

Our Contributors.

THOSE EXCEPTIONS.

BY KNOXONIAN.

In the old text books on Grammar there was a list of rules on gender, number and case. The rules were easy enough, and the examples under them were quite comprehensible to the intellect of an average boy. Under each rule, however, there was a list of exceptions, and oh, these exceptions were a terror. The exceptions were far more troublesome than the rules.

In the old books on Arithmetic there were rules for short and long division, reduction, simple and compound proportion, tare and tret, and everything else in figures. The rules were not particularly difficult; but under each rule there were exceptions, and these exceptions were very annoying.

The exceptions follow a boy into the High School. There he finds them in his Greek Grammar, and his Latin Grammar, and everywhere else. They always trouble him. The exceptions don't even leave him when he goes to college. In the highest seat of learning they are found in almost every subject, and they always maintain their character for being troublesome.

Somebody—probably neither Solomon nor Shakespeare—has said that there is only one rule in existence that admits of no exceptions, and that is that "a man must always be present when he is being shaved." A person of a critical turn of mind might take exception even to this rule. Everything depends on the kind of shaving. Many a good man has had his pocket closely shaved when he was not present. The rule admits of no exceptions as regards the human face.

In the old books on Grammar and Arithmetic the exceptions were generally printed in small type. One dear old dominie, at whose feet this contributor sat, used to say: "Boys, never mind the small type." He did not wish to trouble the boys with the exceptions. Blessings on the memory of the old man. May his memory be ever fragrant, and his grave be ever green! Had the boys been able to skip the exceptions all through life they would have been saved a great deal of trouble. But the exceptions cannot always be skipped. They meet you everywhere and they are always troublesome. In fact, they constitute no small part of the troubles of this life.

Here is a merchant doing a prosperous business. Nine-tenths of his customers are pleasant, sensible people. They buy readily, pay promptly, and buyer and seller have many a pleasant chat across the counter. After a time they begin to feel an interest in each other, and business intercourse often ripens into private friendship. But among the large number of customers there are two or three exceptions. They beat down prices, find fault with everything, and generally torment the man of business. These exceptions are far more trouble to him than all his other customers.

In a large manufacturing establishment, or public institution of any kind, there is a large number of employes. The most of them are good faithful people. They are diligent, industrious and faithful to every trust. The head of the institution has no trouble with them. In fact, their faithfulness to duty gives him great pleasure. But there is nearly always one exception, and that one exception gives more trouble than all the others put together. The exception generally manages to keep the whole concern in a state of continuous friction.

Those exceptions are found everywhere. The lawyer finds it a pleasure to do business for all his clients—with one or two exceptions. The doctor has pleasure in treating all his patients—with one or two exceptions. The teacher delights in giving instruction to his pupils—with one or two exceptions. All the scholars in the room are good and clever—with one or two exceptions. All the neighbours are kind and obliging—with one or two exceptions. Oh, those exceptions!

Those exceptions trouble even an editor. They trouble him much—if they can. Nine-tenths of his subscribers are well satisfied with their paper. They know it is not always at its best; but they know that no clock strikes twelve every time. They know it is not perfect; but they know that their own work is not perfect, and therefore they don't expect perfection in

the work of everybody else. But the exceptions don't reason in this sensible way. They may be absolutely good for nothing themselves, and that kind of people always do expect to find perfection in everything and everybody. The exceptions would run the paper—if they could. They are all supremely well qualified to edit a newspaper. They know exactly how it ought to be done. They know how everything ought to be written, exactly what ought to be put in and what ought to be kept out. They may not know much about their own business, and may have bungled everything they ever touched; but they know how to conduct a newspaper. Those exceptions are all editors—ready made.

If those exceptions are found everywhere, we should not be surprised if they are found in the Church. And so they are. They are found even in the ministry. The great majority of Presbyterian ministers are gentlemen. Once in a while you meet an exception that is a perfect boor. Most Presbyterian ministers can preach, but you do occasionally meet an exception that cannot. Most Presbyterian ministers are men of sense, but you do sometimes meet one that is a fool. And the exceptions in the ministry are very troublesome. One lively, cranky exception can give the Church more trouble than all the infidels in the Dominion. The Home Mission Committee, and the Superintendents of Missions, and the old Committee on Probationers know something about clerical exceptions.

The typical Presbyterian elder is a solid, sensible, God-fearing man—a man loyal to his Church, his duty and his God. But there *are* exceptions. Happy is the session that has no exception. The exceptional elder is not any better than his brother, the exceptional minister.

The duties of a pastor would be unalloyed pleasure were there no exceptions of any kind in the congregation. For a minister who likes his work, preaching is a positive pleasure. The great body of the people listen attentively, many of them devoutly; but that exception who *will* go to sleep every Sabbath with painful regularity rather mars the enjoyment. You notice him more than any other person in the congregation.

