



### CURRENT LITERATURE.

MISS BOSTING (*wishing to give a literary turn to the conversation*)—"What do you think of 'Marie Bashkirtseff'?"

HUDSON—"Ah, really, I don't think I have met her, you know."

### AT THE VICE-REGAL DINNER.

AFTER THE ORDER OF PRECEDENCE HAS BEEN ABOLISHED.

THE unjust and mediæval Order of Precedence, by which Roman Catholic archbishops and bishops were enabled to take the lead of Protestant clergymen and lay dignitaries, having been abolished in deference to the demand of the Methodist conferences and the Equal Rights agitation, the Lieut Governor of Ontario, on the occasion of his giving an official banquet, found himself in somewhat of a dilemma. He had invited the leading clerical and lay celebrities—representatives of the professions, commerce and journalism—in fact, the usual company on such occasions, where all sorts and conditions of men, except the workers who pay for it all, participate in the festivities by proxy. But how to seat them at table was the question. Who were to have the chief seats—so coveted by the Scribes and Pharisees of old—and who to be relegated to positions below the salt? It would never do, in the face of the agitation, to give the hierarchy the places of honor, and equally would it be out of the question to reverse the old order, put the Protestants at the head of the table and let the proud prelates bring up the rear.

The company had assembled in the spacious drawing-room, and the hour fixed for the function had struck. His Honor moved to and fro among his guests with furrowed brow and abstracted mien, returning short and often irrelevant answers to the remarks addressed to him, and apparently oppressed by the weight of his responsibilities. Twice had a liveried servitor approached and whispered into his ear the fatal words: "Dinner is ready, your excellency." Suddenly his countenance cleared, and, after imparting instructions to his trusty aide-de-camp, that functionary left the apartment hastily, returning in a minute or so with a long string, which, to the amazement of the guests, was stretched upon the floor and held in place by a couple of menials.

"Gentlemen," said the Lieut-Governor to the company, "as you are aware, the time-honored Order of Precedence, beginning with archbishops and ending with journalists and tramps, has been abolished. Though it gives me great pleasure to invite you, I cannot undertake to arrange you at table. To do so would be an infringement upon the principle of Equal Rights. You will be glad to hear that there are seats enough and victuals enough to go round—that's the principal thing, after all; but as to who shall enter the banquet hall first and who shall occupy the seats at the head of the table, that must be determined otherwise than by me. After much anxious thought it has occurred to me that the only way to avoid invidious distinctions is to see that you all have a fair start and let the best man win. (Applause.) You will, therefore, please step forward and toe the mark, and, when I give the word 'Go,' make the best time you can to the banquet hall and take any seat you choose. Stand back, if you please, Your Grace, you're a little over the line. Are you all ready? Now then—one, two, three—go!"

At the word the banqueters rushed forward, the most active speedily forging ahead, while several of the eminent dignitaries and portly office-holders found themselves heavily handicapped by their superfluity of adipose tissue. There was a terrible crush in the doorway, in which some of the competitors got their clothing badly torn and disarranged. The best seats were grabbed by a group of newspaper men, lawyers and doctors, while the high dignitaries were hopelessly left. Archbishop Walsh found himself, when the struggle was over, seated near the foot of the table next to Dr. Wild, and Premier Mowat only succeeded in gaining a seat a little higher up, after a lively scramble with Emperor Creighton. These little *contretemps*, however, only served to add zest to the occasion, and the company joined with hearty good-will in drinking a toast specially added to the list, "The Triumph of Equal Rights."

### A BROAD HINT.

JULIA (*as the clock strikes twelve*)—"Why, Mr. Staylait, you do remind me so much of a gentleman in high position about whom we've been hearing a good deal lately."

STAYLAIT—"Ah, and who is that?"

JULIA—"Why, Mr. Mowat. Not in appearance you know—but you seem to possess some traits in common."

STAYLAIT (*not knowing whether to feel flattered or not*)—"Ah, my friends sometimes tell me I ought to go into politics (*tumbling suddenly*)—why, bless me, it's nearly midnight!—didn't think it was after eleven. I must really go. Good night!"

### A SURE SIGN.

JUDSON—"Allow me to introduce Mr. S. C. Ribbler, a gentleman who is rapidly making his mark as one of our leading writers."

HUDSON—"Happy to meet you Mr. Ribbler. And how do you like Canada? You find things rather different from what you expected, I suppose?"

TRIBBLER (*surprised*)—"And how did you know that I was a recent arrival from England?"

HUDSON—"Oh, I saw an article bearing your signature the other day entitled, 'Have we a Canadian Literature?'"