



VAN HORNE STUMPED.

(SEE GOLDWIN SMITH'S LETTER IN THE *Mail* ON THE SITUATION IN MANITOBA.)

RUMINATIONS ON ROSALINE'S RHYME.

BEING A GENTLE CRITIQUE OF AN UNPRACTICAL AND UNHEALTHFUL LYRIC.

BY THE GROWLING CONTRIBUTOR.

ROSALINE, E. J.—has written a little verse, which I see printed in the *Empire's* Woman's Department. That is my apology for having read it. Unfortunately I am a subscriber to the *Empire*. I say unfortunately, because having to read such things as this poem, makes my subscription an unfortunate speculation. When I pick up my paper I want to be let severely and continuously alone—in the paper as well as out of it. But when productions of this order are brought under my very nose—obtruded upon me *nolens volens*—I guess I have just grounds for complaint.

"In the Night!" is Miss Rosaline's theme. Now, if there is anything under heaven I abominate, it is to have the doings of the night paraded in the press.

People have no right to do anything at night but go to bed and sleep. Proper people do so. Those who act otherwise, either are improper people, or have something wrong with them. I want to hear nothing about either class. And my impression is that I am but one of a very large multitude in this particular. Therefore, I warn the papers that if they persist in printing what goes on during the hours when nothing should go on, we shall rise in our might and set our faces as well as our purses dead against it. It is simply disgraceful that a man who wants to enjoy life naturally and quietly, should be harassed, not to say tortured, by unwelcome and disagree-

able topics reported and discussed in the public prints. It won't be stood any longer, sir, I tell you plainly! It is peace and calm and freedom from vexation. The majority of rightly-constituted men want these days. And, by George, sir, we mean to enjoy it, if we have to boycott the whole, miserable, pestiferous press of the land! Now, just let us look, for curiosity, at this unnatural young woman's production about so undesirable a subject as the night. She starts out with this:

"There is no silence absolute, it seems."

Hang it, no there is *not*! There would be if it were not for such tireless, not to say turbulent spirits as this young person. Saying there is no silence, is going to produce it, don't you think? Getting up out of bed at midnight and going moaning and groaning and grunting about the house, that "silence" is "not absolute," is a nice way to bring on your silence, isn't it? Climb up on the roof and lament in frenzied tones that "there is no silence!" Perch on the back-yard fence, look up at the moon, and sob yourself into hysterics at the unaccountable absence of perfect stillness! Go down cellar and rummage the coal-bin with a snow-shovel for your missing quiescence! Any one of these great schemes will get you "silence," not merely in small quantities, but in whole chunks. Eh? Try it, Rosaline, and if not successful, apply to me and I'll give you my recipe for silence in a York minute.

But let us go ahead:—

"Lying awake in the 'wee hours,' I heard,
Last night, the muffled nestling of a bird,
And a low semi-chirp, as if in dreams,
By midnight breezes and the stars' soft beams,
Its little music-loving soul was stirred
To impulses of song."

I'd ring that confounded bird's neck on the spot, if there wasn't another one to be had in the wide world for love or money! What your canary wants, my girl, is probably insect powder or more seed in his cage. No bird of mine would dare to start up a chirrup after I got in bed, and live till next morning to tell the tale of his silly act. But if careless, foolish persons will go on keeping unnatural things around them, they will just have to hunt for their "perfect peace"—and take it out in hunting.

Here, now, there's more of it:—

"The insects chirred
Their lazy lays, soft as the speech of streams."

Well, if that is not a philosophical view to take of the cricket-nuisance, I'm blowed! I'm no superstitious old woman, but you needn't try to convince me that a cricket in your house isn't a sign of ill luck. It's a well-authenticated fact! And yet, here we find a young woman actually listening, at dead of night, to the peep of an infernal cricket, and placidly terming the death-betokening "peep" a "chir"—an "insect's lazy lay"! By George, there's something in that unemotional girl's composition that needs looking after! If I was her father I'd call in the doctor right off, and at the same time I'd make her hunt the old house high and low till she found that hanged black beetle and mashed all the "chir" and "lazy lay" out of his ebony carcase! That's what I would do!!