



WANTED, IN WINNIPEG.

Competent persons declare that the real estate business in the North-West will never boom again until an auctioneer something like the above begins business. Coolican and Wolf are charming in their way, but they can't touch the hearts of the bachelors as this young person could.

YE SIEGE OF YE COMMODORE.

It was in ye city of Humbletown, in ye year of ye Hiving of ye Grits, that there arose a great contention over ye training ship called ye Collegiate Institute of that ilk. This ship was not like ye ancient Charybdis, inasmuch as it was taut and in good order, a tanto from truck to keel; from stem to stern all ship-shape and in British fashion. In this ship ye youths of ye people were trained to war, against ye world, ye flesh, and ye devil, otherwise called Sathamus, neither was there any distinction made between ye children of ye rich and ye children of ye poor, because, said ye Commodore "they are all children of Canada." There they were trained to quit themselves like men, to wrestle strongly with one another, and afterwards to go forth thoroughly equipped to fight against and overthrow ye great giants, Poverty, Ignorance, Superstition and Crime. These being ye four great powers that love ye darkness, and which fly at ye approach of light, like vermin from ye blinding rays of ye noon-day sun.

This contention was begun by one called Pere-de-rats. This Pere-de-rats was originally a man, but being caught by ye witch La Fors-of-habit picking holes in his neighbors' coats instead of mending his own, she, to punish him, transformed him into a rat; retaining outwardly his natural form, but being mentally and morally to all intents and purposes a true rodent; and since then, he has adopted the name of Pere-de-rats. He invariably works in ye dark, keeping himself carefully out of sight, yet peradventure he might share ye fate of his brethren, who, having four legs and a tail, fall an easy prey to ye long-haired terrier, whose head and tail are so much alike that some have been known to caruss ye wrong end; or to grimalkin, to whom darkness is visible. So his tactics were to keep scraping with tooth and nail, in order to pick a hole in ye board which surrounded and protected ye ship as she lay alongside ye people's wharf, and then to challenge ye Commodore to

account for ye leak which he himself had scraped and made. So it befel, that a certain man named M. Le Temps, as he strolled down the wharf, heard ye noise of ye rasping of ye tooth of ye rodent, and searching to find out ye cause beheld a great hole in ye side of ye ship; whereupon he was seized with alarm, and horror fell upon him, and rending his garments he uttered a loud and terrible cry. Which, when Pere-de-rats heard he fell to rasping louder and louder, until ye combined noise of these two brought ye Commodore to ye side of ye ship. Ye Commodore looked over ye ship side and saw a speck in ye likeness of ye man standing on ye wharf, by the ship side, looming vastly. "Ahoj there!" he cried, "What's all this noise and outcry about, and why art thou so horrified at ye hole which ye rodent hath made in ye side of ye ship? Harken unto me. If thou wilt catch this rodent and wilt hold him by ye tail to ye light of ye sun, and so deliver him into my hands, lo, I will take out his teeth, and cut off his head and throw his body to ye cats, and ye hole shall be mended and caulked, and ye rasping shall cease, and I shall be left in peace to train ye youth of this city in ye way that they should go." Now there had gathered a great crowd of ye fathers and mothers of ye youths in training aboard, and at these words they sent up a cheer, for they knew that ye Commodore ceased not to labor for ye good of ye youth in his charge. But neither ye Commodore nor M. Le Temps heard ye cheer. And while he yet spake there appeared upon ye scene a doughty cavalier, who, dashing the rowels into the side of his steed, rode valiantly up to the ship side. The name of this cavalier was M. Quelqu'un-de-court, he was of florid and withal rueful countenance, and when he had reined his steed, Hobby, he began to prophesy. "Ye burden of Humbletown! Ehow, and alack! the awful expense of provisioning this ship, where ye children of plebeians learn to speak in classical tongues, and are sent forth into ye world's great battlefield as doughty warriors as ye children of ye patricians to whom we belong. Ehow and alack! ye burden of Humbletown! ye burden wherewith my back is broke and my spirit crushed. Scrape, oh Pere-de-rats! and make holes, and sink this ship, for it wearieth me, and when thou art sick my hand shall minister unto thee. Ehow and alack!" Then up spake one of ye plebeians who had sons aboard ye ship, and who remembered those who had developed from raw ignorant lads into grave, well informed and honorable men, under ye training of ye Commodore of ye fleet. "What meanest thou, oh M. Quelqu'un-de-court! thou knight of the rueful countenance, that spurrest that Rosinante of thine atilt of our good ship, like another knight of less perishable memory, against the sails of a certain immortal windmill. Tell us now, art thou really Don Quixote the 2nd, sallying forth to redress imaginary wrongs, and thy friend M. Pere-de-rats here, is he really thy veritable Sancho Panza? Know then, that the taxlog is borne equally by all, the tall and the short, for are not wedges of rents placed on the shoulders of the men of small stature until they support the log equally with the tallest, which thou certainly art not. Moreover, what thou considerest a burden we consider a privilege, and since the great Father of all hath made no discrimination in this distribution of mental gifts, who art thou that thou shouldst deny to the poorest of His children, the chance of developing and improving any peculiar talents with which He may have endowed them? Thinkest thou to enrich the commonwealth by starving the minds of the future men and women thereof? Bethink thee, Don Quixote, M. Quelqu'un-de-court, thou art not in Spain, where there are but two classes, grandees and beggars, but in Canada, in ye city of Humbletown, where a beggar is a *rara avis*, and where there are no grandees outside of ye red brick

