

THE VICTORIA HOME JOURNAL

Devoted to Social, Political, Literary, Musical and Dramatic Gossips.

VOL. II., No. 31.

VICTORIA, B. C., MAY 13, 1893.

\$1.00 PER ANNUM

TALES OF THE TOWN.

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

WALKING home one evening last week, a friend stopped me to ask the cause of a smile that overspread my visage. I was unconsciously smiling, but it could not be helped. The explanation given my friend was found in a paragraph in a daily paper, with the heading "An Episode." The subject of the episode was the now threadworn subject of the tramp being turned away, in a starving, fainting condition, from the rich man's house, and finding a rough but warm welcome and supper at the cottage of the laborer. Such an old, old friend as this episode being sprung upon me in a badly disguised style of local dress was too much; I had to laugh, although the story was such a barefaced plagiarism. However, it was not so much the theft I was amused at as the clumsy manner in which it was rigged out, something like a jackdaw in peacock's feathers. In a moment, I cast my mind's eye around among my most distinguished friends and acquaintances in Victoria, and although I know of quite a number of fairly well laid out grounds to private houses in Victoria, I know of nothing so grand or extravagant as the writer of the episode drew on his imagination for. As to the mansion spoken of—well, I will let it go forth to the world that we lick creation for the splendor and magnificence of our private residences; the staff of culinary artists—I will also acknowledge that some of our very rich people actually do sport a couple of Chinamen in the official part of the house, and possibly another to open the door to the visitor, who receives a grunt or "no savee" and the door slammed in his face, while John goes to find "bossee." Be it ever so dirty, there is no place like home, so I will not contradict a word of that episode. None of our merchant princes ride home on the street cars; they all have broughams with rich upholstery and plate glass windows, which broughams are made to sweep gracefully up the spacious carriage drives leading to the baronial mansion; a gentleman of birth (who has a lordly disregard for aspirates) handles the ribbons; powdered flunkies attend the doors, etc., etc.

It looks like old times, the days of the boom, to see Francis Bouchier decorating the city of Victoria again, and he hasn't forgotten how to do it either. He is the same old Francis, not having been even a little corrupted by "those horrid Yankees," as the non-voting English dude styles them. Francis is an artist on the question of living, and many a dude who attempted

to follow his example is now rustivating at Kaslo and other health resorts in the search after healthy restfulness from importunate creditors. Still Francis bobs up like a cork on the waters, and no doubt he will yet be the cause of a good many more corks bobbing up in Victoria.

How often it is that one is struck forcibly by the fact that the weather is used as a basis of a friendly salutation. You meet a friend as you are persistently chasing yourself towards your office, and he says, "Good morning. Fine day, isn't it?" And then you reply,—"How are you? Yes, lovely weather." And the skies may be overcast and the air full of the spray-like indications of coming rain. Just keep tab on yourself for one day, and you will find out that some remark of that nature is the invariable greeting. But it is not an intended piece of mendacity, nor is it an entirely unconscious reference to climatic conditions used to open a conversation or to supplement the regular and conventional form of greeting. The fact that you will tell your friend, or that your friend tells you, that the weather is beautiful, or that it is a fine day, when you both know that the statements are absolutely false, is due to the inherent desire in all natures to be pleasant, and to say something of a cheering nature. It is a desire to be pleasing, and if your friend greets you with a smile and a cheerful look, you at once get the reflection of his apparent feelings and immediately suggest that it is a beautiful morning. It is an involuntary personal compliment and there is a good deal of human philosophy behind it, if one stops to think.

My friend McLagan, of the Vancouver *World*, gave his readers a little homily, the other day, on the subject of hypocrisy, choosing for his text a couple who shall for the present be nameless. Whether it is the province of the public paper to preach private personal morals is a question that is open to argument, but the fact remains that people residing in glass houses should be careful of the direction in which they cast stones. I have a dim recollection of a holy man who used to sell the scriptures in concise form, on the instalment plan, and who was not averse to certain promptings of the flesh at the same time. People should be consistent in matters of this kind; and before plucking the mote out of their brother's eye, should be sure there is not a beam in their own optics.

Archbishop Gross' lecture on Monday evening was a very interesting affair, although quite a number were disappointed that there was so much philosophy and so little science in it. Those people went to hear a scientific disquisi-

tion and were treated to a very philosophic, in fact, religious, chat. This is not saying that His Grace could not deal with the subject from a scientific standpoint, for he has proved himself as earnest a scientist as he is a deep thinking philosopher and earnest theologian. Still it was deeply interesting, made doubly so by the venerable speaker's fine magnetic presence and profound learning. It is a peculiar fact that these very scholarly, learned men employ language that is beautiful almost poetic, in its simplicity, and Archbishop Gross is no exception to the rule. I listened to his remarks with a deal of attention, and was glad that I had thus spent the evening.

I am reminded that time works changes, by a little story I heard the other day. I will not vouch for its originality, and will give it just as it came to me:

A young man and a young woman lean over the front gate. They are lovers. It is moonlight. He is loth to leave, as the parting is the last. He is about to go away. She is reluctant to see him depart. They swing on the gate.

"I'll never forget you," he says, "and if death should claim me my last thought will be of you."

"I'll be true to you," she sobs. "I'll never see anybody else or love them as long as I live."

They part. Six years later he returns. His sweetheart of former years had married. They met at a party. She has changed greatly. Between the dances the recognition takes place.

"Let me see," she muses, with her fan beating a tattoo on her pretty hand, "was it you or your brother who was my old sweetheart?"

"Really I don't know," he says. "Probably my father."

In many respects, James J. Corbett, who appears at The Victoria next Thursday night, is one of the most remarkable men that ever appeared upon the stage. The counting room of a bank would be the last place where the knowing ones would look for material of which gladiators and champion pugilists are made, but it was behind the grated screens of the Nevada National Bank, of San Francisco, that James J. Corbett, a young man of studious habits and gallant address, who had graduated from the College of the Sacred Heart, earned his living for some time. His physical superiority, his dexterity of movement and quickness of eye soon began to manifest themselves, and it was but a little while after Corbett paid his initiation fee to become a member of the Olympic Athletic Club of San Francisco, that the members of that organization offered him extraordinary inducements to become its professor of boxing. During

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