

[Written for the Canadian Illustrated News.]

A FATHER'S VISIT: A REMINISCENCE OF SCHOOL-BOY DAYS.

(CHAMBLY.)

One scene my memory recalls,
Of mingled grief and joy,
Of school-boy days, two brothers we,
And each a thoughtless boy:

'Twas when, one day, our names pronounced,
And answering to the call
By leaving with a bounding heart
The form, books, slate, and all,

We quickly from the room escaped,
Its bustle, noise, and din,
And speeding through the silent street,
Soon reached the quiet inn.

And what had taken place, from which
We both such joy derived,
While all the others envious were?
Our father had arrived!

And oh, how sweet that meeting was!
By memory still retained,
His words and smiles were balm to us,
Whose fragrance long remained.

We talked of home, and talked of school,
And how we late had thriven;
And to the questions asked by all
Were welcome answers given.

But ah—how had the two hours flown!
Gone like a dream away!
Vain were entreaties on our part,
He could not longer stay.

Through snow-clad districts wild and drear
He had a long way come,
And yet much farther must extend
His journey wearisome.

Two horses fleet the fur-robed sleigh
Along the snow-track drew,
The echoes of whose tuneful bells
Each moment fainter grew.

And he was gone again! While we,
Loth back to school to tread,
Stood lingering by the gate, where creaked
The sign-board overhead.

Then tardily our steps retraced,
Too sad one word to speak;
In each a sense of loneliness,
That made all things look bleak.

And afterwards, for many a day,
Whenever sauntering past
Upon the windows of that inn
A wistful glance we cast:

And thought of him who had been there,
Whose presence did once lend
Enchantment to the room within,—
Our father and our friend.

And he, the honest and the true,
The loving and the kind,
Long left an influence for good,
I fain would think, behind.

R. H. W.

THE SOCIETY UPON THE STANISLAUS.

BY BRET HARTE.

I reside at Table Mountain and my name is truthful James;
I am not up to small deceit or any sinful games;
And I'll tell in simple language what I know about the row
That broke up our Society upon the Stanislaw.

But first I would remark, that it is not a proper plan
For any scientific gent to whale his fellowman.
And, if a member don't agree with his peculiar whim,
To lay for that same member for to "put a head" on him.

Now nothing could be finer or more beautiful to see
Than the first six months' proceedings of that same society.
Till Brown of Calaveras brought a lot of fossil bones
That he found within a tunnel near the tenement of Jones.

Then Brown he read a paper, and he reconstructed there,
From those same bones, an animal that was extremely rare;
And Jones then asked the Chair for a suspension of the rules,
Till he could prove that those same bones was one of his lost mules.

Then Brown he smiled a bitter smile, and said he was at fault;
It seemed he had been trespassing on Jones' family vault;
He was a most sarcastic man, this quiet Mr. Brown,
And on several occasions he has cleaned out the town.

Now I hold it is not decent for a scientific gent
To say another is an ass—at least to all intent.
Nor should the individual who happens to be meant
Reply by heaving rocks at him to any great extent.

Then Abner Dean of Angel's raised a point of order, when
A chunk of old red sandstone took him in the abdomen;
And he smiled a kind of sickly smile, and curled up on the floor,
And the subsequent proceedings interested him no more.

For in less time than I write it, every member did engage
In a warfare with the remnants of a paleozoic age.
And the way they heaved those fossils in their anger was a sin,
Till the skull of an old mammoth caved the head of Thompson in.

And this is all I have to say of these improper games.
For I live at Table Mountain and my name is truthful James.
And I've told in simple language what I know about the row
That broke up our Society upon the Stanislaw.

DANIEL WEBSTER'S CARELESSNESS IN MONEY MATTERS.

