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TALES OF THE TOWN.

IT is now nearly seventy years since Amelia Opie wrote her celebrated work on the Art of Lying. Whether Miss Opie's contribution to the science of prevarication improved the style of lying or induced her readers to be more truthful, is a matter I am not prepared to discuss. Certain it is that, in her classification of lies, Miss Opie did not fully cover the ground. If I remember correctly, the authoress divided lies about as follows: Lies of Vanity, Lies of Convenience, Lies of Interest, Lies of Fear, Lies of First-rate Malignity, Lies of Second-rate Malignity, Lies, falsely called Lies of Benevolence, Lies of Real Benevolence and Lies of Wantonness.

Miss Opie once believed that the lie of fear was confined to the low and uneducated of both sexes, but further reflection convinced her, as it has others, that this is by no means the case. It is now generally admitted that this lie springs from the want of moral courage, and as this defect is by no means confined to any class or age, the result of it, that fear of man which prompts to the lie of fear, must be universal also; though the nature of the dread may be of various and different degrees of strength.

Lies of Fear are quite often the result of Lies of Malignity. For instance, a man in a moment of thoughtlessness maligns a kind employer. He knows that if discovered he will lose his position, and starvation stares him in the face. In order to save himself from the wrath which his folly will bring down upon him, he will equivocate and deny that he is guilty of the charge laid at his door. The denial may be indirect, but the fact remains that he is deliberately lying, and this is what constitutes a lie of fear. Lies of evasion are common and very often clumsy. Take for instance the man who says, "I did not do so-and-so," but who influences another person to do so, is guilty of a lie of evasion. Of course it will be said that very few men will stoop to such a cowardly means of screening themselves, still such a thing has been done, and no doubt will be done again. The above remarks have no bearing on anything of a local character, and are merely written to fill in space. I may take occasion, in the course of a week or so, to further discuss this matter, and use local characters to illustrate my subject.

I observe in an eastern paper that the cholera is, beyond everything else, the source of the gravest and most widespread alarm at the present time. Its appearance in its most frightful forms, in many of the

chief seaports of Europe, and the numerous instances that have already proved fatal, render impossible the hope that had been indulged in that the pestilence would be confined within narrow limits, and the whole world is now face to face with the problem of how best to prevent or cure. It is to be hoped that the sense of security hitherto indulged in may not give place to a still more senseless panic, and to this end not overmuch faith should be placed in the sensational exaggerations with which the columns of the daily press teem. Unless some check is placed upon the latitude indulged in, people run no slight risk of being frightened to death long before the plague reaches them. No country and no city can afford to leave undone one single thing that will conduce to safety, but there is little use in indulging helpless and actionless terror.

It is alleged that many of the fruit dealers of this city are in the habit of selling decayed fruit to Indians and Chinamen. This is a serious matter at any time, but with the cholera raging throughout Europe and almost forcing a foothold on this continent, this matter becomes a question for immediate action. The *Colonist* of Friday morning, sounds another note of warning to the authorities to see that the city is "cleaned up." It asks, "What is the corporation of Victoria doing to prepare for the advent of cholera?" and answers, "Nothing whatever." Of course, it is not to be expected that the present city council will do anything to protect the city, and it only remains with the citizens themselves to do individually what they can to prevent a visit of the disease. The exchange of rotten and decayed fruit to the Indians for fish is an industry which should not be encouraged, and, if continued, we will be able to get up a cholera epidemic of our own, independent of Europe. The city scavengers have gone on strike, declaring that they cannot go on with their work for want of some means of disposing of the city's filth. The masterly inactivity which characterizes the Victoria City Council on occasions of this kind is worthy of admiration. They either do not know what their duties are, or knowing they do not care about putting themselves to the trouble of performing the work for which they were elected. If the cholera visits Victoria, we will no doubt behold once more the harrowing spectacle of a city government acknowledging its incapacity and the people calling upon the higher authority of the province for protection.

Efforts strong and uncompromising efforts—should be made by the white population of Victoria to prevent the further spread of the Chinese over the city. As they are now in almost every quarter,

our noses are assailed on each side by the stench arising from their laundries and stores. It appears to me that property owners would consult their best interests by agitating in favor of restricting Chinamen to the haunts of Chinatown. John's presence not only lowers the moral tone of a community, but, wherever he takes up his abode, the property in that neighborhood is greatly depreciated in value; yet despite the fact that property is so depreciated, the Chinese in Victoria are allowed to spread all over the city, to plant their many unpleasant odors and disease-breeding dens alongside of valuable residential property.

On Yates street, they have now crept up to above Cook, and goodness only knows where next they intend opening their horrid-smelling wash houses. During the latter part of last winter, a brick building was erected near the corner of Yates and Blanchard streets for the special accommodation of two laundries, and now the smell of soapsuds and dirty water around that locality cry loudly (tho' vainly) to Health Officer Bailey for attention and relief. But I suppose, now that there are no funds in the city exchequer, Mr. Bailey won't trouble about such a trifle as a bad smell.

And this same disgraceful state of affairs exists around every Chinese laundry in town, without any attempt on the part of civic officials to remedy it. Chinamen, with perfect impunity, are continually throwing slops and refuse out in front of their shops, and that, too, on Government street. I wonder if Mr. Bailey, our very active and esteemed Health officer, ever takes a trip into Chinatown? If he *does*, nothing ever comes of it in the way of reform, and if he *doesn't* he is neglecting his duty. The stench down that way is positively strong enough to frighten any tourist away from Victoria, unless he is an ex-M. P. from Ottawa, and even he would get all he could stand.

The fearful stench arising from the foot of Johnson street demands immediate attention. Several laundries on Pandora street empty their sweet-smelling refuse into the Johnson street ravine, and Chinamen all the way down contribute generously to the multitudinous odors, while at the foot of the ravine half a dozen laundries add their quota, making altogether a horribly strong and sickening stench. I wonder if that ravine is leased by the Chinese, or do the city fathers leave it unfilled just to please them?

It is to be regretted that so many dogs are allowed to run at large, to the great annoyance and positive danger of the public generally. Curs of all descriptions rush out by the dozen to bark and snarl at