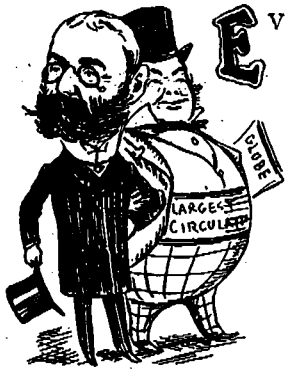


A FEW MINUTES AT THE HUB.



EVENTUALLY it would be sure to come out that we had never visited Boston, and from the instant of that announcement the influence and prestige which GRIP has enjoyed for well nigh a score of years would disappear, for it would be manifest to all reflecting persons that the culture which has heretofore marked these pages must have been a mere sham. To be sure,

the danger has been minimized of late by the presence upon our staff of a gentleman who not only has been to Boston, but who actually lived there for years. Yet we felt that, more or less, ruin would lurk about until it could be truthfully asserted that the rest of us had been there. That declaration can now be made, and GRIP's reputation is safe, come what may. An invitation from the Athens of America, indicating that a large audience of the residents of that city would be pleased to assemble in Tremont Temple and do the listening if our young man would go down there and do the talking, was accepted in the spirit in which it was sent. At the risk of falling under the corroding censure visited by Canadian patriots upon the Cartwrights and Farrers, our young man went. It may diminish the heroism of this, perhaps, to mention that the elections were over, but such was the case. And it may be added, confidentially, that the daring exploit was still further modified by the fact that from the depot in this Old Flag city of Toronto to the depot in that unspeakable abode of Yankees we travelled continuously in a C. P. R. train. We leave Mr. Van Horne to explain this away as best he can.

Well, the audience were there as per agreement, and they did the listening in a manner to leave nothing to be desired on the part of the speaker. Only in one detail was he disappointed. He had expected to look down upon a sea of eye glasses, and there was hardly a *pince-nez* in the house. Nor were these "helps to read" (or to look distinguished) any more prevalent on the streets or at the theatres. This was a set-back, all the more keenly felt because just a few days before going to Boston he had read the following poem by Harry B. Smith, a Chicago man:

THE BOSTON BABE.

In culture's centre, in Boston town,
Dwelt a cultured single man,
A sage professor of owl-like mien,
Some forty years his span.
In all the deepest philosophies,
In all the "fads" of the day,
In languages, sciences, ev'rything
The professor was quite *au fait*.

He wore eye-glasses; of course he did,
As ev'ryone does down there;
Sometimes he blinked through grim goggles green,
And often he wore two pair.
But none is proof against Eros's spells.
And at last it came to pass
That he fell in love with a spinster fair,
The sagest girl in her class.

Oh, though she was only twenty-five,
Through life she'd have had to grope,
If she hadn't worn spectacles strong and thick
As the lens of a telescope.

Lured by each other's charms of mind,
He wooed and she answered "yea";
Lo, after a brief betrothal term
They were wed in a stately way.

The time fled by, as the time will fly,
When, much to their learned joy,
There arrived one day on this mortal scene
A dear little Boston boy.
When the usual crowd gathered 'round the babe,
To chatter, admire and vex,
With unanimous voice they all exclaimed;
"Great heaven! He's born with specs."

One of the few glasses which gleamed in the brightly lighted hall rested upon the nose of Gen. Chas. H. Taylor, proprietor of the *Globe*, and President of the Boston Press Club. The general is one of the most widely-known newspaper men in the States, having achieved a phenomenal sweep with his paper, which he lifted from obscurity to "the biggest circulation in New England" within a dozen years. The Press is one of some nine-hundred and ninety-nine clubs which claim Gen. Taylor as a member, but it probably finds the first place in his affections. It is snugly housed in the very heart of the city, and the evidences of prosperity it exhibits are well calculated to fill a Toronto journalist with envy. If the Boston people at large may be safely judged by those whom it was our young man's good fortune to meet—Hon. Chas. Gallagher, Geo. A. Foxcroft, Mayor Matthew, etc., etc.—the existence of so many clubs is easily accounted for. These gentlemen were all highly clubbable. The funny man of the day has rung the changes on Boston's "culture," and as usual he has a solid fact around which to weave the festoons of fun. It is plain even to the transient visitor that Boston puts more emphasis on her theatres, art schools, lectureships, and social receptions than upon her dry-goods shops. To the resident of almost any other city on the continent, this is of course funny—but it is also refreshing. A Torontonion, however, probably feels more at home there than any other stranger, for Boston is just what Toronto will be when we get 200,000 more of a population.



EX NIHILO NIHIL, ETC.

MR. CRUSTY DE CRUMBLE—"Look here, you ass! When I and my wife come here to get our photographs taken, we want photographs, not things like these. Hang you for an idiot!"

BICKLEY—"I could have d-done them bet-t-ter, if—er—you had b-brought bet-t-ter material."