A GROCER'S CLERK.

BY R. W. GOUINLOCK.

I am a clerk in a country store, and sometimes I wish I'd been a martyr in those days when they stretched people on beds of spikes or roasted them on a gridiron. Then I think I could have taken a little comfort in life.

This is the way of it: I am behind the counter on the side where we keep prints, and there trots up to the opposite side, where we keep flannels, a customer neither young nor beautiful; I hurry around and across, and she asks for calicoes. Then I turn her about and make my way back, and I pull down a half dozen pieces, but she just gazes at the shelves and says she'd like to look at the under piece on the top shelf. I climb up, at the risk of breaking my neck, and get out the under piece, and she concludes 'tisn't what she thought it was. Then she says she'd like to look "at that stripe." I blundered on to every other stripe before I get her particular stripe. Then she says she wants a little figure, and I get all the little figures out for her. She wants to know how much it is a yard. I tell her six cents, and she says she can get better in Springfield for 5, and she looks at me suspiciously, as if I was a cheating youth. She wants to know if it'll wash, and I say, "I presume so; most calico does wash," and she looks at me indignantly, as if I was a saucy youth. Then she asks me if we take eggs, and I say we do, and we pay 28 cents; and she says they're paying 30 at the other store, and off she goes, and I put up the prints, and am down at the farther end of the room turning fragments out of a cracker barrel, when back she comes and wants samples.

We keep the postoffice, and by the time I get back to my cracker barrel in comes a man who wants to know if he hasn't a letter. He never had a letter in his life, and he knows it, and I know it; but it is one of those facts that both parties ignore, and I go back and give him the consoling assurance that he hasn't any, and he departs in peace of mind.

Then there is a lady who wants to match a confounded piece of silk braid, drab bordering on the lilac. It takes me five minutes to find one box of silk braids, and five more to find we haven't drab bordering on the lilac. Then she wants sewing silk of the same shade, and I hunt all through the sewing silks, and there's drab bordering upon everything else under the sun except the lilac; but I know by the way her flounces sweep out that a mercantile house not keeping drab bordering on the lilac stands very low.

That's the way it goes day after day, week after week, and I hate tea, detest saleratus, abhor codfish, and wish calico, cotton cloth, drilling, hooks and eyes, and all the rest of the wretched necessities of an artificial civilization were at the bottom of the Indian ocean. I long to be a savage more than I do to be an angel, and I shall be, one of these days, though I do wear cloth suits and have a shaving-mug at the barber's marked in gilt letters, "S. O. Hyde." I wonder that all self-respect and sentiment of humanity haven't long ago perished from out my bosom.

Such were my reflections one fine morning just after train time while I was weighing out half a pound of black tea, when my fellow sufferer in the drygoods and grocery infliction called out:

"Here's a lady inquiring for you, Sam."

In distinct outline before the door stood a little woman, her skirts spread out by a triangular hoop like the skirts of the female figures we used to draw on our slates at school. I came up to make my bow and saw she had deposited a brown willow basket on the show-case and dropped a black, glazed bag at her side. She wore a stringy kind of shawl with fearfully long fringe, and seemed to be afflicted with the numb palsy.

"Are you my nephew, Sam-wel?" asked she.

"My name is Samuel Hyde, ma'am," I replied.

"I'm your father's aunt, Louezer Hyde."

"I'm glad to see you, Aunt Louisa."

She looked at me sharply, as if I was making fun of her. I suppose it is because the corners of my mouth turn up that people are always suspecting me of making fun of them. I wish those corners would sink, and wonder they don't.

"I'm your only living female relative on the father's side," said she.

My business experience with females had been so embittering that I was glad to learn she was the only one on the father's side.

"As you've no mother, I feel it my duty to help make a home for you."

