

## TORONTO TALK.

## A RARE, RACEY LETTER FROM THE ONTARIO CAPITAL.

PITHY CHATS ABOUT SOCIAL, RELIGIOUS, POLITICAL AND MUNICIPAL MATTERS IN THE WEST.

TORONTO, Dec. 16th, '86.

Permit me to express my distinguished approval of the name which you have chosen for the paper where-with you propose to fill the long felt want of your wallet. EVERY SATURDAY is suggestive of punctual weekly ghost walkers, than which there is no greater spiritual comfort to the working journalist. Once upon a time I thundered through the columns of a long felt want which was not, but ought to have been styled every second Saturday, but even that would have become a misnomer, for in course of time the Recording Angel dropped a tear upon his sponge and wiped pay day altogether out of the calendar. I long since ceased to bear hard feelings against the Recording Angel for that act, for I have come to realize that after the sheriff had sold the stone to a Jew junkman, and the landlord had removed the windows because he could not get the rent, I would not have been able to earn a great deal of wages space-writing against a ball of mercury that never bobbed up serenely from below. It was about this time, too, that a bright but impractical hand of my young fellow journalists started a paper called *The Commonwealth*, apparently because wealth was so uncommon with them that Job's turban was a proud and haughty bird compared with one of these. Nevertheless there were then

## PLEASANT DAYS IN BOHEMIA.

The Bohemians wanted little here below, and though they often wanted it long they always had that best of sauces—appetite. If they did not exactly like Sidney Smith and his fellow Edinburgh reviewers' cultivate literature upon a little oatmeal they watered a good many free lunches with cheap beer, and were merry withal. Heigho, Tom and Jerry! Things have changed since you and I were young and good looking. The brilliant Bohemian is no longer in demand, and the places that once knew him now only know the sleek and sober dular. Applicants for positions on the *Globe* are put through an examination in the shorter catechism, while those who seek berths from the *Mail* are compelled to swear off on King James' version of the Bible—the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible, without note or comment. We have ourselves largely to blame for this for pretending that it is possible to be a good Christian and a good journalist at the same time.

## THE LATE LAMENTED PICA

(that is, lamented with us here, but now with you) was a rank offender in this respect. He was a hickory Dutchman from Hespeler's distillery, with a mouth for beer that would have made him a senior wrangler at Heidelberg University, but that man would take fits of piety that were positively shocking. I have known him to be beastly sober and disgustingly respectable for a whole week at a time. During those fits of aberration he would look like a funeral procession and talk like

Jeremiah in the last stages of liver complaint. The first thing you would know next he would take a dose of pills and go out and drink some poor, every-day bibulist so blind that nothing but instinct would prevent him from crossing the street to shake hands with a debt collector. Then there would be a relapse and Pica would do nothing but report Salvation Army meetings and Scott Act speeches. Why, when Sam Jones was here the first time Pica wrote him up in a way that made even that hardened taffy-eater blush, and it was currently rumored around town that Pica had the revival jimjams for sure, and was going as a missionary to the Congo Valley, or St. John's ward, or some other darkened region. But I suppose he did the next best thing when he undertook to throw a gleam of intelligence athwart the correspondence of the *Mail*. Poor old Pica. He was a good fellow, and it was a pity he drank. There is mighty little fun in *The News* these days.

## SAM JONES

has come and gone again without more than the usual passing notice bestowed upon itinerant celebrities. The fact is that Sam don't wear, and no one knows it better than he, and he governs himself accordingly. For a month or more his "impromptu" methods—all more or less carefully prepared—assisted by that most adventitious aid of united church efforts, good singing, attract the piously disposed, and also that mob of marvel-mongers who may be almost said to go "like Thaterfelto wandering for their bread," but the novelty soon wears off. I venture to say that if Mr. Jones were to take a church in Toronto and fill its pulpit for fifty-two consecutive Sundays as our regular ministers do,

## DR. WILD

would outdraw him at the end of the year. Dr. Wild is the most interesting, genial and successful old humbug that I know of. It is impossible to be displeased with him, even when he bites pieces out of your early education in grammar, makes history read as though it were a child's fairy tale, fires off borrowed erudition anent the pyramids, the round towers of Ireland and other prehistoric investigators, and looks

a good deal, for if there is anything that will make a man tolerant of another man's doing it is a wad of ten dollar bills. This is the reason Peter Ryan is not the Liberal candidate instead of Leys for this gerrymandered, three-cornered seat, though truth to tell Peter's religion will never wear out the knees of more than one pair of pants in the twelvemonth. March and Roney are the labor candidates, and March is a papist, while Roney is a V. M. C. A. old man. I calculate that a good many of the Catholic working-men will vote for March and Leys, and a good many of their Protestant brethren will split between Roney and Ned Clarke, of the Orange *Sentinel*. I may be mistaken, but my experience with that mendacity machine, the ballot box, justifies my suspicion.

