

POINTS.

By ACUS.

"To point a moral and adorn a tale."

Johnson: Vanity of Human Wishes.

It is to be presumed that in making a trial trip during exhibition week the Toronto fire brigade were unable to find the proverbial "long lane that has no turning"; at all events, in rounding the corner of a lane that *has* a turning, two members of the brigade were unfortunately thrown to the ground. Of course, everyone hopes that the injuries inflicted will not prove too serious; and what makes it all the more painful is that it was all done, as it were, "only in fun." Accidents are very frequently the order of the day on holidays. When grown-up people condescend to play at all, they usually play with edged tools. Sky-rockets, like certain other holiday accessories, "have a stick in them," which comes down sometimes to the detriment of people's eyes and craniums. Grand stands also have a way with them of taking grand tumbles. And overcrowded excursion steamers often carry their passengers to the borders of another and a better world.

What has become of the sea serpent? It is over a year, I think, since I have read a good, thrilling newspaper sea serpent story. There has not been a tale of its tail for a very long time, and its head has evidently been under water instead of under observation. Perhaps we may infer from this an increasing morality and truthfulness; or it may indicate a decline of the imaginative faculty in the human race. Perhaps the sea serpents and the weather prophets (?) have gone off somewhere together, to sympathize on account of not being believed in; for the weather prophets are missing, too. They both were interesting reading, even if one did not believe in them. But, according to the old proverb which says "Speak of a certain personage and he is sure to manifest himself in the flesh" (or words to that effect), we may expect now to hear of them at any moment.

It is said that David Swing facetiously remarked, upon reading a rather acrid letter purporting to have been written about the Americans by Matthew Arnold, that he might be an apostle of "sweetness and light," but he very soon *soured*. Of course, the letter in question turned out to be nothing but a clever humbug; but, in view of more recent utterances by this author, no doubt a few Americans may still be inclined to believe in the tendency to sour. He cut up their newspapers (without using either scissors or paste) and disposed of their most popular novelist, if I remember rightly, as "a native author called Roe." What is worse, he lifted up his voice and intimated that Emerson's style "has not the requisite wholeness of good tissue." And he also found fault with their geographic nomenclature, notwithstanding that one of their greatest authors has enshrined in poetry the "banks of Gitchee Gumee." Literally, the United States came very near being the death of him, as Matthew Arnold narrowly escaped drowning at Long Branch. But the American people generally, judging from the tone of their periodicals, have forgiven him already. The best people, I sometimes think, have the quickest tempers; and, of course, a quick temper is not a long one. In addition to this, a sympathy with the ethics of which he was an exponent—a sympathy which is planted and which will bring forth its fruit in due season—will prevent resentment from lasting long.

An aristocratic matron whom I once heard "coaching" a youthful *débutante*, said impressively that the chief thing to be observed was "De-lib-er-ation." Corporation labourers, according to this criterion, must be the best mannered men on earth. The arduous nature of the toil of the corporation labourer is exceeded only by the lordly leisure with which he undertakes its performance. Quite properly placing mental activity before physical, he first enters into a pleasant conversation with his companions, running pretty much over the whole range of mental and moral science and civil polity. Finally, however, he moistens his hands preparatory to beginning

work; but, suddenly struck with an idea, he darts off to "moisten his clay" also. He then takes off his coat, for the second or third time, and is in readiness to pitch in or to pitch out, as the case may be. At last, after all the discussions have been brought to a logical conclusion and after several ineffectual attempts, he condescends to give a kind of intermittent attention to matters which are of the earth earthy.

The Lake Erie & Western Railway Company is said to have issued orders forbidding its employees to flirt. The young ladies, instead of complaining, in the language of the old song, that

The captain with the eye-glass
Cast a sly glance at me,

have evidently been entering a similar complaint against the conductor with the brass buttons. Like Mr. and Mrs. Meagle, railway men we always supposed were "practical people." But, then, looking at the subject in another light, it is nothing more than natural that employees on a railroad should be somewhat fast. While railroad companies are forbidding things, I wish they would forbid snoring in the sleeping cars.

CANUCKIANA.

The news of the back down of Newfoundland has been received with some disappointment, and some scorn, throughout Canada. One newspaper man, however, puts a good face on the matter and, like a polite Canadian, remarks to the suspicious Newfoundlander:—

Absence makes the heart grow fonder,
Isle of Beauty, fare thee well!

Newfoundland has contributed a great impulse to geology. C. D. Walcott, of the U. S. Survey, found there the key to the order of the Cambrian beds. He spent the greater part of his time at Topsail, twelve miles from St. John's, on the south shore of Conception Bay, and there made a large collection of fossils—chiefly trilobites—some of very large size. Here too he found the "missing link," of which he was in search, which settled the order of succession of the Cambrian rocks. So important were his discoveries that he was requested, by the chief of his department, to proceed to London to lay them before the International Geological council.

