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TALES OF THE TOWN.

TO an orthodox old Presbyterian like myself, the mind-reading seance at the Y. M. C. A., a week or so ago, was a disheartening and blood-curdling spectacle, such as I hope may never be repeated under the name or patronage of this association.

Although only a simple branch of mental science was practised, one may well inquire, "What next?" Mind-reading, telepathy and thought-transference are synonymous terms, applied to subjects all closely related to clairvoyance. Had the Society of Spiritualists given this entertainment, Y. M. C. A. young men would have been shocked; but when the immaculate association puts this on the boards, the aspect of the question is entirely changed. Mayhap, the heads of the local branch possess the power of exorcising the evil spirits or blessing the practice. In any event, I expect to hear of their being summoned before a convention, a council, or a Presbytery, or some other terrible tribunal, to answer to the charge of being in league with the Prince of Darkness. Assuredly, religion is going to the "bow wows," or we would have heard of these delvers into the regions of the supernatural being dragged before either a court of justice, or the elders, to explain their conduct.

It is a curious quality of these modern religionists, this inconsistency of theirs. If they were consistently inconsistent, I could understand and admire them. When I look back through the mists of ages and reflect on the fiendish tortures inflicted on persons who dared to even think of such things, I tremble for the safety of the young man who gave this exhibition. It is well that he was born in the present century, for it is not so very long since the puritanic spirit of the Pilgrim Fathers consigned to the flames people possessed of kindred powers, and taught humanity the error of witchcraft. It seems strange that

our young men of to-day cannot keep out of these things; they should not turn their backs on the doctrine of the Christian religion, which has been so nobly supported in this respect—even unto death.

It has taken centuries to bring our religion to its present state. It has been baptized in the blood of our ancestors, and here, right in our midst, we are cherishing a many-headed monster, which will stop only when it has devoured us. Is all our efforts through the ages to go for naught? Are we to suffer this association—apparently a financial institution—to bring corruption into our midst? To foster unbelief? Why do we not live up to the doctrine of our ancestors? Why do we not follow in the lines of the Puritans and earlier Christians? Methinks the answer comes, and with a deep, depressing sense of something lost—"Christianity is not what it used to be; religion is going to the dogs."

I am informed that the Sunday-closing friends are at work endeavoring to secure an enforced observance of Sunday. For what? Presumably because it would please them; certainly not on philanthropic grounds. Philanthropy does not enter into the minds of these people. They are endeavoring to administer a tonic to the conscience of the wicked candy vendor through the State spoon; but it is open to serious doubt whether such a course is really beneficial. This movement, carried to the extreme, would deprive several hundred church-goers of the means of getting to church on Sunday, for cars would not be permitted to run on that day. And after church they would have to walk out to their usual haunts at the park. We would also be deprived of the sound of the "church going bell,"—that is, unless the man who rings it isn't paid for doing so, and does it for love. However, we might easily dispense with this bell-ringing, as it is a downright nuisance three Sundays out of the month, and it is

perfect torture to listen to the high-class musician who pulls the string at Christ Church. If Sunday closing and Sunday observance will do away with the ringing of the church bell, by all means let us have it at once. "Tis a consummation devoutly to be wished."

I note that "Meph," a writer in the Colonist, has a little affair with the editor of THE HOME JOURNAL and a correspondent of that appropriately termed "street dodger," whose name to the public is "The Bystander." It has always been a matter of surprise to me why an editor whose knowledge of music is confined to an ill-defined suspicion that "Annie Rooney" is by far a more meritorious musical composition than "The Kreutzer Sonata," should lend his paper, or wretched leaflet as the case may be, to self-styled critics, whose only right to the title may be that they hold diplomas from the London College of Music, to ridicule amateurs. The rebuke of "Meph" was well timed, and I regret exceedingly that the whole of the communication as the author informed me it was written, did not appear in the Colonist.

A medical man who recently visited an eastern city, has come back with a new idea which he wishes could be developed here. Down there the half-hundred doctors in the city have a rather unique scheme to do away with the troublesome dead and delinquent bill payer. They have formed what they call a physicians' business association. All the doctors of all schools belong to it. It is the duty of every member to report to the secretary cases of non-payment of bills. The offending parties are listed, and if they persist they are blacklisted, and no doctor in the city will do anything for them till the bill is paid. It is said to work to a charm there, and, according to all accounts, something of the kind is badly needed here.

That the best things written or spoken are spontaneous, ebullient, instantaneous and unexpected is a truism.

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