

meandered through the S. S. room. Bound- ing to his feet Edmond glared ferociously about him. The silence was broken by the quivering of his porcupine quills. Horror! What was it that caused his toes to curl and his leg to wamp? From a corner of the room came the sound like unto that of a bull in a china shop. "It is the cat," Pinaforically murmured our hero as his eyes went in the direction of the sound. But when there they became riveted to the spot. His face paled, the candle burned blue and—went out. "Courage, Edmond De Tompkins," said our hero, as with a mighty effort he cast his paper collar from him and grasped his revolver. A bright light began to play around the corner of the room and slowly a figure began to develop, until a weird, majestic form displayed itself. Its lips moved. It spoke. "Mortal, thy name?" "Edmond De Tompkins." "Hast thou no fear?" "None, please you, mighty spirit," replied our hero! his teeth loosening one by one and slipping silently down his throat. "Art thou Grit or Tory?" "A Tory and follower of Bunting." "A follower of Bunting. Ah! 'Tis well. Thou art the man for my purpose. I have a mission for thee to perform. Knowest thou Sir John A. Macdonald?" "By my beard, I do, right well. He is known as the Grand old To-morrow!" "He is. My mission is this, Listen. Hie thee by morning's light to Ottawa; gain access to Sir John; and warn him to abandon the title of the Grand Old To-morrow and henceforth be known as the Grand Old Dosomething. Warn him to abandon gerry-mandering and pandering to railway, syndicates. Bid him recant his wicked ways and join the Grits. If thou doest not all these, by thy faith in a Bunting thou shalt be knighted and die a G.C.B. Promise." "I promise," gasped Edmond De Tompkins, "but tell me, mighty spirit, by what name shall I know thee in after years?" "I am known as the Spirit of Reform!" A bright light shot through the room, a rumble as of thunder was heard, and Edmond De Tompkins sank senseless to the floor.

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When he came to himself daylight was breaking o'er the distant hills. Remembering his promise, he bounded through the window, alighted nimbly on his feet in a snow drift forty feet below, gave one long lingering look at the baronial pile of his ancestors and fled to Ottawa. When Sir Herbert's retainers entered the room, they found a torn paper collar, a gripsack containing a bundle of tooth-picks, a copy of the *Mail* and two bricks. These were all. The after fate of brave Edmond De Tompkins will be made known next Christmas. TRUS A. DRUM.

TOPICAL TALK.

None of the Canadian contingent of the Gordon Expedition has so far got it off. But, mark me, you will one day find the published admission: "My trip was an instance of see Nile folly!"

It has occurred to me to remark that I always have my suspicions of the person who pronounces the word "apparent" as if there were two "r's" in it. Such a person at table usually makes a baby's bib of his napkin and eats with his knife.

I AM glad to learn that Alderman Harry Piper is to resume his brilliant lectures on zoology this winter. As a lecturer the great and only Canadian showman stands without a peer. I only hope that the lectures will be as ably reported this year as they were last season in the now defunct *Evening Canadian*. I also hear that Ald. Harry is importing, at immense expense, several rare animals, a Barbadoes mule, a Touquin jackass, a specimen of a new breed of Ethiopian, two intelligent aldermen, and several more being amongst the collection. Good for the Canadian Barnum and Forepaugh rolled into one.

"How to Prevent Prize Fighting," is being widely discussed in the press. One way would be for the press to studiously ignore the whole slugging fraternity, as well as the whole business they follow. The able sporting editor has the thing right in his own hands.

I OBSERVE in the New York *Telegram* a brief description of one of the gentlemen of the long robe of Hamilton. It is remarked, as an extraordinary fact, that "his forehead is high and he parts his hair in the middle." Come to think of it these two characteristics seldom go together. That N.Y. *Telegram* man is an observant cuss.

WHAT does the *Globe* mean by calling our commercial travellers "bagmen?" Has another old-country editor been engaged on the editorial staff? The only bag-men I know of in this country are lawyers, mail-carriers and rag-pickers. "Drummers" is bad enough, but I fancy our Knights of the Order-book will indignantly resent being associated with at least two of the other classes named. No doubt the *Globe* will proceed to justify its employment of the term by asserting that commercial travellers do bag men. But that is altogether too far fetched. This new editor, if he goes on writing of "bag-men," will have to be sacked.

