

THE DAILY NEWS

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DAILY EDITION

Saturday, March 8, 1913.

THE DRAMATIC
ELEMENT

What is the meaning of the
chorus of admiration that has
gone up throughout the world
for the member of the Scott
expedition, who, rather than
be a further drag upon the
party, walked out into the
blizzard to what he knew, and
what his companions knew, to
be certain death? The incident
is described as a superb
case of self-sacrifice by a man
for the benefit of his com-
rades.

We are not concerned now
with the heroism of the act,
but with its effect upon the
imagination of the world.
There is not the slightest
doubt that Captain Oates was
a hero. Neither is there any
doubt that every member of
the noble little band was a he-
ro or possessed the stuff of
which heroes are made. The
question of heroism may there-
fore, be laid aside. But there
is another aspect of the in-
cident.

Supposing a man to be af-
flicted with an incurable and
contagious disease; supposing
that, realizing the burden he
was to his wife and family or
to his friends, and the danger
of communicating his disease
to them, and knowing that
there was no hope for him, he
were to walk out of the house,
not into a blizzard that meant
certain death, but into a river
where death would be just as
certain as in the blizzard,
would the world rise up and
call him a hero? Does the
chorus of admiration with
which the story of Captain
Oates has been received mean
that in the estimation of the
world a man is justified in
sacrificing his life so that he
may no longer be a drag on his
friends? Or does it simply
mean that the story reached
the world in a dramatic form
as to compel admiration with-
out reference to any question
of wisdom or ethics.

A great deal of what passes
for hero-worship in the world

is a tribute to the drama rather
than to heroism; it is an ex-
pression of the dramatic sense
rather than a response to an
heroic appeal. Much of the
world's truest heroism makes
no appeal, because the dra-
matic element is lacking. The
heroism of patient men and wo-
men struggling to live decent
and useful lives amid unfavor-
able conditions not of their
own ordering, passes unnot-
iced because of the absence of
dramatic incident. Yet a man
like J. M. Synge, with a strong
sense of the dramatic possi-
bilities of even the common
places of life, is able to reveal
to us and make us feel, as he
does in "The Riders to the
Sea," that the very essence of
tragedy itself may be found in
a distracted old woman sitting
in her cabin in front of her
fire place, softly crying to her
self over the loss of her hus-
band and her sons. Distracted
old mothers have wept silently
to themselves over the loss of
their loved ones since
humanity became endowed
with human feelings; but it re-
quired the genius of a drama-
tist to reveal the heroism and
the tragedy of such a situa-
tion.

If there is a class of men
and women today that ought to
of the world, it is the class in
be ranked among the heroes
which are found the men and
women who are struggling pa-
tiently, quietly and often with
out hope of other reward than
the good they may do, for the
prevention of disease. Yet
these people attract no atten-
tion, for the most part. There
is nothing dramatic about
their work, and the world must
have its drama, or it will have
no heroes. If a man goes
over Niagara Falls in a barrel
every school boy in the coun-
try will know his name; but a
man may spend his whole life
in the service of humanity for
the causes of disease and the
remedy, and the people of his
own town may scarcely know
his name.—Woodstock Sen-
tinel-Review.

SOCIAL, MORAL AND RELIGIOUS
TOPICS OF GENERAL INTEREST

(Contributed by the Ministerial Association)

NOTE—The "News" does not necessarily endorse all views that may
be expressed in these contributions

A Great Meeting in June

Plans are on foot to make this
year's annual meeting of the
Presbyterian General Assembly
the greatest in the history of the
Canadian Church. To this end a
number of wealthy Presbyterians
are subscribing \$100,000 to pay
the travelling expenses of the
minister, his wife, and one elder
from every congregation in Can-
ada. Dr. Andrew Grant, former-
ly of the Yukon, is the moving
spirit of the great undertaking.
The name of Mr. Murdoch Mc-
Kenzie, of Honan, China, will
probably be proposed as Moderator,
moderator of the Presbyterian
Church in Canada, and more and
more the question of a lay-mo-
derator is being mooted. In the
American Presbyterian Church
the name of Mr. W. J. Bryan,
whom his admirers term "the
first Christian citizen of the
world," and the name of Presi-
dent Woodrow Wilson have been
suggested for the office.

