

SOONER OR LATER.

Sooner or later the storm shall beat
Over my slumbers, from head to feet;
Sooner or later the wind shall rave
In the long grasses above my grave.

I shall not heed them where they lie—
Nothing their sounds shall signify;
Nothing the headstone's fret of rain:
Nothing to me the dark day's pain.

Sooner or later the sun shall shine
With tender warmth on that mound of mine:
Sooner or later in summer's air
Clover and violets blossom there.

I shall not feel in that deep-fair rest
The sheeted light fall over my breast,
Nor even note in those hidden hours
The wind-blown breath of the treading flowers.

Sooner or later the stainless snows
Shall add their hush to my mute repose—
Sooner or later shall elude and shift
And heap my bed with their dazzling drift.

Chill though that frozen pall shall seem,
Its touch no colder can make the dream—
That wrecks not the sacred dread
Shrouding the city of the dead.

Sooner or later the bee shall come
And fill the noon with its golden hum;
Sooner or later, on half-poised wing
The bluebird above my grave shall sing—

Sing and chirp and whistle with glee,
Nothing his music can mean to me;
None of those beautiful things shall know
How soundly their lover sleeps below.

Sooner or later, far out in the night,
The stars shall over me wing their flight:
Sooner or later the darkening dews
Catch the white spark in their silent ooze.

Never a ray shall part the gloom
That wraps me round in the silent tomb:
Peace shall be perfect to lip and brow
Sooner or later: oh, why not now?

THE C. T. HIS STORY.

Having the sweet little job awarded me of writing, merely—the past and present history of the Commercial Traveller, with comments, reflections, moral deductions, and inferential analogies, I fly at it in a state of exuberant joy. I tackle it in such a playful spirit of content as almost disinclines me to chide the meagre invitation for not including in the task, An Essay on the Military Law of Nations; The Effect of Submarine Pyrites on the Atlantic Cables; and The Solar Variations occasioned by Discal Irregularities.

I could just as well have chucked these in, but feel that it were unmanly to complain.

This is a serious subject: nothing but absolute fact—the absolute the better—must find a record here. No fancy, no fiction, no flitree work.

This is the reason that I buckle to it so hilariously and feel just like going to a circus.

This is why I pitch in before some other historian gets the bulge on me.

Starbuck, in "The Influence of Pie on the Civilization of the Siberians," assures us that the first C. T. was patiently waiting at the gate of Eden for the exit of the Adam family, and sold Eve a clothes-line and a gross of hair-pins, six minutes before the lightning-rod man could catch up and catch on.

I don't swear to this, because I don't have to.

Nobuchadnezzar, who took so kindly to his grass diet, was a patron of one of the fraternity, —one who was early in the field. Seventy-four quart bottles were found in that meadow, all labeled, "Levi's Salad Dressing."

A gentleman in the Pain Killer business is mentioned as having been on terms of intimacy with Job.

A volume (if it were small enough) might be filled with proofs of early professional adventure, before the centuries were weaned, not to mention a memorable transaction on the part of a fruit pedlar, up a tree, which more or less affected all of us.

Coming down a lap or two, to the time of Rome, we find recorded by Hardtack (Vol. XIX., pp. 4-11-44, § 617, * * * ! + ! ?.) an instance of a real estate C. T. offering a house for sale by exhibiting a specimen brick, carried in his hat.

Skipping a few short centuries more, there looms up the direct prototype, predecessor, and precursor of our to-day's C. T. He was a precursor. You can swear to it. He lived and travelled in England. He stowed himself and his traps into another trap and devastated the land. He scooted around in a gig. He never used the railways because there were none built, but he was the first to learn the necessity of introducing them, and ordered a few constructed on the spot.

He was called a "bag-man." The writer is the only person living who can explain why he was so called. Having been brought up in the conundrum business, put through an apprenticeship in riddles, and having earned a healthy living at answering enigmas, I am proudly conscious of possessing phenomenal ability for the solution of difficult and intricate propositions. An innate bashfulness alone prevents my mentioning this.