MUCH is being said and written just now about the insufficiency, incapacity, and general uselessness of our city detectives. I'll wager any money—I've got eight cents—that if those people who write and talk so much against the detectives, were put in their places to try and do any better, they would make such a hash of the matter and cut up "such antics before high heaven as would make the angels weep." A great many people seem to think that they could do another man's business far better than the man himself. A great many, quotha! (*Globe*) seven-eighths of the inhabitants of this earth are just in this fix. Many people think that they could make a better fist of "Topical Talk" than I do. I believe they could, too.

MR. JOHN WOODEN is the manager of the Elmdale Skating Rink. I want to give the Barrie editors some advice about him. John Wooden't like to be told he had a great head. That kind of imagery—wooden imagery, you see—not in a cord with his feelings. You could, however, bring in an old saw to suit his case, and add that he has to buckle down to work. But you must knot say anything cutting about him, or what would likely make him feel chop-fallen. Try an occasional reference to his having embarked in this enterprise, and state that you opine he will not root. But at all times have a fellow feeling for him. Be howmanic in your remarks. Buck cheerful also. Don't charge him with treason. Birch chance, you all mapul together, and then he will be Wooden won.

AMONG the "situations wanted" in one of the city papers the other day, was this:

Young Man—Willing to work for his board; apply by letter. Address—

The conclusion you naturally arrive at is that the young man had good reasons for making a contract by letter. A personal interview perhaps would have satisfied the other party that if he gave him his board he would be taking big chances on making anything out of the bargain. At all events, the young man these days who would be willing to work for his board must either be able to take an awful lot of board or else to do a mighty small share of work.

WHATEVER suggests "the Bohemian skull" as a subject for an essay before the Canadian Institute? A Bohemian's skull is only in exceptional instances strikingly different from the skull of any other professional man. Take brother Griffin's, for example. It is hard, pretty thick, rather smallish and well-developed in the region of the moral faculties. But of how many other men's skull could you

not say the same? To be sure, the average Bohemian's skull is often abnormally developed—especially in the morning following pay-day at the office. But a truce to banter. The truth must be admitted that too often the Bohemian's skull is infinitely tougher than the article he writes. For verification of this lamentable fact just take up a copy of the *News* when the sensation market is booming across the border.

Two compositors were among the anarchists put on trial at Berlin the other day. Femi-doff and Kurchler were the names they gave, though it is not unlikely they were Smiths or Raffertys in disguise. No doubt they at one time were innocent printers' apprentices, and began their wild career by maliciously mangling original poetry and destroying the local editor's best jokes. Then they pursued their mad course until each became an editor. From that the descent to the town council, the Legislature and Senate, was swift and sure, until at last they blossomed out as pirates and democrats and were caught in the back room of a beer-saloon, plotting treason against the state. This ought to be a solemn warning to all intelligent compositors who fancy they know more about the picce they are setting up than the man who wrote it.

I CAME across this heading in an up-country exchange:—

COUNTY CREAM—DISTRICT DEEDS, condensed into interesting Paragraphs for Readers Who Like the Marrow of the Meat.

Now, this is the sort of thing that is calculated to plunge a reflecting person into profound perplexity and grief. What has "County Cream—District Deeds," got to do with news items? You can, of course, comprehend its significance if applied to the practices of the guileless cheese factory patron whose milk is not submitted to the test of a lactometer. But as it stands it is nothing but a combination of artful alliteration and specious sophistry absolutely maddening to contemplate. And then just seize and study the expression, "marrow of the meat!" As if marrow was ever found in meat! The young man wants a hook on anatomy, or else an able-bodied beef bone to dissect. I guess the beef-bone would appeal most strongly to his higher sensibilities. Any beef-bones sent to me will be duly forwarded to his address, which is withheld this time, to see if he will not alter his wayward life.

THE MAYORALTY.

VOTE

FOR

Alexander Manning,

AND

ECONOMY,

REDUCTION OF TAXATION,

ABOLITION OF EXEMPTIONS,

PURE WATER, and

IMPROVED STREETS.