the body of the stage, but since it is built to withstand just such treatment it usually pops out of the mess unharmed.

## An Example in Kindness.

The far-reaching effects of kind treatment are well illustrated by a story of a man and a tired horse, which is told in the Buffalo Commercial. Down the street came a wagon loaded with meat and drawn by a well-fed little mare. Her steps became slower and slower, and finally in the middle of the car tracks she stopped.

"Git up!" said the driver; "git up, Jenny!"

Jenny only turned appealing eyes toward the man on the seat. Behind him came the shouts and oaths of other drivers.

"Poor Jenny, poor little horse!" said the big, dirty man. "Is she all tired out?" At the sound of his voice the little horse sighed a sigh of tired appreciation.

"Never mind," he went on soothingly as he scrambled down off his seat and took her by the bridle. "We'll go right out to the side here and rest a bit." He led her away from the crowd and stood patting her well-curried sides, while she rubbed her nose against his face.

The other drivers moved on, then turned and looked at the man and the horse. Some of them smiled—in sympathy. Others quietly replaced the whips that they had taken from the sockets.

The Quebec Act, passed in 1774 by the British Parliament, gave the French-Canadians the free exercise of the Roman Catholic religion, the enjoyment of their civil rights and the protection of their own civil laws and customs. It annexed large territories to the Province of Quebec, and provided for the appointment by the Crown of a Legislative Council and for the administration of the criminal law as in England.

## Minard's Liniment For Burns, Etc.

A bowl that has been invented to receive the product of a household food grinder without loss can be attached to a grinder to fold up over it when idle.

**COARGE SALT LAND SALT**  
Bulk Carlots  
TORONTO SALT WORKS  
C. J. CLIFF TORONTO