

# THE DEMI-TASSE

## CRITICISING THE COMMISSARIAT.

NOW that "the size of the loaf" is agitating the Toronto public, the following account of how one man superintended the commissariat may not be amiss.

There were five of them and they were going fishing. Jim was detailed to look after the refreshments for the party and see that provision was made for the hunger and thirst which might afflict them. Everything was ready, rods and tackle in bright and shining order and the best of friends looking forward to supper on the banks of the stream.

"Where's your stuff, Jim?" asked the eldest of the crowd.

"Here," said Jim briefly, producing supplies which consisted of an array of seven bottles of whiskey and a large loaf of bread.

There was a solemn pause and then the first speaker shook his head. "You might have done better, Jim. We'll never be able to get away with all that bread."

## MAKING IT COMPLETE.

THE late B. B. Osler was possessed of a wit which sometimes became caustic. Referring to the appointment of a certain judge, he said: "It is quite in keeping with what they've been doing lately. They put in A—who has a wooden leg, then B—who has a wooden arm, and now we have C—who with a wooden head."

## NEWSLETS.

The schooner, *St. Joseph*, was sunk near Amherstburg in collision with the *Rockefeller*. Not the first time, so Miss Ida Tarbell would say, that Rockefeller has proved a wrecker.

Sir John French will come to Canada to work out the details of the plan of Imperial Defence. Mr. Allan Studholme of the city of Hamilton-on-the-Bay and Mr. James Simpson of Toronto protest, but the *News* is prepared to give Irish French the greatest banquet ever.

Investigations in Montreal before the Royal Commission "reveal graft, wire-pulling, rake-offs and other forms of crookedness." This is becoming an old, old story. Why can't the civic authorities of Montreal show a little originality? If we could hear of a Montreal alderman turning evangelist, that would be news worth while. This time, Montreal has had to pay two prices for flagstones. And now the grafters are to go on the rocks.

It is reported that a cement merger is to be formed with two of our senators among the directors. Won't they be the stuck-up things?

The recent activity in the airship world, says an English despatch, has been responsible for a new form of insurance at Lloyd's, which now declares it is open for aerial insurance. Some of our members at Ottawa will now make frantic efforts to have their speeches insured.

## SHE READ HIM LIKE A BOOK.

THE last chicken had gone to roost, all was still in the barn and yard. The evening lamp was burning, none too brightly, on the centre-table in the sitting-room of the old farmhouse.

Looking up from his magazine the farmer said vehemently to his wife one night:

"Do you know what I'd have done if I had been Napoleon?"

"Yes," she answered. "You'd have settled down in Corsica and spent your life grumbling about bad luck and hard times."—*Ladies' Home Journal*.

## THE PASSING OF AN OLD FRIEND.

THE manager of one of Keith's vaudeville theatres has announced that hereafter the mother-in-law joke will be excluded from his stage. In his decree of banishment no account was taken of the age of the culprit nor of its long and faithful service.

"Go," said the manager, sternly, pointing his finger toward the stage door, "you have brought sorrow enough to the house."

So the decrepit old joke passed away and not even a poor scene-shifter shed a tear. Within three days the manager was flooded with letters of thanks from men and women who were living on the best of terms with their mothers-in-law. A

young man who had no mother-in-law, but who was saving up his money to get one, promptly bought two tickets for the show. Whole families crowded joyfully into the theatre, as though a quarantine had been raised.

In view of this demonstration, it will not be long before the mother-in-law joke will be unable to get work on any stage. It will be compelled to eke out a precarious existence in the comic weeklies and spend its declining days in barber shops.

Yet some historians claim that our ancestors' ancestors laughed at this joke—that centuries ago the fact that one's wife had a mother was thought to be indescribably funny. Perhaps that is why this period of the world's history is called the Dark Age.—*Success*.