Instantly I remembered that Aunt Louisa was worth $75,000. I think I learned that fact in early years at the paternal knee, along with who made me, and what state I lived in. I know it always stood to my infantile consciousness in the relation of a primary truth. My father, all his life, courted poverty through the medium of drygoods and groceries, and went through bankruptcy as often as the law would allow. During the periodic seasons, before calling the creditors and making an assignment, he used to clasp his hands to his head and ejaculate: "Louisa might help me if she only would!"

But Louisa wouldn't, or at least didn't, and whatever may be thought of her affection for her nephew, mature observations on the oscillating nature of the molasses and ginger market have convinced me that her judgement was eminently sound.

"I'm delighted to see you, Aunt Louisa. I'll go right down to my boarding-place with you."

With a brown willow basket in one hand and a shiny leather bag in the other and my great aunt tottering behind—why under heaven's name she didn't walk by my side I couldn't see!—we meandered down the street.

We met Evelina Plympton. I was engaged to Evelina. I had enjoyed that honor ever since one July evening when there came up a sudden thunder-shower, and she clasped my arm and ejaculated she was "so timid." An engagement was an annual episode with Evelina. When I solemnly asked Pa Plympton's consent he didn't remove the pipe from his mouth, but just nodded and pursued his previous train of thought. Evelina smiled patronisingly upon me. Deference to the aged, I knew, she considered beautiful.

My aunt didn't like my boarding-place, and after a great deal of search we succeeded in finding a house to her liking, with the "battery" on the northeast corner, opening into the dining-room and kitchen. The next momentous step was to get my aunt's "things" moved.

I need not say that our residence, when furnished, was neat but not gaudy. I sighed for my cosy quarters, but I remembered my aunt's valuation, and reasoned that if she was my only living female relative on the father's side I must of necessity be her only living male relative on the mother's side.

We kept one servant, whose wages my aunt thought it right I should pay, because, as she said, if there was no one but herself, she shouldn't keep a girl. Our cuisine was managed with the strictest regard to economy. We lived largely upon soup, my aunt highly esteeming marrow-bones.

For two or three years I had been in the habit of smoking a single cigar at the close of the day's labors. One evening I was sitting on the plazza indulging in this luxury, when out came my aunt.

"Sam-wel," she cried, "are you smoking?"

"Yes'm," very meekly.

"Well," said she, calmly but firmly, "none of my money shall ever go up in cigar smoke." Then again: "How much do you pay for cigars?"

"Ten cents."

"Now, Sam-wel, I want you to take your pencil and calculate how much ten cents a day will amount to in a year, then how much in fifty years; then I want you to put this sum at compound interest and see how much it will amount to by the time you are seventy-five years of age."

I conscientiously made the calculation. "Aunt," cried I, "I'm perfectly appalled. Never did I dream of this. Of what mad extravagance have I been guilty!" and wildly I hurled my cigar into the cammomile bed.

It became generally known throughout our village that my aunt was wealthy and I was heir-expectant, and I soon perceived that whether or not I ever obtained the gold I was to have the glory. At a town-meeting, legally called and with the moderator in the chair, I was elected one of the nine predential committeemen; duty—"to see about getting the wood." "Our Sabbath-school appointed me a delegate to a conference at Cummingford; privileges—to lose my time, pay my own fare, change cars twice, stage it five miles over a country road and through a November landscape; prospects—address by Deacon Thomas Jones; music—that rare and intricate compositor: "Shall we gather at the river?"

Solemn scenes have no place in this narrative, and I pass on to the time when we were assembled for the reading of my aunt's will—the lawyer, the doctor, the minister, and myself. That instrument ran as follows:

"After paying my just debts and my funeral expenses and providing a suitable monument, I give and bequeath to my beloved nephew, Samuel O. Hyde, his heirs and assigns, for their use and behoof forever, all my wearing apparel and personal ornaments, with the exception of my gold beads, which I bequeath to my namesake Louisa Hyde of St. Joseph, Mo.; all my beds and bedding, household utensils, and furniture, with the exception of my great armchair, which, as it came in on the Jones side, I wish to go to some deserving member of that family. I also give my nephew Samuel $5 with which to buy a reference bible in my remembrance, and also the sealed paper of instructions accompanying this instrument, which I wish him to read a year hence in the presence of the witnesses now assembled for the reading of this my will.