He, the semi-original C. T., was called a bag-man because he carried his goods or samples in a—no, not in a trunk, nor a handbox, nor a brown-paper bundle, nor a balloon, but in a—I hate to give it away so cheap.

Let me soften the shock, the explosion, the

sudden effulgence of light on this important problem attendant upon a too excessive previousness of explanation. Even a magazine shouldn't blow up unexpectedly. We will wise around to the point sort o' serpentine.

I was somewhat anachronistic. (Oh! just unabridged, that word is! put it in careless— —one hand—ordinary lead-pencil—no extra charge.) Yes, I was somewhat (gaze at it above) in introducing the gig. Our prototype began business on foot, with a pack on his back, next on horseback, with a pack in his pocket.

How did he carry his goods?
How should a bag-man carry 'em?
And now the answer can be gracefully imparted.

Because he carried his samples in a bag! in saddle-bags.

See what historical research, close reasoning, fine analogy, untiring energy, and vivid imagination will accomplish!

And yet, I'm not weary. I shall keep on as though nothing had supervened.

It was not till our traveller had mounted his gig that he amounted to much; only then began he to be characterized as a "driving fellow."

We are rapidly approaching the present time and the real subject of this article. A mere century or century or two stand us off.

The bag-man has poor roads to travel over. The primitive ways, or highways, of Adam had not then given place to those of McAdam. The travelling salesman was compelled to economize space. He had to gage his bags to the capacity of his gig. This was so important a matter as to cause the invention and introduction of a new and ugly word in the language. Baggage was readily shortened to "baggage."

"Nine trunks, averaging three hundred pounds, with the others coming by express," would have been deemed a frightful fiction in those early times; now they are a daily necessity.

There was never a guild, craft, or profession in which, from the earliest times, a more general and genial feeling of fraternity has been exhibited than among the noble army of C. T.'s.

Europe, England especially, readily learned and cordially admitted the high importance of the wandering broker. The best room was his to dine in, the cosiest chamber to sleep in. The choice bit of the beef was his to cut and come again. His tap was porter or heavy ale. He scorned coffee and tea, yet to the latter article is he indebted for his present popular sobriquet.

'Twas thus:

On a raw, rainy night in October, A.D. 1616, five road merchants sat at dinner in the good old English town of Salisbury. The inn was known as the "King's Arms," from a swinging sign-board representing an adipose monarch without any arms, on account of his expansive chest occupying the full width of the board. Nor was this the only board he had to do with, for there was a current belief that the pictured potentate had acquired his rotundity from a free indulgence in the delicacies afforded by the inn landlord. Leaving royalty to swing for his supper, let's step inside.

At the table, as aforesaid, mine hostess was urging one Mr. William Boggs—better known to his intimate friends as Berry Hill—to try a cup of tea, as a novel substitute for his seventh pint of stout.

"Tea may not have then been introduced into England. I don't know. If so, the fault rests with the Emperor of China, and I've nothing to do with it."

William pleasantly but forcibly mentions that he "can't see it."

"See what?" inquires Jem Ferrigo from the far end of the table.

"See tea!"

Had I any other readers than you, my intelligent confederates, I would explain this thing further; tell how the "C. T." was handed around, twisted and plain, joked over, toasted, punned with, played upon, and at length adopted. But truth is so simple that it needs no upholstering.

I am trying my best to bring the C. T. down to the present time, but he won't come.

One of the craft inaugurated the Boston Tea Party. I could impart his full name—if I knew it. I am certain of only the fact that he was one of us; and this from a remark he made as he launched overboard the last of those three hundred chests of Hyson. As the fragrant herb ("f. h." is good, but not in salt water) floated out to the ocean, he remarked, in a tone of gentle melancholy,—

"There's a sea tea;" then placing his good right hand upon his manly bosom, "and here's a C. T."

American hotels have long recognized the value of the commercial trade, but it is a mistake to suppose that the "T cum C" house in London, Ont., was thus named in our honor. It was so called in remembrance of a coppery brave who didn't use to take his Indian meal there.