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are too severe and well defined to permit him to pay out so much line as his Congregational brother. The mention of His Grace, good old soul that he is—whatever his imperfections—naturally reminds me that I ought to drop the parsons and say

## SOMETHING ABOUT THE POLITICIANS.

Though the terms are almost convertible in Toronto these days, when the cry that Protestantism is in danger resounds from so many pulpits, and most of the priests are on a still hunt after the *Mail* men's scalps. The Revs. McLeod, Parsons and D. J. Macdonnell among the Presbyterians, Canon Dumolin and Dr. Langtry of the Episcopalians, and Dr. Potts, the Methodist Pope, have all got it and got it bad. Canon Dumoulin has been flourishing the Ross Scripture readings in one hand and the Bible presented to St. James' Cathedral by the Prince of Wales in the other, and calling upon the faithful to choose between them. At any rate there is more bigotry to the square inch in Toronto than in any other town this side of Ireland. You could not elect a Roman Catholic or a Free Thinker mayor of Toronto if you were to raise the price of votes to ten dollars apiece, and that is saying a good deal, for if there is anything that will make a man tolerant of another man's doing it is a wad of ten dollar bills. This is the reason Peter Ryan is not the Liberal candidate instead of Leys for this gerrymandered, three-cornered seat, though truth to tell Peter's religion will never wear out the knees of more than one pair of pants in the twelvemonth. March and Roney

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will probably be uncontested this year, as the heclers are too busy with the Legislature to covet Mr. Howland's vineyard. Though I say it—who should not, for I am no great admirer of his—he deserves a second term, and has made a tolerably good mayor. His chief faults are canting, fadding and praying on the house-tops. Hank Monk told Horace Greeley that a man who had no small faults must have some darn big ones, and I think that any man who prays a great deal in public is apt to pool his petitions in private. But Howland is not open to the charge brought against Manning with such effect last year—that of being a mean

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are the apparent favorites so far. Toronto is a Tory town. Both of them will poll a solid Orange vote, as they both ride the goat in the same lodge. Then H. E. Clarke is a favorite with business men and a good employer. E. F. is popular with the boys, a practical printer, and generally liked for his genial and obliging disposition. Though the Catholic vote is pretty solidly Grit, he will get even a few of them, as even the Irish Canadian has had a good word to say of him personally. Leys is a strong man in the east end, and his party plumpers may give him the third seat, but one or both of the Labor candidates will make a sharp fight for that, unless they are jayhawled by their own class. There—you know as much about the situation here now as I do, and what more knowledge can any one want? The pot has not fairly begun to boil yet, so that campaign incidents are rather rare, but one which occurred in St. Paul's ward last night is worth reporting. The Toronto School Board—than whom there is no greater gang of Dogheries outside of Fooldom have departed

## INSPECTOR HUGHES

to go forth and slay Grits and papists with that Sampsonion weapon, his

red right jaw-bone. While speaking the other night he suddenly pulled a Union Jack out of his pocket with a movement which led the beholders to expect that he was going to blow his nose on it, instead of which he wildly waived it over his poor head, to the delight of the groundlings and the disgust of the sane gentlemen on the platform. Mr. Hughes has got the big head, and it is sore. Minister Ross did not let him into the educational grab bag, which is reserved for Nelson of the *Globe* and other favorites. To say that Hughes is making an ass of himself would be to deprive my esteemed contemporary, Mother Nature, of the credit due her handiwork, but he has certainly elaborated the original design.

## THE PROTESTANT HORSE

is said by some to be showing great bursts of speed outside of Toronto, but I have it upon the best authority that during their tour in the west the Ministers have failed to find any of his tracks. He has certainly gone dead lame in North Wentworth, where the Tory candidate has retired, and the local Conservative organ says that Dr. McMahon will go in by acclamation. You can't make intelligent Protestants believe that purgatory yawns for them because a parcel of politicians have quarrelled over the plunder, or because the *Mail* office slings chunks of church lore to the gaping mob. Should Mr. Meredith win, as he personally deserves to, Protestantism will stand just where it does now, upon its merits, neither the better nor the worse for the change.

## THE MAYORALTY

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## RUPERT.

Hon. Edward Blake having declared against prohibition, the esteemed Deacon Cameron waves his lean right arm aloft and shrieks that "the bottle is now opened." Perhaps though it was the intelligent compositor who substituted an "o" for an "a." Yet we have known the bottle opened in the *Globe* office.