

THE "MIXED."

"Necessity" is reported to be utterly "ignorant of law," and if so she consequently asserts her rights in the face of all legal interposition to the contrary. This proverb may or may not be unexceptionally true. But of this there is little doubt, that she has no sensibilities to be touched by the preferences, the likes or dislikes of ordinary mortals. She imposes, at will, the most unpleasant experiences, and is deaf to all grumbling as if to declare it to be so much waste time and breath on the part of the sufferer. Her doctrine appears to be that when we are driven to the inevitable we but illustrate, in a somewhat martyr-like spirit, the axiom,— "That if a man must do, and can't do as he likes, he must just do as he can." What wonder is it that such doctrine, so unpalatable while the lash of necessity is in use, should find some grim satisfaction in the after-burst of re- tort! For certainly some vent is given to one's mortification, if the pains inflicted by necessity be unavoidable.

Of the many modes of conveyance in modern use it may be that to each belongs a certain complement of inconvenience. And yet the occasion is taken to grumble, if it be dreamed that there is one out of reach supposed to furnish lighter tax upon the traveller's patience. But the grumbling is never any improvement of the experience that suggests it nevertheless.

For instance, the settler beyond the reach of railway communication talks but to the wind if he ejaculates his displeasure while submitting to the pounding inflicted on the primitive causeway in the "Democrat" or Rockaway which does duty in Her Majesty's mail service. The old clumsy thing rocks about and thumps all the same. And it may be no superstition if the oscillation is supposed to increase perceptibly in proportion as the crusty traveller gives way to the useless fashion of sputtering.

Of course we would not expect the tossed passenger to laugh and call the ordeal he endures something jolly. Knowing it to be anything but that, he would be put down as a hypocrite. To be occasionally thrown into the lap of a fellow passenger might bear such construction, but that in turn the neighbour occasionally pounces back into his own. And to have one's sides bruised, head tortured by the roof, or to be cramped out of all shape, holding on to straps, irons, or seat rails, could provoke no laugh that would last. Hence if patience even can be outlined on the visage, and a martyr silence be made to chain the tongue, it must result from one or other, or both, of two considerations which enter into the sufferer's muddled brain. He may deem it the most intelligent policy to endure bravely what cannot be cured, or he may brace his nerves by the reflection that other mortals, boasting of reads graced by steel rail and steam power, have also their inconveniences to endure. And certainly if this thought does arise, however selfish as an argument it may be, it contains more truth than poetry. And it might not require a mind that had exceeded the literary attainment demanding a third-class certificate to show, that in this selfish reflection, is contained a finding which gives to the stage coach passenger a decided advantage. For is it not more tolerable to toss about at the mercy of an average mail coach, under the conviction that the journey is being made at the very highest speed possible to the region, rather than travel at snail pace behind a propelling force, well able to hasten its motion fourfold?

Steam whistles indeed! They may be the voices of civilization, or the utterance of genius—or any other thing poets choose to call them. But when they prate over activities tardy enough to make a supernaturated coach horse laugh, no rhetorical figures are needed to designate them.

Fancy the ghost of George Stephenson on one side of the track, and Baalam's long-eared companion on the other, at the precise moment when the average "Mixed" is dragging its weary way along the average railway. Methinks the deep wail of the gifted discoverer from the one side, would intersect the wave of braving laughter from the other, at the angle common to the volley of a firing party over a comrade's grave, while the unfortunate mortals, who hang by the tail of the twenty or thirty jointed thing, denominated the mixed, are the victims of emotions totally undefinable by written language.

One cannot resist the criticism of the title given to this low type of railway conveyance, the more because it is so suggestive of that quality which is said to give spice to life. But the very first lesson taken in the study of the name dispels all expectation that the aphorism noted has any application to this subject. For the title, doubtless given in a hurry, and possibly suggested, as many others have been, from some derisive reference to it, is justified by every imaginable feature possessed by the thing designated, and borne out in all its movements and management. "Mixed, mixed and nothing but mixed."

