

The promoters of the National Policy are indeed floundering among the breakers of self-imposed difficulties. Innumerable ports of entry are jealously guarded by untold legions of officials, who, far from being burdened with an excess of sagacity to guide them in their impossible tasks of discrimination, are, as a rule, below the ordinary standard of salaried intelligence. They are the blind led by the blind, and not unnaturally they are continually falling into the ditch. If essential oils pay 20 per cent. and essences \$1.90 per gallon and 20 per cent., how can the Custom-house enact an equitable and uniform rate of duty, and guarantee a just classification at every port of entry?

I shall now take my leave for this number of this far from agreeable subject, with a general wish and earnest hope that a more enlightened and less one-sided system of legislation is yet in store for our beloved country. The people's voice must, sooner or later, insist, with commanding distinctness, that the conduct of its legislators, individually and collectively, has to undergo a radical change, or that the unprofitable servants shall make room for better men. The notions of patriotism of our members of Parliament have to become loftier and more just; their allegiance to party more modified and discriminating; their devotion to country paramount to all other considerations. They should be more conscientiously obedient to their own inner convictions, and less submissive to the degrading trammels of a selfish party discipline. Canadian statesmen must learn to feel, not only that they are playing a noble part, but that they are called upon to guide a glorious vessel, freighted with rich fortunes, through storm and tempest and sunshine alike, and that on their skill and watchfulness, their courage, purity and self-abnegation, depend the destinies of a great nation. They must steer their course with a steadfast purpose and a single eye; keep their hands clean and their conscience clear. When such essential changes in the disposition of our law-makers and statesmen shall have taken place, then, and not till then, will Canada stand forth and take her proper place in the front rank of civilized and ever-progressing nations of the earth.

D. A. Ansell.

HOME, SWEET HOME!

Home! in that word how many hopes are hidden,
How many hours of joy serene and fair,
How many golden visions rise unbidden,
And bend their hues into a rainbow there.

I am anxious to say a few words about *Home*. The song tells us "there is no place like" it. And the song is right. But how few homes there are in the world! Or how many homes which are no homes. It is painful to think of it. Possibly not one in ten is deserving of the name. And what wonder? Look at it.

A young man meets a pretty face, falls in love with it, courts it, marries it, goes to house-keeping with it, and boasts of having a home to go to, and a wife. The chances are nine to one he has neither. The pretty face gets to be an old story, and as that was all he "had paid attention to," all he bargained for, all he had sworn to "love, honour and protect," he gets sick of his bargain, knows a dozen faces he likes better, gives up staying at home in the evening, consoles himself with cigars, billiards and politics, and looks upon his home as a very indifferent boarding-house. And so passes year after year; and not one quiet, happy, hearty, homely hour is known throughout the whole household.

Another young man becomes enamoured of a "fortune." He waits upon it to parties, dances with it, exchanges *billets-doux* with it, "pops the question" to it, gets "yes" from it, takes it to the clergyman, weds it, calls it "wife," carries it home, sets up an establishment with it, introduces it to his friends, and says (poor fellow) that he too is married and has got a home. It is a mistake. He is not married; he has no home. And he soon finds it out. He is in the wrong box, but it is too late to get out of it—he might as well hope to escape from his coffin. Friends congratulate him, and he has to grin and bear it. They praise the house, the furniture, the new Bible, the cradle, the newer baby, and then bid the "fortune," and he who "husbands" it, good morning. Good morning! as if he had known any good morning since he and that gilded "fortune" were falsely declared one.

Take another case. A young woman is smitten with a pair of whiskers. She "sets her cap" at them. The delighted whiskers make an offer. The young lady is overcome with magnanimity, closes the bargain, carries home her prize, shows it to pa and ma, calls herself engaged to it, thinks there never was such a pair (of whiskers) before, and in a few weeks they are married. Married! Yes, the world calls it so. What is the result? A short honeymoon, and then the discovery that they are as unlike as chalk and cheese, and not to be made one though all the clergymen in Christendom pronounced them so.

