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THE GOLD FOR CANADIAN HOMES

# PURE GOLD

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## PURE GOLD

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## OUR SPECTACLES.

A MAN never looks more dignified than when he takes a spectacle-case from his pocket, opens it, unfolds a lens, sets it astride his nose, and looks you in the eye. I have seen audiences over-awed by such a demonstration, feeling that a man who could handle glasses in that way must be equal to anything. We have known a lady of plain face, who, by placing an ornament of this kind on the bridge of her nose, could give an irresistible look, and by one glance round the room would transfuse and eat up the hearts of a dozen old bachelors.

There are men, who, though they never read a word of Latin or Greek, have, by such artificial appendage, been made to look so classical, that the moment they gaze on you, you quiver as if you had been struck by Sophocles or Jupiter. We strongly suspect that a pair of glasses on a minister's nose would be worth to him about three hundred and seventy-six dollars and forty-two cents additional salary. Indeed, we have known men who have kept their parishes quiet by this spectacular power. If Deacon Jones criticised, or Mrs. G. about gossiped, the dominie would get them in range, shove his glasses from the tip of his nose, close up to his eyebrows, and concentrate all the majesty of his nature into a look that consumed all opposition easier than the burning glass of Archimedes devoured the roman ships.

But nearly all, young and old, near-sighted and far-sighted, look through spectacles. By reason of our prejudices, or education, or temperament, things are apt to come to us magnified, or lessened, or distorted. We all see things differently—not so much because our eyes are different, as because the medium through which we look is different.

Some of us wear blue spectacles, and consequently everything is blue. Taking our position at Trinity Church, and looking down Wall Street, everything is gloomy and depressing in financials, and looking up Broadway, everything is horrible in the fashions of the day. All is wrong in churches, wrong in education, wrong in society. An undigested slice of corned-beef has covered up all the bright prospects of the world. A drop of vinegar has extinguished a star. We understand all the variations of a growl. What makes the sunshine so dull, the foliage so gloomy, men so heavy, and the world so dark? *Blue spectacles, my dear.*

## BLUE SPECTACLES!

An unwary young man comes to town. He buys elegant silk pocket-handkerchiefs on Chatham Street for twelve cents, and diamonds, at the dollar store. He supposes that when a play is advertised "for one night only," he will have but one opportunity of seeing it. He takes a greenback with an X on it, as a sure sign that it is ten dollars, not knowing there are counterfeiters. He takes five shares of silver-mining stock in the company for developing the resources of the moon. He supposes that every man that dresses well is a gentleman. He goes to see the lions, not knowing that any of them will bite; and that when people go to see the lions, the lions sometimes come out to see them. He has an idea that fortunes lie thickly around, and all he will have to do, is to stoop down and pick one up. Having been brought up where the greatest dissipation was a blacksmith's shop on a

rainy day, and where the gold on the wheat is never counterfeit, and buckwheat-fields never issue false stock, and brooks are always "current," and ripe fall-pipins are a legal-tender, and blossoms are honest when they promise to pay, he was unprepared to resist the allurements of city life. A sharper has fleeced him, an evil companion has despoiled him, a policeman's "billy" has struck him on the head, or a prison's turnkey bids him a gruff "Good-night!"

What got him into all this trouble? Can any moral optician inform us? *Green goggles, my dear.*

## GREEN GOGGLES!

Your neighbor's first idea in life is a dollar; the second idea is a dollar—making in all two dollars. The smaller ideas are cents. Friendship with him is a mere question of loss and gain. He will want your name on his note. Every time he shakes hands, he estimates the value of such a greeting. He is down on Fourth of July and Christmas Days, because on them you spend money instead of making it. He has reduced everything in life to vulgar fractions. He has been hunting all his life for the cow that had the golden calf. He has cut the Lord's prayer on the back of a three-cent piece, his only regret that he has spoiled the piece. He has calculated how much the interest would have been on the widow's "two mites" if she had only kept them till now. He thinks that the celestial city with pavements of gold is a great waste of bullion. No steel or bone eyeglass would fit the bridge of his nose. Through what does he look? *Gold spectacles my dear.*