The Commercial Traveller of to-day, in this country, is accorded a higher position than ever. He has changed the old methods of doing business and greatly increased its volume. He is credited with pluck, perception, penetration, patience, perseverance, and principle. These are all the p's he wants on his plate. So, as a rule, he lets piety out of the catalogue for future reference.

He is admitted to come under the broad meaning of the word "gentleman," and does no discredit to it. He is liberal, frank, free; he beats his rival every time that it is possible to do so, but is not jealous nor envious. He helps his

opponent in distress and pays ungrudgingly his share toward supporting the widow of the man who took away his trade.

Merchants for whom or to whom he sells admit his value. Hotels seek his patronage. Society courts him and enjoys his infinite variety. All admit his claims save the one interest that is more indebted to him than to all else for its prosperity.

The railroad interest, with a stupidity that is phenomenal, insists on regarding and treating him as a bitter enemy.

Not until within a very short time have the companies seen fit to make any concession to the Commercial Traveller, who sweeps the rail almost daily' as compared with the incidental passenger who journeys over the road once in a lifetime. C. T.'s thousands of miles of travel are no more favorably viewed than the stranger's single trip of convenience.

The C. T.'s baggage, without which he could do no business, nor secure freights for the road, is handled grudgingly, weighed gingerly, and charged for unsparingly. A sort of stigma is sought to be fastened upon him for the crime of carrying "samples," which are, in miniature, the same goods that the transportation lords grow rich by carrying in bulk.

But the beginning of the end of this injustice is come. Many roads have made and are making proper concessions, which are duly appreciated.

Here I'll drop out and let the C. T. take care of himself awhile.

JOHN APPEO.

ECHOES FROM LONDON.

LONDON, August 31.

THERE is to be a company floated with a capital of a "plum," to buy or establish a new Radical paper.

THE Volunteer Club will re-open in new premises, those in Arlington street having been sold by the owner.

THE Grand Old Man has been sitting for another portrait—this time a life-size etching by Mr. Sargeant.

THE Premier has become utterly fashionable in all his belongings as well as his costume; he has adopted crushed strawberry for the color of his despatch-box.

THE session of 1883 certainly is ending with a widespread belief that the year after next rather than next year will be the time of a general election.

THE Prince of Wales has accepted, with thanks, a painting of the Longfellow house at Cambridge, painted by Ernest Longfellow, and presented to His Royal Highness by Ellis Lever.

IT is stated that Lord Charles Beresford was offered a C. B. for his share in the Egyptian campaign, and that he respectfully requested to be excused from its acceptance.

LORD ASHBURNHAM, failing to obtain the price he asked from the French Government, has, it is said, decided to dispose of the MSS. to the highest bidder.

ALL the photographs on sale or in stock of Miss Fortescue, the actress, are said to have been bought up. A new portrait was on the point of being distributed to the trade, but this has been stopped.

EVEN in the hands of some persons without literary pretensions the pen is mighty as a source of revenue. The inventor of the stylographic pen, it is stated, derives from his patent £20,000 a year.

A CABLEGRAM has been received from Oscar Wilde by one of his friends in London in which the poet states that he now abjures America. His brutal Philistinism is too much for him, and he intends to submit his play *Vera* to the judgment of the London public.

A NEW "Peerage" by Mr. James E. Doyle, is in the press. It will show the succession, dignities, and offices of every peer from the Conquest down to 1872, and will be illustrated with portraits, shields of arms, and fac-similes of autographs.

THE improvement of the chain pier at Brighton is amongst the novelties of the locality. A very splendid saloon is to be built at the end. It will be extremely elegant and replete with novelties. We do not know if there will be any bedrooms.

THE Strand above Temple Bar, or the "Griffin," is to be widened. The Board of Works will come to Parliament next year for the necessary powers to enable them to carry out the contemplated improvements. These, when effected, will open up a broad thoroughfare running from the Somerset House to the Law Courts.

