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TALES OF THE TOWN.

DURING the past fortnight, barber-shop conversationalists, confiding females, and street corner gossips have been unusually busy weaving truth and story. In fact wherever two or three were gathered together, there was a discussion of the friction between the pastor and managers of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church. A congregational meeting was called for last Monday evening to consider the existing unpleasantness. A rare time was looked for; and yet what occurred was not, properly speaking, a rare episode in the history of this body of followers of the Gentle Nazarine. For has not the past witnessed many a meeting of this congregation where factions became abusive and rancour ruled supreme, where many of the present wranglers first made bold to hiss and became schooled in dissension, where many a good, faithful man and pastor, (shortly before welcomed, praised, and enjoyed) was denounced and dismissed like an uninteresting toy, sacrificed to the insatiate desire of a restless majority! Marvel not little children that I write these things of you. However, a spirited if not a spiritual meeting, was promised. Long brewing rumors were about to burst with uncertain effect. The street savant hinted at a statement of accusation from the managers that would rank with Burke's stately utterances and eclipse Cicero's arraignment of Caecilius or Cataline. The pastor and his friends were sure to be in good form. One of them inquired of me in whose works the oration of Marc Antony appeared. The attractions had become too strong—I concluded to attend the meeting.

It was a dark, damp night. Heavy clouds hung low. The mists were thick and moved by a sluggish wind. 'Twas a night wherein our knowing fathers might have seen ghouls disport themselves and the broods of Darkness hold carnival. On such a night they would have prepared for riot, discord and treason; they would have slept with unsheathed swords and placed a watch over the sentry. I know not whether our worthy chief of police is a man of medieval thoughts and received a warning from the boding look of the night or from Madame Dr. Bell; or whether he has a deep conviction of the instability of social conditions, or a keen reminiscence of some past church dispute, but of this I am sure that it will be a great source of pleasure to the community to know that the chief was so solicitous for the well-being of this body of deliberating Christians as to place the ablest cop in the force on special duty before the church door.

About 500 others attended that meeting. It was observed that four-fifths were of

the fair sex; the head of the late "Progressive Man's Business Association" was also observed. The meeting was opened with an appropriate prayer that wisdom and moderation guide them. The next item on the programme was "Onward Christian Soldiers, Marching as to War"; but as the audience seemed fairly spirited, the rousing hymn was dispensed with. Some difficulty was then experienced in obtaining a chairman; a gentleman, however, who stated that he was familiar with political contests, was finally selected as one not without some qualification. Upon his calling time, a neat little man stepped into the ring. In a fine, round voice, he read a "statement of fact." It was as precisely worded as a lawyer's brief, it had been carefully typewritten, and, withal bore marked evidence of the labor of much love. It stated the financial condition of the church, how the pastor had made demands upon them that they were unable and refused to comply with, and that now they appealed to the congregation to endorse their action. This good father in Israel having concluded, the pastor rose to ask a question, but the voice of the law declaimed against so unseemly a practice as asking a question, and the aforesaid g. f. in Israel resumed his seat, apparently much relieved.

The pastor then addressed the meeting, dealing at considerable length with the "statement of fact," showing it to be factious, indeed. He was in fine form, and at times his appeals were lofty and effective, evoking much well merited applause. Upon his concluding, a friend who had grown old amid the dissensions of the church, came forward and expatiated upon the repetition of history and the infirmities of humankind; as for him, he was a Scotchman and on the Lord's side. Many others who had labored long in the vineyard addressed the gathering. (There appeared to be no Union among this class of labore rs.)

As the issue became better understood the enthusiasm increased. The audience became divided and interruptions were frequent. Occasional personalities added fuel, and the hotter the speech the more it pleased. So the feeling increased till finally, when one of the managers rose to move a resolution of confidence in himself and colleagues, the factions were well defined. The resolution was moved and seconded by men unknown to half the congregation—the old warriors having profited by past experience. This done, the pastor claimed the right of reply. It was accorded him, and under a spell of indignation at that ingratitude which is "sharper than a serpent's tooth," he scored in caustic terms several of those before him. He was interrupted, how-

ever, by one who was probably asking himself "who next?" and was prevented from following that line further. After a warm and lengthy reply he concluded with a vindication based on Paul's injunction "let no man despise you." He was scarcely seated when half a dozen rose to speak. After order was restored and a little more recrimination indulged in, the voting was proceeded with. Here again there was room for a difference and it was eagerly seized. Some wished to vote secretly, although several in their fervour divulged the secret. The names were called off and the votes collected. This was a long tedious proceeding, lasting from 11.15 to midnight. But not a soul left that church. (N. B. There were no bets on the result.) While others were prognosticating, I withdrew for a quiet moment to consult the night:—

But the silence was unbroken,
And the Darkness gave no token,
And the only word there spoken
Was the query of the peeler,
Of the pious, patient peeler,—
"Hast a cigarette?"

When I returned, the chairman was declaring the vote. It stood 82 to 64 in the pastor's favor. Triumphant applause drowned the murmurings of the dissenters. Order could not be again restored. Several essayed to speak, but they could not get a satisfactory hearing. At 12:15 a.m. it became apparent that the meeting could not be continued, so amid confusion and mumblings, the pastor's voice was heard in feeling tones pronouncing the Benediction, for it must be remembered that this was a Christian gathering, the same that will reassemble for Divine worship on Sunday next. The secretary remained a few moments after the crowd tumbled out, and entered in his book:—
"Chief business transacted—Entertaining fools; breaking friendships; increasing cynics; embittering life." But the meeting was over. The people parted for their home. The Darkness heard what was said on that midnight walk. No wonder the morrow's sun blushed before it shone on the spire of St. Andrew's.

The world is made of atoms. Every thing great and grand in nature is but the aggregation of infinitesimal parts. All magnificent effects are the concentrated result of numerous causes. Things that appear trivial may be so important that without them there can be no such thing as a completed whole. There is nothing, therefore, unimportant. Success may hinge upon a smile, and prosperity hang upon a word. This being the case, mannerism must be a factor in the success of human effort. If upon the utterance of one sentence depends the

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