

Schoolmasters hesitate to exercise the authority necessary for their office, knowing the weakness of parents, and stand helpless in the presence of a spirit of disorder and violence. Thus boys are brought up with a disregard for all those social *convenances* which are so important a factor in civilization, and indulge in horseplay, or worse, which makes them generally execrated—and especially by those who are accustomed to the better regulated customs of the Old Country. Depredations are nightly committed in suburban gardens by youths who confound wanton destruction with fun. If parents did their whole duty and the police were more vigilant this kind of amusement would soon be suppressed. Failing this, suffering citizens will be apt to resort to some such punishment as was found so effectual in suppressing garrotting in England.

"WHY should we drown?" is a pertinent and timely question addressed to the public by the honorary secretary of the London (England) Swimming Club. "Why should we drown?" might with equal propriety be asked of our public, and particularly that portion of it which lives upon or visits the various lakes. With the beginning of hot weather the thoughts of thousands of young folk will turn towards bathing, and many city families will begin to lay plans for spending a vacation out of town. Most of the latter holiday-makers will go to some water-side resort. If they would only think about it they would see that more important than a new boating suit or any other luxury they can take with them is a knowledge of how to swim. By help of such knowledge they can get much more pleasure out of their boating or bathing, since a greater sense of security from drowning will remove the *arrière pensée* experienced by most landsmen when on the water. Happily the number of young people who know how to swim is increasing every year: but it ought to increase faster than it does. Public swimming baths ought to be established in every town, and should be run by the municipalities, so that the charge for admission might be kept at the lowest possible point. This plan is generally adopted in England with most satisfactory results. A few of the good people who are anxious to spend money in benevolence would find it a very cheap outlay to establish a fund for prizes that would tempt competitors and swell the number of swimmers. Charity begins at home, and this would be even a better outlay than subscribing to missionary societies.

DURING the present insanitary state of Toronto Bay bathing, of course, will not be indulged in by those who are conversant with the facts; but something ought to be done to warn visitors. Indeed, it is a moot point whether that water stretch ought to be used at all, either for sailing or rowing. The wharves on the city side are rarely free from unpleasant smells, and on occasions these gases can be distinctly detected all over the Bay. It is to be hoped that the mistaken policy which led the municipality to prefer building ornamental public offices rather than reform the sanitary system may not result in an epidemic of cholera.

ATTENTION is called to the letters on Prohibition and the Scott Act which appear in our correspondence column. They are a valuable contribution to the discussion, that of Judge Elliot being a specially able and exhaustive reply to the arguments advanced by Mr. Wells and other responsible advocates of forced abstinence.

SEVERAL weeks ago reference was made in these columns to the fact that Colonel Fred Burnaby had left the manuscript of a political novel which might be given to the world at an early date, and that the work in question contained a scathing denunciation of the late English Government's foreign policy. That announcement went the rounds of the British and American press. On Saturday it appeared in the columns of a Toronto daily as "special" news!

FORT WORTH, TEXAS, June 20.—A fight occurred in the district court-room last night which came near resulting fatally. The trial of young Stephens, charged with the murder of Dr. Wallace at Mansfield, this county, had just opened, the entire day having been spent in empanelling a jury. The attorneys were tired and petulant. Henry Furman, the leading counsel for the defence, became embroiled in a controversy with County Attorney Bowlin, and they finally came to blows. Every one expected to see a double tragedy. The court-room was quickly emptied. Both men were undoubtedly armed, and each only waiting for the other to draw. In the midst of this confusion Judge Beckman leaped from the bench into the arena. As he did so, Lawyer Weare, who is associated with Bowlin in the prosecution, excitedly struck the judge a very severe blow under the ear. The court was dazed for an instant, but being a powerful man instantly recovered his balance and let fall a sledge-hammer blow that prostrated Lawyer Weare. Turning his attention to the principal combatants, who by this time had clinched and were committing mayhem upon each other's ears and cheeks, the judge commanded the jury to arise and quell the riot. At the same time the court seized one of the combatants and two jurymen another, thus separating them. Furman and Bowlin were fined \$50 each for contempt, after which the court immediately adjourned, as all the combatants were bleeding profusely. The court did not fine Lawyer Weare. It is feared the feeling engendered will yet result in a tragedy.

