



TRUTH FOR THE PEOPLE

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WHAT TRUTH SAYS.

A very old disease, with a new and extremely scientific sounding name, is being discussed in the British papers just now. This disease is called "psycopathy," and what it is the *Pall Mall Gazette* thus informs us: "Psycopathy is an abnormal development of egotism." This paper further goes on to express its opinion about those suffering with it: "When a full-fledged psycopath is discovered he should be immediately hanged." It surely would not be a difficult matter to find those stricken with psycopathy in its most virulent form, either in England or Canada. It seems to me that a man who sticks up a portrait of himself, in a public place, twice as big as any other picture on the wall, is a pronounced psycopathist, but in his case the *Pall Mall Gazette's* proposed cure has been applied to the portrait and not to the patient. The former has been hung; the latter still lives to drive Senator Alexander to the verge of insanity, by persisting in keeping his vast portrait where it is.

Should a law ever come into force condemning full-fledged psycopaths to death on the gallows, I am inclined to think that Toronto's population would show a marked shrinkage. Of course, any man who writes in a periodical and uses the first person singular, is a psycopath in a certain degree and something ought to be done to him. I—but let me pause; I fear I am treading on dangerous ground.

The Byron letters, together with those of the noble poet's wife and sister, are to be published, and it is said that the public are looking forward to the event with great interest, as the matrimonial troubles of Lord Byron will be fully aired. It seems to me that the publication of these letters is pandering to a morbid desire on the part of certain people to revel in the recital of the wedded infelicities of distinguished persons. Certainly those anticipatory readers will not be gratified by the perusal of anything one fiftieth part as disagreeable as they may be led to believe by reading the unfounded statements, years ago, of Mrs. H. B. Stowe. I may be mistaken, but I think it would be better to let the unhappy disagreements of Lord and Lady Byron be buried in oblivion. Their publication can do no earthly good. There were incidents of a far more pleasant nature in the poet's life than his matrimonial squabbles, which it would be enjoyable to read of; but such are kept in the back-ground.

The morbid thirst for sensationalism in the present day is, apparently, on the increase, and it very much resembles the thirst of the toper: it increases with, instead of being assuaged by what it consumes. And to supply this diseased craving, sensational writers of all kinds are continually cropping up. Scandals are eagerly devoured, and such a *bonne-bouche* as the domestic quarrels of a titled couple is certain to be hailed with delight by those ghouls who revel in such savory morsels.

It seems probable that a bill will be passed making it compulsory with plumbers to undergo a satisfactory examination as to proficiency in their trade before they will be allowed to "practice." This will be an excellent thing, for, as matters are at present, householders are far too much in the power of plumbers who have every chance to do "scamping" work if they feel so disposed, and it is not going too far to say that many of them do. Should a competent inspector of plumbing be appointed, and the bill passed forcing plumbers to obtain licenses and pass an examination, a gigantic stride in the right direction will have been made. I would suggest one more improvement; let plumbers' bills be taxed in the same manner as those of lawyers' are. Then we may begin to have a foretaste of the millennium.

Mr. Brinley Richards, the eminent Welsh musician, and the composer of the national anthem "God bless the Prince of Wales," is to be made a Knight, though why Mr. Gladstone is anxious to confer that honor on him we are not informed. The Premier may have possibly bribed him, by promising him the title, to never write another national anthem in the Welsh tongue, the one referred to commencing something in this way "Crmioddid g Jddlwyr," or words to that effect. No Englishman's jaws are safe if such fearful words as these are liable to be thrust before him at any moment. Be the Prime Minister's reasons what they may, Mr. Richards is to be Sir Brinley.

There can be no doubt that young men at the Universities, both in this and the old country, pay a great deal of attention to athletic sports and the cultivation of biceps that would do for a Roman gladiator; but I think there is a great deal of nonsense talked about our colleges being nothing but great physical training places where more homage is paid to bodily than mental prowess. Of course there are some youths who carry their love of athletic sports to excess to the detriment of their chances of distinguishing themselves in their mental contests, but such are the exception and not the rule, and I must say I admire a young fellow who is a "dab at games and sports," as the phrase goes, and who is also moderately well up in his books, more than a milkop of a fellow who scarcely knows a cricket-bat from a fishing-rod, but who can cap lines of Homer or Virgil with any one, and who has classical and other lore oozing out at every pore.