"The remainder of my property, both real and personal, with the exception of the legacies hereinafter named, I bequeath to the American missionary society, neither legacies nor bequests to be paid until a year and a day hence."

The nature of the will was soon made public. Elderly friends in church and Sabbath school felt that I had cause for rejoicing in having been spared the snares and temptations which accompany wealth. My employer privately expressed the opinion that I had been getting above my business, and he was glad to see me taken down a peg. Not many days afterwards Evelina told me she had begun to realize what a solomn ordinance matrimony was. She and I were both young and had our way to make, and she thought perhaps for the present it would be better for us to consider ourselves only friends.

I said, "Very well," and felt that I was a lonely bark tossed on a wide and watery waste.

For a year I went calmly but hopelessly forward in the dry goods and grocery way, and we then assembled for the opening of my sealed orders—the lawyer, the doctor, the minister and myself. The first words that met my eye as I unfolded the paper were, "And all former wills by me made I do hereby revoke," etc. With palpitating heart I passed the documents to the lawyer. After provisions and legacies similiar to those of the first instrument, this latter document proceeded as follows:

"To the American Missionary society I give and bequeath the sum of $25.000.

"To my beloved nephew, Samuel O. Hyde, who I hope may have learned, during the year that has passed, lessons of wisdom more valuable than money, I bequeath the sum of $25.000 which I direct my executor to pay over to said Hyde as soon as may be convenient. I further direct my executor to annually pay to said the income from the remainder of my property, both real and personal, and to pay from the principal to said Hyde on his thirtieth birthday, if he be living, or to his heirs if deceased, the sum of $25.000, and to pay to said Hyde on his thirty-fifth birthday the remainder of my property, be it more or less."

I went down to the store the next morning just as usual, for I wished to show people that I had too good sense to have my head turned. When I filled our best customer's jug with kerosene I knew I had demonstrated my coolness.

The chairman of the board of selectmen wanted to know what I should advise in regard to rebuilding the Piperstone bridge; the doctor asked my opinion concerning the comparative merits of muriate of ammonia and iodide of potassium in a case of pleuritis where egophony denotes slight effusion, but with strong indications of adhesion of the mediastinum; and the minister said there was an article on "Semi-Pelagianism in the Fourteenth Century" in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* he thought I would enjoy perusing. As I stood on the hall door steps after singing school that evening, Evelina came out back of me and said, with a little shiver, "Oh, how da-ark it is!" Presently she remarked, "Aren't you very lonely since your aunt died?"—tender emphasis on the "lonely." My aunt had been dead a year, and Evelina engaged at least once in the meantime. I left Evelina at her cottage gate, and I felt that.

Of all the glad words of tongue or pen,
The gladdest are these—"I wasn't to have been."

The next afternoon my employer invited me to be seated behind the railing that fenced in our office, and, said he, laying his hand on my shoulder in a confidential, a parental, a sacrificial air:

"Samuel, I have been a reflecting upon my duty to you. You are a young man just starting in life, and starting in some respects under favorable circumstances, but everything depends upon your starting right. You have always been faithful to my interests, and I have determined to show my appreciation of your faithfulness. I have decided to sell out to you!"

A glance at the door showed me that the way of escape was not cut off.

"Sir," I remarked, with some justifiable indignation, "no more shall the brown paper bag and the white cotton string mingle in all my dreams! I hate tea, detest saleratus, abhor codfish, and loathe that postoffice and two-cent stamps!"

I was done, and I knew by the hush upon that store that, whatever else I might be, I was an orator.

