

SPRING.

BY AN INDIGNANT BARD.

Tune up your lutes! Tighten now each string!
I've made my mind up once again to go it;
Tho' you may deem me an unscrupulous thing,
I glory in the fact that I'm a poet.
Confound you, I again will sing of spring,
And print my song. I want you all to know it!
Altho' my road is hard I'm bound to hoe it!

I'll sing of spring, of daisies and primroses,
Of zephyrs soft, of moonlight on the river,
What do I care if frost still nips your noses,
And chilling wintry blasts still make you shiver.
Altho' your hands are numb, your left ear froze is,
I'll sing of flowing barks of Guadalquivir,
Until I rise your gall, disturb your liver!

For years have I been made a butt of scorn
By needy editors in filthy den,
Who, were it not for many a whiskey horn,
To brace their nerves could hardly hold a pen:
Yet at each spring time mostly every morn
They exercise their wit on me, and then
They straightway fill themselves with whiskey straights
again!

Some say they throw spring poems to the goat,
Others remark they keep a large bull pup—
And feed him with whatever has been wrote
(Or written to speak properly)—who'd sup
On something that perhaps is fit to quote!
I wish I owned a large gun built by Krupp,
That I might blow the envious rascals up!

Yes, confound ye! I'll sing of spring
Long after ye of funny papers
Up to the golden gates have taken wing,
And earth's been freed of your unnamy capers!
I've got a mission great, which is to sing
(If only to confound the frauds and fakirs
Not yet been called on by the undertakers!)



THE HISTORY OF LITTLE JOHN THOMAS.

The subject of this sketch is not yet nine months old, and has had less of incident in his life than most youths of his age. He has escaped the measles, small pox and whooping-cough, and the most microscopic of eyes could not detect more than two teeth. This does not prevent his mother from saying that his four teeth are as plain as day. She must mean *fore* teeth as distinguished from back teeth, however, as I expect to live with her for many a day I hope, it is not for me to dispute with her. If she says the child is very like a whale then, marry, a whale indeed it is. A husband and a father must be submissive.

The ravages of time have, however, laid their wintry hand (or hands, as the case may be, with ravages) on the youthful head of J.T. as Mr. Bagstock would say, and unnumbered winters have bleached his scanty locks as white as if he were an octogenarian (if my wife heard me call him such a name as that it would bring this sketch to an abrupt conclusion). The sparse condition to which John Anderson my Jo, John, has been reduced by some bilious poet is verdant and juvenile compared with my John Thomas. It were a figure of speech to call it hair—it is either fur or down, or perhaps both—it is not much of

whatever it is, but that does not prevent much speculation about it. I refrain from arguing whether it will be black or red, or white—I must be satisfied first that it will be anything—the shade will be of little consequence. There is head enough for a Circassian, with two aural appendages sufficient to prop up considerable lateral growth.

These remarks may seem to be ahead of my proper order—I should begin earlier.

Well, then, to be more exact, on the 22nd of February 18—at an early hour in the morning a man wrapt in a huge ulster coat might have been seen hurrying along in the direction of —Street. I was in that ulster. There is nothing unusual in a man hurrying along in a big coat on a cold wintry morning, and the 'might have been seen' phrase is not unknown to the general reader. After I got to —Street I hurried back again, and there was nothing surprising in that as I live in —Street.

I lay down on the sofa in the drawing-room and slept till morning when I answered to the query of "how we all were." I merely refer to this morning as being the last morning on which I have had a decent nap.

I believe that books have been written on naming the baby, and I have seen less entertaining books, I believe that I could write a better book than books of that class even if I were restricted to the same subject, for I tell you that I know what the poet meant when he asked "What's in a name?" There is this much in any name you mention that it won't suit your wife. *Any* name but that she will say, and you just try any name but that and you will find what luck you have had. A very fair plan is this. Suppose you want the boy called John Thomas you can say "I don't know after all, Maria, but that that name you spoke of some time ago was the most suitable."

"What name?"

"John Thomas."

When my wife was bent on calling our innocent boy who did no wrong to anybody, the high-sounding name of Henry Augustus, I rather seemed to like it. In a few days when the glory seemed on the point of being divided, she was less enthusiastic, and finally I discovered a way of fixing Henry Augustus. I told her that Mrs. B., who sits near us in church and whose bonnet is as a garden wall, approved of our choice of a name. That was enough. It was like the egg in the coffee—it settled it.

I beguiled a decent neighbor and the aunt of J. T., to renounce for him the world and its works and pomps, and in due time a distinguished prelate of the church ushered the subject of these remarks into the ranks of Christians. A mug with a suitable legend was struck to commemorate the event, and with the aid of two old champagne bottles I managed to make some cider pass for execrable Moët and Chandon. In order to make the deception as complete as possible, I feigned to be tipsy from the champagne, and made up an entertainment half delirious and half hysterical, which nearly brought me under the notice of policeman X. A cold chicken and cider (as cider) reconciled his conscience, and has since rendered him painfully attentive to the nurse girl and the contents of the perambulator.

It would take volumes to describe what this boy said and did—why he howled and why he didn't—why he was a dear boy and why he was a great pig—how much better he looked than other babies—when he would have a tooth and how many he has now—what color his eyes were and his hair would be—the dread of bow-legs and squint eyes—the fear of talking and walking too early, or not talking and walking at all—the transformation from long clothes to short and the epoch of a night shirt—the jealousy of some lisping supposed to re-

fer to his paternal rather than to his maternal ancestor—the hatred of old friends who failed to enquire about the baby and the reconciliation to deadly enemies who were discovered to have been thoughtful in that direction. He is now bordering on his ninth month, and is what I call a fair, passable boy. I won't go beyond this—my foot is down—his mother has often endeavored to entrap me into other expressions but I haven't given way and don't intend to.



The attraction at the Grand is just what a judicious manager would have chosen by way of a contrast from the Irving performances. Equally admirable in their way are the jolly comedians who, through the medium of this farcical, melo-dramatic, musical extravaganza "Pop," have been keeping the audiences in roars of laughter since Monday evening, and will continue, without mercy on the vest buttons until Saturday night. Go and see "Pop" if you want to realize it. It is good enough to console all the unlicensed grocers in the city.

Henry Irving received a royal welcome from Toronto, and in his turn gave several royal performances. It was confidently said that he would prove a disappointment, but this prediction has been entirely falsified. No better pleased audiences have ever filed out of the archway of the Grand, and the universal opinion is that no better performances have ever been given on our stage. Miss Terry, although seen but little, scored a complete triumph, and the members of the company severally won praise for their ability and intelligence. Toronto owes the manager of the Grand a vote of thanks for this series of intellectual treats.

An enterprising manager here has offered Patti \$6,000 for a concert and one act of opera, the performance to take place early in March.

The exhibition of the Royal Canadian Academy opens in Montreal on April 15th. It is the intention of the committee to issue an illustrated catalogue, giving sketches of the principal works exhibited. Lord Lorne's portrait is being painted by Millais for presentation to the Royal Canadian Academy.

"The big bonnet is banished," a fashion journal declares. But while the half-acre hat remains in the zenith of its power the down-trodden male sex must groan in captivity.

Says the *Regina Leader*:—"The most important meeting ever held in the North-West crowded last night into the Methodist Church."

That is the way Nicholas Flood puts it, at any rate. "Is Corporal Michael Casey in the ranks?" inquired Wellington, just before the Battle of Waterloo. "I am, general!" said that gallant officer stepping boldly to the front. "Then," returned Wellington, "let the fight begin!" This was the Corporal's version of it, at all events.