



TRUTH FOR THE PEOPLE

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WHAT TRUTH SAYS.

The plumbers have a hard time of it all the world over. Every body seems to take a pleasure in girding at them. Their charges, it is said, are exorbitant, their dawdling and waste of time simply outrageous, while their "scamping" tendencies and general bad work doings have made them the reproach of all honest workmen and the terror of all decent householders. Indeed, it has come to pass that not outsiders merely blame them. The more respectable of their own body are crying out "shame" and calling for repentance and improvement.

The master of the Worshipful Company of Plumbers in London, England, has been reading his fellow-craftsmen a lesson. Mr. Shaw, the master in question, denounced defective plumbing as one of the greatest crimes that man could commit. He said further that the damage done in this way every year to health and life was simply incalculable. In comparison all that dynamiters and assassins have accomplished or will be so insignificant as not to be spoken of. The plumber's work is often, we are afraid, done in such a way that its various shortcomings cannot be traced, but plenty of its shortcomings can be fully followed and they are certainly atrocious. This master plumber insists upon universal inspection as greatly needed and an exemplary punishment wherever bad workmanship is found out.

What is true of England is equally so of Canada; perhaps more so. Were plumbing done as it might and as it ought to be, there would not be one water-pipe frozen in Toronto or anywhere else from one year's end to the other. The cause of all these domestic trouble and catastrophes is bad plumbing, and that alone. Well, just think of it. The late cold snap caused the outlay of thousands of dollars in rejoining water-pipes, and in Toronto alone the loss of millions of gallons of water in the effort to keep things square. Pipes are taken in a vast number of cases just where they will be most exposed to frost. Then the lead is often poor, the joints leak, and everything is just the reverse of what it ought to be. The stories that are told of the diabolical freshings of some of the Toronto plumbers are simply so shocking as to exceed any ordinary faith. Yet many of these can be only too easily authenticated. What is to be done? "O! reform it altogether."

And the plumbers are not the only sinners through they get the credit generally of being so in this department. The same tendency is everywhere and among all classes of workmen and contractors, and not only so, but in the creation of a house without daily, hourly, watchful superintendence and what sort of a thing will be the result? In the end it will cost double what was said at the first would be sufficient and will not in any respect be half up to the mark bargained for. What cracks there could be speedily be in all the woodwork! What miserable plastering! What fraudu-

lent bricklaying! What portentously bad locks! The whole not "cheap." Anything but that! But "nasty" with a vengeance! Have man altogether parted company with their consciences? It would seem in a great number of cases as though they had. Think of the bad bricks put into sewers. Think of the scamping work on block pavements. The great thing is not to put in good work, but to take care not to be found out when bad work is put in at good prices! It is very terrible, but it has a very great amount of truth about it all the same.

Then is there any such thing as good painting or good paint? How long will white paint stand on a fence before it can be rubbed off like whitening? Not long—not two years at most, in many cases, though it used to be fifteen or twenty. Why? Because the paints are all adulterated, and only here and there the genuine thing is used. Friends all! Repent and sit in dust and ashes. Why, if a man could thoroughly establish his character for doing fair good work whether watched or not, he would make his fortune. We have heard people remarking with a sort of helpless look of wonder that such and such a butcher would supply a child just as fairly as the best judge of butcher's meat. That is, he was simply honest, and men stood aghast in wonder as at the sight of a white crow. Another tells of a house-builder who needs no superintendent! If that man could continue uncorrupted among all the evil influences around him, what a fortune he would make! Most of people doubt it, but after all honesty answers best in the long run. Oh, plumbers, carpenters, bricklayers, butchers, grocers and house-builders take a note of the fact and turn over a new leaf.

In next week's TRUTH there will appear a well written article in regard to McMaster Hall, the Toronto Baptist College, from the pen of one of the leading gentlemen connected with that institution. It will be illustrated with a very fine view of the building. Others of similar leading Canadian educational institutions will follow in due course.

Is it understood that home is a place where friends meet? So it is generally understood, but it is frequently a mistaken idea. Guests usually come not in a pleasant, free and friendly fashion, but once or twice a year, at what seems very like a great meeting of creditors. At other times families in general seem to keep themselves to themselves. It is a great pity that such should be the case, but it is true all the same, and in no locality we think more so than in Toronto. A man who thinks to "drop in" of an evening for a little friendly chat, will soon find himself undecieved, and will never, no almost never, be repaid in kind.

The basin of the Congo is a tremendously large stretch of country, about twice the size of Brazil, and according to Stanley, with about twenty millions of people. There ought to be a good trade with those folks. The Manchester men have been assured that they could then have a yearly market for \$130,000,000 worth of their dry goods.

Think of that, ye cotton makers of Canada, who have been over-producing!