## KNEW THE BAD PLACES.

A GENTLEMAN in an address to a graduating class told the following story of the president of an ocean steamship company, who was taking a journey across the water. When the ship was in a dangerous channel he became engaged in conversation with the pilot, an elderly man, who had spent most of his life on the water. The president of the company remarked: "I suppose you know all about the dangerous places in this channel?" "Nope," replied the pilot. "You don't!" exclaimed the president. "Then why are you in charge of that wheel?" "Because I know where the bad places ain't."—*Philadelphia Public Ledger*.

## POLITENESS.

LIEUT. SHACKLETON, in a happy and manly speech which he made in reply to the toast of his health by Mr. Heinemann at the dinner given by that gentleman at the Savoy Hotel, told an interesting story of politeness in the untrodden regions of the Antarctic.

His party, he said, were always extremely good-humoured and polite, and one professor in particular attained a degree of politeness unusual under such trying circumstances. "Are you busy, Mawson?" he called out one night to another member of the party who was in the tent.

"I am," said Mawson.

"Very busy?" said the professor.

"Yes. Very busy."

"If you are not too busy, Mawson, I am down a crevasse."

"The professor was found hanging down a crevasse by his four fingers, a position which he could not have occupied for any length of time."—*London Daily Chronicle*.

## CHARITY ENDURES.

A NEWARK man was walking down to business one morning, when he saw a young woman with a baby in her arms sitting on a church-step and weeping. The man, whom we shall call Jones,

was touched by her apparent distress, and asked her what was the cause of it. "I walked into town," she replied, "to have my baby baptised, and now it will cost me three dollars to have the service performed. I haven't the money, and I don't know what to do." "Well, that's a small matter," said Jones; "I haven't three dollars in change, but here's a ten-dollar bill. Take it and I will wait here for the change." The woman returned in a short time, and handed Jones seven dollars. He patted the child's head and went down-town, rejoicing in his own goodness. He felt good all that day, and his countenance shone with an unusual brightness. His associates all noted the change, and finally one of them asked him the cause of it. "I am happier than usual to-day," said Jones, "and the reason of it is that I did three good things on my way down-town this morning." He related the occurrence, and wound up by saying: "So I performed a deed of charity, started a little child on its way to Paradise, and got seven good dollars for a counterfeit ten-dollar bill."—*Argonaut*.

## IN A BAD PLIGHT.

SOME years ago the excursion steamer returning from Alaska to Seattle dislocated its propeller in a dreary portion of the inner passage and came to a forced stop. For two days the vessel's engineers and machinists laboured to repair the break, but without success. Two of the boats were manned and dispatched for aid to Victoria, three hundred miles away. In the meantime it was discovered that the ship's stores were not abundant. Alarm bred in the minds of pessimistic passengers, and the contagion spread. Starvation might assail the vessel before help arrived. A former California official took it on himself to reassure his timid companions, but his effort was not perfectly adapted to raise drooping spirits. In fact, his closing sentences but added to the gloom. "Let us be brave," he said. "If the worst comes and that dread necessity which in such misadventures has met others must be faced by us, let us remember that it is good to die that our friends may live. The one or more that may be sacrificed will be consoled by that thought." There was a moment's silence, awful in its intensity, then a cheerful voice was heard. "You should be taken first, Governor Booth. You know the bravest are the tenderest." And even the terror-stricken smiled once more.—*Argonaut*.

## THE DARKEY GOT HIS DINNER.

BOZEMAN BULGER, the baseball expert, sat with a number of New York players on the piazza of the hotel at Marlin, Texas, where the New York team does its early training. A large black person in rags hung about in front of their uptilted chairs for half an hour or more, waiting for an opening to project his own personality and needs into the conversation. Mr. Bulger passed the wink for everybody to ignore the coloured brother's obvious desire to make a plea.

A factory whistle blew.

"M'm'p-e-e-e!" sighed the dark one with an explosive effect that commanded the attention of everybody. "Dar she goes! It means dinner time for some people—but it doan mean nothin' but twelve o'clock to me!"

He got his dinner money.—*Everybody's Magazine*.



Live Men Wanted: Exceptional opportunities to right parties, apply at once.—*Life*.