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TEMPERATURE

as observed by Hearn & Harrison, Thermometer and Barometer Makers, Notre Dame Street, Montreal.

THE WEEK ENDING			Corresponding week, 1882.				
Feb. 11th, 1883.	Max.	Min.	Mean.	Feb. 11th, 1882.	Max.	Min.	Mean.
Mon.	25.0	8.0	16.5	Mon.	20.0	1.0	10.5
Tues.	20.0	15.0	17.5	Tues.	20.0	1.0	10.5
Wed.	23.0	32.0	32.5	Wed.	24.0	1.0	12.5
Thur.	22.0	17.0	19.5	Thur.	23.0	1.0	12.0
Fri.	17.0	7.0	12.0	Fri.	16.0	1.0	8.5
Sat.	11.0	3.0	7.0	Sat.	11.0	1.0	6.0
Sun.	14.0	7.0	10.5	Sun.	8.0	-3.0	2.5

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CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.
Montreal, Saturday, Feb. 17, 1883.

SAINT VALENTINE.

"To-morrow is Saint Valentine's Day,
All in the morning betime."

The only difficulty in dealing with the fact being that it has been St. Valentine's Day several times before, and that on each occasion hundreds of unfortunate scribblers have scratched their heads and bitten their quills to a stump—in the days, that is, when there were quills to bite—to bethink them what to say to an expectant public, who, in the majority of instances, would have been just as happy had they said nothing at all. For, indeed, there is little chance in the nineteenth century of our forgetting the good Saint Valentine, in league as he is with the Government and the postman to remind us of the fact. I wonder if I shall be the first to remind any one of the origin of the day, or, indeed, if there be anyone who has not previously stored in his memory the facts connected with it in previous discussions of a similar character on other fourteenth of February. And yet, stay, a glance at the Registrar-General's report assures me that babies, many indeed, for that matter, have been given to the world since the last time I volunteered this information. To them, then, let me speak, and tell them how in ancient times the Romans drew lots for partners at their *Luperalia*, and how the custom in later and more Christian times came to be transferred as a religious observance to the feast of St. Valentine, bishop and martyr. Let me inform them, too, that, amongst other interesting facts, the first person of the other sex upon whom their eyes may alight on this eventful morn is fated to be their valentine and partner for the coming year. Be careful, then, young ladies, I beseech you. Resist all inclination to open the door to the milkman, if he be fashioned as milkmen usually are. Be sure, if you do sit up till after twelve with anybody, be sure, I say, that it is the right man, and when Betty brings you word that there is a visitor below, ask him to send up his card. We cannot be too careful in these little matters, and the thought which is disturbing my rest and preventing me from taking my usual nourishment, is that perhaps I may be too late to warn you, and you may have imprudently gazed upon the wrong fellow.

But I suppose, after all, it is the post-bag and its contents which interests us mostly on this

anniversary. Valentines so called have undergone a change, by no means for the better, in the last ten or fifteen years. Do you not remember, any of you to whom I speak, the hours you spent, and the bad language you would have liked to use, over that especial piece of doggerel in which "heart" and "Cupid's dart" had played so conspicuous a share, and which was meant to evoke the compassion of the reluctant fair. Didn't you ever write your own valentines? I know I did, and very bad ones they were, too. But then the Valentine poet had not yet arisen, who for a quarter should provide us with an effusion which would put our early efforts to the blush.

Then, with the progress of color printing and kindred arts, came the beautiful, as we then thought them, lace paper valentines, with figures and bunches of impossible flowers, which, on being gently raised, disclosed beneath the impassioned verses of the aforesaid poet. And then, too, came the custom of concealing the identity of the sender, a custom often, I fear, broken through by tacit agreement, when Corydon feared lest his Phyllis might linger in doubt as to the whence of her tribute of affection, and Phyllis murmured over his initials in the corner. "Silly boy, as if I should not have known it was him," which, if ungrammatical, was doubtless true.

Our valentines are more costly now, but there is reason to fear that the love which freighted the old ones has left but a Brummagen god to take his place. The beautiful cards which now go flying over the world bear nothing between the lines but the compliments of the season. Well, we are a matter-of-fact people, yet perhaps the old love gets told equally well in new ways. The valentine has had its day, and ranks now pretty much with the Christmas card with its naked children in mid-winter, and exotic flowers blooming amid the snows.

And there is yet another feature of our modern *Luperalia*, which surely is not an improvement upon the old ones. What are we to say of the coarse and vulgar prints that disfigure the windows of the print-sellers, and are fitter for the noble savage to send to his dusky consort that is to be, than for ladies and gentlemen—Heaven save the mark—so much as to finger? (Clever they are not, witty are not, in many cases indecent, in nearly all vulgar and senseless. Insult a man or woman, if needs you must, openly, and where he or another may have a chance to punch your head for it, but do not send to any one an insult in red and yellow under the shadow of St. Valentine, bishop and martyr.

