

## WORDS AND PHRASES.

"*A Roland for an Oliver.*"—Roland and Oliver were two of the most famous in the list of Charlemagne's twelve peers, and their exploits are rendered so equally and ridiculously extravagant by the old romancers that thence came the expression of giving a "Roland for an Oliver," as signifying the notoriety of one big lie or extravagant act by another equally unreasonable.

"*To die in the last ditch.*"—Hume says that the origin of this phrase may be ascribed to William of Orange. When Buckingham urged the inevitable destruction which hung over the United Provinces, and asked William if he did not see that the Commonwealth was ruined, the prince replied, "There is one certain way by which I can be sure never to see my country's ruins,—I will die in the last ditch."

"*Rope in.*"—This phrase originated from the old-time custom of gathering the hay of a meadow by means of a long rope drawn by a horse, thus "roping in" a whole windrow at a time. Passing into common use, the term has acquired the unpleasant meaning of getting or securing without regard to circumstance. "Rope them in in some way," is often said.

"*Bogus.*"—In the year 1837 one *Borghese* passed through the Southern and Southwestern States and passed off a large number of checks, bills of exchange, etc., signed by himself, swindling a large number of people. His transactions were so numerous that his name became notorious, and with a rapid way of pronouncing it soon became "Bogus," and this is often applied to fraudulent transactions or worthless paper.

"*Go snacks.*"—At the time of the plague in London, there was a noted body-snatcher named *Snacks*. Wishing assistance in his increasing business, he offered to any one who would aid him one-half the profits. Of this assistant it came to be said "He goes with Snacks," and finally, "He goes Snacks," equivalent to "He goes halves," or shares equally.

"*Pipe-laying.*"—This term had its origin in a fictitious and treacherous correspondence which pretended to give an account of the method by which voters from Philadelphia were brought to the polls in New York, while the fraudulent scheme was concealed under the form of a contract for the laying of water-pipes from the croton aqueduct. The whole scheme was devised for the purpose of casting odium upon a political party. It, however, made so deep and general impression upon the public that the term *pipe-laying* was at once incorporated into the dictionary of political terms, and is still used to designate the employment of men as voters (who are not entitled to vote) by fraudulent means. C. N.

"*Shilly-shally.*"—The expression indicative of indecision is said to be a corruption of "Shall I, shall I." Some rhymster thus gives it:

"Cheer up your hearts, your spirits rally,  
And ne'er stand fooling, 'Shall I, shall I';  
But budge, jog on, bestir your toes,—  
There lies the way, follow your nose."

"*He's caught a Tartar.*"—In some battle between the Russians and Tartars a private soldier of the Russians called out, "Captain, I have caught a Tartar." "Well, bring him along," said the captain. "Ay, but he won't let me," said the soldier. The fact was, the Tartar had caught him. So when a man undertakes to overreach another, and gets taken in himself, it is common to say, "He's caught a Tartar this time."

"*Kick the bucket.*"—One Bolsover having hung himself to a beam while standing on a bucket, completed the work by kicking away the bucket. He "kicked the bucket," and so died.

*Blackguard.*—In olden times the palaces of kings and seats of nobles were not so well nor so completely furnished as now, and hence when any of the nobility exchanged one residence for another, all kitchen utensils, kettles, pots, pans, etc., were taken with them. The servants who rode in the cart or wagon with these articles were called the "Black-guard." From being applied to a class of persons who, though menials, might have been honest and well-disposed, it has come, with us, to be applied to a low and scurrilous class of persons.

**RESULTS NOT SEEN.**—The best teachers do a work unknown and unseen. Whoever says to his class of boys or girls that which strengthens the weak, improves the ignorant, encourages the downhearted, gives new hope to the discouraged, softens and cultures the rude and boorish, does a work equal to that the angels

of heaven undertake. His labor may seem to be nothing in the eyes of those who simply look to see the results that business brings forth: houses, lands, money and fame. Yet it is just such work that is needed to vitalize conscience and infuse ideas. A country is rich if it has many such men and women at work—poor if it has few.

—In the organization and management of educational forces it is notorious that in several most important respects we are far behind many of the European and other nations that have had the sagacity to borrow from us the grand conception of universal education, and the wisdom vastly to improve upon many of our methods of administration and detail in the working of the system. In England, for example, the educational movement is directed by many of the ablest and most eminent personages in the realm, and as a consequence England is making far more rapid progress in popular education to-day than the United States. In no branch of the public service is there greater need of both heart and brain than in this. Honesty, capacity, fidelity to the public interests, a clear conception of the ends of education, and of the means by which these ends are to be secured, are the need of the hour. From this service, the aims, ambitions, and methods of the self-seeker, the ward politician, and the demagogue should be rigorously excluded. Those who would make an educational office a temporary shift, a stepping-stone to something else, should be forever barred from holding it. Merit, experience, a perfect familiarity with all grades of the work, a nice perception of its true motives and methods, and of its bearing upon life, character, and the interests of society at large, should be the sole passport to its positions of trust and responsibility. When school boards are thus constituted, when superintendents are made of the stern stuff of sterling manhood, when the rights of true teachers are properly respected, and their services are adequately compensated, when educational tramps are quietly laid upon their appropriate shelves, and when permanence is assured to the men and women of brains who are willing to consecrate themselves to the service of education, we shall hear less complaint of its cost, and witness results more nearly commensurate with the public needs, and not before. The sooner this lesson shall be learned and acted upon the better for the schools, for the people, and for the interests of the country as a whole.—*Educational Weekly.*

—The following is taken from a memorial read before the Common Council of Buffalo by one of the school principals, while that body was considering the propriety of reducing teachers' salaries: "The term of service is in most cases only for a limited period of years. Many of our best teachers soon find that they must abandon the schoolroom on account of impaired health. They must therefore remain without remunerative employment, and soon live upon their scanty savings, or else embark in some business for which they have neither taste nor the requisite training. The inevitable result is too often financial ruin. The case is different with other professions. At an age when the teacher is most likely compelled to retire, the successful lawyer is just entering upon his most lucrative practice; finally he reaches the bench loaded with honors and riches, while his classmate that outstripped him at college lives in poverty and obscurity because he became a teacher. The business of the merchant grows and expands from year to year until it gathers such volume and impetus that only his sons and successors will finally reap the full harvest. You can read dead men's names on the signs of prominent business houses, but when the teacher dies his business and his capital sink with him to the grave. But aside from these great drawbacks the vocation of teaching tends materially to shorten human life. A carefully prepared table taken from the Massachusetts Bureau of Vital Statistics shows that out of thirty-four professions and occupations named, only one is less favorable to longevity than teaching. The combined average duration of life of the farmer, mechanic, merchant, lawyer, physician, and clergyman, is fifty-three years; that of the teacher is only thirty-four years."

—An editor, evidently henpecked, says that "if in our school-days the rule of three is proverbially trying, how much harder in after life do we find the rule of one?"

—*Schoolmaster*—"What is the meaning of equinox?" *Pupil* (who knows something of Latin derivations)—"Please, sir, it's Latin for nightmare."—*Punch.*

—An opponent of the public school system insists that if you teach a boy to write, he is much less likely to make his mark in after life.