

THE DEMI-TASSE

A SINCERE PRAYER.

IT was in the days when Inspector Seath and Inspector Hodgson went to and fro spreading consternation in the high schools and collegiate institutes of the Province of Ontario. The former was especially an object of dread to the sensitive instructor or the nervous pupil, while the "Seath grammar papers" were feared from one end of the province to the other. In fact, the candidate for examination, when he saw "John Seath" at the top of the paper, simply dropped his head into his hands and groaned in despair, making only a feeble attempt to unravel the mysteries of interrogation. The one anxious inquiry was: "Has Seath set any of the papers?"

Just as this trepidation was at its height, Inspector Hodgson visited a high school in Western Ontario, of which the Principal was an extremely religious gentleman who usually added a petition of his own to the ordinary morning prayer. The Principal, on the first morning of Inspector Hodgson's visit, made the formal prayer and annexed a fervent petition for a blessing on the visiting inspector, adding more fervently: "And, O Lord, we do beseech Thee to soften the heart of his colleague."

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SMITH'S TOUCHING STORY.

"I AM sorry, Smith, but I can't do a thing for you," said the friend to whom Smith had related his hard luck story. "I am borrowing all I can to carry on my own business and am having a hard time to keep my head above water. Our old friend Jones, with whom you roomed at College, has just returned from the West where he made a fortune in mining. He is single and hasn't anyone to look after and I think he would help you out."

"That's a good suggestion," said Smith enthusiastically. "I practically kept Jones the last year in McGill and if he has money I am sure he will help me over this crisis."

Jones is delighted when Smith's card is presented. "Why Smith, old boy, this is the most agreeable surprise of my life," was his greeting when Smith was shown into his private office. "Where did you drop from? Sit right down," and to the coloured porter, "I'm not in to anybody for an hour. Now Smith, tell me all about yourself since you left college."

"Well," began Smith, "I was married that fall to—"

"Married! That's fine. Just what I ought to have done. Just what every man ought to do. Here I am nearly forty and without a tie in the world. But go on tell me all about it. Any children?"

"Yes, we had two," said Smith, "but—"

"Two, that's great. I certainly envy you old man."

"But," continued Smith, "a year ago my wife died and—"

"Died? That's terrible. Almost worse than never being married," said Jones, "and those two dear little children with no mother!" Here the tears came to Jones' eyes.

"The two children died, too," continued Smith, "got scarlet fever about six months ago and both went."

At this, Jones' handkerchief goes to his eyes and his voice breaks as he tries to sympathise with his friend.

"And to cap the climax my creditors are pushing me so hard, that unless I can raise five thousand dollars within the next ten days I am a bankrupt."

Jones breaks down completely at this end and pushes a button, and to the coloured porter who answers the summons said, between sobs, "Put this fel-fellow out, he is break-breaking my he-heart."

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MORE THINGS IN HEAVEN AND EARTH.

THE pipe organ is said by some musicians to be the instrument without a soul, depending on mechanical appliances to produce the various effects of pipe-organ music. The pipe organ has great potentialities, however, as the following little episode will show.

It was the occasion of the building of the present big organ in the Metropolitan Church, Toronto. The large rear organ was finished and Dr. Tor-

rington, the venerable organist of the time, was lingering about one evening trying out the instrument. A number of musical people wandered in; among them two or three very prominent Methodists known to the world of music. Dr. Torrington was prevailed upon to give a private recital. He pulled out a number of stops and played a few full-blooded noiseful passages, after which he paused and looking about at the party he said with poetic enthusiasm: "Gentlemen, that's earth."

Nods from the musical ones present. He pulled out a few more stops; shut off a few and began to play a ravishing strain on the echo organ.

"Ah, gentlemen," he said happily, "that's heaven."

Approbatory signs from the musical ones present, all glad to know that heaven and earth are both present in one place in a modern pipe organ.

But in an unguarded moment one of the party not so good a Methodist as the rest and quite carried away by the Doctor's analogies, said crisply: "Say, Doctor, now give us hell."

But the musical ones said it was language fit not for a church. The Doctor declined to play the Hades selection.

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A TALE OF TWO CITIES.

New York with gladness was aflame
And proudly welcomed with acclaim
A Polar hero o'er the seas,
Who'd been where gasoline would freeze.
New York exclaimed in haughty glee,
"We've had Explorer Cook to tea."
Said Sydney with a sigh so weary—
"Oh, get along! We've dined with Peary."