If men, aye, and women, too, could realize how they degrade themselves by handling such "rubbish," surely the trade of the cheap valentine maker would perish, or be turned into better and purer channels. With harmless fun I have all possible sympathy, but when it becomes vulgar, indecent, insulting, it ceases to be harmless, nay, it even ceases to be fun.

So may you all have the prettiest of valentines, ladies, and if a particularly choice one comes from a strictly anonymous source, remember that I always send mine in that way.

GOSSIP OF THE WEEK.

Who is to solve the mystery of the origin of the pseudonym, "Soapy Sam," as applied to the late Bishop Wilberforce—or the "synonym" as his son, Mr. Reginald Wilberforce, oddly enough, chooses to call it? Mr. Reginald Wilberforce himself treated it lightly enough last week, and said the origin was in the "S.O.A.P. of Cuddesdon College;" those letters being carved high up on the wall of that college, of which the late Bishop was the founder. The interpretation has been given as S. Oxon, the founder, and Alfred Pott, the first principal. But, now, what say two correspondents of the *Times*? The first declares that whereas Cuddesdon College was not begun to be built till 1853, he had seen the saponaceous sobriquet in print, as having been applied to the Bishop by some of his High Church friends, in relation to his "behaviour in the Hampden affair," in 1847; and, further, that a year or two later—and certainly before 1853—he heard the late Mr. Frewen call out to a brother M.P.—"Won't you come and tell 'Soapy Sam'?" The other pathetically tells how, so early as 1845, when a "boy at Rugby," and on a visit to the late Mrs. Tait's father, he received a "grave but very kindly rebuke" from Archdeacon Spooner for having ventured

to ask—"Is that the man they call 'Soapy Sam'?" I presume the name was really immortalized by Lord Beaconsfield in his celebrated reference to "his saponaceous Lordship."

The frequency of fires in London has given rise to a new industry. Formerly it was the fashion when there had been a large fire at a dry goods establishment for other houses in the same trade to buy the salvage stock and offer it at stupendous reductions. Now the costermonger has gone into the business. He loads his burrow with half-burned and wholly wet goods, and drives a roaring trade. In order to prove the genuineness of his goods he will in the intervals of doing business publicly wring the water out of them, a process which, as far as observation goes, has a remarkable effect upon the crowd, custom thereafter rolling in. Whether he waters his goods as he was wont to water his greens it might not be judicious to press too closely, but there are the goods partially burned and wholly wet, and the burrow is cleared with encouraging rapidity. It is marvellous to think how many people there are going about London to-day with portions of their underclothing partially burned. We have still something to learn, it seems, in the way of trade, but the "coster" is, so far as I have observed, indigenous to the soil of the old country. A disquisition on the *gout*, with notes upon his transmigration into the various forms of itinerant vendor on this side the Atlantic, would offer a subject worthy of Dickens.

The thought reading of Mr. Bishop, whose claims have been the subject of so much controversy in the English papers, has been put to the practical test of a money loss to himself if he failed, and a gain of the same sum to a charity if he succeeded. The trial took place at the Philharmonic: Hope Hill, Liverpool. Mr. Bishop was to find a pin concealed within a radius of 500 yards of the Adelphi Hotel. The conditions were that if Mr. Bishop failed he should give £10 to the Liverpool Infirmary, while if he succeeded a like sum should be deposited by the proposer of the wager. The starting-place was to be the steps of the Adelphi Hotel, where Mr. Bishop is staying, and a committee was to be appointed to superintend the proceedings. It was further stipulated that Mr. Bishop's head should be enveloped in a velvet sack, and that the only connection he should be allowed to have with the "experimentee" would be a slender wire. Mr. Bishop publicly accepted the challenge both by verbal declaration on the platform and by advertisement, and the test accordingly took place on Saturday at one o'clock. A considerable crowd assembled in front of the Adelphi at the hour fixed for Mr. Bishop to start in quest of the hidden pin, while in the hall of the hotel were a number of gentlemen interested in the experiment, including the Rev. J. H. Skewes and Mr. W. Ladyman. It was through the latter gentleman that the wager was made, and as he was, therefore, responsible for the proper observance of the conditions, he had undertaken the not very difficult task of concealing the pin, and had, indeed, at the time Mr. Bishop was ready to start, already had deposited it in its place of concealment some time previously. Mr. Ladyman took his position by Mr. Bishop's side; a pianoforte wire was wound round Mr. Ladyman's hand, and Mr. Bishop having taken hold of the other end walked outside on to the steps. After some mystic passes with the hand, Mr. Bishop made a sudden dash into the crowd towards Ranelagh street. After the lapse of about six minutes a loud cheer intimated that Mr. Bishop was returning, and true enough he was espied coming towards the hotel holding the pin aloft in his hand. He was accompanied by Mr. Skewes and Mr. Ladyman, and the former, in a brief speech, stated that Mr. Bishop had won the wager, that the pin which Mr. Bishop had found was the one the speaker had marked before it was hidden, and that the infirmary would consequently receive the £10. "Did Mr. Bishop lead you or you him?" was asked of Mr. Ladyman, and the reply was emphatic, "He led me, most certainly, all the way." Mr. Skewes added that he marked the pin, and that he remained with Mr. Bishop while it was hidden.

