

of prophecy. The greater work is to reveal God. Every true religious enthusiast is a prophet.

Daring as it is to say so, in the growth of Language it is certain that the retrospect of slang from the start would be the recalling from their nebulous conditions of all that is poetical in the stores of human utterance. Moreover, the honest delving, as of late years, by the German and British workers in comparative philology has pierced and dispersed many of the falsest bubbles of centuries; and will disperse many more. It was long recorded that in Scandinavian mythology the heroes in the Norse Paradise drank out of the skulls of their slain enemies. Later investigation proves the word taken for skulls to mean *horns* of beasts slain in the hunt. And what reader had not been exercised over the traces of that feudal custom by which *seigneurs* warmed their feet in the bowels of serfs, the abdomen being opened for the purpose? It now is made to appear that the serf was only required to submit his unharmed abdomen as a foot cushion while his lord supped, and was required to chafe the legs of the seigneur with his hands.

It is in embryos and childhood, and among the illiterate, we always find the groundwork and start of this great science and its noblest products. What a relief most people have in speaking of a man not by his true and formal name, with a "Mister" to it, but by some odd or homely appellative. The propensity to approach a meaning not directly and squarely, but by circuitous styles of expression, seems indeed a born quality of the common people everywhere, evidenced by nicknames and the inveterate determination of the masses to bestow sub-titles, sometimes ridiculous, sometimes very apt. Always among the soldiers during the Secession War one heard of "Little Mac" (Gen. McClellan), or of "Uncle Billy" (Gen. Sherman). "The old man" was, of course, very common. Among the rank and file, both armies, it was very general to speak of the different States they came from by their slang names. Those from Maine were called Foxes; New Hampshire, Granite Boys; Massachusetts, Bay Staters; Vermont, Green Mountain Boys; Rhode Island, Gun Flints; Connecticut, Wooden Nutmegs; New York, Knickerbockers; New Jersey, Clam Catchers; Pennsylvania, Logher Heads; Delaware, Muskrats; Maryland, Claw Thumpers; Virginia, Beagles; North Carolina, Tar Boilers; South Carolina, Weasels; Georgia, Buzzards; Louisiana, Creoles; Alabama, Lizzards; Kentucky, Corn Crackers; Ohio, Buckeyes; Michigan, Wolverines; Indiana, Hoosiers; Illinois, Suckers; Missouri, Pukes; Mississippi, Tad Poles; Florida, Fly up the Creeks; Wisconsin, Badgers; Iowa, Hawkeyes; Oregon, Hard Cases. Indeed I am not sure but slang names have more than once made Presidents. "Old Hickory" (General Jackson) is one case in point. "Tippecanoe, and Tyler too," another.

I find the same rule in the people's conversations everywhere. I heard this among the men of the city horse-cars, where the conductor is often called a "snatcher" (*i. e.*, because his characteristic duty is to constantly pull or snatch the bell-strap to stop or go on). Two young fellows are having a friendly talk, amid which says 1st Conductor, "What did you do before you was a snatcher?" Answer of 2nd Conductor, "Nailed." (Translation of answer: "I worked as carpenter.") What is a "boom"? says one editor to another. "Esteemed contemporary," says the other, "a boom is a bulge." "Barefoot whiskey" is the Tennessee name for the undiluted stimulant. In the slang of the New York common restaurant waiters a plate of ham and beans is known as "stars and stripes," codfish-balls as "sleeve-buttons," and hash as "mystery."

The Western States of the Union are, however, as may be supposed, the special areas of slang, not only in conversation, but in names of localities, towns, rivers, etc. A late Oregon traveller says:

"On your way to Olympia by rail you cross a river called the Shookum-Chuck; your train stops at places named Newaukum, Tumwater, and Toutle; and if you seek further you will hear of whole counties labelled Wahkiakum, or Snohomish, or Kitsar, or Klikat; and Cowlitz, Hookium, and Nenolelops greet and offend you. They complain in Olympia that Washington Territory gets but little immigration; but what wonder? What man, having the whole American continent to choose from, would willingly date his letters from the county of Snohomish or bring up his children in the city of Nenolelops? The village of Tumwater is, as I am ready to bear witness, very pretty indeed; but surely an emigrant would think twice before he established himself either there or at Toutle. Seattle is sufficiently barbarous; Stelicoom is no better; and I suspect that the Northern Pacific Railroad terminus has been fixed at Tacoma because it is one of the few places on Puget Sound whose name does not inspire horror."

Then a Nevada paper chronicles the departure of a mining party from Reno: "The toughest set of roosters that ever shook the dust of any town left Reno yesterday for the new mining district of Cornucopia. They came here from Virginia. Among the crowd were four New York cock-fighters, two Chicago murderers, three Baltimore bruisers, one Philadelphia prize-fighter, four San Francisco hoodlums, three Virginia beats, two Union Pacific roughs, and two check guerillas."