What more appropriate term could be applied to its general "make up?" Cars of all shades of colour, brown, blue, black, light drab, dark drab, Indian red, French grey—and many more, so faded that no one can determine the hue of the present or the pigment of the past;—cars open, cars close, cars with decks, cars without, cars for cattle, cars for lumber, cars for oil in barrels, in tanks, or in old boilers;—cars flat, cars once flat, now concave;—these, with a

caboose and a dingy coach pensioned off from the Express line, make up the mixture of an ordinary mixed train. To this must be added another mixed feature provided in the proportions,—some broad, some narrow, some long, some short; but as some are high, and some are low, the mixture mixes the brakeman's brain as he trots along the roofs when moon and stars are hidden. And to crown all, the mixed physical proportions must be further confused by an unceasing medley of label, which considerably mixes the mind of any one trying to make out to what Company the mass in reality belongs. The eye swims before all kinds of crosses from St. George's downwards, rude attempts at scroll painting, names huddled together in such proximity, and interlocked so as to drive the eye's focus back and forth a half dozen times to decipher the painter's intention; while, what with the puzzling mixture of initials, the geographical love of a lifetime becomes requisite to fix the birthplace of each car. There is the L. & K., M.C.R.W., N.P., N.Y.C., and a hundred such hieroglyphics, to baffle all attempts to determine the true name of the road on which this awfully mixed train stands.

Put your head in one of these Joseph coaled boxes and you will find it internally, if not externally, mixed. Cases, barrels, bundles, boxes, bags, bales, forks, spades, organs, buggies, crates, and every kind of package containing every class of goods to be found in Webster. And if you shut your mouth and use your nasal organ for an inspiration, a mixed one indeed is the result. One inhalation takes in the aroma and stench, the pleasant and the offensive. Breaths of pepper, ginger, oils, tea, coffee, drugs, varnishes,—in short everything but jockey club, conspire to enter your nose in one breath. And if you are forced back by this mixed volume and the *tout en tout* orders the renewal of motion, as each car passes, you will presently smell pigs, then sheep, then horses, then cattle, while on the top of all this polluted oxygen you will next be treated to a layer of petroleum gas.

Such is but the outline of the average *make up* of an average "mixed" train. Would that the miserable title was applicable no further. But it is as mixed in its management as it is in its character. What cares the "mixed" for the Time Table! Try and take passage on one in a hundred at the precise moment it is advertised to start, and you will find your expectations and realizations as mixed as the train itself. Of course, it is business to be on hand at the time. But you will beat the train in arrival at the station by half an hour at least, if I am not mistaken. Ask the first official you meet when she will be in, and ten chances to one you will be told "She will be in when she arrives, and she never arrives sooner." The fact is, the agent and baggage-master are mixed on the subject, because the subject itself is mixed.

Arriving late, you naturally conclude the starting will be as little delayed as possible. But in that conclusion you are again slightly mixed yourself. I see you pick up your baggage and make for the coach as soon as it stops, when your shoulder is rudely tapped by some one, telling you "There's time enough yet. There's an hour's shunting to be done." Of course you subside. It is the best policy. For that shunting business usually mixes one's last meal considerably, unless he holds on tightly to the arms of his seat. Did you ever try it?

Now, standing on that station platform, you need but to be an imperfect observer to discover that this shunting business is about as mixed as a Bull's Run, or such another as happened at a place called Ridgeway.

Hear that conductor, with cracked voice, berating, in English not the choicest, the little dapper man who carries a link in one hand and a pin in the other:

"You dunderhead! What are you doing with those cars?"

"Taking them, of course."

"Taking them, eh! Didn't I tell you to drop two and take three?"

"No, you told me to drop three and take up two."

"No, I didn't."

"Yes, you did."

"I tell you I didn't," and he whistles for all he is worth, and reminds the muttering brakeman that "he will be reported if he doesn't use his ears better and his tongue less," while the latter, who holds his situation, as he thinks, under great provocation, mutters enough above his breath to show his blood is slightly mixed, and would mix it with that of his superior officer if there was not a slight chance of his being thrown out of employment by the Traffic or Freight Superintendent.

Watch the switchman, with one hand on a lever, and two fingers of the other in his moustache, shrieking a vocabulary of his own to that stupid engineer, to "stop," to "go on," to "back just a car length," and wonder why the confusion does not drive the man from the switch, and the engineer on his journey in disgust. And yet these worthies are at ease, compared to the dapper little brakeman, who goes through the mixed duties of coupling and uncoupling those stupid cars. The "drawhead" of one is too high, and of another too low. A pin is too crooked or too straight, too short or too thick. And the way that man darts in and out from those couplings, throwing up his arms, or whistling with his fingers, like a maniac, would excite the nerves of any belated passenger, but for the amusement he affords to make you forget your importunate delay.

And lest you should think the conductor to

have escaped the general mixture and confusion of this ordeal, just ask him "When he thinks he will be ready to start?" And he may reply, as I heard one do on a certain occasion, thus: "Number 1146, 32, 66.72 three flats and one cattle car, when we are ready, we've all day before us." Discovering, as in this instance, that part of the answer was for himself, and part for you, it will not be strange if you suspect that he, too, has the infection badly, and is about as mixed as his train.

