



THE STORY OF A TROUSERS-STRETCHER.

"PATRONAGE."

"WILL you buy a couple of tickets for the assembly of the Ontario Society of Artists?" said Sherwood Pinxit to Mr. Noveaurich.

"Guess not," was the prompt reply.

"But it's going to be the event of the season; a decidedly swagger function, I assure you," persisted Pinxit.

"Very likely, but I don't care for that sort of thing myself," replied Noveaurich.

"Don't you think your wife and daughters would like to go?" urged Pinxit.

"No; I don't think they would. I tell you I don't want any tickets," and the reply was delivered quite snappishly.

"But, my dear sir," said Pinxit, "the affair is to be under the patronage of the Lt.-Governor and Miss Marjorie Campbell—"

"Give us five reserved seat tickets, quick," gasped Noveaurich; "why didn't you mention that at first?"

SHORTER HOURS OF LABOR.

THE agitation for shorter hours of labor has been going on for some time amongst artizans, and the movement is evidently spreading in other directions. It has now been taken up by that large and influential body known as newspaper chestnuts. A meeting of the representatives of this class of workers was held the other evening, a report of which has been courteously furnished to us by the Secretary.

The chair was taken at 8 o'clock by the *Kicking-Mule* oke, a venerable witticism with scanty white locks.

The chairman, in calling the meeting to order, said all present knew the necessity for action on the question of reduced hours of labor, and he need not take up their valuable time with any lengthened remarks. The fact of his being in the chair was a sufficient indication of his own hearty sympathy with the movement. Personally he was strongly opposed to the existing system under which he felt he was cruelly overworked, as he had no doubt other chestnuts were. He then called for expressions of opinion from those present, and resumed his seat.

The *Exorbitant Plumber Bill* joke was the first to respond. He said he rose cheerfully but with difficulty, owing to the infirmities of age. He hadn't enjoyed what one might call a holiday since he could remember, and now that the winter season was coming on he looked forward with dread—he might even say terror—to almost constant labor under the pen of that cruel task-master, the newspaper humorist. He was in favor of shorter hours, and felt that so far as he was himself concerned, he should have been superannuated years ago.

The *Mother-in-Law* joke next took the floor. She quite endorsed all that had been said by the previous speaker. She was aware that she had long since ceased to be funny, and would dearly like a rest, as she was sure also the public would. She had little hope of the movement for shorter hours of labor amounting to anything, however, as the so-called funny man of the day seemed to depend entirely upon the labor of existing chestnuts.

The *Will-be-a-sis'er-to-you* joke said she merely wished to express her contempt for so-called humorists who were so poverty stricken in brain power that they could only exist by a heartless sweating system, of which she was one of the unfortunate victims.

The *Lover-who stays-late* joke said he found it painful to stand on his feet even for a moment as he had been twisted into so many shapes in the humorous columns (so called) that he was now a chronic sufferer from cramps. He begged to offer the following resolution:

Whereas, the spirit of the day is opposed to overwork, and whereas shorter hours have been obtained by workers in other fields of labor,

Be it resolved that we the Chestnuts of Popular Newspaper Humor, protest against the constant and inordinate amount of work which is placed upon us by alleged funny men, and declare that consideration of common respect for old age, as well as sympathy for the gentle reader, demand that we forthwith be superannuated, or that our hours of toil be materially reduced.

The resolution was eloquently and forcibly supported by the *Short-weight-Iceman* joke, the *Railway-fraud-Sandwich* joke, the *Man who swears-when-putting-up stovepipes* joke, the *Slow-telegraph messenger* joke, the *Young-wife's-heavy-cake* joke and the *Darkey chicken-thief* joke. It was finally declared carried unanimously, and the meeting broke up with the singing of "Auld lang Syne."

TOO MUCH "FRENCH" FOR HIM.

WALKERTON—"What's this, Blenkinsop? I hear you've joined the Equal Righters. Thought you were a stiff Tory."

BLINKINSOP—"So I was. But I've changed my views."

WALKERTON—"Well, well. What's the reason for that?"

BLINKINSOP—"Why, my experience at the Court of Revision has convinced me that it's high time to put an end to this thing of French domination."