Mr. L. R. O'Brien, the distinguished artist, speaks enthusiastically of Howe Sound, the first indentation of the coast line north of Burrard Inlet, forming the harbour of Vancouver. It is over twenty miles deep, irregular in outline, studded with islands, and walled by mountains rising steeply from the water to a height of from four to six thousand feet. One mountain in particular, called by the Indians "Intchekai," cannot be less than ten thousand feet high. It is some fifteen miles inland, up the valley of the Squamish river.

The Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario imagined a drive through certain portions of his Province, in a carriage and pair. Sir Alexander Campbell, in company with two friends, made a quiet start from Toronto. Guelph was the first point, and then the prosperous township of Nissouri was visited along the banks of the Thames. This fertile section of the country was the most admired by the travellers. The trip which lasted eight days, thirty miles a day being the average distance covered, was greatly enjoyed by his Honour.

Our Canadian football boys are astonishing the Scotchmen on their native heath. One of these says that the tall goal-keeper is a perfect stone wall, but far more tender, of course. The two backs are clinkers—as sure as the bank and as safe as a cork collar. The trio of halves are each whole. The pick of the basket was Pirie. Secretary Gordon, for a rusty one, showed excellent judgment in tackling. When he gets greased up he will be difficult to pass. The forwards were all positive, some were comparative and Thomson was superlative.

Harrison Springs are another Canadian medical resort of fame. They are situated five miles from Agassiz station, on the main line of the C. P. R., and 60 miles east of Vancouver. The waters are

famed for the cure of salt rheum, rheumatism and a variety of skin diseases, besides being a blood purifier and a health giving tonic for the whole system. The vapour baths are patronized by persons carrying a superfluous amount of adipose matter.

Our Chinook—the wind-god of the Rockies—has inspired the spirit of poetry even in far England, as witness the following from the graceful pen of Andrew Lang, in *Longman's Magazine*:—

Chinook and Chinok were magicians of merit
Who each of them kept a familiar spirit—
They lived, we should tell you, a long while ago.
Between the red men and the wild Eskimo—
And the feats of the common magicians they'd mock,
Of the noisy pow-wow, and the dark Angekok,
But the best of good friends were Chinook and Chinok!

It was nothing to either to fly in the air,
To float like a fish, or to climb like a bear.
It was nothing to either to change by a wish
His foes into fowls and his friends into fish!
Thought Chinook "I shall ask old Chinok to a feast
And charm him, for fun, to the shape of a beast,
And when I have laughed at his fright till I'm black,
Why—dear old Chinok—I will alter him back."
So he sent to Chinok, and he asked him to dine,
Thought Chinok to himself, "I've an artful design,
For I'll change old Chinook to some sort of beast,
And I'll soon charm him back at the end of the feast."

So they met, and their medicine-bags laid on the shelf,
But each had a powder he kept to himself,
A powder for making his friend look absurd
By changing him into a beast or a bird,
While each in his medicine-bag kept stored up another,
By which he'd restore his old shape to his brother.
Then both, when they settled serenely to eat,
Dropped a pinch of the powder unseen on the meat;
And Chinook, with a grin, began making his mock;
"Why, you're changing," he cried, "to a badger, Chinok!"
And Chinok, who felt rather uneasy, cried "Look,
You are changing yourself to a toad, my Chinook!"

Then each of them longed to return to himself,
But the bags with the powders were high on the shelf,
And the badger can't climb, and the toad could not hop
To the shelf where the medicine-bags lay on the top,
So the pair could not reach them by hook or by crook,
And a beaver and toad are Chinok and Chinook!

Yes, a toad and a beaver those worthies remain,
And the moral of all is uncommonly plain,
That good luck never comes to a person who pokes
At a host, or a guest, his dull practical jokes!

Success generally puts one in good humour. In the midst of the crowd celebrating the Montreal election, the other evening, Mr. Chapleau was handed a bunch of roses. Raising his hat to the upturned faces, he said: "You give me the rose, and I give you the thorn (*l'épine*) that shelters it." As this was spontaneously said, it was spontaneously received with thunders of acclaim.

Col. A. A. Stevenson, well known for his Scotch jokes, and his knowledge of French, as instanced by his translation, in that language, of Auld Lang Syne, must needs try his hand on the same occasion. He said that the pear-tree (*poirier*) did not thrive in the Island of Montreal, but that the thornbush (*l'épine*) flourished there as everywhere.

A familiar name is always a token of good-will, and a passport to knowledge. A traveller writing to the Manchester *Examiner*, calls Vancouver "Britain's Half-way House," on the ground of its position midway between Hong Kong and Liverpool, which are now acknowledged to be "the termini of the Queen's Highway." As the merits of this line become better known, at home and abroad, it will grow in popularity.

PRESIDENTS AND KINGS.—The following are the countries having kings as rulers, and those having presidents: Argentine Republic, Bolivia, Chili, United States of Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, France, Guatemala, Hayti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Salvador, Santo Domingo, Switzerland, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela are ruled by presidents—20. Belgium, Corea, Bavaria, Denmark, Prussia, Saxony, Wurtemberg, Greece, Hawaiian Islands, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Roumania, Servia, Siam, Spain, and Sweden and Norway are ruled by kings—17.