

THE IMPERIALIST

a present of pocket-money on the Queen's Birthday—were common ones, and almost statutory. How their father, sitting comfortably with his pipe in the flickering May shadows under the golden pippin, reading the Toronto paper, could evade his liability in the matter was unfathomable to the Murchisons; it was certainly illiberal; they had a feeling that it was illegal. A little teasing was generally necessary, but the resistance to-day had begun to look ominous, and Alec, as we know, too temerarious, had retired in disorder to the wood-pile.

Oliver was wiping Advena's dishes. He exercised himself ostentatiously upon a plate, standing in the door to be within earshot of his father.

"Eph Wheeler," he informed his family, "Eph Wheeler, he's got twenty-five cents, an' a English sixpence, an' a Yankee nickel. An' Mr. Wheeler's only a common working man, a lot poorer'n we are."

Mr. Murchison removed his pipe from his lips, in order, apparently, to follow unimpeded the trend of the *Dominion's* leading article. Oliver eyed him anxiously. "Do, father," he continued in logical sequence. "Aw, do."

"Make him, mother," said Abby indignantly. "It's the Queen's *Birthday*!"

"Time enough when the butter bill's paid," said Mrs. Murchison.