

THE DEMI-TASSE

A LAST RESOURCE.

CAPTAIN NORCOTTE of the S.S. *Mystic*, well and favourably known in nearly every seaport on the North American coast, is a prince of good fellows and a past-master in the art of story-telling. The genial Captain has always a fund of amusing yarns in mind, whereby to entertain the ever-welcome visitors on his floating palace. The following is one of his favourites:

"We had just arrived in port from our home voyage, and lay in the stream awaiting our turn at the 'chutes.' A heavy northeasterly gale had arisen, with little or no warning, and a goodly number of small craft were scudding for shelter. Among the last to arrive was a tiny French fishing-schooner of some twenty tons, and the berths being all occupied she would naturally be compelled to drop anchor in the offing. Her skipper was at the tiller and as they 'breezed' past us, close to port, he sang out: 'Let go da bow-ankre!' One of his crew sprang forward to execute the order, but immediately shouted back: 'I dassent; dere's no chain on 't!' 'Let it go, anyway,' howled the skipper, 'it may stop her a leetle!'"

THE TRIALS OF A FRENCHMAN.

A YOUNG Frenchman, who has lately arrived in Toronto, found himself in a pleasant boarding-house on College street, where most of the boarders were of long residence and were well acquainted—almost as members of a family. The Frenchman was a bright, gentlemanly little fellow and was soon taken into full fellowship. One night a little poker game was started—"a penny ante." It was the first time the Frenchman had played the game, and he became quite fascinated by it. The next day he determined to purchase a poker outfit for himself to take back to France with him when he returned. So he went to Eaton's and asked if they had some "sheeps."

"Upstairs," said the polite clerk, "in the toy department." The young man went up four flights and again asked for "sheeps."

"Over in the far corner," said the floor walker.

When he reached the counter to which he had been directed, a young woman to whom he made known his wants, showed him a number of wooden sheep with wool fastened on them.

"Pardon; eet ees not zese I want. I weesh *sheeps*."

"Well, these are certainly sheep," said the young woman, "and they are very good sheep." Then a new idea came to her and she added: "Of course,

if you want something cheaper, you will find some tin animals over at that other counter," pointing across the room.

"But, it is not sheeps I want, but *sheeps*. I want not sheeps ze animals but *sheeps* to play wiz."

"But, my dear sir, these are sheep to play with," insisted the young lady.

The poor man was growing distressed, when a second girl came to the rescue. "I know what you want," she said, "come with me."

He went with her and she piloted him over to a counter on which were piled miniature ships, yachts, and so forth.

"There you are," she exclaimed, triumphantly.

"But eet ees no, not zis. It is *sheeps* zat I want."

By this time it began to be the general impression on the floor that the man was crazy, and this was strengthened by his explanation that he wanted the sheeps for his "aunties."

"They must keep a boarding-house," whispered one girl to another, "and he has mistaken this for a grocery."

But a sophisticated head of one of the departments (whose identity is kept a close secret) finally came to the rescue and said:

"Excuse me, sir, but I think I understand what you want—poker chips, isn't it?"

The little Frenchman's face became wreathed in smiles as he turned and said in a relieved tone of voice: "Surlee. Sheeps for pokeair. Zat ees eet."

"Sorry, sir, but we don't keep them."

A NEW WOLFE STORY.

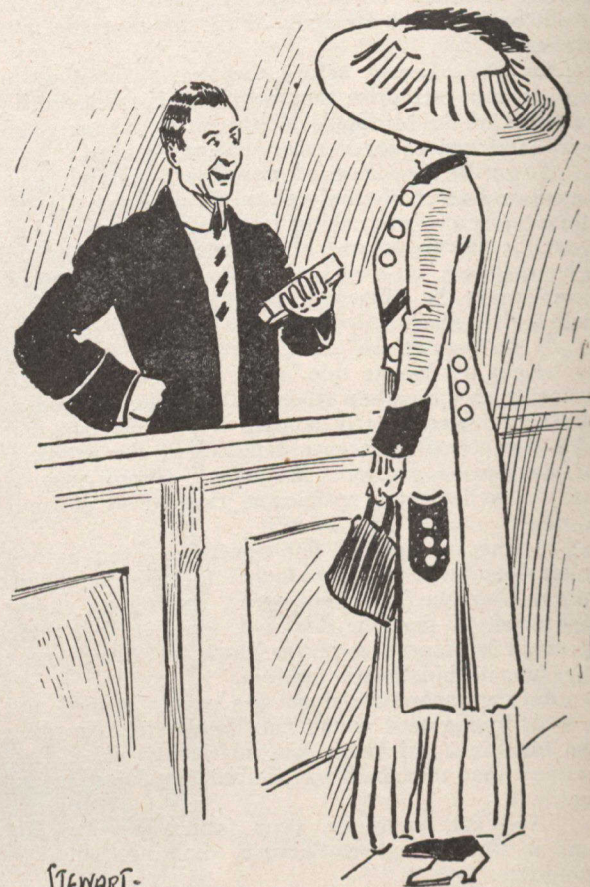
MR. J. A. MACDONALD, editor of the *Toronto Globe*, picked up a new story of General Wolfe. He heard it from an aged Scotch gentleman with whom it was a sacred reminiscence from his forefathers. The story goes that Wolfe, then nineteen years of age, was an officer on the staff of the Duke of Cumberland, who commanded the English forces at the Battle of Culloden in 1746. After the battle, the English staff officers were riding over the field in the direction of Inverness and came across a wounded Highland officer. The Duke asked him to which side he belonged and received the answer, "To the Prince." He then turned to Wolfe and ordered him to shoot the Fraser. Wolfe, disgusted at being asked to murder a wounded officer replied:

"Your Highness, my commission is at your command, but I decline to be a butcher."

