

“BYSTANDER” ON VINEGAR.

(From a future number of the W—k.)

There is no more vulgar delusion than that vinegar is an acrid, corrosive, excoerciating fluid. Of course the Canadian newspapers so consider it. It is not surprising that journalistic dealers in farradiddles should be ignorant of the rudiments of scientific learning. It is fitting that such scribes should sing the apotheosis of milk. Vinegar has other uses than the familiar ones which are connected with gastronomy—it is not less indispensable to political discussion than to sliced tomatoes.

There is room for a curious and learned work on the place of vinegar in Literature. The world has never been told, and few citizens of the world beside myself are aware, of what it has accomplished in the way of sweetening and beautifying Letters. The writer of this work, when he comes, may find some illustrations of his theme in the very highest walk of Literature. He may, for example, analyze the quality of the writing which not so very long ago aroused the wrath of the Semitic and tribal Beaconsfield. This has been mistaken by clumsy analysts for Vitriol, but is now conceded to be a pure specimen of literary Vinegar. In other instances, such as that which on a recent occasion invoked from a



certain insignificant quarter an ironical caricature, equally erroneous conclusions have followed incompetent analyses. In this case (epitomised in the caricature alluded to by picturing a great Writer teaching Gladstone the art of Government) the evident conclusion of Ignorance was that the Writer in question had exhibited Gall. It was not gall; it was vinegar.

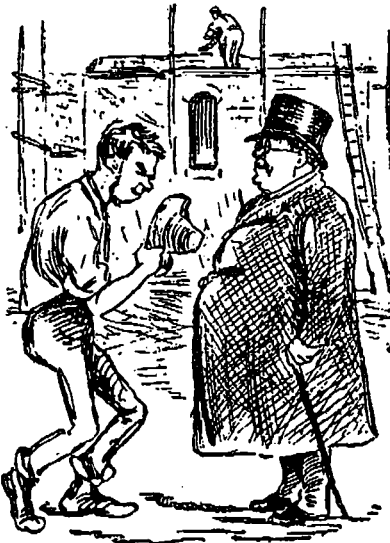
Notwithstanding the vulgar delusion referred to in our opening words, vinegar is in reality a sweet, grateful and comforting liquid—and a writer's ability is, in our opinion, to be measured according to his aptitude in its use. The component parts of this little-understood fluid are, scorn, conceit, and intolerance—three substances which are, either separately or in combination, well known to be of a mollifying nature. Each of them, moreover, is capable of subdivision. The elements of scorn are pessimism, skepticism and Ishmaelism; conceit consists of a mixture of ingredients known even to the vulgar; intolerance is composed mainly of impatience and contempt.

There is of course a possibility of a writer—and the greater the writer the greater the possibility—making too free a use of vinegar. Not that, speaking absolutely, too much of it can be used; but even the greatest writer depends to some extent on the disposition of his readers, and it is possible to displease some by an over use of vinegar. There are, for instance, people—pitiful cranks, no doubt—who do not care to read discussions of the Irish question in which the character of the Irish people, their leaders, and their cause are treated in a manner calculated to set the

teeth of the reader on edge. There are some who would prefer to have questions pertaining to the Christian religion written upon with little or no vinegar at all. Even a sneer at the Old Testament done in the most nervous and beautiful English is enough to offend these people. Topics such as Co-education, the Prospects of Canadian Literature, Charlton's Anti-Seduction Bill, etc., cannot be handled by any really great writer without a liberal use of vinegar, and yet, whenever any truly Gifted Pen undertakes to treat them there is a general outcry against what they call his "billion superciliousness" and suggestions are thrown out that what he needs is a liver-pad.

A LAKE SHORE IDYL.

Oh, happy, happy, day! when she and I  
Sat hand in hand upon the steep clay cliff  
That overlooks the blue Ontario's shore,  
Watching the graceful sea-gulls as they whirled  
In their eccentric flight above the surge.  
The billows swash upon the pebbly sands  
Scemed mournful music in our list'ning ears;  
They sang in doleful cadence, just as if they knew  
That she and I must part, and part ere long.  
She to a foreign school—and I, alas!  
To fight alone the cruel, cruel world.  
“Oh, Angelina dear,” I said, “my own  
Oh can it be that we have thus to part!”  
And as I moved still closer to her side  
To give one fond and longing last embrace,  
The treacherous sod gave way and down we slid  
Through boulders, twigs and bushes, down and down,  
And landed in the boiling, bubbling surf.  
She was not dead, but oh! so very wet;  
Her Mother Hubbard skirt was rent in twain;  
Her hat, the treasure of her youthful soul,  
Was borne away upon the mighty deep.  
Her bright eyes flashed in fiercest rage, she said,  
“I told you we were too close to the bank.”  
“You thick head dude! you stupid, stupid fool!”  
“Git out!” and with a withering glance she walked  
away.  
And as I looked upon my torn-up pants  
I said, By Jove! I guess the girl is right.



