

The Chicago newspapers are trying to drive into the thick skulls of their town councilmen, by all the weapons of earnest appeal, wit, irony, sarcasm, caustic ridicule, which Chicago scribes know so well how to handle, the necessity of cleaning the city in view of the possible visit from Dame Cholera next year. In which connection it might well be asked, Is Toronto as well prepared as she ought to be for a visit from that terrible old lady in case she should take it into her head to come so far? Gentlemen, whose duty it is to look after the health of the city, *verbis sat sap.* You remember Dr. Cannon will do his duty and Coatsworth even he whose other name is emphatically an E, will try. Come, it is a stiff necked and rebellious people, it will need you both, and no mistake.

What a wise man David had been, that is David, King of Israel, whose Psalms some of the stilted stupids of the present day think such poor things. Now just let every body consider such a remark as this.—“*The wicked borroweth and payeth not again, but the righteous showeth mercy and grace.*” Ah, David good old fellow, so you too know the terrors connected with borrowing neighbours! Yes—and not only borrowing neighbours but neighbors who were of the wicked one, for they never paid back. That was bad. No wonder that, though a King, you often cried out in the agony of your heart because of the wicked who beset you round like bees and clamorously asked for what they never meant that you should see any more. Dear David, what did they borrow? Did they ever send round of a morning to the palace back door for a cupful of oatmeal with which they might make a little wholesome porridge that their souls might bless God and the King before they gave up the ghost? It is to be feared not, for it was not at all certain that the virtues of oatmeal porridge were sufficiently known at that time and in those regions, though it is certain that in after years Daniel, who was of the seed royal, relished “pulse” which was either porridge or mash. Leigh Hunt or his wife borrowed from the Carlyles many a cupful of porridge ready-made, but who could ever expect that such cupful would ever be repaid? Leigh had fully learnt the lesson that base is the soul that pays, but the ecumens of David’s soul do not seem to have pursued the food which Scotchmen love. What then? Did they borrow rice to make puddings of? It is possible, but not in the last degree likely. Did they ask for a “drawing” of tea? or had they the slightest hankering after brown sugar in even the smallest quantities? History does not say that the saccharine arrangement was very common in those days, indeed TRUTH believes that the word *sugar* does not occur even once in the whole of the Bible. So it is to be presumed that it was not for either brown or crushed sugar that the servant damsel came round the corner. It is provoking that the King of Israel does not condescend to particulars. Perhaps it was a few fresh eggs that formed the special object of desire. Perhaps, as David was a family man it was a cradle of which he had, no doubt, a considerable stock. This is not improbable. TRUTH has heard of well authenticated cases not a hundred miles from Toronto, of a cradle being borrowed for six months and of the owner being then directed to send for it as it was no more required. So it is exceedingly likely that David was tried by his cradles being coveted and not returned in time when a new arrival clamorously cried for their soothing movements. Or was it a plug of tobacco? Hush, do you insinuate that the sweet singer had loved the weed and blew a cloud?

No, it was not tobacco that was asked for, for if it had been David would have sent the unfortunate to the general store round the corner. It was—it was—well what was it? As sure as fate, it was a couple of pounds of new potatoes just when they had newly come in and were a most toothsome morsel. Yes, and there was a solemn promise to repay, but it came to nothing. No wonder that David said in his haste that all men were liars. Such conduct was enough to provoke any body. But TRUTH takes the liberty of saying that if David had been settled in some quarters of Toronto and had been beside some borrowing neighbours there who hold their heads pretty high, he would have said all that he did say, not in his haste, but decidedly, and in the most emphatic terms at his leisure time. Surprised thing he would! Why there are those in the Queen City of the West who will borrow a single suck of an orange or, *Crede mihi*, a single blow of a slightly soiled and greatly crushed pocket handkerchief! Borrow! why Heaven help them they would borrow the coppers that are laid on the eyes of the dead, and find some use for the bleached bones of their neighbours’ grandmother! Oh ye borrowing fiends that add a new terror to life and rob the grave of half its gloom, read the 37th Psalm and repent in dust and ashes, while at the same time let all sotred cry out in the agony of their souls. From all too familiar and borrowing neighbours, good Lord deliver us!

