

THE HUMORIST AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE.

"THE situation," said the Political Heeler, "is one of extreme gravity. There are serious dangers to the constitution ahead of us. The Ship of State, so to speak, is laboring in the trough of the sea with the prospect of being dashed upon the reef, with no chance to cast anchor."

"Seems to me," said I, "that it would be somewhat hoggish to be anchoring for the trough of the sea (*groans*). If, as you say, there are reefs ahead, it is all the fault of the pestilential Grits."

"Of course it is," said the Heeler.

"Because," I continued, "they themselves admit that they are the Reef-formers."

A period of mournful silence ensued, during which naught but muffled imprecations of the boarders struggling with an extra tough steak could be heard.

"Speaking of hogs," I resumed, following the train of thought suggested by the joke about the trough, "it is a wonder that our Scotch friend when contending the other day that his countrymen sometimes possess the humorous faculty, did not refer to Hogg, the Ettrick shepherd. He was celebrated for his flow of *paveky* (porky) humor."

"Verra true, so he was," said the Scotchman seriously, while the rest grinned and bore it.

The Political Heeler, who had started in on one of his campaign speeches when I interrupted him, presently harked back to his favorite topic.

"The Irish agitation is fraught with menace to the best interest of the Empire."

"Which, I think, is 3 per cent.," I remarked. "Or didn't Goschen cut it down to 2¾. By the way, England considered financially, might now be called the Land of Goshen, eh?"

"Will you kindly cease your ill-timed levity and allow me to continue my remarks. Fraught with menace, as I said, to England's best interests. The times are out of joint."

"The London Times?" I quickly suggested.

"The agitation," continued the Heeler, eyeing me wrathfully, "is on an entirely different footing from previous movements. It is agrarian, sir, agrarian."

I tried hard to think of some pun on this word, but couldn't.

"Those who formerly agitated for Irish independence were a different class of men altogether. They would not have countenanced Parnell. They would have scorned—"

"Very true—so they would," I put in. "Take the poet Moore, for instance. Had he lived in our day he would have been a staunch upholder of the government."

"You are right there," said the Heeler, somewhat appeased.

"Because," I went on to say, "he *am a Tory* poet."

Laughter, groans, cuss-words, and general confusion. Political Heeler madder than ever. He made a vain attempt to resume the thread of his discourse, but was met with the request from smart Alick to "hire a hall," and "cheese it." Whereat he scowled on the assembly and departed down town.

"I know the poet Moore," said the saleslady, who considers herself literary. "He writes nice pieces, don't he, about the Lake of Cashmere, where they make such elegant shawls. He wrote about it in 'Paradise Lost.'"

"Not 'Paradise Lost,' I think," said the law-student; "Milton wrote that."

"Well, it was something about Paradise, anyway," said the saleslady.

"Yes, 'Paradise and the Peri.'"

"Perhaps it was about some of the relations of Alex. Pirie that used to write for the *Telegram*," said the saleslady. "I never read the piece through, but Mary J. Holmes and The Duchess give nice little pieces out of Moore's poems in their stories. I like The Duchess better than Mary J. Holmes, don't you?"

"Really, I never read either of them," said the law-student.

"Oh, my! I thought you was a great reader." And it was evident that the young man had sunk about fifty degrees in her estimation.

Meanwhile the Scotchman was perusing GRIP with a broad smile on his features.

"GRIP is a trifle late this week," I remarked.

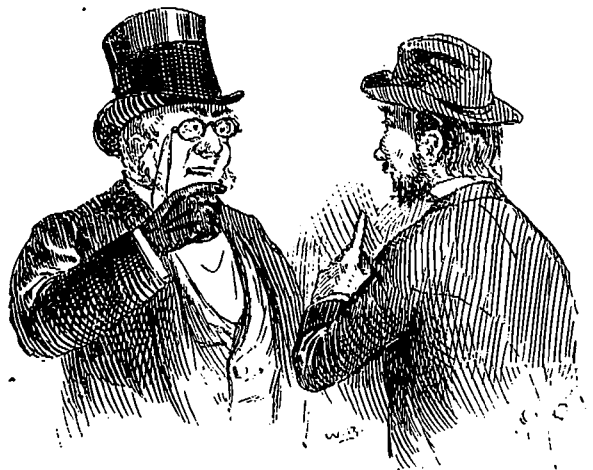
"Late! Na, na, mon. It's *Airlie*, ye ken. Losh, mon, is it possible that I've make a joke mysel!"

"PRACTICE."

"JOHN," said Deacon Pumpkin to his hired man, as they were rummaging the bin for big potatoes to put on the tops of the bags, "you should go to hear Brother Freetank, our new minister. How he pitched into dishonest professors last Sunday! Jest good, hard thumps; none of your namby-pamby refinery about him, I can tell you. There, now, I guess that'll sell that bag."

EXTRAVAGANCE.

IT was at the Grand Opera House, Hamilton, and the audience was very slim indeed. The hour having arrived, the stage bell tinkled, and, as the curtain rolled up, the footlights were turned on full force. "Why this extravagance?" said Josh Buchanan, of the *Times*, rushing into the manager's office. "What do you mean?" queried Reche, with an astonished expression. "Mean!" shouted Josh, "why, what do you want to swell the expense by turning on the gas for? Isn't the house light enough?"



SCIENTIFIC TEMPERANCE.

TEMPERANCE CITIZEN (*whose principles are more profound than his education*), accosting eminent Doctor.—"Doctor, I was at a lectur' of yourn, an' I believe you said oxygen and hydrygin was neces-s'ry for everybody an' we couldn't live 'thout 'em."

EMINENT DOCTOR.—"Yes, sir, I said so."

T. C.—"Well, sir, 'taint true. Look at me! I'm healthy as they make 'em, an' I never tasted gin of any kind!"