Is It Not Singular

—That consumptives should be the least apprehensive of their own condition, while all their friends are urging and beseeching them to be more careful about exposure and overdoing. It may well be considered one of the most alarming symptoms of the disease, where the patient is reckless and will not believe that he is in danger. Reader, if you are in this condition, do not neglect the only means of recovery. Avoid exposure and fatigue, be regular in your habits, and use faithfully of Dr. Pierce's "Golden Medical Discovery." It has saved thousands who were steadily falling.

—Free and easy expectoration relieves and frees the throat and lungs from viscid phlegm, and a medicine that promotes this is the best medicine to use for coughs, colds, inflammation of the lungs and all affections of the throat and chest. This is precisely what Bickle's Anti-Consumptive Syrup is a specific for, and wherever used it has given unbounded satisfaction. Children like it because it is pleasant, adults like it because it relieves and cures the disease.

The most delicate individual in the world, should he tread upon a lady's train, is liable to become a robe bust man.

Weather Probabilities.

—The probabilities are that we shall have much damp, chilly, sloppy weather during the coming season—just the weather to contract sudden colds. Be prepared for them by having on hand Hagyard's Pectoral Balsam, a safe, agreeable and speedy cure for colds and their consequences. 246

Hat Improvement.

—The great drawback to the silk and pull-over hat is their weight and hardness to the head, giving the hatter trouble to sell besides being uncomfortable to the wearer. The trouble has been to make a light hat and have it stand and keep its shape. This has been accomplished by Smith, the hatter. By carefully selecting his materials and by use of the patent steel wire for the brims he has built a silk hat fitting as easy as a soft hat, and after a trial of six months there is not a man having worn one but that gives it the preference and praises the maker for introducing what has long been wanting. ed-2

An actor who is a stick should be clubbed off the board with a shingle and be made to "walk the plank."

—It may be only a trifling cold, but neglect it and it will fasten its fangs in your lungs, and you will soon be carried to an untimely grave. In this country we have sudden changes and must expect to have coughs and colds. We cannot avoid them, but we can effect a cure by using Bickle's Anti-Consumptive Syrup, the medicine that has never been known to fail in curing coughs, colds, bronchitis and all affections of the throat, lungs and chest.

The Ohio man who sold his wife for five cents positively declines to throw in a chromo.

It Acts Like a Charm.

—Ex-Ald. George Evans, 449 Queen street west, testifies to the efficacy of "Hallamore's Expectorant" as follows: "It is undoubtedly far superior to all other advertised remedies for coughs and colds, especially in the case of children, with whom it acts like a charm." edx

Pennsylvania allows a man to marry his mother-in-law, but he doesn't.

—The superiority of Mother Graves' Worm Exterminator is shown by its good effects on the children. Purchase a bottle and give it a trial.

A contributor writes: "I send you a post-humous poem. If published, send me two copies." All right—addressed to which place?

Threatened Danger.

—In the fall of '84 Randall Miller, of Maitland N. S., was prostrated to his bed with an attack of incipient consumption. Cough remedies all failed. He rapidly grew debilitated, and friends despaired of his recovery. He tried Burdock Blood Bitters, with immediate relief, followed by a speedy cure. 246

A Philadelphia woman has been fined one cent for bigamy. A fine of one cent for bigamy is preferable to one sent to jail for the same offence.

Public Notice.

—All testimonials in favor of Hallamore's Expectorant are from well known residents of Toronto. Mr. S. J. Willcock, 129 Spadina avenue, says: "I have used Hallamore's Expectorant for coughs and colds for thirteen years, and would not be without it. It never fails to cure me." edx

A recent song has the following refrain: "Oh, hug me closer, closer still." Of course there are frequent rests to give a fellow a chance to comply.

—Mr. J. Leist, warehouseman for Lautz Bros., Buffalo N. Y., says he had a swelling on his foot which he attributed to chilblains. He used Dr. Thomas' Eclectric Oil, and is troubled no longer. Dr. Thomas' Eclectric Oil may be imitated in its appearance and name, but not in its virtues.

Hoarseness and Bronchitis.