TRUTH confesses to a very real and wholly inexcusable sympathy for gossip. As long, that is, as the gossip is not simply slander and malicious back biting under a more euphonious name. For that it has no patience. A mere back-biter, shmy, treacherous, snake-like coward and humbug that he or she is, as the case may be—male and female of that genus are alike detestable—should be sent to the most hopeless sort of earthly Purgatory.

But a little lively, not ill-natured humanly interesting talk about one’s neighbors is it not delightful? Let the propriety dragons preach as they like to the contrary. A sharp critic will no doubt remind one that the most inveterate dragon will never preach about the *delightfulness* of gossip, but about its *wrongfulness*. It delightfulness is a foregone conclusion. Were it not so delightful it would not be done. But let this pass. It is natural for men and women to talk about one another, and if kept within due bounds, there is nothing wrong about it either. Why “dear me,” what a dull uninteresting dreary round of monotonous existence life would become were our lips to be hermetically sealed about our neighbors, their joys and sorrows, their weaknesses, their little peccadilloes, their mistakes and awkwardnesses, their lovemakings, flirtings, and jiltings, their house-warmings and heart-breakings, their billings and cooings and all the other trifling things which after all form both the warp and the wool of life for most of us. The worst of it is that gossip is so often ill-natured, and much of it undoubtedly is simply devilish. There is so much of it, which in the most barefaced way is manufactured out of the whole cloth, and stamped with the signet ring of approval of Satan the Father of Lies. How shall the right kind always be kept so, and no harm be done? Aye, but how can one make fun of his neighbor’s weakness without being over malignant? There’s the rub.

When is the whole world going in for ready money and the abolition of all day books and ledgers? It would pay all honest people while it would be death sure to the

impecunious and unprincipled. Bad debts must be covered somewhere and some how. How is this done? By making the honest not only pay for himself but for his dishonest neighbor who lives on tick as well. It is not to be supposed that a tradesman can sell on credit as cheaply as he could do for cash. Yet it is a fact that with too many of these gentry the cash payer is put on exactly the same footing with him who never pays oftener than once in six months, if he does even then, not to speak of “*ever*.” Now this is not fair. It is not honest, and it is discouraging to honesty. Why should not every tradesman give five or ten per cent. off for cash without being asked? Yet he is the rare exception who does so. Go into a butcher’s shop for instance, with money in your hand and if you are thought good, you will actually be asked to let it stand, for the “boss” likes to get a good round sum at a time. If you are not known or not thought good, your money is taken and not the ninetieth part of a cent allowed for such payment below that which is charged to that flashy carriage person to whom the object is bowing and scrawing at the time, though that pink of gentility won’t let the man of bones see the cash for the next twelvemonth. All this demoralizes people.

The Prince of Montenegro is a thorough believer in the principles of paternal government. But he gives both dudes and dudings, male and female, a very poor chance indeed to flourish and grow fat in that benighted kingdom of his, should these peculiar products of civilization ever make their appearance there. Some time ago by his orders all cafes and drinking shops were peremptorily closed, the Prince being of the opinion that they could be regarded as nothing but “schools of effeminacy, extravagance, and corruption.” He also abolished all titles, so that now even the highest functionaries have to content themselves with plain Mister. But the measure of their calamity was not yet even filled up for the unhappy people of Montenegro. Their Prince has lately issued an edict against all extravagance in dress, including in his list of extravagances, “cravats, gloves, walking-sticks, parasols, and umbrellas.” How thankful we should all be that we don’t live in Montenegro. Life in Canada under the N. P. and the watchful, keenly, critical and censorial eagle eye of the *Evening News* man is in many respects bad enough, but not to be able to wear a cravat or carry an umbrella in wet weather, or a parasol to shield one’s complexion, or a cane for the delectation of the maidens. Why, existence under such circumstances would not be worth having. What can the poor bank clerks and other office swells in Montenegro do? Find some other means it is to be supposed of proving their distinction from the grovelling crowd.

