

Society Notes.

Our curiosity was so much stimulated by the allusions in our Charlottetown correspondent's last two letters, that we could not refrain from getting a copy of "Society as it is in Charlottetown." After a careful perusal of the same, we are inclined to endorse our correspondent's very severe criticisms, though we do not think the "rag" is calculated to do any real harm. If the author could have combined a little refinement with his powers of observation, he might have ranked to some extent as a social reformer. As it is, the pamphlet will be remembered for a few years, as a poor imitation of the coarseness of the 18th century satirists, without the wit that gave them immortality.

What particular sect Tom Trim belongs to is very hard to guess,—he seems to treat all alike, pretty roughly. To one church he gives the credit of having killed our late Bishop, and caused our present Bishop's illness: we can only hope, for the peace of mind of that congregation, that there is no foundation of fact for this charge. With the idea, apparently, of "giving to the Devil his due," Mr. Trim ends up: "Some of these are pretty fair people, on the whole, but for the most part they are a hard-headed, hard-hearted, and close-fisted crowd, but they are Protestants, and that's everything to them."

There's a good deal of talk about the "parsons in petticoats," too, who are described generally as a narrow-minded, illiberal set, that won't see any good in anything anybody but themselves may do. The only one who gets a kind word is "the long, thin preacher in petticoats who trots about the town a good bit, and occasionally is seen in the company of some of the Hop-beer aristocracy; trying to do them good. The poor man, it therefore seems, has good intentions and aspirations at times, in spite of the dreadfully cut-and-dried unsatisfying doctrines that he preaches—he's a far better man out of, and away from his church, than he is in it—and this is true of most of the ministers of religion. What jolly, whole-souled hearties some of them would be, if they cut away the theological apron strings of a mythical mother, and thought fearlessly and independently like honest men!"

When Tom Trim has quite finished blackguarding the clergy, he slings in a few general views which are worthy of a better context. Here are some extracts:—

"Religion is a synonym for sound morality, whose foundation is utility, declaring those acts right and praiseworthy, whose effects are helpful in everyday life. . . . True religion teaches that fidelity to principle exalts the individual in the scale of ethical purity. Great teachers of mankind have said that earnestness is better than genius, while sincerity is the test of true nobility. . . . Lastly, true religion teaches that while we demand for ourselves the right to think and speak freely, we dare not deny a like power to others. If we deem their views erroneous, we must not forget that they probably regard our views in the same light."

So much for Tom Trim and his views on religion. As to his treatment of society, we shall have something to say about this next week. What has all this to do with society notes?—you will probably ask. Simply this, that what has created such an outcry in Charlottetown is bound to possess some interest for us in Halifax, especially as whatever of it is true might just as well have been written here and about us.

We remarked some time ago that Miss Gaseous had started off with a tendency to being too mysterious. In last Saturday's budget this tendency has developed into a perfect mania. A whole column of society notes without a single item of news!—nothing but innuendoes. Now, innuendo is a powerful weapon in the hands of one who knows how to use it; but when a young girl, not sufficiently in the swim of things social to have anything definite to talk about, sets to work weaving a fabric of fairy tales in the hope that society will rock its brains trying to identify the fairies, she sadly overtaxes her powers, and ruins a good chance of being voted a fraud.

Why not call it a puzzle competition at once, and offer some sort of prize as an inducement to readers of the "Mail" to try and find out the private detective and the jealous woman?

Mr. Doesticks is great on the subject of calling. Mark this well:—

"If those in high position invite neighbours who do not rank so high as themselves in the social scale, the persons so invited must leave cards after the entertainment; but they must not inquire if the lady of the house is at home; it would be very indiscreet, and would be regarded as an act of presumption so to do, and would possibly prevent invitations in the future, however much attention has been paid to them by the host or hostess during the entertainment. Leaving cards without asking if the hostess is at home applies to acquaintances, not to intimate friends, and to ceremonious rather than friendly attentions."

Now, this would be very nice—for those in high positions, at any rate—if an authorized list could be made of the residents in Halifax, arranged in order of social standing; but as things are, we certainly prefer the ordinary usages of society, by which people who meet by invitation in one another's houses are allowed to consider themselves of the same social standing, if not equal in seniority and order of precedence. And by the same usages;—they may be a bit old-fashioned, but what is good enough for our mothers is good enough for us,—it is considered an insult for anyone to leave a card on a lady without asking whether she is at home. Doesticks is well worth listening to, as a rule, but we sincerely hope his tips on calling will not come into general practice.

There is a great deal of energy expended by the police in trying to keep our pavements free from snow, with the obvious result that anyone who wishes to walk with any degree of safety is obliged to keep the middle of the road, except in the few places where the regulations have been defied, and enough snow left to afford a decent foothold. It seems to be nobody's business to bring any common sense to bear on these matters. Look at the state of the Morris St. pavements during the greater part of this winter:—They are certainly more suitable for skating than walking. In a climate like this, the removal of snow means leaving a surface of glare ice, unless ashes are sprinkled over it. Perhaps it is too much to expect that the city would do this for us, though we do know of cities where even this is done. All we venture to suggest is that the present system is a good many degrees worse than useless. Unless the police can insist on having the cleared spaces well covered with ashes, it would be far better for them to let things alone altogether.

Messrs. M. Dwyer (Jr.), E. T. Mahon and I. H. Crowell left for Liverpool on the Oregon last Saturday.

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