A correspondent of the Boston Transcript tells the following story:—"Pecuniary retentiveness was by no means a distinguishing trait in Mr. Webster's character, nor was much distinction always made in his disbursements between the cancelling of his own debts and the relief of others. A young New England friend of mine, a printer by trade, attempted to seek his fortune in South America, and for this purpose embarked with a printing press and types for Buenos Ayres. He had not taken the precaution to effect any insurance, nor to arrange for the acceptance of any home draft in case of necessity. The vessel was wrecked on the passage and his property lost. He was on shore without any considerable funds, and his means were soon exhausted. There was no English printing office in which he could find employment, and he had no acquaintance with the language of the country or with any resident there. He soon formed a slight acquaintance with a man speaking English, who suggested to him the drawing, for his immediate relief, upon some friend in New York or Boston. He honestly told his adviser that he had no authority for so doing. The suggestion was then made that somebody might be willing to accept for the honour of the drawer, and if he would make a draft of \$100 upon some

person whose name might be known at Buenos Ayres, there might be a possibility, with his aid, of getting the money. Thinking it almost a case of life and death, and hoping to be in funds from his earnings before the draft could be sent to this country and be returned protested, as he expected, in the ordinary and then the only course of transmission by sailing vessels. The young man gladly availed himself of the suggestion. The question then was, what name he should propose as the one upon whom to draw. He named by turn several "solid men" of Boston, not one of whom seemed to be known, or to meet with favour. He happened to think of Daniel Webster, whom he knew only by his world-wide reputation. The broker to whom the negotiation was proposed at once caught at the name, and was satisfied with it. The draft was accordingly made, and the money raised at the customary discount. The young man remained abroad for a year or two, and was tolerably successful. Not a word was heard of any protested draft, and on his return to Boston he called with the money to repay Mr. Webster, and to make the best apology he could for the liberty he had taken. To his surprise, Mr. Webster said he knew nothing about the matter. On his insisting that the draft must have been accepted and paid, Mr. Webster so far yielded to his wishes as to suggest his calling again, and that in the meantime he would set his clerk to making some examination. It turned out on a second call, that the draft had been found cancelled, and, as the clerk said, was discovered among many other loose papers in one of the office desks. Mr. Webster was then paid the hundred dollars but declined any remuneration, which was urged upon him, in the way of interest on his strictly accommodation loan."

PNEUMATIC TUBES.

Pneumatic tubes, for transmitting small parcels, or "carriers" containing telegrams, are now in use between different offices in Paris and London. Twelve of the principal offices in Paris are connected by these tubes. The carrier consists of a brass box, shaped like a clock weight, placed inside a tightly-fitting case of hard leather. After many experiments, this form has been found the best adapted for the service. The messages are placed with addressed envelopes in the carrier, together with a list showing the number and destinations of the messages. The carrier stops at every office on the route, that messages may be taken out and others put in. Each office is furnished with a Morse instrument and line wire. There is one main circuit, 21,497 feet in length, two secondary, 17,356 feet and 16,617 feet, and a branch line 3,712 feet, making a total of 59,176 feet, or eleven miles. "The trains" start from the central station every fifteen minutes, stopping at five offices.

In London, two methods have been adopted: one consists of a circuit or continuous tube, leading from the central telegraph office to the general post office, and back to the starting place; the other of single tubes leading to separate offices. These tubes are of lead, about one and a half inches in diameter, and are inclosed in iron pipes for protection. The carrier is a small cylinder of gutta percha, covered with cotton. Two, or even three, are sent at the same time. The transit occupies about one half a minute through the longest tube, 3,600 feet in length.

A constant movement of the carriers is kept up in the circuit in both directions; they are placed in a loop of the main pipe, which is closed, a valve is opened into the main pipe, and by the same movement a column of compressed air is let in behind the carrier, which propels it through the tube into a similar tube at the other office. Another carrier can at the same time be sent from the other office, the air being exhausted from the tube.