TRUTH cannot resist the conclusion that Prime Minister Smith, of British Columbia, made an ass of himself when he meandered on in the way he did at the dinner given to him and some of his colleagues, by the members of the press attached to the Villard excursion party. If the matter has been reported correctly, then the most charitable conclusion one can come to in reference to Prime Minister Smith and his behaviour at that time, is that he was more or less unpleasantly laboring under the effects of liquor. In short he must have been drunk, TRUTH is inclined to think. The excuse is one which, unfortunately for the honor of Canadian Statesmen, has to be all too frequently brought forward. What did Smith say, do some of the readers of TRUTH ask? Why, he palavered away about Canada annexing

California and other portions of the United States, trying to show that California would never amount to anything, but that British Columbia is the future seat of empire on the Pacific Coast. All which may or may not be true, TRUTH expresses no opinion. It is not so intimately acquainted with the designs of Providence as some people would seem to be, and does not believe that there are sufficient data as yet, at least upon which to found any such wild speculations as these. But to vapour forth such sentiments before gentlemen whose position as hosts forbade reply, was to show intellectual and moral obtuseness which were simply abnormal, and could only be even excused on the plea that the speaker was helplessly fuddled or inexorably an ass. Now then, Smith (are you any relation of Amor de Cosmos?) rise and explain or rather cry *peccati* and TRUTH will let you off this time, and so will Mr. Villard. You are a pretty fellow to think of annexing any thing but a horn.

The physical bruisers with their beetle brows, bull dog jaws and fully developed animalism have been giving their exhibitions with “hard gloves,” and raking in the hard cash from the kindred spirits that believe in said bruisers as the very excellent of the earth and the greatest glories of humanity. Now come the intellectual bruisers with their smug looks and self-sufficient airs, gently and earnestly proclaiming to the world that in the interest of all that is high and noble and for the advancement of “humanity” in all its nobleness, they—the said bruisers—are “just a goin’ to begin,” and will be ‘appy to have a friendly round with any “gentleman” who is still foolish enough to believe in a personal God, and will assure all that he will guarantee that he—the said peripatetic bruiser—will, for the low charge of a quarter per head, knock any such “pusson” out of time in ten minutes, and give the audience one of the most wonderful intellectual treats that have ever been presented to any number of free men on this continent for the last two hundred years. Come, gentlemen, look alive, and bring out your man. Here am I, etc., etc., ready, etc., etc., to prove, etc., etc., with infinite ease, etc., etc. Step right in *game’n*. The greatest intellectual mill ever known—far better even than the Mill o’ the Floss, whatever that was, and whenever fought. Satisfaction given or your money returned. Business really meant. Will cover any reasonable amount at the shortest notice. Now, then, show your man that we may fight together.

Complaints are made from a good many quarters that the Model School is too much of a mere arithmetical forcing ground to serve the best interest of education. TRUTH feres there is too much ground for these complaints. From all that he has been able to learn, arithmetic is apparently the educational be all and end all of that institution. Other subjects of quite as much importance, some might very well be disposed to consider them as of even more importance if not positively neglected are yet in a measure slurred over, and made subsidiary to arithmetical celerity in a way which by no means meets the cordial approval of parents. TRUTH very much fears that sufficient attention is not paid to the importance of discovering and developing the different natural capacities of children, but that they are all forced through the same unvarying routine of the Gradgrind mathematical mill in a way which must lead, in not a few cases, to very undesirable consequences. We are told that a child’s standing in arithmetic determines his standing in all other