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TALES OF THE TOWN.

DICKENS immortalized a character known as "Dick Swiveller" who kept a memorandum of the streets in London closed to him by debts. Dick had a list up to date of his creditors, where they lived and the amount he owed them, and he used to add to his list at intervals the names of the streets he had to avoid. Had his fortune smiled on him as soon as she did, pretty nearly every street in London would soon have been "closed" to Dick. But there are characters in real life more strange than the eccentric Swiveller. There is one in Victoria at present that for cool assumption and unadulterated nonchalance in the treatment of his creditors, knocks Swiveller "clean out." This character, aided by a slender "remittance from home," has been living around here for some time; long enough anyhow for the storekeepers and merchants to thoroughly know him. Yet, with that strange fatuity that merchants have of being for ever taken in by these deadbeats, this fellow gets the best of credit, and lives high on very little right along. He is plausible, smooth tongued, aristocratically connected, is a natural born high liver and a good entertainer, dresses in all the alleged English styles, and is generally one of those Englishmen peculiar to the "blawsted colonies." An instance of this representative abroad of a great and glorious race occurred the other day, in the office of a well known hotel (for our esteemed Briton puts up at only the best), and the proceeding was characteristic of the man.

A leading merchant presented an account amounting to the hundreds. Our friend opens the envelope with as much style as though the President of the great Republic of the West had just dropped a note asking him to lunch. It was a bill; a common, everyday account; in other words, a "dun." The Briton turns in majestic scorn on the miserable representative of a despicable tradesman. The said miserable representative is shrivelled up. "Waut do yeou 'neen ah, bay presenting youah bill to me heaw? Down't yeou know this is a public place, and yeou ought to know bettah? Wye youah damaging youah cwidit, and advertising youah firm as demmed hawd up. Ay will keep youah blawsted account and let you wait faw the money," and with lordly contempt he resumed with a friend the interrupted conversation about how hopelessly a certain peeress had fallen in love with him.

Those who attended the dedicatory services Sunday of the new church, which the Catholics of this city have built, could not fail to be impressed. The pomp and

ceremony which mark the public services of this grand old institution all over the world are certainly impressing; no doubt they are conducive to true Christian devotion, and that simple uplifting of the human heart to its creator, but on the impressive disposition the effect is peculiar, and I think therein lies one of the chief influences of the Catholic church over its adherents.

The music was not up to the standard; instrumentally it was good, but vocally it was very poor and disappointing throughout; a fact owing to two causes—first, the apparent ignorance on the part of the soloists of any knowledge of Latin, particularly in pronunciation, and the second the fact that the music selected was a little beyond the capacity of an ordinary choir to handle. Latin scholars as a rule are not good musicians, and then it requires musicians of a very high average order to either sing or play the music of this church, whose masses and anthems have ever been and are now the sun and moon of ecclesiastical music. I have had more real delight in listening to one of Mozart's or Haydn's grand masses properly and efficiently executed than in the most popular of the great operatic works of the day.

I must say that the Catholics of Victoria are to be congratulated on the possession of so handsome an edifice and such an architectural ornament to this fair city, and I trust that Bishop Lemmens will long live to minister to his flock in their new and lovely spiritual home.

The departure of the Lieut. Governor and Mrs. Nelson will be regretted by their legion of friends in this city and throughout the Province, for that matter. During the time this estimable couple have been occupants of Carey Castle, they have done much to elevate the social standard of the Province. The receptions at Government House were always functions of a highly pleasing character, and Mrs. Nelson will be greatly missed the coming season. This lady always manifested a deep interest in everything which had for its object the social advancement of her sex, and matters of a charitable nature found in her a friend.

I am pleased to record this week the unprecedented success of the meeting called to organize an Irish society. I am further pleased to be able to compliment the gentlemen present on the good taste they displayed in naming their organization the "Sons of Erin." What more suggestive name could have been selected for a society which will throw its doors open to the son of every true born Irishman? It is doubtful if any society in this city ever started with such a large membership as the one last Tuesday

night, which will perpetuate the glory and fame of a country which has produced so many great men, and it is not every national society that has such a grand array of brilliant men to honor. The names of Swift, Burke, O'Connell, Curran, Sheridan and Grattan will remain green in the memories of their countrymen as long as the grass of the isle which gave them birth retains its emerald hue. Statesmen they were, cast in no ordinary mould, but great men in their own land and throughout the world. Richard Brinsley Sheridan was the grandfather of an Irishman near and dear to the heart of every patriotic Canadian. It is needless to say that I refer to Lord Dufferin. But it is not only to legislative halls that Irishmen can turn with pride. The hero of Waterloo was an Irishman, and Lord Wolseley is an Irishman and proud of the distinction which his birth gives him. And here let me say that before and since the historic battle of Clontarf, Irishmen have always been found on the field, ready to do battle for what they conceived to be truth and justice. Coming nearer home, we all know that the greatest orator of his day in Canada was Hon. Thomas D'Arcy McGee, and this is saying a great deal, for the genius of young Edward Blake was at that time budding forth. Somehow, when I get writing about the Irish, I never know when to stop, but, before concluding, I desire to remark that the thorough good feeling which prevails among the Irishmen of all classes in this city augurs well for the success of the new society.

The Local Improvement By-law is no doubt a good one, but not perfect, though calculated in a great measure to restore equilibrium in our city finances. It is thought that if throughout the lately enlarged boundaries the city is to grade all new streets, lay in all the water supply and lead all the light from ordinary revenue, that this ordinary revenue must be largely increased by heavier rates. "Let it be done," says the erst suburban resident. "Not so," is replied, "from your proximity to town you before got many of the substantial advantages of city residence and contributed nothing; now being in the city you will pay your rates and taxes to the city treasury, but that is not enough for your water and paving and light. By a heavy city expenditure your property will be trebled in value, and you are asked to bear your share of the burden, as more immediately benefited by the improvements."

The Local Improvement By-law says on the face of it, clause 1: "You shall pay all the expense by means of a special rate upon the real property benefitted thereby," and clause 4: "The City Engineer shall determine and show on plan what real

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