

EDUCATED VILLIANS.

Gambling is increasing to such an alarming extent in American cities that stringent measures will have to be taken, and taken soon, if the evil is to be kept within reasonable bounds. Not only has the legalized gambling of speculators grown beyond due proportions, but the operations of the less pretentious light fingered men who frequent saloons and places of amusement, have increased to such an extent that the Christian church appears to look upon these transactions as quite beyond its control, and congressmen, legislators, aldermen, and policemen, likewise acknowledge their inability to cope with the evil. Every city has its confidence men, affable pleasing fellows who are ready to show a stranger every attention, and who take pains to make themselves so agreeable that it is difficult to refuse the request made so innocently for you to give them change for a twenty dollar bill, especially when you know the applicant wishes this change in order to take you, at his expense, to a theatre or saloon. Many of our Nova Scotian boys could, if they would, tell some curious experiences with the gentlemen traps of the neighboring republic; but most of those who have accommodated their companions with the change required, seldom reveal to their friends that the twenty dollar bill, which had been given them in such good faith, proved in the end to be a counterfeit. The following incident will show how some of these "dandy dollar" men impose upon the public, live on their wits, and evade the law:—

A pleasant-faced, gentlemanly young stranger walked into one of the most swell of Kearny-street's magnificent drinking palaces and called for a punch. When the concoction was completed he raised it to his lips at the same time that he tossed a dollar on the bar in payment. The coin felt like the hunk of lead that it was, and the sound produced by its contact with the bar was as flat as the ker clug of a frog in striking the water. The sound attracted the attention of two or three of the young man's neighbors, and they eyed him with some curiosity, as if wondering what sort of a verdant he was to attempt to pass such a coin. The barkeeper simply glanced at it and smiled, and waited for the stranger to produce a substitute. The dollar piece did look disreputable, and no mistake. It was battered and bruised, had a plug in one corner, and the milling about the edges was in a state of sad decay, while added to all this was a color that betokened it to be lead from Leadville, and no mistake. "What is the matter?" asked the patron of the house and proprietor of the queer piece of bogus.

The crowd laughed and the barkeeper suggested that another coin be substituted for the bad dollar.

"Oh, that's it, is it?" responded the gentlemanly young man, pretending to examine the date on his unsavory proffer. "Well, do you know that I am glad you refused it; that dollar is worth five times its face value to anybody that has got common sense."

Two or three of the party grabbed a look at the date and then laughed again.

"Why, you are foolish, young man," said one of them, pityingly. "As money, a bushel basket full of those things would not be worth a dime. I thought at first it might have an old date, but if it was coined while Noah was afloat in the ark it would not be worth more than it is, which is simply nothing."

With this the barkeeper felt impelled to give the young man some kind advice to the effect that he had better not make any more attempts to pass the dizzy thing, or he would be liable to arrest for shoving the queer.

"That's all right, gentlemen, I'll bet any of you \$10 that that coin is worth five times its face value, just to show you that I know what I am about."

"Oh, we don't want your money," put in the barkeeper, "just pay for that drink and say nothing more about it."

"Very well, sir, I'll pay you for the drink with any sort of money you like, but when you grow wiser you will be sorry that you did not take your payment out of that worthy, but misused coin," and with this the owner of the violation of the law against counterfeits produced a wallet fairly bursting with its hoard of bills and gold, and passed over a half eagle for the punch. The sight of his wealth caught the crowd at once, and two of them immediately offered to accept the bet he had proposed a few seconds before. The young fellow pretended to hesitate, and then insinuated that they should give him odds on the wager.

"Very well, since you are so clever a numismatist, I will give you a chance for your money. I will bet you \$20 to \$10 that that coin is not worth \$5 to any one except yourself. Of course you cannot be the judge of its worth, as you are betting on it."

"Well, that is fair, although I would prefer to appraise the value of my own goods. I will take your wage, and leave it to any common-sense man that you may select."

"Done."

"Bet me, too, on the same terms?" asked another of the party, and another, and still another.

The young man accepted all the offers, and then offered to wager the barkeeper drinks for the party on the result. The drink-mixer accepted and piled \$10 on the top of the liquids. A respectable old gentleman was called from the other end of the bar to hold the stakes and act as referee. The money once deposited, and the terms of the bet explained, the half-tipsy air that the young fellow had carried suddenly disappeared, and with his pen-knife he carefully pried the dollar apart. The two halves split like the case of a watch, and in the centre was a little excavation containing a splendid \$5 gold piece. The referee passed over the stakes without a word. The barkeeper made a bluff at a smile, but it seemed more of a counterfeit than the poor old dollar. The three young men who bet fled in search of fresh air. The young man quietly folded up his dollar, took his drink, remarked

that it was a pleasant day, and went out, leaving a trail of thick black gloom behind him.

