

THE OPERA BEGINNETH TO OPERATE.

EFFUSION OF WITHERINGTON SPOON, GENT.

Dear GRAMMATEL, tell me what to do,
My heart is to a precious stew;
Miss Milner 's got so sweet a voice,
She 's left to me no other choice
Than love and worship,
Love and praise,
Yes, love and worship
All my days.

And, oh, the sparks of her eye,
Her witching smile, her killing sight,
Such venom give to Cupid's dart
'T would thro' a very hermit's heart.
Then her lips, so divine,
I'd give the world
To press to mine,—
I'd give the world to press to mine.

This poor's maiden, Queen of Song,
To her my heart and love belong;
So fair her form, so great her art,
She's Prima Donna of my heart;
Prima Donna of my heart,
Of my heart!—
Yes, Prima Donna of my heart.

SERMON MAKING.

The *Leader* of the 22nd instant devotes an article to a new Sermon-making manufactory, established at New York. The *Leader* sneers at it. Perhaps the *Leader* thinks the price—10 cents each—at which Sermons are turned out, at the aforesaid establishment, too cheap. The *Leader* is published at 1½¢; why should not a Sermon be published at 6d. Does the *Leader* think that an establishment for the manufacture of sermons is a crying evil? Did the Editor of the *Leader* ever go to Church in Toronto? We trow not. If he did he would hesitate ere he curled his editorial nose in scorn at the idea of a sermon-manufacturing establishment. Where is the wrong in writing a sermon? Where is the sin in selling a sermon? If it is wrong to indite and sell sermons, what is his guilt who indites or publishes a daily paper? But a truce to trifling with the *Leader's* indefensible arguments.

Would to Heaven that a branch depot of this establishment for the manufacture of sermons was opened in Toronto. Would that the young Curates who talk their congregations to sleep on Sunday afternoons had the means of purchasing a sermon with a moderate share of common sense in it. Would that we were no more to be bored with weakly written sermons on points of religion.

Let it not be supposed, however, that we advocate of the lazy system of reading sermons. We hold the system in abhorrence. But if we are to suffer from written sermons, let them be as good as can be procured. The habit of reading sermons is a great evil. The man who cannot preach an extempore sermon cannot be said to have learned his profession. And it is notoriously true that the Ministers generally of our city are deficient in the art of preaching sermons. They not only read their sermons, but they read very indifferent ones. What would be thought of the Barrister who should stand up and read a speech to the jury upon an important case? It would certainly be his last brief. And yet Ministers do not blush to mount their pulpits,

Sunday after Sunday, and in a whining, sing-song voice read something out of a paper which they call a sermon. What would be thought of the Actor who should read his part, instead of acting it? He would be hissed off the stage. And yet Ministers are content, when they reach the pulpit, to unfold their dingy piece of paper and chirp forth something orthodox about religion. If we are to have written sermons eternally crammed down our throats, in Heaven's name, let them be of the best description; not the wisly-wisly stuff that we continually hear.

Why should we have written sermons at all? Ministers are supposed to have received a liberal education, and surely they ought to have studied the art of public speaking,—or else, why become Ministers. If not capable of speaking extemporarily in public, why not stick to writing religious works, and not fill the place of better men.

A written sermon has little power. It falls flat on the ear, and, in nine cases out of ten, sets the hearers to sleep—as if it were the bad composition of a schoolboy badly read. Toronto is full of those lazy Ministers, who will not take the trouble to study the art of public speaking. From the Cathedral down to the smallest Meeting-house it is all the same; only that in the latter we have a chance of hearing something genuine.

Laziness and the Bishop are the only reasons for the indiction of written sermons. Whether those are sufficient reasons or not, let the public judge. That written sermons are an indiction, no one will deny. They are as bad as written speeches. What a sensation a written ministerial explanation would make! How people would stare, if George Brown were to stand up at a meeting and read a speech against the Ministry, or if John A. were to retail his sarcasms second-hand from a piece of paper! And if a written speech would be ridiculous in such cases, is it not doubly so when the stakes are doubled. Surely if there is one place in the world in which the highest perfection of public speaking ought to be employed it is in the pulpit.

