

It is certainly one of the mysteries of life how some girls get married, while others are altogether left out in the world. Some of the latter are just as nice as anyone could wish, and yet they seem never to get over a chance, while many of their more fortunate sisters have really nothing to recommend them, at least nothing that an unprejudiced on-looker can see. They are not pretty. They are not useful. They are not particularly good housekeepers. They are not intellectual, indeed they have not two ideas in their silly heads to keep one another company. They may be idle, frivolous, vain, foolish, empty-headed, or even vicious girls, and yet they win the goal of every woman's desire—a house of their own and a husband, while other women with ten times more beauty, a hundred times more wit and intelligence, and a thousand times more genuine goodness and loveliness of character, are neglected.

For want apparently of something better to talk about, the Reform press in Ontario quarters is even yet writing in very useless talk about Sir John A. Macdonald's new title. They might employ their wits to very much better advantage. Comment of course was quite in order, and very hostile comment was to be expected, and was quite legitimate, and we are inclined to think not altogether uncalled for. But there is no use to be continually harping on the same string, especially when all such exercise is perfectly futile. The thing is done, and can't be undone. Sir John is really a G. C. B. with all that the title implies, and the Reformers should frankly accept the situation, and be thankful that it is no worse. What would they have done had he been made a Lord, or perhaps even a Marquis? Why, one shudders to think what would have been the effect on bilious editors had that taken place. But it hasn't, for which the special Providence that watches over the welfare of young and struggling democracies, be abundantly praised.

A decision recently given by the Judges of the Superior Court of Massachusetts is of interest to all newspaper men. We are not aware that a Canadian decision has ever been given on the subject.

In one of the Sunday papers of Boston was published what appeared to be an important piece of evidence relating to a murder which occurred in that city about twelve years ago.

The District Attorney, feeling that justice might be defeated by the premature disclosure thus made, summoned the reporters who wrote the article, and they declined to give the name of the informant on the ground that it was a privileged communication.

The question then was, Could the reporters be adjudged guilty of contempt for persisting in their refusal to answer before the Grand Jury? The judges gave an adverse decision.

People talk about hard times and the great difficulty felt by multitudes in making ends meet, but after all have the people in general not themselves to blame? They drink whiskey and beer in such frightful quantities, and smoke tobacco to such a monstrous extent, that it is not impossible that there should be hard times from these two expenditures alone. Perhaps the people in the States drink a little more than we do and smoke tobacco somewhat more industriously. Yet after making all allowance we come pretty well up. In the States there is consumed about 1½ gallons of whiskey to every man, woman and child in the

country, and about 10½ gallons of wine and beer. How can people but poor when they waste at that rate?

It is impossible to think without a shudder upon such occurrences as the burning of the orphan asylum at Brooklyn the other week. It is customary to term such fatalities "dispensations of Providence." They might more justly be called "visitations of human negligence." There have been few examples more glaring of what might well be called temptings of Providence than this St. John's Asylum. Hundreds of boys, the majority of them mere children, were imprisoned in a vast structure almost wholly composed of wood. Five stories in height, we believe it was, and a Mansard roof in addition. There was no fire escape. The means of egress were few. The room used as an infirmary was immediately over an apartment used as a drying room for fuel. In such a building a conflagration was almost certain to come sooner or later, and very nearly as certain when it did come to be attended with loss of life. It has come at last, and the loss of life has been terrible. There is not half the supervision exercised that there ought to be over the construction of buildings intended for the accommodation of many persons. The most complete arrangements possible should be made for just such eventualities as happen every now and then. And especially when children and women have to be considered the necessity for such action is all the more exacting. There are many places besides the St. John's Home that are veritable death-traps. The same results or worse would follow under similar circumstances that followed there.

The Yankees have done a shrewd thing in this Nicaraguan treaty of theirs. It is difficult to see what right Britain has to interfere in such a case. It is a mutual arrangement between two independent countries.

Franco and Portugal are inclined to "act ugly" about this Congo Valley business. Franco if she is wise will not involve herself any further with foreign powers. She has quite enough to do with China.

Is Russia, by the way, going to side with Franco against the Celestials? Some of the Government organs, it is reported, are strongly urging the good opportunity now presented for seizing Corea and settling accounts with China. With Franco on one side and Russia on the other, China would have her hands full. Singly she could manage them. Together it is doubtful if she can do so.

The Russian Government is making a new departure in the way of pawnbroking, and we are inclined to think, a good one. Hereafter there will be no such thing as a private pawnbroker. That business will be a Government monopoly. No profit will be sought. Paying necessary expenses will be all that is looked for. Six per cent. interest per annum will be the maximum rate.

The bar of Ontario lost a distinguished ornament in losing Mr. James Bethune. Though a comparatively young man he had thoroughly established himself as one of the ablest men of his profession in the Province.

The Toronto Globe called attention the other day to the case of some one who writes to the New York World offering to give \$1,000 to the person who will satisfactorily explain why it is that people entering a crowded elevated-railroad car, instead of moving up to the middle of the car, persist in hanging about the doors. If some one else will offer another \$1,000 for a satisfac-

tory explanation of how it is that so many men, and women too, will force their way into already over-crowded street cars which the struggling horses can scarcely drag along, then two very important phases of social economy will doubtless be placed fairly on the way of full elucidation.

