

THE VICTORIA HOME JOURNAL

Devoted to Social, Political, Literary, Musical and Dramatic Gossip.

VOL. II., No. 23.

VICTORIA, B. C., MARCH 18, 1893.

\$1.00 PER ANNUM

TALES OF THE TOWN.

*"I must have liberty
Withal, as large a charter as the wind
To blow on whom I please."*

MY attention has been directed to a feature of the last night's performance of the "Spider and Fly" which was not down on the bills. If my information be correct, several highly respectable young men of this city took a box to witness the production, but were subjected to considerable annoyance by the ballet girls every now and then guying them. One aged and infirm member of the company, whose voice is said to have only a compass of two octaves while she can kick nineteen, was particularly bold, and the young gentlemen referred to were placed in a rather humiliating position. The manager of the "Spider and Fly," I have heard, was severely reprimanded by our local manager for permitting such conduct on the part of members of his company. Our young men must be protected at all hazards.

As a result of a visit to the "unemployed" workingmen's meeting last Monday night, I have resolved to tender this advice to parents: If you have a son who is dear to you, bring him up in such a manner that he will never be a speaker. The most tiresome man in the world to-day is the one who is always watching for an opportunity to make a speech. The worst of it is that the man who wants to make a speech is never a good speaker. He generally has a wheezy voice and yellow teeth and in nine cases out of ten he does not know what he is talking about. So, if your boy develops a weakness for speaking, lead him out to the woodshed in the still, dreamy gloaming and hit him with two cords of green pine.

Anent that labor meeting. It is singular how we sometimes, by our own actions, choke off men and utterances which may be brimful of hope and encouragement. I have been reflecting and called up, among other things, what Mr. Miller might have uttered. Among other things, he might have said that there is no other city in the world, of anything like the same number of inhabitants, that can point to as many living monuments to energy and determination (the paramount qualifications for men of a pioneer country) as the city of Victoria. To illustrate: A short time since, I saw a certified cheque for \$75,000 drawn by a man who, but a few years since, was a common laborer on the roads. About twenty years ago, an humble Irishman was employed at \$40 per month as guard of the chain-gang. When he died, he endowed an orphan asylum with some \$20,000. Another man, who now has it in his power to issue marriage licenses, when he landed

here, had just 10 cents left and took work at breaking stones on the streets. Further, among this class of persons we may mention a prominent dry goods merchant, a wholesale liquor dealer, a jeweler, and a prosperous farmer, without making a hole in the list, but the singular part is that five of those stonebreakers became mayor of this municipality. How the people apparently love to be gulled—they love talk better than action. For instance, one man strings adjectives together to show his love of the people, and the people believe him. Another risks everything, and gives actual employment to many, yet the latter narrowly escapes being yept a monopolist; yet, my word for it, the poor devil is of en put to it in order to determine how he shall satisfy the firms from whom he bought the material which gave employment and prosperity to many of his fellow-men.

There seems to be some truths that are never fully appreciated; there are unquestionably demonstrated facts, the meaning of which, it appears, can not be fully grasped by certain people. The demonstration is clear enough, and positive enough, but it is either beyond their mental capacity or else it is so directly in opposition to their pet theories that they will not admit its incontrovertibility. Fifty years ago there was a large and influential class who could not be made to believe that success was possible in any profession without a collegiate education. Repeated successes in the professions by men who never enjoyed the advantages of an academic course of study after a time broke down this prejudice, and there are comparatively few, if any, who will now maintain that a higher education is the only safe foundation for professional advancement. It is also now quite generally recognized that a comprehensive and practical education can be acquired as well by the individual as by teachers. Still, there is a difference, and, heretical as it may sound, we make the assertion that the difference is in favor of self education.

The difference is this: Those who lack the determination and energy to acquire, through their own efforts, the knowledge they feel they need to competently fill a certain sphere in life, may measurably acquire this knowledge under the stimulant of collegiate surroundings, and the rules and regulations that demand some study, at least. Those, however, whose ambition to acquire knowledge is not broken down by their inability to attend the advanced institutions of learning, and who successfully pursue their studies under circumstances that most men would consider discouraging, are made of that stuff that has never failed to make such men leaders of men.

In Chicago there is a university, endowed with \$5,000,000, whose faculty is ambitious to fit students for any vocation in life. It has turned out doctors, and lawyers, and merchants, and contractors, and speculators, and doubtless defaulters, but it has never been able to boast of having turned out a full-fledged journalist. This has been a thorn in the side of the faculty for years, and the pain has become so unendurable that the cause is about to be removed. The university, six weeks ago, established a department for the study of journalism, and before long an army of young men will besiege the newspaper and magazine offices, and demand positions upon the strength of the diplomas they hold, proving that they are "graduated journalists." Of course, they would not report a fire, and they would be insulted if they should be assigned to furnish a report of a dog fight, and consequently they will expect, upon being given a desk, to commence writing heavy editorials upon subjects that veteran editors are reluctant to handle. There may not be vacancies for all these graduates, but the vacancies will have to be created.

I presume men who have been actively engaged in newspaper and magazine work for years, who commenced at the lowest position in the editorial department, and worked themselves up step by step gaining knowledge with experience, and thus acquiring a comprehensive grasp of all the practical details of the profession, will have to step out and make way for these young men who have "mastered" in two years of study more than the actual workers have absorbed in twenty years of hard labor. The revolution in newspaper work that must inevitably ensue from this innovation in collegiate training, will not be noticeable for a year or two, and it may take the people a quarter of a century or so to get a faint idea of its meaning, but it must occur, because good sound sense and experience can not hope to hold its own in the face of the instruction furnished by professors, who don't know the difference between an imposing stone and lower case pica, and who, if put to the test, couldn't tell which of two odors came from the ink keg or the glue factory. After the success of ready-made journalists has been demonstrated, it is very possible that the Chicago University will devote its attention to the manufacture of statesmen, and after awhile there will be second-hand establishments dealing in ready-made professional and business men of all kinds, and the "hand-me-downs" will become the recognized article of commerce.

It is not my intention to belittle acquired knowledge, or to underestimate the value of a collegiate education. I unequivocally