Perhaps indeed no place or term gives more luxuriant illustrations of the fermentation processes I have mentioned and their froth and specks than our Mississippi and Pacific Coast regions at the present day. Hasty and grotesque as are some of the names, others are of an appropriateness and originality unsurpassable. This applies to the Indian words, which are often perfect. Oklahoma is proposed in Congress for the name of one of our new Territories. Hog-eye, Lick-skillet, Rake-pocket and Steal-easy are the names of some Texan towns. Miss Bremer found among the aborigines the following names: *Men's*, Horn-point; Round-Wind; Stand-and-look-out; The-Cloud-that-goes-aside; Iron-toe; Seek-the-sun; Iron-flash; Red-bottle; White-spindle; Black-dog; Two-feathers-of-honour; Gray-grass; Bushy-tail; Thunder-face; Go-on-the-burning-sod;

Spirits-of-the-dead. *Women's*, Keep-the-fire; Spiritual-woman; Second-daughter-of-the-house; Blue-bird.

Certainly philologists have not given enough attention to this element and its results, which, I repeat, can probably be found working everywhere to-day amid modern conditions, with as much life and activity as in far-back Greece or India, under pre-historic ones. Then the wit—the rich flashes of humour and genius and poetry—darting out often from a gang of labourers, railroad-men, miners, drivers or boatmen! How often have I hovered at the edge of a crowd of them, to hear their repartees and impromptus! You get more real fun from half an hour with them than from the books of all "the American humourists."—*Walt Whitman, in the North American Review.*

HERE AND THERE.

IN according so hearty a welcome to the officers and men of C Company on their return from the North-West, the citizens of Toronto did not less honour to themselves than to the little weather-beaten force they greeted. The Queen City has developed into so busy a centre, and many of its sons and daughters have recently passed through a period of commercial depression so widespread, that to not a few of the thousands who lined the streets for hours on Monday the time devoted to the reception was an absolute sacrifice. This remembered, Colonel Otter and his men may with reason be proud of their welcome home—of its spontaneity as evidenced both in the ringing cheers which marked time to their triumphal march through the streets and in the magical reappearance of bunting which had already done similar duty on the return of their companions in arms of the Queen's Own and the Grenadiers.

CANADIAN correspondents of American journals might make a point of impressing upon their readers the fact that Montreal is not Canada. The ignorance of the average denizen of the United States about this country is only paralleled by the lack of knowledge constantly displayed by Englishmen at home when writing or speaking of the Dominion. Already trade between Canada and the States has been nearly paralyzed, our neighbours having been accustomed to think of Toronto as a suburb of the pest-ridden Montreal and Ottawa an adjacent village. In return perhaps the American health authorities will relax the absurd regulation which prohibits all Torontonians who have not been recently vaccinated from crossing the line.

THERE is pertinence in the suggestion that travellers from certain American cities coming into Canada should submit to be vaccinated or otherwise produce evidence of having undergone the operation within a short period. It was from the States that Montreal's epidemic was imported, and in Chicago, Buffalo, St. Louis and other cities small-pox, like the poor, they have always.

OUR contiguity to the great Republic has its penalties as well as its advantages. The invisible line fortunately does not exclude the industrial productions of our ingenious neighbours—provided always that the N. P. impost, added to their actual cost, does not render them prohibitive. Neither does the same intangible line of demarcation serve as a barrier to the immigration of defaulting bank managers *et hoc genus*. Now we are threatened with an inundation of the lottery fiend, who has been made most uncomfortable by the post-office regulations of the States. New Brunswick, we are informed, has been selected as a centre from which to work these nefarious schemes, several well-known swindlers having located themselves in St. Stephen. From that retreat they send flaming lottery circulars by the million, all over the United States, but are careful to mail none to the citizens of the country wherein they are located; thus they violate no law of New Brunswick or the Dominion of Canada, and for their stealings from citizens of the United States cannot be extradited and punished. "These protected thieves," adds a contemporary, "are millionaires, and live in the greatest luxury."

Who runs may read the moral conveyed by the collapse of a new building in course of erection on Kingston Road, Toronto. A hideous danger lurks in the mushroom growth of shoddy buildings so characteristic of the day. On every hand flimsy tenements or rickety stores are being flung together by unscrupulous speculators who subordinate every consideration of sanitary fitness or structural stability to the accumulation of dollars and cents. There is much useful work for the City Engineer in this direction, and our City Fathers ought to see that it is done.

A TIMELY note of warning was that sounded by the *Mail* the other day when attention was called to the dangers attending promiscuous dancing between the sexes at public resorts, at so-called private "assemblies," or at "schools." In too many cases the latter terms are the merest blinds for reunions where there is a commingling of young men and women which is pregnant with danger. In the excitement of the pastime girls are apt to overlook the fact that their partners or escorts are perhaps heated with liquor, and as an introduction is considered unnecessary before asking a female to dance it is not difficult to see what must occasionally be the outcome of such indiscriminate acquaintanceships. It is a lamentable comment upon the decay of parental control to be told that mothers who have been appealed to in the matter have bewailed the lurking danger, but have declared themselves powerless to prevent the attendance of their daughters at these traps for the unwary, so infatuated do some of them become with the recreation.