Many children attending London schools come without dinner, their parents are poor. It is not to be expected that dinnerless boys and girls should make much progress at their lessons. To remedy this, cheap dinners have been inaugurated, and we are assured that good, wholesome and sufficient meals can be had for two cents, and pay all expenses thereby. Just think of it. Irish stew and bread for a hundred can be supplied for \$1.75, or little more than a cent and a half. Could not the benevolent in Toronto do something like this, and obviate to a great extent soup kitchens altogether?

How curious the different ways in which people show their kind-heartedness. One man last year sent to the editor of London Truth 5,000 new six-penny pieces for distribution among the children in London hospitals and workhouses. This year he has bettered it by sending \$,000 for the same purpose. It will make 8,000 little hearts quite glad.

Toronto has to mourn over the fact that prize fighting within her bounds is greatly on the increase, and can be set about without any fear of interruption or punishment. It is certainly loathsome to think of two human brutes battering each other as they do every now and then in this city under the pretence that it is thereby a grand natural cultivation of science. Such talk is a great deal too thin, and if our police and police commissioners were doing their duty, the iniquity would have been stopped long ago.

Cannibalism it seems has revived in Hayti and has also been found prevailing at Cape Coast Castle. It is said that by a particular kind of superstition prevailing there, cannibalism is thought to be indispensable.

There is a dog story going the rounds of the London papers which is worth producing. It seems that a few weeks ago a rough terrier barked fiercely at the door of the Charing Cross Hospital. When admitted he limped in, squatted on the mat, and held up an injured fore-paw. The house-surgeon came, whereupon the dog followed him at once across the hall to the accident-room, jumped at once, when invited to do so, on the chair, and again held out the injured paw. It was dressed, when the dog licked the hand of the surgeon and loudly barked its gratitude till it had to be turned out, showing great reluctance to leave. Dr. Bellamy, the house surgeon, confirms this statement, and adds that on Thursday the dog came like any other out-patient to have his paw dressed. It is not known to whom the dog belongs.

The French have not got the Chinese contract off their hands, and may not for some considerable time. If they were reasonable peace would be soon made up, for the Chinese do not want to fight but they can't help themselves, for the French want a great sum of money, which the Chinese have not to give.

The Duke of Argyle is not at all sure that the rise in the standard of living of the crofters is not one of the causes of the present agitation. The special correspondent of the *St. James' Gazette* thus describes his visit to a crofter's hut, which, he declares, was a palace in comparison with some of the dwellings he visited:—"At last my eyes became accustomed to the semi-darkness, and I was able to make out the forms of the inmates of the hovel. They sat huddled together on a low back settle, warming themselves, and greedily watched a battered pot that, suspended from an improvised tripod above the fire, contained a quantity of thin broth, the main ingredients of which were, as I afterwards discovered, potatoes and fish! I shared the poor people's meal of broth and oatmeal cake, while the smoke curled upwards, and hung beneath the roof in an impenetrable cloud." It is on facts of this description that the crofters have waxed fat, and kicked.

The *Financial Reform Almanac* of Britain for 1885, shows how the aristocracy have drained the public purse since 1850. The net result is that 532 noble families of 7,991 members have held 13,883 offices in that period, and have received £108,614,652 sterling as their pay. No doubt much of this money has been honestly earned in the public service, and there can be equally no doubt that by far the larger part of it has been quite unnecessary expenditure.

The following graphic and truthful description of "War," by Thomas Carlyle, has been often quoted, but it is worthy of being so again:

What, speaking in quite unofficial language is the net purpose and object of war? To my own knowledge, for example, there dwell and toil, in the British village of Drumdrudge, usually some five hundred souls. From these by certain "natural energies" of the French, there are successively selected, during the French war, as thirty able-bodied men. Drumdrudge, at her own expense, has suckled and nursed them; she has, not without difficulty and sorrow, fed them up to manhood, and even trained them to crafts, so that one can weave, another build, another hammer, and the weakest can stand under thirty stone avoirdupois. Nevertheless, and much weeping and swearing, they are selected, all dressed in red, and shipped away, at public charges, some two thousand miles, or say only to the south of Spain, and fed there till wanted. And now to that same spot, in the south of Spain, are thirty similar French artisans, from a French Drumdrudge, in like manner weaned, till at length, after infinite effort, the two parties come into actual juxtaposition; and thirty stands fronting thirty, each with a gun in his hand. Straightway the word "Fire" is given, and they blow the souls out of one another and in place of sixty brick, useful craftsmen, the world has sixty dead carcasses, which it must bury, and anew she! tears for. Had these men any quarrel? Busy as the devil is, not the smallest! They lived far enough apart were the earliest strangers, say, in so wide a universe there was even, unconsciously to themselves, some mutual helpfulness between them. How then? Simpleton! their governments had fallen out, and, instead of shooting one another, had the cunning to make these poor blockheads shoot.

Colonel Van Zandt spoke in quite a flattering way recently of the raw material of the militia. He regarded it as in no respect inferior, in some respects even superior, to the State Guards of the United States. Well, this is encouraging, but it is nothing new. Everybody knows that knows anything about the subject at all, that there is no better material to make a soldier out of than the average Canadian.