## GOLD SPECTACLES!

I know a man who sees everything as it is: black is black, white is white, and speckled is speckled. He looks straight through a man, taking him at any point—heart, lungs, liver, ribs, backbone being no obstruction. People pass before him for what they are worth. The color of the skin is nothing, the epaulettes nothing, the spurs are nothing. He thinks no more of a dog because it once ran under the carriage of the Lord Mayor; and when a prince has an attack of nose-bleeding, the blood seems no more royal than that of other people. He takes out of one of his vest-pockets, scales, in which he weighs a man in an instant. He takes out of the other vest-pocket a chemical apparatus, by which he tells how much of the man is solid, and how much gas. He never saw an angel or a spook. He never had a presentiment. Rather than trouble the spirits of the future world to come this way, he concludes to wait till he can go to them. He consults no wizard to find out the future; but by honest industry and Christian principles, tells his own fortune. The number of cats that wake him up at unreasonable hours is four, while to others it would have been fifty. In the music of his life there are but few staccato passages. He uses no microscope to enlarge the little, or telescope to bring higher the distant, but simply a plain pair of spectacles honest spectacles.

## TRUTH-SPEAKING SPECTACLES!

But sometimes these optical instruments get old and dim. Grandmother's pair had done good work in their day. They were large and round, so that when she saw a thing she saw it. There was a crack across the upper part of the glass, for many a baby had made them a plaything, and all the grand-children had at some time tried them on. They had sometimes been so dimmed with tears that she had to take them off and wipe them on her apron before she could see through them at all. Her "second sight" had now come, and she would often let her glasses slip down, and then look over the top of them while she read. Grandmother was pleased at this return of her vision. Getting along so well without them, she often lost her spectacles. Sometimes they would lie for weeks untouched on the shelf in the red morroca case, the flap unlifted. She could now look off upon the hills, which for thirty years she had not been able to see from the piazza. Those were mistaken who thought she had no poetry in her soul. You could see it in the way she put her hand under the chin of a primrose, or cultured the geranium. Sitting on the

piazza one evening, in her rocking-chair, she saw a ladder of cloud set up against the sky, and thought how easy it would be for a spirit to climb it. She saw in the deep glow of the sunset a chariot of fire, drawn by horses of fire, and wondered who rode in it. She saw a vapour floating thinly away, as though it were a wind ascending, and Grandmother muttered in a low tone: "A vapour that appeareth for a little season, and then vanisheth away." She saw a hill higher than any she had ever seen before on the horizon, and on the top of it a King's castle. The motion of the rocking chair became slighter and slighter, until it stopped. The spectacles fell out of her lap. A child, hearing it, ran to pick them up, and cried: "Grandmother, what is the matter?" She answered not. She never spoke again. Second-sight had come! Her vision had grown better and better. What she could not see now was not worth seeing. Not now through a glass darkly! Grandmother had no more need of spectacles!

—*De Witt, Talmage.*

## SHAKSPEARE ON DRINKING.

I wonder that temperance lecturers and teetotal advocates do not quote more frequently some of the striking passages in which the great dramatist describes the baneful effects of intemperance. No description outside the inspired writings are so intensely true. "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry at the wine. At the least it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder."

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.—*Proverbs.*"

For lay sermons on these texts turn to Shakspeare's pages. When the villain Iago wishes to make Cassio the tool of crime he presses him to drink. "Come Lieutenant," says Iago, "I have a stoup of wine, and without are a brace of Cyprus gallants, that would fain have a measure to the health of black Othello."

"Not to-night, good Iago: I have a very poor and unhappy brains for drinking. I could well wish courtesy would invent some other custom of entertainment."