The single tubes are operated in the same way. The carriers are sent by pressure, and returned through a vacuum. One engine only is required, which is at the central office, and works two large cylinders, one of which is used as a reservoir for the compressed air, the other for the vacuum. A nearly uniform pressure of eight pounds to the inch is maintained. The tubes are easily worked, and are tended by boys.

Occasionally, in a rush of business, they become clogged, and the whole force of the compressed air is then turned into the pipe. If that be insufficient, a head of water fifty feet in height is added, and the carrier forced through. All communications relative to the use of the tubes are made by signals on telegraph wires.

DIFFERENT WAYS OF MAKING TEA.—The Chinaman puts his tea in a cup, pours hot water upon it, and drinks the infusion off the leaves; he never dreams of spoiling the flavour with sugar or cream. The Japanese triturates the leaves before putting them in a pot. In Morocco they put green tea, a little tansy, and a great deal of sugar in a teapot, and fill it up with boiling water. In Bokhara every man carries a small bag of tea about him, a certain quantity of which he hands over to the booth-keeper he patronizes, who connects the beverage for him. The Bokhariot finds it as difficult to pass a tea-booth as our dram-drinker does to go by a gin-palace. His breakfast beverage is Schitschj, that is, tea, flavoured with milk cream, or mutton-fat, in which bread is soaked. During the daytime sugarless green tea is drunk, with the accompaniment of cakes and flour and mutton suet. It is considered an inexcusable breach of manners to cool the hot cup of tea with the breath; but the difficulty is overcome by supporting the right elbow in the left hand, and giving a circular movement to the cup. How long the tea takes to draw is calculated to a second; and when the can is emptied, it is passed round among the company for each tea-drinker to take up as many leaves as can be held between the thumb and finger—the leaves being esteemed an especial dainty. When Mr. Bell was travelling in Asiatic Russia he had to claim the hospitality of the Buratsky Arabs. The mistress of the tent, placing a large kettle on the fire, wiped it carefully with a horse's tail, filled it with water, and threw in some coarse tea and a little salt. When this was near boiling point, she tossed the tea about with a brass ladle until the liquor became very brown, and then it was poured off into another vessel. Cleansing the kettle as before, the woman set it again on the fire, in order to fry a paste of meal and fresh butter. Upon this the tea and some thick cream were then poured, the ladle put into requisition, and after a time the whole set aside to cool. Half-pint wooden mugs were handed round, and the tea ladled into them, a tea forming meat and drink, and satisfying both hunger and thirst. However made, tea is a blessed invention for the weary traveller.—*Chambers' Journal*.

A Hindoo temple, to cost two lacs of rupees, is to be erected in London.

SCIENCE AND ART.

The drying of grapes, for making raisins, is becoming a large industry in California, the highly saccharated juice of the American grapes peculiarly fitting them for the purpose.

Experiments recently carried on in India have proved that coffee pulp will yield, upon distillation, 9 per cent. of its own weight of spirit, equal in strength to Scotch whiskey. Nothing is said as to the flavour of this spirit in its raw state, but it appears to realize on the spot a price nearly equivalent to 4s. 6d. per gallon.

Prof. Nauch, of Riga, has discovered that thin glass tubes, when they have a ball blown at their ends, give out a distinctly audible and clear note on cooling, so long as the relation of the size of the ball to the length of the tube does not pass a certain limit. The sound is ascribed to vibrations set up by the inrush of air consequent upon cooling.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The London Society of Arts has issued a specimen envelope, which it suggests as a substitute for the postal card. It is a small oblong sheet of thin paper, the top side being shaped off in the form of the usual envelope flaps. The inside of the sheet having been written on, the two sides are folded in, the bottom folded over them, and then the flap brought down and fixed in the usual way with moistened gum. The whole is very simple and light, weighing two grains less than the post card. Both in regard to public and postal convenience it seems in every way preferable to the post-card.