But the idea is very prevalent that young men go to Oxford and Cambridge for no other purpose than "to have a good time," and to indulge their athletic proclivities to the fullest extent. Certainly this is true with a large number of young fellows with more money and muscle than brains, or who happen to be the scions of some noble house and whose parents don't care whether they learn anything or not; but the majority go to those universities to study—and I may add they might just as well not learn a lot of stuff they are compelled to do, for it is

not of much use to them in after life. However, as an evidence of the idea entertained by many people about university life, let me produce the letter of a wealthy Irish farmer, who intended to "send his son to college," and recently wrote asking for information as follows, to the heads of Oxford university: "Please say what are your terms for a year, and will it cost anything extra if my son learns to write a good hand and spell proper, as well as to row a boat?"

Contrary to its usual custom of saying all it can in England's disfavor, the American press has been most enthusiastic in its praises of the bravery displayed by the British troops in Egypt. The following extract is from a Philadelphia paper:—"The accounts of the British bravery and pluck that reach us by cable from Egypt surpass the wonderful exploits of the Edwards and Henrys, to say, nothing of the glorious achievements of British arms in the earlier part of the present century. Imagine 80 British soldiers encircled by 5,000 Arabs, holding them at bay, and finally, charging in close column through the Arab lines. It was a feat worthy of the gallant six hundred. Even in her 'little wars' England shows the kind of metal her soldiers are made of."

I used to be charmed by the account of Leonidas of old and his plucky little band of three hundred men holding out against the thousands of the enemy, but in reality they did nothing more brave and gallant than our soldiers do in modern times. I sometimes think that perhaps a little too great a fuss has been made over the charge of the Light Brigade at Balaklava. It was, undoubtedly, a brave affair, but those men were obliged to obey orders; they could not have got out of that charge if they had wanted to. I have no wish to begrudge them their laurels, but I confess I think that incidents occur in every war of modern times quite as well worthy of being handed down to posterity as the Balaklava Charge.

After several thousands of dollars' worth of water had been wasted this winter by the letting of taps run constantly in private houses, the authorities came to the conclusion, last week, that it was high time to put a stop to the practice, and accordingly an official was sent on the war-trail after delinquents, the result being that about two dozen were captured and fined. If this had been done when the cold weather first set in, the city would have saved several thousands of dollars, as the Mayor states that he expects the water works department will show a deficit of \$30,000 for last year.

The waste of water has really been alarming, and anyone can calculate for himself about what it must amount to when it is stated that a $\frac{1}{2}$ inch tap running constantly for twenty-four hours will pass about 7,500 gallons of water in that time; which, at fifteen cents per one thousand gallons, amounts to \$1.10. This is a low estimate, for the $\frac{1}{2}$ inch pipe is the smallest size put into any

house. Probably the powers that be think it is never too late to mend, and that they may still make up some of the loss by having offenders fined, even though it is now rather late to begin. It looks to me something like locking the stable-door after the horse has been stolen.

"An Appeal to the Mothers and Daughters of the Diocese of Winchester;" such was the heading of the proclamation issued by the wife of the bishop of that diocese and one would naturally conclude that an appeal from such a source would be for funds and contributions for some charitable purpose, such as the supplying of the poor people with necessaries, or something of that kind. But no; what the bishop's wife wants is that the Mothers and Daughters of the Diocese of Winchester should club together and raise funds to buy the Princess Beatrice a wedding present! I fancy that, in the prevalent hard times in England, the influence of the bishopric and the wealth of the Diocese of Winchester might be directed to some better end. A sum of money that would not go far towards purchasing a present for a princess might keep some deserving family from destitution. Charity should begin at home. The Princess Beatrice has plenty of wealthy relations and friends to supply her with superfluous luxuries without troubling the ladies of the Diocese of Winchester.

A terrible story of the burning of a lunatic asylum with eighteen of the unfortunate inmates comes from Philadelphia. As is usually, or at least, very frequently, the case at similar institutions, the water service was found to be totally insufficient and the hose was rotten and almost useless. Of course, "an enquiry will be made into the matter," but why are these enquiries never made in time to prevent these awful disasters? Probably there are numbers of similar institutions which would be found quite as unprepared to fight a severe conflagration as the Philadelphia asylum, were an enquiry made; but it is only after the buildings have been destroyed and some of the inmates burnt to death, that anything is done in such matters.

In contrast to the usual tone of the French press when speaking of England and the English, the following passage from the *Voltaire* is very striking. That paper, in an article on Egypt and General Gordon, says:—"Gordon may be a mystic or a fanatic, but he is certainly every inch a man's man. We French have not lately had much reason to love the English, but we cannot now help admiring their courage and heroism, energy, coolness, patriotism, perspicuity, which are not ordinary qualities we can disdain in an adversary. Let us then salute Gordon, albeit English. Let us send to him to the desert, and over the walls of Khartoum, a testimonial of our sympathetic admiration."

"Sir, I beg to state that I am not the John Smith who was fined at the police court yesterday. By inserting this in your valuable columns you will oblige yours, &c.,