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TALES OF THE TOWN.

PARTLY through curiosity and a desire to kill time, I, now and then, drop in to listen to the City Council proceedings. There was a time, in the days of the people's John, I was in the habit of watching him breezily polish off municipal business, but, oh, what a change now. It makes me weary to listen to the unnatural gas that some of these modern Ciceros permit to escape them. The profound wisdom of these representatives of an intelligent and discriminating public is simply edification itself; but it is the practical spirit and business-like promptitude, the tact and skill and the unerring ingenuity with which public subjects are handled generally that surprised me. There is a pacific spirit about this year's board that is beautifully harmless. Then the desire to thoroughly thrash out every little matter with the utmost minuteness, and the delicious clumsiness displayed in handling more weighty matters cannot but interest the spectator. I got weary and went home early.

There was, as I said at the time, a peculiar medley for the voters to select from in the last municipal elections, and had it been possible to elect all the candidates, the first act of the council that would have met with popular approval would have been a vote for the purchase of soap and towels for a grand aldermanic personal spring cleaning. Such a vote is scarcely necessary at present, there being an average cleanliness among the members. One or two are afflicted with a painful conviction that they must deliver a half hour's speech on every subject, great or small. There is a labored sameness about these speeches that reminds us of the days when we used to get our old Sunday school tickets for new ones. We, somehow, had to take them, and the aldermen seem to think that they must make speeches.

The terseness of Ald. Hunter's

remarks, his bright witticisms and smart repartee are the only pleasant features of these dreadfully dry meetings. Practical and far seeing withal, he is always interesting and happy in his remarks.

His worship is tediously practical and methodical; Ald. Lovell is prosy; Ald. Munn is one of the boys; Ald. Bragg is like a fish out of water and flounders just like one; Ald. Baker is afflicted with a superabundance of conscientiousness which he cannot control; Ald. Hall is ditto; Ald. Styles goes ditto with Ald. Bragg; Ald. McKillican speaks when necessary; and Ald. Humber speaks on all occasions. On the whole, the present council is a huge mistake, judging from what it has not accomplished and what it has promised. Then again it is a most unmannerly council. Mr Mayor may talk himself hoarse, but that does not interfere with the private conversations going on around the board, and after his worship has got tired shouting, some alderman will sleepily ask that some lengthy document be read over again. It is a wonder to me that Mayor Beaven does not get up and go away in disgust at such a continual exhibition of ill breeding.

When the public wakes up to the necessity of proper and business-like administration of public business, then and only then shall we have an intelligent board of aldermen. At present, the very few brains at the board are drowned in the sea of rank stupidity that is to be found in the council chamber on Wednesday evenings.

The Moral Reform Association, by all accounts, is now thoroughly prepared for an aggressive campaign against vice in this city. In pursuit of this laudable object it is just possible that a few of the good people, on compulsory virtue intent, will unearth some of the causes that are responsible for the brass and tinsel institutions that flourish in our midst. There can be but little doubt that the hoodlum ele-

ment is responsible for much of the wickedness alleged to prevail in the city, and until young men behave themselves and live natural lives there is little hope that the evil will be completely wiped out.

The "budding youngster," of whom the people are admonished to take better care of, sighs while in petticoats for knee pants and cigarettes, he looks with envy upon his older brothers inhaling cigarettes, and practices with a straw the artistic manner in which the hoodlum holds the paper-rolled poison between his fingers, with the thumb resting on one of the pockets of his pantaloons, while the smoke is passing through the lungs. How the budding youngster looks ahead with pleasure to the coming time when with his girl and three or four other fellows, and their girls arm in arm they can monopolize the whole sidewalk, making the night hours hideous with their songs.

It is true that the city is to a great extent responsible for the existence of the young tough. Naturally enough the police officers do not care to bring disgrace upon respectable families by arresting these young people, and the result is they grow up in a state of semi-respectability, and later on swell the great army of non-producers and loafers. I earnestly trust the Moral Reform Association, composed as it is of philanthropic and God-fearing men will go to the bottom of this evil, and kill the germs of the disease, as well as the disease itself.

"Mother wants to keep me a baby until I am twenty-five," pouted a girl of fourteen, whose wise mother wanted to have her retain the loosely flowing locks and the youthful simple garments suitable to her years for a couple of seasons longer. This complaint is very frequently heard coming from the lips of maidens who are to be envied owing to their adorable youth, the very thing they despise. The rosy flush, the slight figures, the clear eyes will never belong to them but once. Only once

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