It is to this custom of "entertaining," by drink and revelry that Hamlet alludes when he says to Horatio: "It is a custom more honoured in the breach than the observance."

Apemantus, speaking to Timon of Athens of his wines and the custom of drinking healths says:

"Those healths will make thee and thy state look ill."

When Cassio is persuaded to drink, and is amused by Iago's drinking song, the villain says: "I learned it in England, where, indeed, they are most potent in potting. Your Dane, your German, and your swag-bellied Hollander—drink, ho!—are nothing to your English."

Afterwards, when Cassio has come to his senses, and his conscience begins to awake, he says:

Drunk! and speak, parrot! and squabble, swagger and discourse fustian with one's own shadow! O thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee devil!

IAGO.—What was he that you followed with your sword? What had he done to you?

CASSIO.—I know not.

IAGO.—Is it possible?

CASSIO.—I remember a mass of things but nothing distinctly: a quarrel, but nothing wherefore. O that men should put an enemy in their mouths to steal away their brains! that we should with joy, pleasure, revel, and applause, transform ourselves into beasts!

And again:

"It hath pleased the devil drunkenness to give place to the devil wrath? one imperfection shows me another to make me frankly despise myself."*Othello.*

Shakspeare makes even his own clown and fools expose the vice of intemperance and the degradation of drunkards.

"OLIVER.—What's a drunken man like, fool?"

CLOWN.—Like a drowned man, a fool and a madman; one draught above head makes him a fool, the second mads him and the third drowns him.

What a sermon, too, on the blessings of temperance, is contained in a few lines in the third scene of the second act of "As you Like it," when Adam says to his young master:

"Let me be your servant!  
Though I look old, yet I am strong and lusty  
For in my youth I never did apply,  
Hot and rebellious liquors in my blood;  
Nor did not with unshapful forehead frown,  
The means of weakness and debility;  
Therefore my age is lusty winter,  
Frosty but kindly; let me go with you,  
I'll do the service of a younger man  
In all your business and necessities."

## GHOSTS.

WE have changed much in these days from the old times when ghosts were almost an article of faith, and when the person who told a tale of the world of spirits might chance to gain credence for his narrative without an inner reservation "that, at all events, it is very difficult to account for it." In Queen Elizabeth's time that stage direction in "Hamlet," "Enter Ghost," struck a real chord of emotion among the people, and, so far from weakening the force of the illusion, considerably heightened it by introducing a mysterious agency, as to which all were more or less sympathetic. Thus, in the Middle Ages a ghost had a dignity very different from the Peckham apparition of these days. There is a story told in French history of a peasant of Marseilles who was troubled by an unearthly visitor. The peasant was to make his way to the king, and reveal to him a message that would be communicated to him; but if he disclosed it to any one else he would die. He did disclose it to another—his wife—and he died, falling dead on the spot, too. The perturbed spirit, however, though unfortunate in this choice of a messenger, revealed himself a second time, with similar formalities and threats, and again the garrulous French nature could not keep reticent about the news. The tale was told, and the narrator in his turn, died. Yet a third time the ghost spoke. This time to a farrier. The tale we tell is historical, and the facts precise and ascertained. The farrier kept his counsel, journeyed to Versailles, saw Gold Stick in Writing, who was very polite, but very obscure. A peasant from Marseilles had an interview with the Majesty of France! Impossible; a thing not to be heard of! Farrier brings forward his ghastly facts. Proof offered, asked for, given. Did not two other of the good folks of the town to whom revelation had been made die because they departed from the strict letter of their instruction? Gold Stick was alarmed. Could not the truth of these statements be easily ascertained from the local authorities? Gold Stick was relieved. The farrier was to call in a couple of days—he called, saw the king in private, had several interviews with him, and returned to his own province a wealthy man, supported by the revenue, a public character from that time till his death, and probably a bachelor and misogamist, for the substance of the secret never transpired. It is all historical. The best artists of the day drew our farrier, the drawing was engraved, and copies of it exist in several private collections. One writer professes to have seen the print, and says that "it represents the face of a man about thirty-five or forty years of age, with an open countenance, rather pensive, and with a very characteristic expression"—a somewhat vague description as to the whole, and one would be glad to have learned what was the special character of that expression.

