

The Passing Show.

BY WILFRID WISGAST.

"All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players."

The scandal of the week has been the elopement of Miss Rosabel Teetzel with a Methodist minister calling himself Walter Nelson. The case is notable for several reasons. In the first place, the man was married, and the school teacher who eloped with him knew that he was married. In the second place, it is absurd to call Miss Teetzel "a young girl"; she is in her 27th year, and if she be not a young woman I fear she never will be. That the man is a liar and a knave there is no doubt; he deserves a good thrashing, and I hope he has had one before this.

But what about the woman? The *World*, in a maudlin manner, calls her "the stricken ewe lamb." A lamb of 27 years old! Now, the *World* is usually reasonable, and does not go in for sentimental gush. But such balderdash as this is injurious, especially in this connection. I have not one word to say in mitigation of the offence of the man, but in this case, without a doubt, the woman was equally to blame, and very probably, in my opinion, more so.

Of course this is a bad sentiment to give utterance to I know, and several people will be shocked or pretend to be. But there is such a thing as the seduction of a weak fool of a man by an intriguing woman. The modest young men of the *World* office may not think such atrocity possible. There are plenty of "ewe lambs" of even under the tender age of 27 years who are quite capable of deliberately and designedly luring a man on to any act of folly or criminality. To attempt to ignore a truth self-evident to any one going about the world with eyes to see is folly.

Not for one moment do I suggest that this Methodist minister was enticed into wrong-doing, any more than the woman was "betrayed." A woman of 27, knowing a man is married, and who drives and walks about with him, admits him to her room at night, and finally elopes with him, is not "betrayed," and it is not absurd to use such language in connection with the case. A woman of twenty or over is usually much more shrewd than a man of the same age; and, as a rule, much more able to take care of herself, if she desires to do so.

My object in saying this is because I am convinced that this wholesale and spurious sympathy for women who do not deserve it has a very bad effect, and causes many a girl to be more careless in her conduct, because she knows that if anything does go wrong all the blame will be thrown on the man, while she will be sympathised with, pitied, and excused. In fact she will be made a little fuss over, and obtain, maybe, some brief notoriety. And there is many a young woman quite willing even to be called "a stricken ewe lamb" to gain some passing tribute to her vanity like this.

The truth is women are often very silly in their bearing and relations towards a "minister." Especially is this so in country places. If single he is simply adored, and petted, and made much of by quite half the young women in his fold; and if married he is often treated with much more confidence and familiarity than any other man. That this is so the frequent publicity the papers have to give to a scandal in some church or the other is unfortunately more than ample evidence. And the members of almost any congregation can, if so disposed, affirm that the scandals which reach the public ear are not a tithe of those that which are known to occur.

Mayor Clarke has done well in deciding not to offer himself for re-election. He has consulted his own dignity, and done the right thing. I should not mind the Mayor being elected for five years, but while the elections are annual I do not want to see anyone permanently installed in the Mayor's chair. It is said that Mr. Clarke has found such continuous occupation while in office that his own private affairs have been neglected. I must say that his paper, the *Sentinel*, is sadly in need of supervision; it was once an interesting sheet, but has for some time past been an unsightly thing built up mostly of boiler plate.

I see a gang of Yankee quack doctors have arrived in this city, and are advertising to give advice free. Of course there are always a certain quantity of fools to be caught, but I trust none of them will be among the readers of this paper. This advice gratis is a quack fake. Those who take it will find it worth exactly what they give for it. It is an old device to catch simpletons, and those who fall into the trap will find themselves certainly no better in health but very certainly much lighter in purse for having acted on the "advice gratis" these advertising philanthropists will give.

I am pleased to see that at last some citizens are becoming alive to the folly of continuing the expensive and grotesque farce known among us as the "Morality Department." It is an insulting and expensive institution; it does much more harm than it ever has done or can do good. It means half a-dozen fellows loafing about, and doing practically nothing, at the public expense. Mr. Sheard is to be congratulated on the stand he has taken in this matter. We must sweep the "Morality Department" away.

We are told by a New York paper that the Prince of Wales has a nervous habit of winking one eye when talking to a friend, and that the person addressed, from a kind of magnetic sympathy I presume, takes after a while to winking one eye also; and the effect of two people thus winking at one another is described as very peculiar." Possibly it is; but we are not told whether it is a lady or gentleman with whom the Prince indulges in this pastime. Well, if it be a lady, perhaps the Princess of Wales had better be on her gay young husband's track; but if it is a man I recognize it as a secret Masonic sign to come and wet the other eye. Anyhow, it is interesting and valuable

information for a leading New York journal to have cabled from London.

It is certainly amusing to any one who has lived in England, and is aware of the utter lack of attention paid by the masses of English people to the doings of Society and the "Swells," to notice with what fulsome minuteness any item of gossip connected with the English upper class is cabled to all the papers of this continent. To be told how some riffy-raffy English nobleman eats, drinks, dresses, or swears, is evidently a matter of absorbing interest to many a staunch republican out here.

The literary occurrence of the week in London is Churton Collins's acknowledgment of the authorship of *The Cornhill Magazine* article published long ago on "Tennysonian Origins." By a republication in an extended form under the title "Illustrations of Tennyson," Mr. Collins does not profess to accuse the poet of plagiarism, but brings up parallel passages showing that Tennyson borrowed ideas and phrases wholesale from previous authors, always, however, improving them.

One of the men coming to the front as a journalist on the London press is Mr. Gilbert Parker, for some years a resident of Toronto University.

A lady of Canadian birth is making her mark as a writer under the *nom de guerre* of "Marie Stuart."

Mr. Andrew Lang has written a slashing article in the last number to hand of the *Illustrated London News*; it is called "On Being Slated," and is a reply to a rather smart criticism by Walter Blackburn Harte in the *New England Magazine*.

Walter Blackburn Harte has a long article in the December number of the *New England Magazine* on "Canadian Journals and Journalists." It will be read with much interest here.

Sir Edwin Arnold has written a long poem, which appears in the December number of *The Contemporary Review*. It is in the lyrical dramatic form and embodies a charming Japanese legend. The title of the poem is "The No Dance."

Joseph Knight, the veteran dramatic critic of London, is writing a life of Garrick. He is also preparing to publish a volume under the title of "Theatrical Notes," which will be a record of the principal performances at the London theatres during the last twenty years.

George Ebers has been writing a story of Alexandria in the third century, under the reign of Caracalla. It is to be called "Per Aspera."

Mark Twain's novel is to be published in England in *The Inler*, Mr. Jerome's new magazine.

In the literary world much interest has been aroused in Lord Rosebery's life of William Pitt.

The Church authorities of Belgium have placed Bruneau's opera "Le Reve" in the "Index Librorum Prohibitorum."