"All aboard!" comes at last; and you take your seat to breathe freely. But alas! The sequel proves you are little better off. The starting, which is a succession of jerks and thumps, mixes you at once; for the motion is so imperceptible, you suspect that the station, seen through the window, is attached, and is really going west with the train. Then the town seems to follow suite. And it is sometime before the tangle yields. And when the station is distanced, the creeping up grade behind a snorting that frightens you, enables you to take a fair sketch of the country in passing, then suddenly changes to the breakneck speed of a slight decline in the road that makes you pity your insurance company, and which seems to be the putting on of airs, to show either a scorn for the law which regulates the speed of freight trains, or a simple illustration of how gravitation alone can force a mixed train to do the fair thing for your passage money. Such erratic motion convinces you that the very gait of a "Mixed" is, as its miserable title indicates, "mixed" and nothing but mixed. Each paltry station furnishes the experience encountered at the point of embarking. And this results in your mixture of vexation, self reproach, and profound disappointment when, on reaching your destination, your watch informs you that a respectable donkey could have borne you easily over the entire length of the journey in time for your engagement, whereas you are now too late for any rational business but to return home at your earliest convenience.

I see you with a November cloud on your brow, pacing the ground with angry steps, debating whether, after all, you live in the nineteenth or the first century. You ask why a railway should initiate the caste which obtains upon the ordinary highway—why there should be the "mixed" to make prominent the luxuriant and speedy Pullman, as, where cart and coach hold their respective stations. And your blood boils when the analogy fails under the stinging reflection that you paid as much for your donkey ride as if you had taken ticket for the Steamboat Express. George Stephenson may have prophesied a *passenger* and *freight* speed. But you could never dream that he intended human beings to be conveyed at freight speed, except at freight fares—viz., so much per cwt. But alas! so it is, and those who cannot help it have plenty of chance to prove it. But, if avoidable, *never, no never*, shall the experience be repeated (if forgiven for the past) so long as water runs and grass grows by.

Mitchell, Ont. H. C.

THE TAY BRIDGE.

We present our readers to-day, in advance of any paper from England, with a view of the bridge over the Tay, the scene of the late terrible accident.

The entire length of the bridge specified in the contract was 10,142 feet, but some small spans on the north side and a series of brick arches, 34 in number, including the land-line contract, brought up the actual length to 10,612 or 52 feet over two miles. The Tay bridge was thus the longest railway bridge over a running stream in the world, the Victoria bridge, Montreal (tubular), coming next, being 9,194 feet, or 1,418 feet shorter, while the structure over the Rhine at Wesel is only 6,120 and that over the Vistula at Grandenz only 1,483 metres, or about 4,800 feet in length. "The bridge," said a description published at the time of the opening, May 31, 1878, "starts from the Fife side of the Tay, where the land is about 70 feet above high water and gradually rises at a gradient of 1 in 356 until the highest part of the bridge is reached, 130 feet from the level of the rails to high-water, mark. The altitude occurs at the centre of the large spans and from this point there is a sharply falling gradient of 1 in 74. In the structure there are eighty-five spans—eleven of 245 feet, two of 227 feet, one of 166 feet, one of 162 feet 10 inches, thirteen of 145 feet, ten of 120 feet 3 inches, eleven of 129 feet, two of 87 feet, twenty-four of 67 feet 6 inches, three of 67 feet, one of 66 feet 8 inches, and six of 28 feet 11 inches. All the spans, with the exception of that of 166 feet, which is made by a bowstring girder, are formed of lattice girders, but in addition to these there are adjoining the north end of the bridge one span of 100 feet, bowstring girders, and one span of 29 feet, plate girders. The thirteen largest girders, each about two hundred tons in weight, are in the centre and over the navigable part of the river. The girders are arranged in continuous groups, with proper provision for expansion, and are supported on piers of varied construction. The foundations of the piers are of iron cylinders, with brick-work and cement. Fourteen piers are built entirely of brick on rock foundation, and consist of two cylinders of 9 feet 6 inches in diameter, connected by a wall of brickwork 3 feet in width. At the fourteenth pier it was found the rock suddenly shelved away to a great depth, under beds of clay, gravel and sand, and therefore another kind of pier had to be resorted to which would