There are many other kinds of ill-assorted marriages, and they all result in unhappy "homes." What else could be expected? Young folks get their ideas of the holiest relation in life from a novel. Or when this is not the case, they, in most instances, have no idea at all of it, but are governed in their choice and conduct by their feelings, their passions, or their imagined interests. Thus marriage is prostituted throughout the world, and the terrible

retribution is seen in myriads of discordant and disordered households. Home, which should be the most beautiful of places, is shunned by thousands as if it were a pest house. Children, finding no enjoyment under the parental roof, seek for it in places of public resort, become corrupted in their manners and morals, and are ruined. To this cause more than to almost any other can be traced the immorality of our youth. Could we not point to dozens of our own immediate acquaintance in this city? Have they homes which are homes? No! They have places where they eat and sleep at night; but as for the purifying influence of home, they are strangers to it. Their fathers and mothers are no more one than light and darkness. It is so in all cities. It is so everywhere.

Oh, what a delight it is—if it were only for the rarity of the thing—to enter a house where husband and wife are one, and the whole family are united in the bonds of love! *There* always is peace; *there* always is heaven itself. Sorrow there will be, of course, for shade is everywhere as inevitable as sunshine; but alike in sorrow and joy—possibly more in sorrow than in joy—the true home, the home which is home, is a scene of the utmost beauty. It is the pure domestic influence which the world mainly needs for its purification. These noisy sects, these swelling parties, these conceited orators, may all do a required work; but the one thing needful is the calm, serene, yet resistless influence of home.

Show me a family of children brought up in the pure atmosphere of such a place, led into paths of light and love by a kind mother, directed to scenes of honourable ambition by a wise father, disciplined in all pure affections by the sweet intercourse of brother and sister and the offices of good neighbourhood; and you show me a family whose characters will do more towards elevating the moral sentiment of the community, and unloosing its bands of wickedness, than could be effected by all the organisations into which poor human nature has ever been dovetailed.

The old adage tells us "Charity begins at home,"—that is, *should begin*. Do we think what is the meaning of this well-worn sentence? It is used too frequently as an excuse for parsimony. We are asked for a contribution towards the relief of the poor, or the establishment of some school or other institution. "No," is the reply, "I have my own house to look to. Charity begins at home." So it should. Charity for home; almsgiving for abroad. A charity-school is by no means so designated in its true sense. Charity, *caritas*, is quite another thing. It means dear, sweet, kind, and soft-hearted affection, dearness, sweetness in life. Chaucer and the old writers use it in the right way, but in a few hundred years the word has changed its significance; and we now see it used in a sense which to some ears is somewhat odious. We find it in its finest, highest sense in the 13th chapter of St. Paul's 1st Epistle to the Corinthians. Dear, sweet charity! How we moderns have transformed her! To think that she should have anything to do with those alms-boys who furnished Charles Dickens with his *dramatis personae* in "Oliver Twist."

CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME! Here it is, written as plainly as ever it was,—a law, though not understood; the essence of wisdom, though passed by; the true meaning of that mystic line is that you, of all ages and both sexes, should do all you can to make your homes happy; it is there you should show your kindness, good humour, your fun and cleverness. There it is you should play the fine gentleman, and be doubly polite; there, where you are seen only of your own kith and kin.

The great Roman poet was so struck with the response of an oracle as to the best way of acquiring wisdom, "know thyself," that he cried out, "E cælo descendit" (it comes down from Heaven) and we may say this of our proverb. No one can put it into practice without finding how thoroughly divine it is. The curious thing is, not that we should not readily acknowledge the use and wisdom of the saying, but that we have let it lie dormant, have applied it to other matters, and have forgotten what it means.

And now who is to begin? Suppose we begin with the servants, because they are the most used to be lectured, and because, being the lowest, they naturally receive all the accumulated ill-temper of the people above them. How many of us can say that we have always treated our servants with charity? Do we always speak to them with the soft voice, the pleasant smile, the plain explanatory request, the usual patience which we should use to a lady who has had twice their advantages? A girl of sixteen or so enters service, and you visit upon her all her ignorance, misdeeds, faults, and mischances, as if she were solely to blame. She is dull—is she physically capable of all you require? If you had all the care, cleverness, and supervision that you require of her, would she not be a very paragon of excellence.

Many have faults, very many errors and grievances; but, considering how we live, how they are kept all their lives in the basement, how we ridicule them, how we ask of them honesty, fidelity and industry, it is astonishing how good they are.

Shall we first admonish the young ladies or young gentlemen? As for the young men or boys of the family, they are really so often called cubs, bears or boors by their sisters, that we presume we must begin with them. They are not very pretty names that have been bestowed on them; the best is the boor,