We do not think that the following anecdote is generally known: The motto to No. 154 of the *Spectator* is a well-known quotation from Juvenal, "Nemo repente venit turpissimus," which may be freely translated, "No man gets thoroughly bad at once." In the course of the publication of the number in question, in folio, the paper, as it came, was commonly hung up within the bars of the coffee-houses at Oxford and Cambridge. A wag at the University, who stole in to read this number at a prohibited time, wrote the following translation under the motto: "It is a long while ere one becomes a senior fellow."

The French military authorities have ordered maps and plans to be taken of all the field-works and batteries constructed by the Germans during the attack on Paris. A part of this proceeding is from a desire to compensate the sufferers, but also with the object of discovering the exact method of the whole attack, and then to further fortify Paris, and make it henceforth impregnable. The food question will, we think, also have to be re-studied, and potted meats and sausages be viewed from a very large and scientific point of observation. The war absolutely depended upon sausages, and but for the discovery of the Frankfurt sausage savant, how would Germany have got on?

By an Imperial ukase issued at St. Petersburg on the 31st ult., the Emperor has conferred the title of Altesse upon Prince Gortschakoff and his heirs, in recognition of the glorious services rendered by the Prince to the country and of the ability with which the Black Sea question has been settled in a pacific manner, and with dignity to Russia. Baron Brunnow is raised to the dignity of Count, and General Ignatieff receives the Alexander Newski Order. The official *Abendpost* of Vienna has commenced a series of articles to disprove the assertion that the London Conference only endorsed the plans of the Czar. The first article points out the gain to Austria in the subjection of the Delta of the Danube to the authority of the European Commission.

A curious conflict has arisen between the Prussian and Italian envoys at Munich. The latter, the Marchese Migliorati, gave a dinner the other day at which Baron Werthern, the Prussian representative, was present. Among the toasts proposed on this occasion was one in honour of the Emperor of Germany, and Baron Werthern, after emptying his glass, broke it, as is often done in Germany when the health of some one who is regarded with special respect or affection is drunk. This greatly offended the Italian envoy, who took the matter as a personal insult, and the two diplomatists began to abuse each other in words so undiplomatic that one of the ladies fainted from terror. According to the last accounts from Munich, the affair is not yet settled, and is likely to become the subject of a correspondence between the two Governments.

A coloured man, to whom meat was a rare blessing, one day found in his trap a plump rabbit. He took him out alive, held him under his arm, patted him and began to speculate on his qualities. "Oh, how berry fat! De fattest I ever did see! Let us see how me cook him. Me roast him. No; he be so berry fat, he lose all de grease. Me fry him! Ah, he be very fat, he fry hisself! Golly, how fat he be! Den me stew him." The thought of the savory stew made the nigger forget himself, and in spreading out the feast to his imagination, his arm relaxed, when off hopped the rabbit, and squatting at a goodly distance, eyed his last owner with great composure. The negro knew there was an end of the matter, so summoning all his philosophy, he thus addressed the rabbit: "You long-eared, white-whiskered, red-eyed rat, you not so berry fat after all!"

A "FOXEY" TRICK.—A few days ago, while a Scotch keeper was going his rounds, a dog-fox in an unguarded moment crossed his path. The keeper having some serious charges against the unexpected visitor for using some undue familiarities with his pheasants, avenged his losses by firing at the depredator. The effect of the shot was to stun the fox, which continued to manifest faint symptoms of life. The keeper suspended him by the neck with a strong cord to a tree, while he sat down and enjoyed a smoke—Reynard, meanwhile, remaining motionless, his legs rigid, his eyes closed, his body swinging helplessly in the breeze, apparently as dead as a door nail. After being cut down and put into the game-bag, the keeper turned back a few paces for his gun, but before he had recovered it he was confounded to observe the fox escape from the bag, and, giving him no time to recover from his bewilderment, send out of sight in a dense cover, as if nothing had occurred. Possibly he may yet afford a run for the hounds, who, with such a wily customer, are not likely to be more successful in compassing his final end than the keeper in question.