One Touch of Nature Makes the
Whole World Kin

At the Memorial meeting for
the British heroes of the Antarc-
tic, Rev. John McNeill, of Cook's
Presbyterian church, moved his
hearers deeply by the following
prayer: "We are meeting in spir-
it in the far-distant region, and
we are looking around, and we
see the sleeping forms, and we
lift our hearts to Thee. We pray
for the widow and the orphan,
and especially we pray for the
wee boy who is the most loved
boy in the world today."

To one looking upon the face
of that young mother as she sits
upon the chair arm with her bare
armed, bare footed baby boy
standing on the chair seat beside
her, we cannot help feeling as
one gazes into those mother's
eyes, peering as they seem to
search the wide waste of the sea
as if looking with anxiety for
some returning ship, one cannot
help feeling that that serious
face betrays the price that she
has been paying to give mankind

a greater knowledge, and no one
notices the chubby baby boy with
his shocky hair, one hand agrip
of the chair post, the other plac-
ed confidently upon the palm of
mother's hand, which closes up-
on the baby fingers to hold him
fast, and when one remembers
that this mother learned of her
husband's death out on the bos-
om of the deep, out of the vasty
deep of the air, as if some mys-
terious visitant had brought the
sad message and vanished, and
this while she was on her way to
New Zealand to meet her hus-
band on his expected triumphal
return, one feels the fitness of
McNeill's prayer and one gladly
joins in this world-litany, and
one remembers that "One touch
of nature makes the whole world
kin." And one could wish that
some great painter would im-
mortalize that picture in per-
manent canvas, that picture giv-
ing to the world's readers in this
week's Literary Digest by the
help of the electrotypist's art.

Vancouver's fine new Y.M.C.A.
building is to cost \$340,000 and
will be a seven storey structure
of the most modern type. The
contract has been let.

Poverty

After natural inefficiency, the
greatest cause of poverty is in-
temperance, according to the re-
port of the inspector of charities
in Ontario. This opinion was
based on an investigation of
some 22,000.

Short Term Prisoners

A prison farm is to be estab-
lished this year by the Edmon-
ton City Council. To it short
term prisoners will be committed
and set to work, in order to pro-
vide for their own expense, and
also to help them towards moral
recovery. The plan followed will
be that of reformatory farms in
Ontario and in many of the states,
the special purpose being to
deal more satisfactorily than un-
der the fine system with arrests
for drunkenness.

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BANDIT GETS SMALL BOOTY

Seeks to Rob Passengers on Train
Leaving St. Louis, But Loses
His Nerve Too Soon.

St. Louis, Mo., March 6.—Some
passengers on Washburn train No.
1, which left here at 9 p. m. for
Kansas City, were robbed by a
lone highwayman before it was
beyond the city limits tonight.

The bandit boarded the train
at Delmar station, near the west-
ern edge of the city, and entered
the Des Moines sleeper, drew his
revolver on B. L. Kennard and,
compelling him to lead the way,
started down the aisle to collect
money from the passengers. The
first passenger the bandit ap-
proached was W. C. Wiley, of
Louisville, from whom he took
\$40 and a watch. He next com-
manded A. M. Snedden to hand
over his money. Mr. Snedden
drew thirty cents from his pocket,
handed it to the robber and, be-
fore the astonished bandit had
time to demand more, locked
himself in a washroom.

The bandit then seemed to lose
his nerve and, pulling the air
brake cord, stopped the train at
Glen Echo, a small station about
sixteen miles west of St. Louis,
and escaped in the darkness. The
train went on to Kansas City.
News of the robbery did not
reach here until the train ar-
rived at Mexico, Mo.

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