We live in different days now, and the age of apparitions seems, notwithstanding an occasional exception, to have passed away. The ghost of the 19th century cannot keep his secret as well as his brother spirit of the 17th, and it is the magistrate, not the minister, with whom he is confronted. The lantern of "Pleasant X" shines upon the apparition, and

under this manifestation the mystery not so much dissolves into thin air as solidifies into flesh and blood. The spirit then becomes what the Acts of Parliament call a "person," and the laws of the land take their useful and uninterrupted effect.

And yet who will deny that there lingers a strong belief, which none of the vaunted "enlightenment of the nineteenth century" can crush down, in ghosts and apparitions? What is spiritualism but a mode of the same disease? We are not as credulous as our simple forefathers, and we have a way of severing our judgment from our faith, and being mortally afraid of ghosts, though we well know that such things do not exist. What is the experience of each one? Is there any reader of this paper who, however fortunate in his own experiences, has not had some relative, or friend, or acquaintance, who has seen a ghost? We do not mean sounds or rappings, but a real *bona fide*—we were going to say—flesh-and-blood live ghost? The writer himself forms no exception to the rule which he believes prevails. Here is a story told to him by one of the chief actors:—Three students of a university, situated in what Thackeray calls a viceregal city, had retired after dinner to the rooms of a friend. There is no importance in the words "after dinner." College beer is very small beer, nor do I know of any instance on record in which a man who had partaken freely was visited by ghosts. The four friends were standing round, the fire, which flickered brightly, so that every part of the room could be seen. Its shape was of this kind. The door from the staircase was at one corner; directly opposite to that was another door, which led into the bedroom. There was no other approach to or exit from the room. The fireplace was at the side of the inner door. The friends were standing round the fire chattering together, when they distinctly saw the outer door open gently, and a figure pass in. It crossed the room, and passed through the opposite doorway into the bedroom. Three of the young men at once rushed into the room, examined every part of it together, but there was no trace or sign of anything. The other had fainted on seeing the apparition. What is curious about this tale is that it forms, so far as is known, the only instance in modern times of a ghost been seen by several persons simultaneously. As a general rule, if the apparition appears to more persons than one it does so successively, as in the French story just told. Another circumstance that is remarkable in this case is that each one of the four persons seems to have arrived immediately at the idea that the visitor was a ghost. The spirit was, indeed, known to two of them—that is to say, two of the party said it was the ghost of their brother. But the other two were quite strangers to the fact, and yet, without a word said, seeing the entry, they seem to have felt instinctively and unhesitatingly that it was a ghost. The tale is told as a thing that happened. There was no dowager-duchess or guardsman present to command the respect of the *Times*, but then—every one is not so strong-minded and naturally incredulous as that journal.—*Globe, England.*

## NURSING TROUBLES.

SOME people are as careful of their troubles as mothers are of their babes; they cuddle them, and rock them, and hug them, and cry over them, and fly into a passion with you if you try to take them away from them; they want you to fret with them, and to help them believe that they have been worse treated than anybody else. If they could they would have a picture of their grief in a gold frame hung over the mantle-shelf for everybody to look at. And their grief makes them really selfish; they think more of their dear little in the basket and in the cradle than they do of all the world besides; and they say you are hard-hearted if you say "don't fret." "Ah! you don't understand me—you don't know me—you can't enter into my trials!" They lack hope. They give way to foolish fear; are cowardly, without faith and fortitude. They are poor things; will not amount to much. Still, it is our duty to help get them out of the rut, and encourage them to throw off cares.