



THE BEGGAR'S PETITION TO CANADA.

Pity the sorrows of a Syndicate,
Whom scoundrel bankruptcy brings to your door;
His follies pardon and his faults forget,
Give ear unto his prayer when he cries *more!*

Nay, ask him not where are the sponduleeks
He bore in sackfuls on his back away;
The miles of lands, or what the awful freaks
That make him beggar all so suddenly.

Loudly but yesterday he blew his horn,
Declaring everything was all O. K.;
Soon would the lengthy rail the land adorn,
Cash was abundant—he could pay his way.

Ask him not, posing now as mendicant,
What you are to believe?—of statements two,
Which was the true one?—which the lying rant?
Or was the situation planned for rue?

Ask him not where the boasted guarantee
Of personal wealth, that would success ensure?
What of his purse plethoric?—Can it be
He claims all profit—you all loss endure?

Name not the purchases of rival lines,
Cash squandered to secure monopoly;
Enough—'tis gone—enough for you, he whines
For gold, more gold, to build successfully.

Oh patient Canada! do close ear and eye!
Heed not the indignant din of people sold,
The public chest once more wide open pie,
And give these canny Scotchmen of thy gold.

L'ENVOI.

Stay! I have a care my country! this horse-leech,
Once at thy veins, drops not till he is gorged;
Let this grim comedy its lesson tea h,
Lest repetition of the farce be urged.

AN OLD SALT'S STORY;

OR,

THE CASTAWAYS OF RAT-TAIL REEF.

"I needn't lay to for to discharge this cargo of truth, only the newspapers have shipped the notion that all us sailors are liars and that every fo'c'sle talk is the inspiration of the Old Boy. I'll show 'em they're on the wrong tack."

The old salt bit off a square inch section from the reporter's plug, and was absently putting the rest into his pocket when the owner of the tobacco gently but firmly replevined the stuff. The meeting was then harmoniously proceeded with.

"'Twas in '64—but say, hadn't you better hail the bar-tender. This 'baccy's musty, and if there's anything that knocks the ton out of me its—yes, shipmate, the same, with a little more sugar. Well, as I was a spinnin' it, 'way back in '64 I shipped at Liverpool on the bark *Gentle Annie*, for China. We weighed about eight bells on the 4th of May; a big cargo was stowed away snug—a million coats for the Chinese sojers. Mebbe you think a million coats would crowd our hold; but I'm a lubber if there was one less, and we hadn't no deck load neither. We had good winds and fair weather for two months straight along, and the crew were as happy as clams at high tide. 'Long about the sixty-third day the cook came to the captain and told him he had a dream three nights runnin' that there was a dead man on board; if the captain wouldn't overhaul the hold the cook swore he wouldn't get another mess during

the voyage. He was a superstitious chap, was the cook, and an obstinate fellow, too. So the captain, to please him, sent a couple of men down below, and sure enough they found a corpse. It was some fool of a stowaway who had starved to death, seeing he couldn't get nourishment out of sojer's coats. Beside him was a big heap of bones, showin' he had kept life in himself longer'n if he couldn't a stomached rats. But the curiousest thing was a long coil of green rope he had a grip on. It must have been six or seven hundred feet, and looked as if it was made out short, taperin' raw hides so nicely joined together you'd think it was all of a piece. None of us could make out what it was or how it came there, so we stowed it away aft, and pretty soon it was forgotten. That very night a storm sprung up. Before morning we hadn't a stitch of canvas to set, our rudder was gone, and we were drifting on to a reef under bare poles. Soon the crash came, and we all knew the old craft couldn't hold together two hours. There was an island right ahead of us, but how to reach it was a corker. The boats were washed away, the sea was too high for a swim—but this is dry work, captain. Eh? Yes, just repeat the dose. Well, while we were on our beam-ends about what to do, some one happens to look aft and there, as I'm a terror on dock wollopers, was that raw-hide rope uncoiling itself over the stern, and shootin' out for the island. Pretty soon it reached the shore and disappeared behind some rocks. The end on board coiled itself around the wheel, and when we felt of the rope we found it taut as taut could be. One by one we went hand over fist along that rope to the shore. And then we began to investigate. We followed up the rope to a sort of cave and there the whole thing became plain. Some other craft, you see, had been wrecked here. A big cheese had floated ashore from it and lodged solid in this little cave. Around this cheese the rope was coiled. Don't you see through the mystery, captain?"