In conclusion, then, we must give our voice for the sermon-manufacturing establishment,—as long as the present system lasts. Let the *Leader* sneer as it pleases; the establishment is needed, and as the price of sermons is low it will likely flourish. The time may come when our pulpits will be renowned for their eloquence. The dawning of that period will be the deathblow of the sermon manufacturing monopoly. But, until then, we must endeavor to make the best of our present imperfect system.

Curious Indiotment.

The *Leader*, whose Police Reports are often more brief than intelligible, gives the following short and pithy account of a "sledge hammer case," so it heads it:

"THE SLEDGE HAMMER.

Margaret Reardon was also sent to the Recorder's Court on the charge of having in her possession a sledge hammer, the property of Patrick Reilly."

The adverb "also" would seem to mean that the female, Reardon, was not the only person sent to the Recorder's Court for having other people's property

in their possession; and if the *Leader* is correct in stating the charge against those prisoners, Mr. Gurnett, whose decisions are generally irreproachable, must have gone mad. What! send a woman to gaol simply because she had in her possession a sledge hammer, the property of another person. If this is to be the law, every person in Toronto, from the Governor General down, should be sent to gaol. For what person is there in our city that has not something or other in his possession, the property of which is vested in another person?

Surely, the *Leader*, in trying to be brief, has become libellous. Mr. Gurnett—although the *Globe* once said that he ordered a constable to "pat" a woman's back for a month—would not send a woman to stand her trial merely because she harboured her neighbour's sledge hammer under her roof. Perhaps the culprit was making striking experiments with the aforesaid sledge hammer. Margaret may have been taking 'the liberty with Mister Pat Reilly of beating a little common sense into his skull with the aforesaid sledge hammer—which, on the whole, might have been a hopeless if not a dangerous proceeding; as "a little learning is a dangerous thing;" and the operation may have considerably riled Mr. Reilly, and led to the promotion of Margaret to the Recorder's Court. However, now that Mr. Gurnett's unalterable fiat has gone forth, we must wait until the matter comes before the Recorder. If the *Leader* is correct, Margaret may rely on Duggan and Dismissal.

A Valuable Donation.

"The Superintendent of the House of Industry begs leave to acknowledge the donation of a piece of factory cotton from Mr. So-and-so."—*Colonist* of Thursday.

—We omit the name of the donor. He is no doubt a very good fellow. But we would suggest to the Superintendent of the House of Industry that in future, he should be more specific in naming the article he returns thanks for. "A piece of factory cotton" sounds, to our ears, very like "a piece of printed paper," or "a piece of rye bread," or "a piece of white chalk," or of anything else capable of being reduced to pieces; and which, though a suitable donation to a single young mendicant, when presented to an asylum, like the House of Industry, seems like sending one shirt to clothe an army. In expressing gratitude for future presents, the Superintendent would lose nothing by naming the number of inches or yards in the piece of cotton which was received. It would not take a very large piece of cotton to make a handkerchief, or thread a needle. We feel confident, however, that the piece of cotton in question was of larger dimensions than a handkerchief or a needleful of thread.

HISTORY IN THE SANCTUM.

In a late number of the *Daily Globe*, in one of those sage articles on the war, for which that journal is becoming famous, the editor tells us that the bravery of the Sardinians reminds of that of the "old Romans of the middle ages." Now we had heard of the Venetian republic, the Florentine republic, and the Genoese republic, but we were not aware that the natives of those mediæval States went by the name of "Romans." The next thing we shall hear of will be the New Yorkers of Kentucky, or the Turks of Hindostan. If the *Globe* goes on as fast as this, Sismond's history will have to be revised very speedily.