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TALES OF THE TOWN.

*"I must have liberty
Withal, as large a charter as the wind
To blow on whom I please."*

IT has just leaked out that previous to the departure of W. H. Ellis for San Francisco, Hon. Theodore Davie called that gentleman into his private office and gave him a few pointers as to how he should act when he arrived in the Bay City. It appears that the Hon. Theodore gained a wide and varied experience of city life during his visit to New York last summer, and he was anxious that the manager of the Government street morning paper should be benefitted by a recital of the same. I am in a position to print the instructions delivered by the Premier on the occasion of his interview with the newspaper king. "William," he said, "now you are going into a new country, and there are a few precepts I want you to bear in mind. I have heard strange stories of San Francisco, and all the different sorts and conditions of men you will find there. It is true they may never have had the advantage of living in Victoria, but they have lived in other places, and I can assure you that they never need fly paper to relieve themselves of the nuisance of that uncomfortable little pest. Bear well in mind these things, I say, and mark them down and con them well:

First—Do not blow out the gas in the room which may be assigned to thee at thy hotel, for the fumes are noxious, toxic and very unpleasant to breathe.

Second—Now when you address a guardian of the peace, speak to him in soft and gentle accents; do not attempt to inspire him with a feeling of awe at your presence, but speak him fair, and all will be well with thee.

Third—And prithee, do not stand on the electric tracks and obstruct traffic by gazing in the air at the lofty buildings though wilt see. For that might hurt thy neck, and that were sad indeed.

Fourth—And speak in chary words of thine own town, praise all thou seest, and do not give thy tongue a chance for invidious comparison. For, as the knight did say as he poured the bottle of perfume on the harness of his steed, 'comparisons are odorous.' And he was right.

Fifth—Nor speak too much of fruits apricots, plums and grapes, and say that in your own land, and also in Saanich, you revel in such luxuries. For thus is envy engendered, and this is never right.

Sixth—And when the bell boy is a pleasing lad and full of favor and courtesy, never give him more than one large silver dollar at once, lest he might size you up wrong and think you easy game; or perchance might call you Mackay, and thus create confusion.

Seventh—And above all things, William,

I beseech thee, do not designate every gentleman you meet a skilled perjurer and falsifier. Such luxuries come exceeding high in the land to which you are now going, and cannot be had for a paltry dollar.

Eighth—Speak guardedly of railways and boom towns; for remember even that secretive and acquisitive woman—the Queen of Sheba—was impelled to admit that the half only had been told to her of the wealth and wisdom of Solomon.

Ninth—Now hearken unto me and bear these things in mind. Be wise; be good; and to thyself be true, and I will promise that the act thou'll't never rue."

And William marvelled as he pondered over the words of wisdom which had dropped from the lips of British Columbia's first statesman, and murmured, "Verily, we are not without prophets in these days."

It is fashionable nowadays to abuse corporations, like street railroad companies, and a great deal of the abuse is, no doubt, merited—in some cities; but there are times when it is proper to throw in a kindly word of commendation by way of encouragement. Electric rapid transit is a new thing, and when it is considered what an immense improvement it is on the old means of locomotion, the man who is not thankful would scoff at anything. I freely confess that science cannot accomplish great results unaided. Take, for instance, the excellent service which the Victoria tramcar company gave us during the recent snow blockade. All along the line of the C. P. R. traffic was suspended, but quite the reverse along the line of the Victoria tramway, from which I infer that the local organization is conducted with much greater regard for the convenience of its patrons than the Canadian national highway. If President Higgins had not put forth all his energies it is doubtful if the cars could have been kept running at all. The sublime spectacle of the President in blue flannel shirt sleeves with snow shovel in hand will not soon be forgotten, and the vigorous yet withal dignified manner in which he pitched the "beautiful" to the right and to the left in order that his cars might not miss a trip was truly an enthralling though somewhat picturesque scene. During the storm there were no delays and no blockaded lines, which is remarkable when one considers how extensive the system is and how unfavorable the climatic conditions have been. President Higgins got up early every morning, fanned the snow from the tracks and kept the wires supplied with the fluid, and I again repeat, without hope of future reward on earth or in heaven, that this unswerving devotion to duty should not be lightly considered. In rapid transit, as in everything else, Vic-

torias beats the world—(our street car system is "out of sight")—and I can chip in a word of praise now and then without missing it, and without surrendering my great privilege of kicking when I feel so disposed.

Katie Putnam knows no pause in conscientious work, but, like Tennyson's brook, goes on forever. I have seen the little woman at least once a year since the 70's, and she appears just as young, winning and painstaking as she did the first time I beheld her in her famous impersonation of "Little Nell." I have never been able to discover the secret of Miss Putnam's popularity; she is not by any stretch of imagination a great actress, but few women on the stage wield as much influence with an audience. From the moment she comes tripping on the stage until the curtain drops on the last act she holds the spectator as in mesmeric spell—and all love her, but why they cannot tell. It may be that her diminutiveness is the magic spark from whence evolves her mystic power. Quite recently I read, or some one told me, that small women attract compassion, and a lady, who appears to have made a study of her sex, writes me that it is foolish to waste any sympathy on little women. In effect she says: "That baby mouth wasn't made in vain. Ever see one of those little women stand up in a street car, or carry her own parcels home, or get in or out of a carriage without having half a dozen men to assist her. And all just because she is a little woman, and has that imploring look, as if she couldn't stand the least bit of trouble in the world. And every man is sorry for and is ready to extend his sympathy and assistance. I've watched her. I've made a study of her tricks and her ways. She just looks at a man out of those appealing eyes and he would walk over red hot plowshares to assist her. When I am born again, I want to be one of those meek, helpless, sorrowful eyed little women, and be helped to all the good things of life, because I look so small, sad and sweet." And Clara Belle adds, "Little woman! Little humbug!" This may be true of some little women, but not all, especially fascinating little Katie Putnam.

When one takes into consideration the composition and qualifications of the modern actress, he must confess that it is only the artist who can give a pleasing performance. Education and study, with natural ability, are the only passports to success. The great opportunities for making money have attracted to the stage men and women utterly devoid of qualifications, with the result that the long suffering public have to tolerate the affliction. Milliners abandon the hatblock to sing vulgar songs in music halls, and subsequently impose their hideous presence

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