Pastoral visitation is laborious, but it is pleasant. You call upon half-a-dozen families in succession and receive a warm, hearty welcome from old and young. It is a tonic. Then you go into an exceptional house in which the dame or somebody else is nursing wrath to keep it warm until you come. You are not there very long until you find it is *quite* warm—perhaps hot. The visit is not a tonic, nor is it a stimulant, nor is it a sedative. It is an exception, and the exceptions in pastoral visitation are not pleasant.

How should we treat exceptions in all departments of life? We should remember that they *are* exceptions. Considering that the exceptions are nearly always small in number, we should think more of the good people and less of the exceptions. This is not easily done. Exceptions have a wonderful power for fixing attention upon themselves. Your half-decayed tooth is not a very important organ of your body; but if that little tooth has a brisk ache going on, it can make you forget all the rest of your anatomy. It monopolizes your attention in spite of all you can do. So does a lively, cranky exception. And still we ought to remember that the exceptions are always a small minority.

Above all things we should never lecture the large majority for the sake of a few exceptions. The majority have their rights. One of their undoubted rights is not to be treated as the exceptions.

Bear with the exceptions. If the Almighty tolerates them, we certainly may.

Pray for the exceptions. More grace might do them good. If it doesn't come upon the exceptions, asking it will help you to stand them.

TYPICAL ANARCHISTS AND NIHILISTS

OF THE HIGHER AND PATRIOTIC CLASS.

No doubt Anarchists, Communists and Nihilists are composed largely of adventurers, soldiers of fortune and men of fierce passions, who seek to overthrow all existing forms of government, with the vague hope that in such a revolution they may come to the top. But while this is doubtless true, it is equally certain that there are among them both men and women of quite a different class—dreamers, it may be, of a social millennium, which is to banish all evil from the

world, and bring peace and plenty to all the inhabitants of earth. They are honest and patriotic, and their opinions, however erroneous they may be, deserve a certain measure of respect, since they are held to their own peril, and at the risk of their own lives. I add a brief sketch of a few such men, who, with one exception, have resided for a time in Switzerland and made it the basis for the organization of insurrections in other countries, and for putting into practice theories subversive of all existing institutions, even civilization itself. As typical specimens of this class take first

PRINCE KRAPOTKINE

who, though a prince by birth, has long ago, from conviction, left the ranks of the class in which he was born in order the better to advocate the cause of the people. He is a hard-working student—a philosopher, who even in his prison cell is constantly occupied in writing for the "Encyclopædia Britannica," and for the leading scientific journals of Europe. His favourite English authors are said to be Buckle and Herbert Spencer, and his library when in Switzerland consisted chiefly of works on metallurgy, mineralogy, chemistry and kindred subjects. When he came first to this country it appears that he assumed the name of his companion Lewaschoff. He attended meetings at Lausanne, Vevey and Geneva, and incited workmen to overturn by force all established order. In an address at Geneva on the anniversary of the Commune—the 18th March, 1881,—he spoke in the most eulogistic language of the assassination of the Emperor Alexander II., which had taken place on the 13th of the same month. In July of the same year he took part in a revolutionary congress in London, where it was proposed to overthrow all established powers, using for that purpose "those chemical and physical agencies which had rendered such good service in the revolutionary cause." It was by his writings in the *Revolte*, published in Geneva, that he violated Swiss law and brought about his expulsion from Swiss territory. He then went to Thonon in Savoy, as stated in a previous letter, so as to keep up his relations with the Russian Anarchists who had made Geneva their headquarters. Certain dynamite explosions occurring soon after at Lyons, the French Government suspected that he had something to do with them, though he denied the charge. The legal authorities had him arrested and imprisoned, and he is now completing his sentence of five years in Clairvaux.

He admits that his writings in the *Revolte* may have helped to provoke the disturbance at Lyons, and these writings he is prepared to defend and to be judged by. These explosions by dynamite, etc., he regards as only preparatory to the great social revolution which is coming in the future; and to let the world know, in an emphatic manner, that there is such a thing as a social question. Evolution is always going on, but all history shows that in order to effect great reforms evolution must be supplemented by revolution. No epoch, in which human progress has greatly advanced, in which mankind has been freed from despotism and servitude, has passed over without loss of life to a greater or less extent. Take, for example, the French Revolution, the Abolition of Slavery in the United States, etc.

Trades unions, co-operative societies, etc., in England at present are anarchic in the sense that they came into existence spontaneously, without interference on the part of the Government. In other words, they are the result of evolution. But the time is coming when, owing to the unequal distribution of wealth and especially of landed property, these movements will have to be hastened by revolution. His plan would be to abolish all government. Then, the land appropriated by the tillers of the soil, tools and machinery by the workmen who manipulate them, and every one a member of a trades union or co-operative association, misery would cease and everybody would be happy. Last year the

PRINCESS KRAPOTKINE,

or Madame Krapotkine, as she calls herself, spent a month in the family of M. Elisee Reclus at Clarens for a change, for she always remains as near her husband as possible. She is about thirty years of age, slight in figure, and a typical Russian in appearance. It is said she spent her girlhood in Siberia, where her father was an exile, which made her even more radical in her views than the Prince. She studied chemistry at Paris and afterward at Geneva, and here she was married, her husband being much older than