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TALES OF THE TOWN.

*"I must have liberty,
With as large a charter as the wind—
To blow on whom I please."*

A STORY in an Eastern paper furnishes convincing proof that it is not always fortunate to have been born in the image of a great man, even if that great man be no less a personage than the Prince of Wales himself. I print the story in the hope that if it should so happen there is anyone in our midst who has been likened unto the Prince of Wales or any other royal person, he may take lesson of the calamity which befell the well-to-do banker in Copenhagen, named Carlsben, who received the intimation of a friend that he looked like a twin-brother of the Russian Czar. He had never seen the Czar of Russia himself, but, as far as he could judge by such portraits as were available, he found, as he looked in the mirror, that his friend had not exaggerated the resemblance in the slightest. The idea pleased him enormously, and from that day forward he left nothing undone to increase the likeness and to play the part of "doppelganger" to the Emperor Alexander III. For instance, whereas he had always belonged to the confraternity of the clean-shaven, he now allowed his beard to grow and wax bushy, and had it regularly trimmed like that of his model.

The ardent desire of his heart, however, was to be presented to the monarch. This, too, he accomplished a year ago, when the Emperor was staying at Fredensborg; and the autocrat of the Russias is said to have been much amused at the striking resemblance between himself and his double. This was the acme of Herr Carlsben's happiness, compared to which all the other events of which his life was composed were vanity. From that time forth, he studiously copied his imperial model in everything, drove about through the streets of the city in a four-in-hand, and was often saluted by policemen, soldiers and civilians in the belief that he was their monarch's guest. In a word, Carlsben played his role too well. He identified himself so completely with the Czar that he gradually began to experience the cares and dread the dangers to which the latter is exposed. One day he awoke with the fixed idea that he was Alexander III. Soon afterwards his peace of mind was disturbed by the infernal machinations of the Nihilists, and at last he had to be confined in a lunatic asylum. His death has just been announced from Copenhagen.

The author of "Tales of the Town" has

never claimed for himself special distinction as a poet, and it is only when the beauty of the subject demands something better than plain prose that he invokes the muse. If the reader survives a perusal of the following lines, it may occur to him that the discovery of "Gold in Cariboo" is worthy of special treatment, even if it be by the great mind who labors weekly to make THE HOME JOURNAL the foremost paper of its class in Canada. Modesty forbids further remark:

Far, far away in the great Northwest,
Where the grizzly grows and the eagles nest,
Is a district that's quite too-too,
It once was wild as that forest child—
The three-pronged deer or the spring bok mild—
I'm talking of Cariboo.
But since I was there and have written it up
Not a clubman in London but toasts in a cup,
"Gold, gold in Cariboo!"

Bound in the best and cheap at the price
With a Chinaman handling nuggets like rice
It promises more than the Zoo.
The crowds gather round it in Bookseller's Row
And wonder that gold should have fallen so low
And envy those lucky ones few
Who've hunted and traveled and written a
book,
And published it too, all on their own hook.
I'll always stand by Cariboo.

After all, there are many things in the world which might as well be written in "poetry" as prose, and, for that matter, might just as well never be written at all. Once upon a time, a learned judge of Chicago stated from the bench that there was no law in the State of Illinois that prevented a man from making a fool of himself, if he so desired, and, as I understand that the same condition of things exists in British Columbia, I am tempted to try the patience of my friends with the following lines anent the recent dog show, which have been handed in for publication:

Howdy dowdy, devil the day, what is the racket here now,
Whine and yelp, who could but help to get out of the terrible row:
Dogs and men, men and dogs, yes, canines of every degree,
The tall, the small, the thin, the fat, but all with a pedigree.

The prides of the town, white, yellow and brown, tan for a change and black,
Nelly and Fan, Hussy and Nan, Rover, Carlo and Jack,
Dressed in their best, this growth of the west,
each looking proud and trim,
The lavishing dollars on blankets and collars—the dog show two bits to get in.

No family ties, always fed to the eyes, happy go lucky are they,
No taxes, no care, their grub always there, no work for a dollar a day,
With freedom that man made a part of his plan, but found himself left in the end,
By mistake or design, went unto the canine, man's much petted four-legged friend.

No pants to repair, his boots always there, no dentist's or doctor's small fees,
No property here for a lawyer to queer, no goods for the sheriff to seize,
Clean straw every day, no landlord to pay, and visiting dogs by the score,
In times such as these, may I ask, if you please, mankind could he wish any more?

Think of the bliss in the life which we miss, think of it all ye and weep,
And who here will try the fact to deny would not be the doggie they keep,
The laborer's pay and his dollar a day would not be assumed by that dog,
With its hunger and strife and worrying life, in place of his nice easy jog.

I pray the Divine such existence be mine, if ever born over again,
I am tired of the part with its sorely tried heart that follows the laborer's train,
In return for the ease, my owner with fleas, I would gladly and willingly share,
A bark and a whine, a yelping canine would give as a thanks for his care.

I have always noticed that immediately preceding and subsequent to the carrying out of the death sentence there are many who express themselves as being opposed to capital punishment. Various objections are urged against the taking of a life even if it be sanctioned by the law of the land. Those who heard the Rev. Dr. Campbell last Sunday evening on the subject of capital punishment must be convinced that the Rev. gentleman made out a strong case in favor of our present laws as relating to the infliction of the death penalty on the murderer. The advocates of the abolition of capital punishment say that despite ghastly warning of the gallows and the graves of the condemned dead, murder is still committed; but the fact that the fear of capital punishment prevents more murders is overlooked.

In support of capital punishment, an exchange points to the fact that in Michigan they abolished the death penalty until it was discovered one day that there was an increase of something like ninety per cent. in the murders in the State. Then a move was made to resurrect the scaffold. The Bible lays down the rule that who so shed man's blood by man shall his blood be shed, and that after all is the best protection society has or can have against the red-handed murderer. This is an age of slush and gush. The weak minded are willing to weep maudlin tears over every nasty brute who is condemned to death. Canada sticks to the good old fashion of hanging murderers, and, as a consequence, the highest crime known to the law—murder—is less frequently committed in proportion to the population than in any any country in the world, and, further, lynch law is entirely unknown.

I was passing down Government street one evening not long ago, and, when in the vicinity of Broughton street my at-