

James carries a lovely woman on his arm, who is at least five years older than Maria, and has raised three more children. Why is her rounded figure in handsome proportions, her white hair silky and curled? She never looks apoplectic, and it is a positive pleasure to press her smooth, fair hand. He dimly remembers during the busy period hearing Maria inveigh against the vanity of her sister-in-law. Those constitutional walks in all weathers, baths, manicuring, pedicuring, shampoos, and restrictions in diet. Maria said then that no good could come of it, but her prophecy must be at fault, for beauty was certainly the result. Thus John, the quiet, dutiful husband, rebels silently, but it does not take long for a woman's quick preception to ferrest out such matters and bewail her lost opportunities.

Why, it has been frequently asked, are the hackmen permitted to obstruct a prominent thoroughfare like Government street? In no other city in Canada or the United States, I believe, is public convenience interfered with in such a manner, and tolerated by the public. But it would not be so bad if the hackmen would be content to remain in any one place until they were called upon to work. They very often drive around in a circle on the street, and at such times it is as much as a person's life is worth to cross the thoroughfare. Furious driving is another matter which should command the attention of the police. I saw a young man nearly driving over a woman at the corner of Government and Yates streets, last Tuesday evening. That the woman escaped being trampled to death was a miracle, and the fiend who drove the wagon laughed at her fright. If that woman had been killed, I would have no hesitation in taking an oath that the driver was responsible for her death. I suppose her murderer would have cringed and tried to convince the jury that it was an accident.

It does not speak well for the intelligence of Victoria people that the most artistic performances ever given at the theatre should have been so poorly patronized. Nat Goodwin is admittedly the greatest comedian on the continent, and yet Victorians showed their contempt for art by ignoring his presence in the city. I regard it as a great mistake on the part of the manager of The Victoria to bring first-class people to his house. London Gaiety Girls are more in the line of a Victoria audience, and Manager Jamieson should make a note of this fact. He must see to it that no high class company comes to his house, if he can possibly sandwich in a pugilistic actor now and then between low-class variety outfits, he should do so. A sleight-of-hand performer should be worked in to vary the monotony of listening to the stock songs of the variety theatre. But under no conditions should the manager presume to offend a Victoria audience by presenting a company composed of first-class artists.

The Manitoba people anticipate great

results from the reciprocity convention held at St. Paul. Certainly there is much to be said in favor of prominent commercial men on both sides of the 49th parallel meeting and discussing matters best calculated to promote trade between the two countries. As the *Manitoba Free Press* (a paper for which I have great respect) puts it, the United States is a great country and Canada a little one, just according to the number of inhabitants. The disproportion also exists in regard to the aggregate wealth of the two countries, and the individual accumulation of wealth. Canada has not yet a very long list of men of colossal fortunes, its possessors of hundreds of millions and even of millions are not very numerous; but it does not follow that the average man in the greater country is any happier than the average man in the less. The great question to be answered in comparing the two countries is, which is the better for the average man. It is no great source of satisfaction to a man oppressed by grinding poverty to know that he is living in a land where there are many rich people. A land in which the rich are very rich and the poor very poor, is not an ideal land for the average man.

Canadians have been accustomed to hear so much of American enterprise and push that they have come to take their own inferiority for granted and to regard themselves as somewhat behind the times. It will, therefore, be news to many that we are, as a nation, so far in advance in so many things. Reciprocity will not, then, be a one-sided affair, in which Canada has everything to gain and the United States everything to give. Canada is prepared to offer, as well as to receive advantages, and should be willing to meet the United States on an equal footing. Conventions of the character of the one held at St. Paul will be beneficial in the direction of educating the people of both countries as to the mutual advantages of reciprocity. It occurs to me that the business men of the coast would do well to hold a convention on similar lines, say at Seattle or Victoria, to which delegates from every city in this province and the neighbouring States should be invited. There is a growing feeling in the direction of reciprocity, and the initiatory steps towards a permanent reciprocity organization should be taken at once. Who will be the first to move in the matter? There is a chance for the B. C. Board of Trade to do something.

During the John Grant regime, it was frequently pointed out that licentiousness flourished and was permitted, if not encouraged, to stifle and dwarf the morals of the rising generation. Many things of a reproachful character transpired during the days of the "people's John;" but on the whole, I have every reason to believe that morality was never at as low an ebb as it is at the present time. I am far from believing that our present mayor is in any way responsible for the flagrant violations of the ordinances against gambling or the permission of evil women with painted faces to flaunt their gaudy laces in the highways, byways and market places. I merely refer to the matter as a remarkable coincidence.

The practice of gambling in a community like ours is far reaching in its consequences. I have been told of more than one instance where young men—yes, and old men, too—in business have been fleeced by the wily knight of the green table. It is alleged that several recent failures can be traced directly to the gaming rooms, and that others will follow before long. It is further stated, and my information is of a reliable character, that young men holding positions of trust and responsibility nightly offer up their golden fleeces to the rapacity of the ravenous wolves. The other evening, a friend of mine remarked to me, "Do you see that young fellow there? Well, he holds a good position in ———. He spends the greater portion of his time at ——— rooms. The other night, he lost \$25. The fact of the matter is he stands to lose on every game he goes into." I was not at all surprised, for another person had told me the same thing about this young man; nor will I be surprised when the daily papers some of these days report that so and so "has skipped out, and that the extent of his defalcations is as yet unknown." Gambling is a business by itself. It is not to be expected that men who do not go into it for a living can succeed against experts.

As to the social evil, as I have repeatedly remarked, I do not care about discussing the matter in these columns. Yet I believe that the spread of this vice must sooner or later be dealt with through the public press. It is strongly in evidence that the evil is growing to an alarming extent. For the sake of filthy lucre, landlords rent houses to women of ill-repute, with the result that the children of respectable parents are familiarized with vice in its worst form. In time, the purest child will become tainted by coming constantly in contact with vice; the danger of contagion is greater than living in a district infected with small pox, and every one will admit that the consequences are far more deplorable. On the streets and in carriages, these women are permitted to roam about at their own sweet will, and the police commissioners appear powerless to combat the evil. The daughter of presumably respectable parents is said to have thrown off all moral restraint and taken up her abode in a house of ill-repute on Douglas street. Who is responsible for this young life blighted by a life of shame? Day after day, she saw young men doffing their hats on the streets to women known to lead immoral lives. Her next door neighbors were women of low character. The authorities failed to perform their duty and have these women confined to one locality. The consequence was that this young girl grew up to regard such a life as one of innocent pleasure. The above is not the only instance, if all reports be true. The time has now come when a move must be made in the direction of controlling the spread of the social evil. If the authorities fail to act, the citizens must take the matter upon themselves, and the sooner the better.

The lacrosse match last Saturday was probably the greatest exhibition of the Canadian national game ever witnessed in