ONE of the most eccentric of the American millionaires of the day, it is reported, intends to bring to this country a dozen intelligent Huron-Iroquois Indians, who have shown their ability by their proficiency at native schools, and have them educated at Eton and Oxford at his expense, with a view to their entering on a special mission, partly religious and partly educational, among the red tribes in Canada and the United States.

If one hundred people were asked if Henry Russell, the composer, were alive, ninety-nine would tell you he must have died a quarter of a century ago. His songs were popular from 1835 to 1855 on both sides of the Atlantic. He wrote "Woodman spare that tree" quite forty-five years ago. Well, for the information of those curious in such matters, it may be stated that he is still alive and well, for last week he was elected a member of the Savage Club.

A GOOD many M.P.'s are just now inclined to question whether Parliamentary life is worth living, especially at the end of the Session. The original propounder of that famous query, however, seems inclined to answer it in the affirmative, since he is expected to contest the St. Andrew's Burghs at the next election. The Conservative Club of St. Andrew's University have selected him as a champion in every way suitable.

MR. WILSON BARRETT having now obtained the entire and exclusive control of the Princess's Theatre, it is satisfactory to note that he has followed the good example first set by Mr. Hollingshead, and since copied by Mr. Irving, Mr. Hare, Mr. Bancroft, and others, and abolished the pestilent fee system. There are no fees now at the Princess's for booking, for programmes, for cloak-room, for attendance, or for anything else.

MR. MUNDELLA has got the House of Commons to pay medical men for the cost of their own death certificates. Here is his resolution:—"That it is expedient to authorize the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of the cost of the certificate of the death of any registered medical practitioner, which may become payable under the provisions of any Act of the present Session for consolidating and amending the law relating to medical practitioners." The doctors will now be the only class in the country who will be paid for dying.

COMPARATIVELY few of the released members of Parliament are going far afield. It is almost too late for Switzerland, the Mediterranean is unpopular because of the cholera, and Egypt is quite altogether impossible. But several of the members are off to America. Among them are Mr. Barclay and Mr. Borlase. The President of the Farmers' Alliance is going straight through to California. His object in visiting the States is to see the farms of Iowa, and to make inquiries there into the system pursued, so as to give hints to his friends at home respecting American competition and how to meet it. He will be absent from England for two months.

THERE is a rumor that, in consequence of the abuse of the privilege of putting questions to Ministers the Speaker will next Session be armed with further powers, so as to put the extinguisher on improper or irrelevant questions. Many members at present strongly object to the powers already entrusted to the Speaker, which they consider too despotic and comprehensive, and any addition thereto they would strenuously resist. To take a step in the line suggested would, they argue, be a blow to the independence and freedom of members, and of the House of Commons, and as such might not unreasonably be accounted a victory scored by the Parnellite faction.

"JUNO, the heroine of Tel-el-Kebir," has been carried off by cholera. By a curious coincidence, the brave old retriever's master, Corporal Bull, died only two days before of the same disease. After leading the Gordon Highlanders, and, indeed, the whole British force into Arabi's entrenchments, "Juno" became the recipient of many honors, the last being a silver collar subscribed for at home by some of her English and Irish admirers. This handsome gift reached her shortly before her death, and the subscribers will be glad to learn that she seemed pleased. It will now be kept, according to their expressed wish, at the officers' mess, as a souvenir of the battle in which the 1st Battalion Gordon Highlanders so greatly distinguished themselves.

THE publishers of the FARM, FIELD AND FIRE-SIDE, Chicago, are meeting with great success in securing subscribers to their publication. In addition to furnishing an excellent paper at the low price of 50 cents for six months, they propose to distribute \$40,000 in presents to their readers. See their announcement in advertising columns.

A good Baptist clergyman of Bergen, N.Y., a strong temperance man, suffered with kidney trouble, neuralgia and dizziness almost to blindness, over two years after he was told that Hop Bitters would cure him, because he was afraid of and prejudiced against "Bitters." Since his cure he says none need fear but trust in Hop Bitters.