"No."

"Well, understand that that rope was made out of rat tails—rats from our ship that must 'a been hungrier than hungry tryin' to feed on sojer's coats. Between rats and cheese there's an affinity—that's the correct word, ain't it? Well, these rat-tails smellin' that there cheese, what could you expect —?"

[Note.—The rest of the reporter's MS. is not to be found, and the reporter is off on a week's holidays.]

A LETTER FROM THE MEMBER'S WIFE.

RURAL DELL.

MY DEAR MARIA,—

It seems an age since I wrote to you, but you'll excuse me, for even if you aren't a married woman with eight children, a house, and a husband, above all a political husband to look after, you know me well enough to be sure I'm busy, and that, like every true woman, I crush out all minor considerations when the girls' dresses want looking after. There are parties, etc., "on the tapis" as it were, though we waxed the floor at our last; indeed, when I think of all I've got to do, the wonder isn't that I don't answer letters sooner, but that I answer them at all. But February, to quote slang, is a kind of an "off month" for house-keepers—Xmas joys, fatigues, plum-puddings, presents, and mince pies are disposed of, and spring house-cleaning hardly near enough to give one the night-mare, and I actually find I have time to write letters and read a novel or two. This is particularly "an off month" for us—the boys have gone back to school, and the girls to Ottawa with their Pa, and except for the four younger children the house is

empty. You'll wonder I haven't gone with Lucius as usual to partake of the festivities of the capital; to tell the truth I have tasted the tree of knowledge of fashionable life, and "lo view,"—there, I declare I've forgotten my French, but I daresay English'll do as well, "the show isn't worth the candle," after you've been there for several seasons, and had to spend such a lot on dress, etc., etc., and had to sit up to all hours at places, where, if it was not for the name of the thing, you'd just as soon been at home. Besides, now royalty has gone it seems scarcely worth while, especially when you can send such fine girls as my Molly and Jane to make their bow to vice-royalty; not but what, to be candid, I've made the most of staying at home to Lucius, and got a new carpet instead of the new dresses I should have been obliged to get if I had gone. You'll be surprised, perhaps, I repeat in confidence, but I don't find it as delightful as you'd think to be an M.P.'s wife; it seems to break up domestic life to have your husband in Ottawa and you and half the children in Rural Dell, but I will give Lucius credit for being cheerful even under our separation, I do believe, that, though he isn't much of a speaker, and hardly ever gets in a bill (he hasn't my talent that way), if it was necessary for the sake of his country he'd stay away all year, and travel any distance if his expenses were paid, and you wouldn't believe how much of his own money he spends going to places for the sake of his party. Why, he's going to Montreal just because an ice industry might be started as a profitable investment, and the carnival should be encouraged by prominent people, and an entertainment of that description is sure to give strangers a strong impression of our climate. Molly said she believed in that sentiment, and, for the sake of countenancing the enterprise more fully, he really must take her and Jane along with. I don't think Lucius quite cares for his women friends to mix in politics (except for calling on his supporters' wives, and being agreeable to voters), but my girls, like their mother, thank goodness aren't ones to let opportunities slip, and they are to go with their pa. I can't help thinking, as a foud mother, but is a pity there are not more bachelors and young men among our members, it would make the drawing-rooms so much more interesting. For all Lucius is a staunch supporter of the Government, I believe he is a bit of a Democrat at heart; he says he can't see any good in having drawing-rooms, when bobbing to the Governor and his wife are the occupations of the evening, and for his part he'd just as soon see a Canadian at the head—but then, poor dear, he never was a good hand at a bow. And how I ask, would we ever see of the any British nobility, if it wasn't for governor-generals, and in my heart of hearts I've always a hope that I—'ll be knighted some day,—how heavenly it'd be to have letters addressed to Lady Eliza Pencherman. But I really must stop, I want you to come and stay with me; I always make a practice of asking my maiden friends to visit me when the house is empty, it makes it so—so cheerful for me, and you won't mind things not being quite as nice as usual, and there's our sewing-society, you can take Molly and Jane's place; it really won't do for a prominent family like ours to be backward in charitable works, and unmarried women always enjoy making themselves useful, so do come soon, and believe me, dearest Maria,

Ever your fondly attached friend,

ELIZA PENCHERMAN.

When does a man die without complaining?
When he dies with a will.

Vendors of the *Telegram* should not be allowed to sell their papers, because they are the ones who keep the *World* back.