That fashionable club-house generally known as Henry Ward Beecher's church, is stirred to its depths just now, it seems, about the course that reverend gentleman saw fit to take in the Presidential election. Everybody knows that he was an out and out partisan of Cleveland's and never tried to mince matters in the way he spoke of Blaine. This not unnaturally gave deep offence to many of the wealthiest and most influential men belonging to his congregation, and now when the season of powrenting is at hand, it is becoming pretty clear just how sore they feel about it. Many of them have left the church, and it is said that instead of the \$34,000 which the pews brought last year, the amount this year will not be more than \$15,000, or \$5,000 less than Beecher's salary.

Every now and then the question of vivisection *pro* and *con* is vigorously debated. It is a question of course on which much heated controversy is to be expected. Impossible that it should be otherwise. Matters of such moment are involved, that these discussions in cold blood would not be creditable to human nature. Some of the tortures inflicted in this way in the name of science have been simply horrible. The only possible excuse for them is that science and humanity have been benefitted thereby. Unless the scientists can show that this result may be looked for with tolerable certainty they know that they cannot hope to escape the storm of obloquy that would certainly be poured upon them. As it is they have very considerable difficulty in avoiding it. The cause of the present revival of the discussion is the account given by a surgeon of some extraordinarily successful cutting out of a tumour from the brain, an operation rendered possible by previous experiments on dogs. Of course he and others like him take the ground that the lower animals have no rights that must not give way to the superior rights of man. If he can hope to be in any way benefitted, then it is quite justifiable, to put them to any discomfort in order to compass that result. Like many other important questions, this is one of degree. It is quite true that to a certain extent the rights of the lower animals must yield to those of man, and that even their lives may have to be sacrificed in order not to save his life merely, but to enable him to live that life as fully and freely as possible. It is a question, however, a very grave and serious question, how far this right over the happiness of the lower animals can be justifiably permitted. Assuredly it cannot be allowed to go any length that the scientific zeal of some men might lead them. They say they are the best judges. Not necessary by any means, for they are not impartial. They are prejudiced to begin with. Their wish is father to the thought, and the decision in their case. They will not admit that to be wrong which their scientific curiosity prompts them to attempt.

While we are writing the British Detectives are on the *qui vive* to find out the perpetrators of the London Bridge villainy. The generous reward of £5,000 offered by the Corporation of the City has put them on their mettle, and everything that professional skill, working for the love of the thing, as well as prompted by hope of reward, can do, will be done to discover the

miscreants. We have very little hope that their searchings will come to much. There will be arrests of course, but it is highly doubtful if the real villains will be found. Not very much is expected from the expedient of getting faces sketched from the descriptions of those who say they saw the men suspected of the crime. Everybody of course will hope that the detectives may be successful, and the miscreants meet the due reward of their iniquity, but we confess that to our mind as yet the prospects for this are few enough from encouraging.

"Don't marry for money"—the warning is given often enough, but it comes with redoubled force from the sad experiences of the wife of the Russian Grand Duke Sergius. She is a granddaughter of Queen Victoria, and a daughter of Princess Alice of Hesse. It is well enough known that the royal house of Hesse was often enough in straitened circumstances. That is abundantly plain from the memoirs of the Princess. Having felt all the miseries of genteel poverty the young princess no doubt thought the best thing she could do when Duke Sergius came avowing was to take him. She was sure of a good living at any rate. Wealth would be hers, as well as high position, and all the comfort and ease and elegance and consideration that come from wealth allied with high position. And so she married him. But lo! scarcely six short months have elapsed when we find her seeking earnestly for a divorce. She has found that some things are harder to bear than poverty after all. This she thinks too hard to bear, and she will fling it off. She will have none of it. She will make a scandal rather than stand it. The haughty Guelph blood that she inherited resents the insult to her wifely honour. And so she will have a divorce. Efforts are made of course to prevent the thing leaking out, but all in vain. Matters of that kind cannot be kept secret. The news is flashed over the whole globe that the six months bride of Duke Sergius of Russia is already seeking divorce. It is said that the Czar and his wife have exercised their personal influence to such good effect as to prevent an open rupture. That will be only for a time in all probability. The Princess showed very proper spirit in trying to get rid of such a fellow, who is evidently like so many other people of royal blood, a thorough rouse.

The Lord Mayor of London, it seems, according to the wisdom of Sir William Vernon Harcourt, the Home Secretary, acted with an amount of zealous haste that was quite out of place in offering that reward of £5,000. Before taking such an important step, he ought to have communicated with the Government. His course was an unjustifiable imputation on the ministers. Not the right thing to do at all. The Lord Mayor, like the sturdy freeman of the metropolis that he was, very properly gave Sir William Vernon Harcourt to understand that the conduct of the city of London was in no way to be regulated with regard to such matters, even by her Majesty's ministers. It had its rights and would exercise them without saying, "by your leave." Sir William, in short, was politely told that the conduct of the corporation of London was none of his business.

Literary circles are kept wonderfully lively by the publication of great men's biographies. They give a spice and sprightliness to life that would otherwise, we fear, be sadly wanting. The memoirs of Tourgenieff, the great Russian novelist, which are coming out just now, gives a very unfavorable estimate of Sarah Bernhardt. He is fiercely contemptuous, calling the diva

one, bold, wor- so le- ties of to be for n- thing have speak down herea dezer over l- call amou pect- It the fe- att- We n- of a- the e- sym- was a- there tempt convi- canno- of the- to ten- were- van e- fest u- It cau- dred y- missi- the s- treat- An- in one- bear- Booth- People live t- was v- do not- been al- the my- The Macka- is to be- it is sai- Ram- spring- promin- cond o- whom- the ran- Hard- back of- was sea- of good- given u- people- well as- That- New Y- take in- property- The n- in avers- ing vo- state an- rapid- is an mind- on the- best in- back- Non- able of- h, an-