Such is the description given by an *Alla* reporter of the doings in the palace of San Francisco, and it is but a type of many others which are being transacted in the cities of Canada and the United States. The keen edge of the law, the denunciation of the public, and the criminality of such proceedings, seem to have no terror for the army of educated villains which is warring on society.

A NEW POSSIBLE MARKET.

A cablegram from St Pierre, Miquelon, states that information has been received there that the French ministry has decided to issue orders for their army and navy to use salt codfish once or twice a week. This order has been promulgated primarily with a view to stimulate and encourage those engaged in the catching of the succulent cod by the people of her loyal colony of Les Iles des St. Pierre et Miquelon, and it has given those people great pleasure to have their industry thus officially recognized and fostered.

Apart from this consideration, however, the step is a wise one. There is no article of diet that is more healthful and nutritious than salt codfish. We read in an ancient chronicle, that when the Israelites were enjoying their forty years of parading and travelling through the Arabian desert, they became tired of the miraculously supplied, but unvarying diet of manna, and sighed for the flesh-pots and garlic and other delicacies that graced their tables in their old Egyptian homes. So also our Halifax boys, when doing duty in the North-West last year, especially those stationed at Saskatchewan landing, sickened of the choice canned meats and the bacon with which they were liberally supplied by the Government, and shouted for some of their home fish.

If the British Government would follow the excellent example set by that of France it cannot be doubted that the act would be appreciated by its soldiers and sailors throughout the world; and at the same time it would open a splendid market for the codfish of Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, etc. The quantities that would be required would amount to more than all that we now produce, while the prices paid would be liberal, and the money sure. This would vastly stimulate our fishermen to greater exertions, and make their business more certainly remunerative than it has ever been heretofore.

It is extremely probable, that if this matter was properly represented in London, the Imperial Government would adopt such an order without hesitation. To make such representations lies directly in the line of the duties of the Canadian High Commissioner at the capital of the Empire. It is to be hoped that he will make an effort to secure this great boon when, if obtained, will have more effect in reconciling the people of the Maritime Provinces to their position in the Union and to the Empire than any other one thing possibly could.

THE TERRORS OF ASSOUAN.

Some very plain talking is required to move the military authorities in England to take active measures. For the past few months the troops stationed in and about Assouan have been dying at a rate, which, if it continued for two or three months longer, would leave not a man to tell the story. The reader may ask where Assouan is. Let him take the map of Egypt, and he will observe close to the Tropic of Cancer a little speck out on the burning desert, without shade of any kind. This is where our British boys have been forced to remain in idleness, for what reason no one can tell. Their dusky foes are taking a midsummer holiday. They are natives, and presumably, acclimated; but yet in this season they have no interest in forcing matters, and are content to retire into groves where the friendly shelter of the palm trees afford them grateful shade. Our men are obliged to remain at their posts, when within a distance of less than thirty miles, they too might enjoy protection from the fierce rays of the sun which beats upon them. Every mail that reaches England brings letters to friends, telling of sickness and death among the brave troops. One soldier, writing to his mother, thus gives vent to his feelings.—"For the last week, we have had a spell of the most infernal weather. For the last four days the minimum in the shade has been over 120 degrees. The highest was 122½ degrees. To day, June 17th, it is 120. Ten deaths occurred during the day, and eight last night. It is really dreadful to see men dying in this way, and if it goes on none will be left. The breeze is like a puff from a furnace."

Tommy Atkins never shrinks from facing a foe; he counts it an honor to die on the battlefield fighting for his country, but to be called upon to face death on an African desert for a cause in which he takes no interest, is certainly a trial of his loyalty. Is it any wonder that the desertions from the regiment stationed in Halifax have increased so of late, since the news that the Royal Irish Fusiliers were to be removed to Egypt.

The *London World*, in referring to a dinner party given by the Princess of Wales, relates a rather amusing incident. The Princess of Wales having previously met, and admired the recitation of the latest pretty American export, graciously requested her presence at dinner that evening; upon which the fair reciter expressed her regret at not being able to accept the honor offered her, urging an excuse that she had promised to chaperone some young ladies to Mrs. Mackintosh's debut. Her Royal Highness replied, with a quiet smile of amusement, "Then I am afraid you must get your friends to kindly excuse you, for I shall expect you"; and left the free-born American to discover that the Royal wishes in this country are commands.