This sober-suited press despatch is too good a text to be passed over by the philosophic historian. Apart from the broad picture it presents of present life in Texas (a community with an undeniably great future) are a number of interesting details:—1. The almost unconscious subjection of the Anglo-Saxon mind to legal formalism amid the practical reign of private violence; i.e., an alleged murderer is spared for public trial, and the legal safeguards of innocence are so strictly followed that an entire day and the tempers of the chief participants are spent in the work of *empanelling* a jury. 2. The public expectation that hot words among English-speaking people inevitably lead to blows (the contrary being the rule among the Latin races). 3. Allowing for local variation, blows in Texas are the forerunners of pistol shots (the direct successors of the "pinking" with swords prevalent among Englishmen of fashion a century or more ago). 4. Again, the innate respect for law which induced each Fistianus to await transgres-

sion by the other even at the risk of losing his life through his adversary's getting the first "drop." 5. The Southern peculiarity of a great number of bystanders (doubtless all armed) taking flight rather than interfere with two gentlemen between whom a "difficulty" is in progress. Everywhere south of the Potomac such an interference, in the interest of peace and humanity, is a serious breach of propriety so long as the shooting or knifing is fairly conducted by the two principals. 6. The dazing of "the court," who or which was "a powerful man." 7. The functions of a *posse comitatus* which appertain to a Texan jury. 8. The final triumph of law in the adjudication of contempt of court and a fine.

THE House of Commons has determined to pass a bill for authorizing the construction of a bridge over the Thames at the Tower. The centre arch of the bridge is to be capable of opening, so as to admit of the passage of vessels, and during the opening pedestrian traffic will be carried over a high level arch. The time occupied by the opening of the bridge, the passage of the vessel, and the closing is estimated at less than five minutes. The expenditure contemplated on the work is £750,000. The bill is passed subject to the conditions that there shall be a regulation that the opening of the bridge shall be continuous at about high water, whether vessels are passing or not, the time to be specified by the Thames Conservators; that the land traffic shall yield to the water traffic; and that there shall be maintained, even during construction, a fairway of not less than 160 feet.

SOME further details relating to Mr. Sala's visit to Australia have appeared in the London press. In a late number of THE WEEK reference was made to the want of appreciation shown by the colonists for the *Telegraph* correspondent. It would now seem that his visit to Melbourne was a decided failure. His opening night drew a very large crowd, and the financial result was \$1,400, but on the second night only \$400 was taken, towards the close of the season he lectured to almost empty benches. It is understood that the fact of his remaining away from a club dinner which he had promised to attend may be attributed to his wounded feelings at this want of public appreciation. The whole affair occasioned a great deal of talk in Melbourne, and no doubt this unfortunate *fiasco* accounts for the non-appearance of the promised letters about the colonies to the *Daily Telegraph*, which have been looked forward to in England with so much interest. Probably, if he does write, Australia—or Melbourne at least—will not find itself flattered.

In one sense Mr. Sala's failure is not surprising. Everyone who knows anything of the colonies and colonists is well aware that Melbournians are somewhat "uppish." Their great characteristic is an intense patriotism of the most egotistical description, which generally takes the form of vast "blowing" about their great city and great country, and the despatch of any other great city or country. There is no city in the world to compare with Melbourne, no street like Collins Street, no public buildings like the Melbourne Post-office, Houses of Parliament, and Government House (the most unsightly building in Australia!), and no people like the Victorians. And so Melbourne has come to the conclusion that G.A.S. is but a penny-a-liner compared with some of its own pressmen. Nothing could be more gratifying, however, than the great journalist's reception by Australians of culture and position; and, putting the pocket out of the question, Mr. Sala can under the circumstances well afford to dispense with the appreciation of the Antipodean mob. The brilliant panegyric accorded to him by the Hon. W. B. Dalley at a dinner upon his arrival in Sydney will not soon be forgotten, particularly as the panegyrist is known and acknowledged to be the most cultured man in Australia.

Our London contemporary, *Society*, thus refers to the attempt to prohibit Sunday drinking in the Principality of Wales:—"We have frequently had occasion to draw attention to the edifying condition of North Wales in respect to so-called illicit drinking on the Sabbath. The present plan in practice among the simple-minded Welsh peasantry is to convey large quantities of beer into private houses, there to be retailed for consumption on Sunday. A raid recently made on the houses of a widow and a labourer, resulted in the discovery at the two places of nearly thirty gallons of beer, in which a roaring trade was being more or less secretly pursued. The heavy fines imposed by the Flint magistrates will probably not trouble the widow and the labourer to any great extent; for, as the Chairman remarked, 'illicit drinking in private houses is now carried on to such an extent in Wales on Sundays that the owners make small fortunes from the traffic,' as we do not doubt they will continue to do until the preposterous and senseless Act, which is the sole cause of all this law-breaking, is repealed. The framers of the iniquitous Welsh Sunday Closing Bill have a prodigious amount of wrong-doing to answer for."

"OUIDA" writes a letter to an English journal in which she gives a horrible account of the cruelties perpetrated in Naples. She states that all animals whose skins are worth a centime are skinned alive, as it is believed that when stripped from the living animal they are more supple, and consequently sell for a higher price. Old horses, young kids and lambs, dogs, cats, and rats are all skinned alive. There are dog-stealers—legally appointed municipal officers—who go about the city and drive all the animals which they can find into a court, where they are daily flayed alive and their skins sold for the public profit. It is needless to say that in a city where the municipal authorities are so deeply compromised no punishment is inflicted on the merciless brutes who commit these inhuman crimes. The story, as told by "Ouida" in all its details, is too shocking