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## TALES OF THE TOWN.

THE result of the trial of M. A. S. Potts, of the *Colonist* staff, on a charge of indecent assault on a little girl named Gracie Walker, must have been highly satisfactory both to the accused man and to his numerous friends here and elsewhere. From the first, no one credited the story, yet a good many wisecracks wagged their heads and declared it was a nasty business to be mixed up in anyway. So it was, but the case is not half as nasty as the disposition shown by a certain few so-called "friends" of Mr. Potts, who, not brave or manly enough to speak their thoughts out loud, made covert attempts to convey the impression they had or seemed to have, that he was guilty. Let this be as it may, the trial is now over and one of the judges of the Supreme Court has declared, after hearing all the evidence the Crown could present, that there was no guilt to be attached to the accused man. As Mr. Justice Drake rightly remarked, these charges are easy to be made and frequently hard to disprove, but, fortunately, in the particular case referred to, there was direct and incontrovertible evidence to disprove what the editor of the *Colonist* aptly named "the cleverly concocted story" of the chief witness for the Crown. I have to extend my earnest congratulations to Mr. Potts, who, throughout the whole affair, has shown wonderful self-possession and coolness, this too at a time when those who know of his pride and sensitiveness, expected to see some outward and visible sign of the suffering he was enduring. The "fiery furnace" he has just come through has done him no harm, but, on the contrary, will have made him many new friends besides making the old ones more stalwart.

I take it as one of the principles of life that every calling, which has for its object the gaining of an honest livelihood, is honorable; and for that reason I am apt not to say anything derogatory of any occupation. But this does not apply to the individuals following any particular line of business. Take, for instance, the book agent. In itself, this is a business which calls for a combination of varied accomplishments; its follower should be gentlemanly in address, courteous in demeanor, patient and painstaking, capable of taking a snub without losing his temper, and, on the whole, he must be fairly well educated. What, though, is the average book agent we meet? He usually has a face of brass, he will push himself into your store or your office during your busiest hour, and will discant parrot-like on *British Battles*, the *Life of Columbus*, or the *Story of the Civil War*, till you wish that the Britons had all died of smallpox so that they could never have gone into battle; that Colum-

bus' mother had never afflicted the world with Columbus, or that the archangel had visited the world before the civil war broke out. For a week after the visit of a book agent, you hate the sight of any literature, art or other matter that he could possibly peddle. I have often been afflicted with the scourge, but I have found a wonderfully effective cure, the recipe for which I will send to any one on receipt of stamp for postage. Now you can't freeze out the average book agent. A stony silence does not chill him in the least. He has a certain lesson to say through to each prospective client, and he pays no heed to interruption. His particular victim in this respect is the lonely housewife in the forenoon when she is up to her elbows in the work of setting the house straight. Then he is in clover, and he revels to his heart's content. He knows she won't buy the book; but he doesn't care; it is a chance not to be thrown away, and he fires his lesson off without a pause or punctuation mark. Then he serenely skips, leaving the unfortunate husband to come home and bear the brunt of the anger of an infuriated housewife delayed in her work.

It has often been a matter of comment that men of Irish nationality were the only people in this city who were without a national society. There are Scotch and English societies, but Irishmen and the sons of Irishmen have heretofore been apathetic in regard to forming an organization that would perpetuate love for the old land and honor their patron saint. I am pleased to note that an effort will be made to wipe out this stain on the escutcheon of Victoria Irishmen, and a national society is about to be formed. In this connection, I am reminded of the beautiful lines of James Orr, entitled

### THE IRISHMEN.

The savage loves his native shore,  
Though rude the soil and chill the air;  
Well then may Erin's sons adore  
Their isle which nature formed so fair!  
What flood reflects a shore so sweet,  
As Shannon great or pas'tral Bann?  
Or who a friend or foe can meet,  
So gen'rous as an Irishman,  
His hand is rash, his heart is warm,  
But principle is still his guide—  
None more regrets a deed of harm,  
And none forgives with nobler pride.  
He may be duped, but won't be dared,  
Fitter to practice than to plan;  
He dearly earns his poor reward,  
And spends it like an Irishman.  
If strange or poor for you he'll pay,  
And guide to where you safe may be;  
If you're his guest while e'er you stay  
His cottage holds a jubilee.  
His inmost soul he will unlock,  
And if he should your secrets scan,  
Your confidence he scorns to mock,  
For faithful is an Irishman.

Monroe Miller continues to notice his ordinary every day friends and acquaintances.

I have been watching him for the past week, and, on two separate occasions, he actually patted the "devil" on the head, and told him if he stuck closely to business, there was a strong probability of his, the "devil's," owning the first prize stallion. I am glad to find that there is at least one of my friends who can not only look fame in the face without losing his head, but can carry lots of it and still belong to this terrestrial sphere. Friend Miller has carried a level head all the week, and the first stud in British Columbia, in addition to carrying his brain pan at a similar elevation, continues to carry the boss in from Mount Tolmie every morning. I am going to interview that horse and give my readers his career in his own language.

A lady recently returned from China says: "The condition of the women of China is very much like the ragged street urchin, who, on being asked what he wanted replied, 'Well I think I want everything.' Can anything be more pitiful than the condition of Chinese women? By the time they have escaped a merciful death in infancy, been betrothed in early girlhood and married to total strangers (as frequently occurs), been domineered over by exacting mothers-in-law, banished to the seclusion of inner rooms, spent years in listless idleness, if rich, or in hopeless drudgery if poor, they are fit subjects for the suicidal mania which sends so many of them unbidden into the presence of God, of whom they know nothing. Although missionary work was begun in China as early as 1807, the women of that country were not reached for some time afterward, owing to the almost impenetrable hedge which surrounds them. The tyranny of opinion is the one great obstacle. In China no one says, 'Why should not women learn to read?' but, 'Why should they learn?' But when these women have the opportunity of learning they make rapid strides. The great hope of the conversion of China is to be found in the women. They are the religious portion of the people. The mother holds an important place in the control of the household, and, though kept behind the scenes, exerts a powerful influence over her children. When the missionaries have reached the mothers the families are in a fair way to be converted. The strict separation of the sexes and the hereditary beliefs of the people have made it necessary to organize a special department of work for their evangelization. This work is done by missionaries aided by teachers and Bible women. The Chinese women are quite stupid intellectually. They have no power of attention and their minds are in a perfect chaos. They have no clear idea of an undying spirit, but vaguely confuse it