

SNOOKS AND HIS FRIEND ARE SOLD.

One can't command the wind and rain,
Nor yet their violence restrain.
If nights are wet, why wet they must be,
However much folks may feel crusty;
This fact promised, I'm free to tell
The queer adventure that befel
Snooks and his friend last Thursday night.
Reader, attention I invite.

For full three days Snooks had resolved,
(Though pondering oft the expense involved),
To attend the ball and concert to be
Gut up by Madame J. Dunlevin,
Snooks—like most people—had a friend,
Whom he pressed vigorously to attend
The coming ball, discoursing strong,
Of beauties fair, dark, short and long.

To make my story brief as may be,
This friend consented soon to go by;
"Tickets were bought—the night arrived,
A luckless night, for rain contrived
To pour in ceaseless torrents down
O'er the luckless streets of the luckless town.
So Snooks and friend resolved to cure not
If for the ball in time they there got.

At eight o'clock with care intense,
To get—regardless of expense—
Themselves up, Snooks and friend commene,
First came the shava—each sporting hair
Is soon removed with utmost care.
Next each with thoughts of conquest big,
Commences anxiously to rig,
In stulp shape his luxuriant wig.

Ere they thus far have quite completed,
Their anxious task one hour has fled;
At length with eager haste they don
A spotless shirt and serious con
The merits of black and white cravat;
Snooks sticks to this, his friend to that,
One half hour more and each with pride
Surveys the faultless bow just tied.

They breathe quite free,—they know the more
Sweats part of their task is o'er.
At ten behold them both arrayed,
Whiskers are brushed,—gold chains displayed,
White kids tried on—bancroftites scented;
Each with his "got up" quite contented;
And each with friendly zeal most willing
To swear the other looks quite killing.

At length they start, still the rain pours down
O'er the luckless streets of the luckless town;
But they heed it not—their dreams are bright
Of the whirling dance through the coming night;
Of angels in hoops—of fairy feet;
Of melting blue eyes and glances sweet;
Of quiet flirtations under the rose,
And of what besides—why nobody knows.

On, on they speed, they reach the Hall;
Confession! why where on earth's the ball?
No sound is heard—no lights are there—
The door is closed—in black despair
Snooks and his friend look on aguish,
And trembling each the other clasped
Teeth clattered—the grey white and cold,
Till Snooks with an effort yelled we're sold.

And sold they were—the luckless rain
Had rendered their "got up" all in vain.
The ball and concert were both postponed;
Snooks rashly swore, his friend but groaned.
But at length with resolute stern
From the pitiless Hall they boldly turn,
And wet through, dripping and all forlorn,
Dash into the Terrepin for a "horn."

READING ROOMS.

Toronto may now be said to be without a single public reading room. The Exchange reading room, long tottering on its lean shanks, may be said to have died of starvation. The Mechanics' Institute reading room, miserable, musty, and wretched as it is, cannot be said to live much less thrive. The most that can be said of it is, that it still cumbers the earth. There is little use in dwelling on the causes which have led to this disgraceful state of things. Of course nobody is to blame in the matter, neither the Committee of the Mechanics' Institute, nor the Board of Trade at the Exchange, nor individual officers, nor the public at large, are chargeable with the deaths of those Institutes. They died, as we all know, by the visitation of Heaven, and no one is accountable.

Well, after all, perhaps they are best dead. There is no denying that reading rooms are a nuisance; they lead to a general diffusion of knowledge, which our readers will readily admit, is often attended by fatal consequences. They men enable to form opinions of their own; and who will venture to assert that the mass of mankind are not much the worse for having any opinions of their own. They acquaint one with the news of the world; but what advantage is it to any man to know what passes in Timbuctoo or Kamtschatka. They keep many men from indulging in vicious habits, but is it not far better that vicious habits should be allowed to work out their own cure by the killing off of those wretches who indulge in them. They check idleness, and are incentives to industry; but let the idle starve, and thus become examples to mankind generally. They are a delightful recreation—Pshaw! mere cant.

Reading rooms, as we said before, are nuisances. Therefore we would be far from holding up the Committee at the Exchange, or the Committee at the Mechanics' Institute, as objects of censure; nor will we call the members thereof droozes, imbeciles, and public defaulters.

Those who have any doubt as to the decay and decomposition of reading rooms in Toronto, need only go into the Exchange. There the cold empty room will at once chill any latent desire for an hour's recreation. While the the herculean efforts necessary to find the morning papers, or to discover the latest quarterly amongst a heap of dirty periodicals a year old, will, we think, quench the aspirations of the most courageous seeker after knowledge.

The Mechanics' Institute is as bad if not worse. We will not allude to the miserable back-lane entrance to it, or the stale, unwholesome, musty smell, which salutes the nostrils of members, as they approach the dingy apartment known as the reading room. We will not dwell on the hopelessness of finding any information within its walls; or on the absurdity of expecting to find a thousand common place books in its library. We will not, in any way, allude to those things, as Dr. Connor says, while bringing up the subject in debate for the five hundredth time. Nor will we draw an invidious comparison between our dirty, miserable excuses for reading rooms, and the comfortable, pleasant,

spacious, well-stocked reading rooms of Hamilton, London, and other villages of less note. We will not say that Toronto ought to be ashamed of itself; and that she is in the hands of men who do not care three shanks of a dog's lamb's tale about the reading population. We will say none of these things. But simply repeat, that the officers set over our reading rooms deserve the undying gratitude of the reading community. A rope should, we think, be presented to each of them, with an address praying them to make use of it with all possible speed.

Who is Patrick Hughes?

—*Mr. Patrick Hughes, of Hughes Brothers, denies the existence of any other Patrick Hughes, who could have signed the North Wellington placard. Surely he knows, and if he don't, who can know. The thing is absurd that any but the real genuine Patrick exists, another man who signed the document and wrote to the Globe, must be an imposter. Yet we see by the proceedings of the City Council that among the applicants for the office of Pound-keeper there is a Patrick Hughes. Can it be possible that the Patrick Hughes of Hughes Brothers, is the Hughes that wants this honorable and lucrative office. If so, verily the hues have changed.*

Carrying Deadly Weapons.

—If the boy Fleming had not been in the habit of carrying deadly weapons, he would not have been hanged yesterday morning. He was hanged that this growing and fatal practice might be checked. The protection of society, and the vindication of the laws, demanded the sacrifice; and it will be a pity, indeed, if a second example should be needed.

BUSINESS NOTICES.

For excellent and pure qualities of Tobacco, the best and most superb cigars, and the greatest variety of Plain and Fancy Pipes commended us to the next Store of Mr. BRADDER, King, just above Bay Street. Everything that the most craving smoker can desire, can be had at this establishment at very moderate rates, with attention and courtesy as well illustrated in Mr. Bendor's disposition and manner.

At the Apollo Concert Room to-night, a complimentary and farewell benefit is tendered to Mr. Cool Burgess, well known as one of the best negro delineators ever in this city. He will be assisted by his able colleagues, Mr. Redmond, Mr. J. Thompson, and several other favorites. We are sure the entertainment will be amusing, and we hope Mr. Burgess will have a full house.

THE GRUMBLER

Is published every Saturday morning, and is for sale at all the News Depots, on the Car, by all the News Boys. No city subscriptions received, opportunity being afforded for its regular purchase. For the convenience of persons residing in the country, THE GRUMBLER will be regularly mailed, at ONE DOLLAR per annum. Address pre-paid "THE GRUMBLER," Toronto. Correspondents will oblige by not registering money letters for reasons sufficiently obvious. Publishing Office, No. 23 Mason's Hall, (Northwester's New Building), Toronto Street.