A NEW ERA IN ENGLISH SOCIAL LIFE.

BY LADY WILDE.

The year 1883 is an important and remarkable epoch in the history of women, for, in consequence of the law which came into operation the first day of this year, the whole social and legal position of the sex is changed. From this time forth a woman enters the married state no longer as a bond slave, disenfranchised of all rights over her fortune, but equal with her husband before the law as regards property, free from his control, and perfectly independent of him in respect to the use she makes of her fortune.

A woman married after that date has now as absolute control over her income as if she were single. She can dispose of her property by sale, deed, contract, or will in any manner she may think proper, without asking permission of any one. Rents and dividends can be paid to her sole receipt the same as to a man.

The old cumbersome and involved arrangements of settlements and trustees need no longer exist, nor will there be any necessity for that peculiarly humiliating form of provision for a wife's personal expenses, called "pin money." These legal barriers were only required to protect a woman against the chances of utter spoliation and pauperism at a time when marriage deprived her of all legal rights over property; but henceforth she holds it in her own hands free from all bondage, and untrammelled by any legal disability whatever.

A woman may, of course, after marriage, resign all her rights, and make over all her property to her husband, if he deserves it; and many women, in the full confidence and first enthusiasm of love, will probably do so. But this impulsive generosity should be carefully checked; for it would be idiotic in the highest degree for a woman to resign, of her own free will, the rights and advantages which her sex has obtained at last from the legislature, after the bondage of centuries, and a struggle for freedom carried on bravely and nobly by a succession of brave-hearted women for the last fifty years.

There will always be plenty of opportunity for the exercise of generous impulses without a woman handing herself down by long legal documents to abrogate her personal rights in favor of another. Much would depend on the character of the husband, and if his conduct is worthy of generous confidence a woman will only be too ready to sacrifice personal interest for love's sake, without the intervention of lawyers and deeds.

That the necessity of "pin money" in matrimonial settlements has passed away should be a matter of intense congratulation to the female sex. It was vexatious and annoying to a woman of fortune to find her personal expenses provided for merely by a small stipend out of her own property, the husband reserving all the rest for himself, and giving the wife no account of it.

Sometimes, in moderate households, fifty pounds a year was considered sufficient for a woman's dress and other expenses; then gradually the fifty pounds would fall to thirty, or twenty, and finally, perhaps, end in nothing, the husband declaring that women had no need of money; let everything necessary be ordered, and he would pay the bills.

Then came the scrutiny of the bills—a season of much torture, and an ordeal of terror to the wife; and meanwhile she had to endure the deprivation of much that makes life charming and pleasant. No one can feel dignified, free and happy without the control of a certain amount of money for the graces, the elegant adornments, and, above all, for the charities of life. The hard-drawn line of simply paying the milliner's bill closed a thousand avenues to gentle joys and pleasures in a woman's daily life, unless indeed she descended to "coaxing" and subterfuge to obtain pocket money, or submitted to minute inquisition as to the objects for which it was required, as if she were a child or a menial.

All this happened under the old system; it was, in fact, the law of married life. But now everything is changed, and a wife can henceforth claim and hold her independent position with the dignity of conscious freedom that knows no need of coaxing or subterfuge, and no impulse of action in married life, save those of perfect love and generous confidence. If a woman has a fortune of her own, say three hundred a year, she can exercise her right to reserve at least a hundred a year for her personal expenses, while she gives up the rest for the general good of the household. In the same way, if she has three thousand a year, let her reserve one thousand and give the rest to the general fund, and this "without the intervention of any legal instrument, but purely of her own free will, for circumstances might arise which would require her to resume control over the entire amount.

In fact, under no pressure or influence should a woman ever resign the legal rights she has acquired over property, or imperil her future position and comfort and the claims of her children by a reckless and unnecessary confidence in another.

Women have been so long politically non-existent, that they almost tremble to assert they have any rights apart from their husband. They require much training in habits of self-assertion and self-reliance, and full knowledge of their newly acquired legal rights, in order that they may become worthy of the nobler life of freedom, and better fitted for the higher and more dignified status, both in home and social life, which they are destined henceforth to occupy and adorn.