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BETTER THAN SERVICE.

THERE was once a semi-weird character in the north of Ontario and his name was Pollough Pogue. He was known of shantymen and river-drivers. He wrote a ballad and the same was published in a Toronto weekly, at great length—deservedly. It was not a soothing sort of poem; but jaggedly full of things that are understood best by the shantymen. The title was, "The River Giants." The editor of the *Haileyburyian*, Mr. C. C. Farr, whose opinions on literature are the standard for that part of the country lying round Cobalt, met Pogue one day shortly after publication of the poem.

"Pogue," said he, "do you mean to tell me you wrote that ballad?"

"Sure I did," was the reply. "Every word of it."

"I don't believe you," said Farr. "It's a mile too good for your style."

The poem might have passed into the usual obscurity that lies in wait for current literature; but a week or so ago the Ontario Legislature Cabinet took a junketing trip up to the Cobalt country in company with Lord Beresford. The party stopped at one of the camps where were gathered a number of the river giants alluded to by the poet Pogue. Out of deference to the Admiral, and in order to give him a real northern thrill, one of the big shantymen with a broken English style stood up to his enormous height, big and brawny in his shoe-packs—and he recited to the assemblage in the open air the entire ballad—nearly half a page, "The River Giants."

The effect was magical. Lord Beresford had never heard anything like it. Members of the Cabinet pronounced the ballad better than any of the songs of the sourdough or the "ballads of the cheechako." And the fact that a river-driver, six-foot-two in his shoe-packs, should have learned by heart the whole of the ballad written by Pogue is a tribute to Pogue, who is now in Los Angeles doing something in journalism, but whatever it may be not equal to the doughty and bloody ballad in which the great line ends—"I'll ross you from toe to chin."

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MORE POLE.

FIRST Citizen to Second Citizen walking down Jasper Avenue, Edmonton: Do you think Peary discovered the North Pole?

Second Citizen: H'm! Rather cooked-up story. The Toronto Mail of yore would call its ancient enemy, the Globe, a Cook book. Now the

Mail's wrathful editor says with indignant mien: The d— Pearyodical.

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HIS OPINION OF DAN.

DANIEL WEBSTER, the great American statesman and orator, used to enjoy telling the following story concerning his first visit to his parental home in New Hampshire after he had become known to fame.

As he approached the homestead he met an ancient darkey who for many years was attached to the place and whom he knew from his earliest boyhood. The latter, not having seen him since he was a youth, did not recognise the distinguished visitor and Mr. Webster, with the intention of surprising him, began to question him as follows:

"Can you tell me, my good man, where the Webster homestead is?"

"Why, sah, you's right at it, sah, dat's it dar."

"You seem to be pretty well acquainted around here. Do you know anything of the family?"

"Do I. Well suttently I does. I done lived all my life right heah on de place."

"Well, then, perhaps you can give me some information. The name Webster is now famous down in the country where I come from. There were two boys, were there not?"

"Two boys, yes sah, Zeke and Dan—knew 'em from childhood sah."

"Well really, that's interesting. You know they are great men now, and I have come a long distance just to see the place where they were born. What kind of boys were they, anyway?"

"Well, sah," replied his coloured informant, "Zeke weren't a bad kind of fellow at all, but that air Dan was a reg'lar darn fool."

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THE HAPPY MEDIUM.

TEN-YEAR-OLD Thomas had been away for the holidays and on his return had to submit to fatherly interrogations.

"I hope you were a good boy, Tommie," remarked his paternal parent.

"Pretty good," was the cheerful response.

"Well, I hope you weren't a really bad boy."

"Not very," said Thomas thoughtfully. "I was just comfortable."

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ONE ON THE CHOIR.

IN one of our city churches recently there was a difficulty amongst the singers and it being rumoured as a settled fact that the choir would not sing a note the next Sabbath, the minister commenced the service in the morning by giving out that hymn of Watts, "Come ye who love the Lord." After reading it through, he looked up very emphatically to the choir and said, "You will begin to sing at the second verse—Let those refuse to sing who never knew our God." They sang.

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FROM OUT THE SILENCE.



Ethel (finding the sermon tedious, and thinking it high time for the collection). "Oh, Mother, do pay the man, and let's go home."