Because of this reply, Wolfe was a hero to the Highlanders who served in the British army. When,

therefore, the first opportunity came to pay their debt of gratitude, it was eagerly embraced. This opportunity was the Battle of the Plains of Abraham in 1759, when Wolfe died victorious and Canada was won for the British Crown. On this occasion, there were 1400 Highlanders in his command, many of whom had fought against Cumberland at Culloden. Eight hundred of them were Frasers, kinsmen of the Fraser whom Wolfe had been ordered to shoot. On the night before the taking of Quebec, Montcalm's sentries were deceived by the French reply of Simon Fraser, who had been educated in France and "was handy with the French language." Thus part of the debt was paid. Next day, the Highland claymores came into play at a critical moment and decided the victory. As Sir Wilfrid Laurier has said, "The Highlanders at the taking of Quebec fought as men never fought before," and this is the explanation.

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STEWART-

"Is this candy fresh?"

"I dunno. It never said anything to me."—*Life*.

A LITERAL TRANSLATION.

"A BUSINESS communication in Arabic reached a Manchester firm," says *The Marine Review*, "and when translated by a Syrian interpreter proved to contain a request for the price of coppering 'two water sheep' of certain given dimensions. The translator was confident of his version, but admitted that he did not know what water sheep could be. For the moment even the principals of the firm to whom the communication was addressed were puzzled, until it struck some one that this was the nearest synonym in the vocabulary of a pastoral people for 'hydraulic rams.'"

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TOOLE'S TEARS.

SALLIES of almost childlike high spirits endeared the late J. L. Toole, the lifelong friend of Henry Irving, to all who knew him. On one occasion, when the author of "Some Eminent Victorians" was spending a day in the innocent adventures which Toole was a genius in originating, they went to the Tower, where they found themselves among a party of eager sightseers in the chamber where the Crown jewels are disposed.

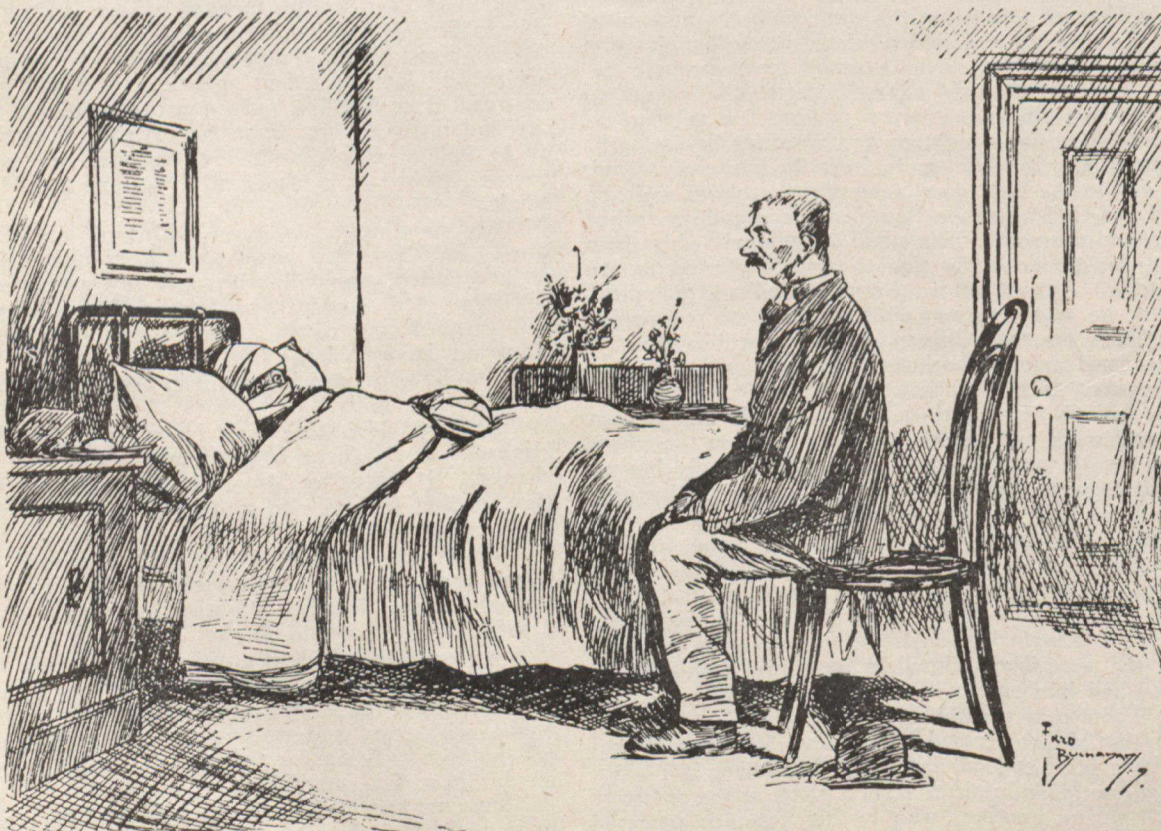
It was a woman who was explaining to the eager throng the history of the articles displayed. At the end of a long catalogue she said:

"And this is Anne Boleyn's crown."

Toole, apparently suddenly overcome, burst into a flood of tears, and leaned against the wall in seemingly uncontrollable grief.

"Oh, sir," inquired the poor woman, in distress, "what is the matter?"

"Nothing! Nothing!" replied Toole, in broken accents. "Don't mind me, but the fact is, I have known the family so long."—*Youth's Companion*.



The Visitor.—"You didn't 'arf fall orkard, Jim. The chaps up at the yard ain't done chucklin' about it yet."—*Punch*.