give an equally sure footing. The weight of the pier was lightened by substituting for the heavy brickwork above high water cast-iron columns, fixed together by horizontal and diagonal transverse bracing, and the cylinders were increased to 15 feet in diameter. The whole of the piers after the fourteenth are built in this manner, but in the east of the highest piers, supporting the 245 feet spans, they have a cylindrical base of iron and brick in cement 31 feet in diameter and from 40 to 45 feet in depth, standing a few feet above high water. The whole of the cylinders supporting iron columns are finished with a coping of Carmyllie stone. The permanent way consists of double-headed steel rails, fished at the joints in 24 feet lengths, weighing 75 pounds to the yard, and secured by oak keys in cast-iron chains. The chains are fixed at intervals of about 3 feet to longitudinal timbers 17 inches wide and varying in depth from 7 to 14 inches. Throughout the whole length of the bridge each rail is provided with a guard-rail to afford additional security to trains passing over the structure. The floor of the bridge consists of 3-inch planking and is covered with a waterproof composition. On both sides of the bridge for its whole length a strong handrail is erected."

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

The *Canadian Illustrated News* commences its twenty-first volume in excellent style.—*Kingston Whig*.

The Christmas number of the *Canadian Illustrated News* is without doubt the finest number of that journal yet issued.—*Prescott Telegraph*.

We have much pleasure in directing attention to the advertisement of the *Canadian Illustrated News*. This is the only illustrated and purely literary weekly in the Dominion and deserves, as we are glad to know it is receiving, a wide circulation.—*Woodstock Sentinel*.

THE "CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS."—The Christmas number of this popular paper came to hand brim-full of "good things." The illustrations, with supplement, all referred to Christmas Tide, and were very attractive. The *News* is deservedly popular.—*Bellefleur Ontario*.

THE *Canadian Illustrated News* is a paper that devotes itself to illustrating current interesting events in the political and social circles of Canada; it gives bits of choice Canadian scenery and must do its full share in making our Canada better known in foreign countries.—*Chatham Planet*.

Not alone because it is a Canadian enterprise, but that it is one worthy of support, we heartily commend the *Canadian Illustrated News*. In no other way can such an accurate idea of "life in Canada" be conveyed to friends at a distance, as by the pictures of everyday occurrences in the *News*. With the first number of January will begin the publication of an original romance, edited by the Rev. Dr. Smithett, of Lindsay.—*Orillia Packet*.

BRELOQUES POUR DAMES.

YOUNG man, in a walking match you "go as you please," but in a courting match you please as you go.

MR. GLADSTONE says: "I use the expression woman with greater satisfaction than I use the name of ladies."

LET the Adam monument be erected and place upon it in letters a foot high: "He never growled at his wife's millinery bills."

A MAN may be brave enough to walk right up to the cannon's mouth and yet not have the courage to hand his wife a letter he has carried in his jacket for a week.

A WASHINGTON belle has just ordered from Worth a pearl-colored satin, brocaded in shaded wood colors in combination with pale wood-colored satin. Her father is probably sneaking up the back streets at home in an £11 ulster.

THE man who marries under the impression that his wife gives up everything for him—father, mother, brothers, sisters and home—finds out sometimes that, however much the wife may have given up, the father, mother, brothers, sisters, etc., have not given her up.

AN ancient beau was talking of repartee to a young lady in Marlboro street. He said, "Women are, as a rule, incapable of clever repartee." She pointed a pair of ruby lips. The old gentleman looked at them and said, significantly and impudently, "Lead us not into temptation." "Deliver us from evil," replied the lady promptly, and walked out of the room.

"Is there any way," writes an agricultural correspondent, "of keeping eyes from turning bad?" Well, no really tangible means have been discovered, we believe, but a hound pup, about six months old, will come as near it as anything else, if you leave the henery door open. About one pup is sufficient for a farm of 280 acres.

FASHION NOTES.

THE income of Queen Victoria amounts to £2,000,000 per annum.

SEALSKIN is much employed in Paris in trimming mantles and jackets.

THE four-leaved clover in green-tinted gold is a favorite design in jewelry.

THE newest buttons are concave in shape and painted by hand in artistic designs.

POINT D'ESPRIT, both black and white, trims many fashionable belts and sash ends.

SMALL silk handkerchiefs have borders of Breton lace inserting and plaited edgings.

A NEW waste-basket is in the form of a tall hat, and, strange to say, it is very pretty.

THE latest caprice in belts and bags is for black velvet ones painted with sprays of flowers.

SILK with jet beads interwoven in the fabric comes for combining with black satin and velvet.

THE latest novelty in shawls are the Chud-dahs, with narrow borders of cashmere embroidery.

THOSE embroidered bags of black satin, that look like nothing so much as foot-muffs, are the fashionable tea cosies.

THE popular horseshoe has now been utilized for a hat-rack. It is of ebonized wood, with nickel-plated nails for pegs.