AN APPEAL TO THE ARCHBISHOP.

PAT.—I hope yer grace will grant me abso-  
lution for associatin' wid a mason, but sure,  
yer Riverince, the toimes are hard, an' I'm not  
able to pick me company!

MYSTERIOUS.

“Wanted, cook without washing, \$10 per  
month. Apply — Yonge-street.”  
This ‘ad.’ appears in a city evening paper.  
Many people advertise for a plain cook, but  
there may be good reasons for this, as a good-  
looking one would probably have a large re-  
tinue of followers, but an unwashed cook is  
altogether too much of a “stand off.” How-  
ever *clacon a son gout*.

WHY HE COULD NOT LEAVE HER.

They stood together 'neath the silent stars,  
hand in hand. The tumultuous Don surged  
madly onward at their feet, as the pale moon  
rose slowly o'er the hoary turrets of Castle  
Green, whose frowning battlements looked  
upon them from the heights on the opposite  
shore.

He sighed a sighful sigh as he clasped the  
fair girl his companion more closely to his  
side.

“Edwin,” said the now almost drooping  
girl. “Edwin, is it possible that you are  
going away—going to leave me? I dreaded  
this many a day, and last evening Mrs. Glib-  
gab who lives opposite pa's house told me that  
you were going away to claim a nearer and a  
dearer for your bride. Would we had never  
met! Ah! Edwin tell me, tell me it is not  
true!” and the fair girl turned up her heavenly  
orbs to his, which from long and passionate  
weeping looked like a circular section of a  
Hanlan flag, red and blue.

“Angelica dear, I assure you it is not true!”  
“Oh! Edwin! but Mrs. Glibgab's dreadful  
words!”

“Hang Mother Glibgab and all the rest of the  
old cats on the street.”

“Oh Edwin! dearest Edwin! I doubt not  
your word, and yet, I feel so uneasy—oh so  
uneasy, tell me something that will set my  
mind at rest—that will tell me that you are  
not going away.”

“I will Angelica, loved one! look into my  
eyes and while I gaze into yours believe me  
the words I utter on the honor of a gentleman  
are true—alas! too true—shall I go on?”

“Yes, yes; tell me, tell me. Be the secret  
never so frightful and horrid, I will rejoice  
that you are not about to depart for foreign  
climes.”

“Listen, Angelica,” he said, as he drew her  
lovely head down till her luxurious bangs  
rested on his left shoulder, “You fear that I  
am away for foreign parts on matrimonial  
errand, calm yourself. It is not so; I will  
now the secret unfold, and I'm sure it will con-  
vince you. Closer darling, let me whisper in  
your ear, I haven't got a solitary nickel, and  
I can't get a pass on any of the roads,  
Angelica!”

She had fainted.

IMPERIAL FEDERATION.

BY AN ONTARIO M.P.

If we had an Imperial Confederace,  
It would be a bully old scheme for me;  
I might be made a lord of high degree  
If I was an M. of the Imperial C.  
I might be made an Earl or perhaps a Dook,  
And then how haughty and grand I would look  
In my ducal coronet and strawberry leaves,  
And a long-tailed gown with its big wide sleeves.  
I could also wear a sword like a sergeant-at-arms,  
And never be troubled much with war's alarms.  
At the Queen's command I'd be glad to appear  
At Windsor Castle any night in the year;  
I could then hob nob with the Prince of Wales,  
At the little private parties and hear the funny tales,  
While I'd amuse the party with some yarns of mine,  
About our funny doings on the old town line.  
The only thing that puzzles me is what to do  
With my old woman and my big gal Sue;  
For Sue, she always was inclined to romp,  
And steps as tho' walking through a Royal Levee;  
And that would hardly do at a Royal Levee,  
So I guess I'll have to keep my ladies out of the way,  
Yet I think it would be a big scheme for me—  
This Grand Imperial Confederace.

A contemporary remarks that “the heart  
of a Greenland whale is a yard in diameter.”  
Oh! that's nothing. We know some folks  
whose hearts have no end of diameter, but the  
trouble with such is that the bigger the heart  
the smaller the purse. It seems to be the  
way of balancing gifts in this world that the  
heart of a whale should have, so to speak, the  
financial resources of a sprat, and *vice versa*.