palace on ye top of ye Queen-street mountain."

Then a small piping voice from ye crowd squeaked "No Latin please," at which everybody laughed. And ye voice of ye Commodore was heard exclaiming "By Neptune! my ship is found and manned for less money than any other ship of like carrying capacity in ye Dominion, or for that matter outside thereof. Neither can it be found for less, unless indeed I feed ye boys on salt junk and hard tack, which would only impoverish ye blood, and cause an outbreak of mental scurvy, of which, I swear by the gods, there is already far too much among ye youth of ye country." Then there came a grave and reverend father unto the ship side and said, "Who art thou, oh! Pere-de-rats? come forth and let us see whether thou art another George Washington come to redeem ye country from ye plunderers." But Pere-de-rats appeared not, but squeaked "Who won, Geo. III. or Geo. W?" and began to rasp and gnaw more vigorously than ever.

Then spake Don Quixote the II. even M. Quelqu'un-de-court: "Ehow and alack! Ye burden of Humbletown! Now if thou, O Commodore of ye primary fleet, and of this ship in particular, wilt consent to shut out ye sons and daughters of ye poorest of ye people, by imposing in addition to what they already pay indirectly, a tax of four dollars per quarter, and find this ship as best you may for four thousand dollars a year less than now, lo! we, the people of Humbletown, viz., M. Quelqu'un-de-court and M. Pere-de-rats will *instantly* raise this siege, and thou shall be allowed to live in peace as Commodore of ye fleet and Collegiate Institute." But the people only laughed derisively, while the Commodore magnified his telescope and applied it to his weather-eye, so that he might better look down upon his adversary. And some said, *sorto voce*, "He would convert our brave training ship into a Dotheboys Hall, with Squeers for Commodore, if he had but the power." But one came forth and spake unto the crowd, "What's all this hubbub about, anyway? Four thousand dollars is after all but ten cents apiece, an' ye will have figures. Get ye to your homes; ten cents, yea and four hundred times ten cents, is better spent in ye higher education of a neighbors child than in helping ye defeat of ye Scott Act, or in upholding and supporting ye deadly liquor traffic." Here ye Don struck spurs into ye steed Hobby, and cantered away as if ye printer's sathamus were after him for copy, while ye Commodore sat on ye poop with a harpoon in his hand watching for ye second advent of ye rodent from under ye slime of ye people's wharf.

Here endeth ye story of ye Siege of ye Commodore.



BUNTING IN WEST DURHAM!