—Among the many remedies used for the cure of coughs and colds, none more speedily gains the confidence of the sufferer than "Hallamore's Expectorant." For hoarseness and bronchitis its rapid effect is surprising. In private sale during 25 years it has gained for itself an enviable reputation and produced wonderful results. In 25 cent bottles at all drug stores. edx

"Mr. Fangle, what was the 'spirit of '76' that I see mentioned in the papers so often?" "As far as I can ascertain, my dear," replied Fangle, "it was Jamaica rum."

—Corns cause intolerable pain. Holloway's Corn Cure removes the trouble. Try it and see what an amount of pain is saved.

One of the cheerful things about the prevalence of hydrophobia is the statement in an exchange that Ouida's pets are dogs and her villa at Florence is filled with them.

A Cure for Drunkenness.

—Opium, morphine and kindred habits. Valuable treatise sent free. The medicine may be given in a cup of tea or coffee, and, without the knowledge of the person taking it, if so desired. Send two 3c. stamps for full particulars and testimonials of those who have been cured. Address M. V. Luban, agency, 47 Wellington street east, Toronto, Canada. ed

—The lungs, liver, kidneys, bowels, &c., act as so many waste gates for the escape of effete matter and gases from the body. The use of Northrop & Lyman's Vegetable Discovery helps them to discharge their duty. Mr. W. H. Lester, H. M. Customs, Toronto, writes: "I have personally tested the health-giving properties of Northrop & Lyman's Vegetable Discovery, and can testify as to its great value."

OLD COUNTRY PASSAGES.

ECONOMY WITH COMFORT.

The Royal Mail Steamship Adriatic of the White Star Line, has a dining-room and staterooms for a strictly limited number of intermediate passengers. This accommodation, which is on the SALOON DECK, is furnished with the electric light and every modern comfort. Besides the advantages of being in a magnificent ship, passengers will find it superior in ventilation and many other respects to the saloon on many ocean steamers. The Adriatic sails from New York for Liverpool via Queenstown February 18.

T. W. JONES, General Agent,
246 25 York street Toronto.

TORONTO POSTAL GUIDE.

During the month of February mails close and are due as follows:

	CLOSE.		DUE.	
	a.m.	p.m.	a.m.	p.m.
G. T. R., East	6.00	12.45	9.20	10.45
O. & Q. Ry	8.00	6.45	8.50	10.00
G. T. R., West	8.20	3.00	12.50	7.20
N. & N. W	8.30	4.00	10.20	8.10
T. G. & B.	6.00	3.45	11.00	8.20
Midland	6.00	3.30	12.40	9.30
C. V. R.	7.00	3.15	[illegible]	7.40
	a.m.	p.m.	a.m.	p.m.
G. W. R.	6.00	11.30	[illegible]	2.00
	p.m.	p.m.	8.40	4.40
	2.45	9.30	10.30	7.20
	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	11.30
	a.m.	p.m.	a.m.	p.m.
U. S. N. Y	6.00	2.45	8.40	[illegible]
	[illegible]	9.30	10.30	4.40
U. S. Western States	6.00	9.30	8.30	4.40
				7.20

British mails depart as follows:

February 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23, 24, 25.

Time for closing English mails, 10 p.m., on January 3, to 17, 24 and 9 p.m. on all other days.

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Telephone No. 1467. Open Day and Night. 246

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Don't fail to examine our Solid Comfort Cutters and Sleighs, all of the Latest Montreal Styles, at

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Next door to Grand's. 246

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STONE, BRICK, CEMENT AND SEWER PIPE.

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Having purchased the business of George Oliver, will continue it at the above address.

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Satisfaction Guaranteed
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WINTER CLOTHING.

Now that the cold weather has set in you will need a good warm suit of English, Scotch or Canadian Tweed.

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THE YONGE STREET TAILOR,
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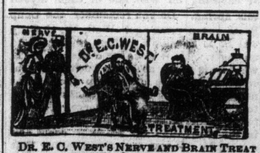

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