



### An Elephant on His Hands.

The public heart goes out in tender pity for the Hon. the poor little Minister of Agriculture, who, in addition to the heavy duties of his own department, is at present struggling under the superadded weight of Sir Charles Tupper's. As he rises in the House to answer some member's question pertaining to the Department of Railways, and stands with a dazed expression in his eyes, he presents a striking illustration of the man who won the elephant at the raffle. His ready wit alone saves the dignity of the Cabinet. For every such questioner he has a satisfactory and settling form of words: "I don't know;" and no doubt he mutters many times a day the famous words of Wellington, "O that Prorogation or Tupper would come!"

### March.

In seeking the derivation of the month of March we are once more directed towards that mythological region where "a many years ago" there disported, in all the ease and freedom of an Olympian existence,

"The gods and goddesses  
Without skirts or bodices,"

concerning whom the ancient classics have had so much to say. Olympus was by no means remarkable for propriety; indeed the early heathen have given us, in that creation of their fertile imagination, the very best possible proof of their own condition at the time, or of what they would have been if possessed of the power with which they endowed their deities. Of course modern cynics may be inclined to think that we are no better now than they were in the direction of sunrise years and years ago; but we can at least lay claim to a sense of public propriety which was rarely exhibited either in earth or the heathen heaven at the time of which we speak. In the midst of this healthy and enervating atmosphere, we forget the precise date but no matter when, Mars, the god of war, first saw the light of day. To add to his chances of future profligacy he never had a father. We speak advisedly in this matter; just ask any mythologist if we are not right. We don't mean that, Topsy-like, he skipped along in continual ignorance as to the identity of his masculine progenitor (alas, that so many, even in this enlightened age, should have cause to seek in vain for information on that head!)-but exactly what the words indicate; he never had a father. The particular deity, too, to whom he was supposed to grant filial obedience, was either too much taken up with his own little shortcomings or too careless of his quasi-son's future to grant even a passing word of counsel and fatherly advice. His every effort, no matter how licentious or vicious, met with unqualified success, and both in earth and Olympus he was courted and made much of with a constancy and ardor which, if glossed over with a very thin coating of surface propriety and mock-modesty, would bear a close resemblance to some of the feats of adulation in which modern fashion is wont to find delight. It mattered not that he bought his military

victories with flagitious violence and rapine; that when out of a job he occupied his time in the haunts of drunkenness and disorder; that he made love to a brother deity's wife while said brother deity was away from home; that he played Olympian poker for enormous stakes, and didn't hesitate to "stack" the pasteboard when fortune proved for the moment unpropitious; that in short he kept himself constantly qualified for club life and chambers on the north side of K. street;-all these things were smoothed over and looked upon as of no account, when it came to be considered that he was supremely successful and abundantly attractive. Mamas with eligible daughters were ever on the watch for him, while the daughters themselves joined in one general and appreciative chorus that dear Mr. Mars was such a man of the world!

We don't know that there is any very special lesson to be drawn from the above-mentioned source of derivation, except perhaps that the boasted civilization of the nineteenth century seems altogether irreconcilable with the continuation of a title which owes its origin to a heathen god, and an exceedingly rascally deity at that. But where a Christian people are content that their great day of rest should be called after an ancient hebdomadal festival in connection with the worship of the sun, there is little use in mentioning minor incongruities. Neither do we know that there is any marked appropriateness, here in Canada at all events, in applying the name of the present month at this season of the year. We have nothing warlike in March save wind and parliamentary debate, and these, if not absolutely synonymous, are oft-times singularly blustery and unprofitable. Many of our legislators are careful to follow the god of war in utter disregard as to the rectitude of the means by which they attain their end; and not a few of their followers show themselves apt pupils of the Mars-worshippers of old, by glorying in leaders who call one another "liar" across the floor of the House, and count it a respectable method of waging a political warfare.

### Smith's Common Law.

By A FIRST INTERMEDIATE MAN.

O Smithiest of the Smiths! O driest  
Of all the Smithy tribe, who pliest  
Thy self-plucked goose's quill unbiased

Thou common Smith, thy hand thou trest  
At Common Law.

What moved thee thus fond youth, to bother  
With this crack-headed, knotty blither,  
Drier than talk about the weather,  
Or budget speeches!

The emblem of the land of heather  
Pierce through thy breeches.  
SERVUS.



Now, then! Who's Got the Best Ministerial Standing?



### John Bull in South Africa.

Capt. John Bull is cutting a sorry figure in South Africa, where he went on a gracious and highly civilized mission, to wit, to subdue the rebellious Boers and take possession of their country. Up to the present writing he hasn't succeeded very satisfactorily in any part of this programme, and a good many loyal members of the British Empire would feel tolerably well satisfied if he ultimately failed. The South African Boer appears to be an awkward animal to handle, but Capt. Bull is encountering not only an immediate enemy in the valorous defenders of the soil, but another powerful foe in the public opinion of the world, which is decidedly against such raiding as this. Mr. Bull is not exactly starving for territory, and even if he were, that would not justify him in annexing the fatherland of any people who didn't want to be annexed. No glory has yet been gained in the "war" with the Boers, though the triumphant achievement of the present military mission will be a trifle more humiliating to British honor and pride than any of the recent engagements.

### The Death of the Czar.

From the far north a startling cry is heard,  
"The Czar is dead!"—the blow so long deferred  
At length has struck great Alexander low—  
Victim Imperial of a trackless foe.

And all the world with horror stands aghast:  
Emperor and Autocrat—the mighty past,  
Shows few more mighty—his mere breath was law—  
His living word held continents in awe.

Great, but not wise enough to heed the sign—  
The writing on the wall—the line on line,  
Of sullen warning—or too slow to bend—  
He braved the worst—that worst his mangled end.

Let none forget his fiat freed the slave—  
An act that glorifies his ghastly grave—  
Let none forget the system, not the man,  
Held Russia prostrate neath a ruthless ban.

No reckless tyrant he—in impulse kind;  
By training only and tradition blind—  
The past had framed him—for the past he fell—  
Not his the wrongs that rung his parting knell.

His form Imperial blocked the onward tread,  
Of freedom—true—but freedom is not wed  
With foul assassins—no—she bides her time,  
And hides her head and blushes at a crime.

God made men free—it may be He may bring  
Good from this ghastly crime—if good should spring—  
If freedom come—her crown will bear a stain  
That long as Russia lasts will dark remain.

GARDE.

### News from Palestine.

PALESTINE, Ohio, March 10th.—Thirty-one ladies have been arrested charged with inciting a mob against a saloon-keeper named Long, of Palestine, &c.:—

A man named Long, of Palestine,  
Was by the ladies' league invested,  
So just to bring them up to time  
He'd thirty-one of them arrested.  
The ladies now plead that too Long  
In Palestine he had been reignin',  
They did not wish to do him wrong,  
But just present him with a Canan.