

THE GRUMBLER.

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TORONTO, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 1859.

WHOLE NO., 77.

THE GRUMBLER.

"If there's a hole in a' your coats
I telegraph ten; it
A chieft'namang you taking notice,
And, faith, he'll treat it."

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 3, 1859.

FIRE! FIRE!!

I knew it; I said it; I felt sure of it. By "it" I mean that I knew, said, and felt sure that on a particular night this week, there would be a fire. Not that I had any dream or other supernatural intimation to that effect; I scorn the idea of premonitions and warnings by telegraph; but by a course of reasoning much above the comprehension of ordinary men, I certainly had an inward conviction, and gave vent to an outward prognostication that there would be a fire. After reading about fifty pages of Adam Bede, I felt inclined to surrender to the close siege Morpheus had been keeping up for several hours; so, after depositing my garments in quick-get-on-again-able position, I jumped into my nocturnal nest, and composed myself for sweet forgetfulness. The ten minutes I usually devote to sweet remembrances of my angolie Maria had elapsed, and her image was rapidly fading from the mental sight, when just as I had anticipated, a guardian of the night, in claustrous, if not sonorous strains, gave vent to the exclamation, "fire!" Ordinarily, I put little faith in policemen, and had it not been for the confidence I felt in my prognostications, I should not have heeded the alarm, even from the Deputy Chief. I knew, however, that my prophecy had been fulfilled, and hastily donning my clothes I emerged into the street. Barely glancing at a luminous pillar of smoke I saw in the north, I grabbed the rope of an engine which overtook me. It was first, and intended to keep so; I can't say whether it was No. 3, or No. 2, or No. 6, but with a suddenly aroused enthusiasm, I rushed along frantically with "the machine."

But from doorways, over fences and emerging from dark lanes came the half-dazed residents till the stream receiving a tributary at every street, rushed round the corner to the scene of destruction. By this time the sleepy constable had got to the bells and of course as the policeman under the reform Council always do, was ringing for St. Patrick's Ward instead of St. James'. Now the crackle of the flames burst on the ear; their reflection on the upturned faces of the crowd, the "Heigh, heigh" of the excited fire-men, the rattle of the water-carts and the bewildered and disorderly haste of the sufferers together, wind up one's nerves to the dread-and-every-thing-point in the mental thermometer. Dropping the ropes of the engine, off I go the nearest domicile in danger: Up and down stairs in and out of rooms, rush eager men with ready hands

but too often unsteady brains to help the sufferers.—Here goes one man down stairs with a blanket and a set of fire-irons in his hands; down through the window on the heads of the mob, another throws a set of chairs; sofas are despatched without benefit of stairs, fenders are cautiously carried away beyond the scene of danger.—In one place a couple of pounds of butter are carefully deposited on a feather bed, on another, a paper of flour is warily dropped on a damask covered chair. A piano is well scratched with the gas-fittings and oil-paintings are used for carrying tea-sets. Every-body's nerves seem unstrung. One tells his friend that he's a fool for removing his goods and chattels, another impeaches his wisdom for hesitating to do so.

Yet how earnestly and vigorously everybody, except a few lazy louts, hurries and bustles hither and thither to the assistance of the sufferers; even folly and thoughtlessness are then pardonable. Meanwhile, who so busy as the firemen? Rushing every where when danger points the way, with the branch and the hook and the axe, unwearyed as long as any danger is to be incurred or any good to be done. The untiring zeal with which they work, and the wild sailor like strain to which the brakes keep time, reconciles you to the occasional coarseness or folly you have to witness. But in the midst of the excitement who does not conjecture whether the heartless monsters who have coolly caused the mischief which so many brave heads are trying to arrest, are standing amongst the anxious and excited crowd, the cool, hardened and impenitent witnesses of their own villainy. Can it be possible that the sick hastily dragged from their beds, the losses which no insurance can repair, of precious family relics, and heir-looms, the scholar's hard-earned collection of lore, the danger voluntarily incurred by every one around, and the dangerous excitement which endangers the health and lives of the fair and young, can it be possible that all these sights cannot soften the hearts of the inhuman monsters who are the authors of them all.

And can we altogether forget the gully supineness and inertia of a "reformed" Council and a reformed police, when no efforts are made to arrest the hands which a godling conscience can not star. But now the fire slackens, and darkness drops its pall over all. Off I depart to my bed, keeping time as I go, to the sound of the brakes, which still rings on the morning air, leaving the unfortunate to watch till day, the wrecked and despoiled relics of their lost homes.

STEINER AND BLONDIN.

It is confidently reported that Steiner and Blondin clubbed together to yield Toronto an entertainment more thrilling and exciting than it has ever witnessed before. At the time of the next half moon, Professor Steiner will mount in his balloon to the satellite of our earth, and attach to one of

its horns one end of a rope, the other end of which will be fastened to a post inside of the enclosure near the Revere House. Blondin will then carry to the moon and back again any gentleman willing to pay \$100. Persons having bright red hair and whiskers will be preferred, as these rubricand appendages will be the means of saving torch-light and Bengal fire. Professor Steiner will carry passengers backward and forward from the earth to the moon, where Bob Moodie will in due time erect a commodious saloon upon one of the mountains with the intention of retailing bad whiskey to Mars and his jolly companions. The Professor was so poorly remunerated last time, that he intends making a still more extensive enclosure round the Revere House. Its limits will be the Don, the Hummer, Hogg's Hollow and the Bay. It will be 1,400 feet high, so that the balloon may be out of sight before any stungy people get a sight of it for nothing. Admittance four dollars. Noisy children double price. The Professor has made the most extensive arrangements for the accommodation of passengers; having obtained permission to use Jones' Omnibus as a car. Baby jumpers will be suspended from all parts of the balloon, for the amusement of small infants. Dr. Workman has applied for the use of the aeronaut's conveyance for the patients, as he thinks that a trip to the lunar planet would be good for them. Steiner was a little crusty and sarcastic about it when the Dr. made the request; but the Dr. made a pun which will render him famous to the end of time—"None of your lunar caustic," said he. The Toronto Cricket Club will send a challenge to the Lunar Club, if there be any such association. Commodore Hodder will write to know if the lakes and seas of the moon contain anything like the same amount of hydrogen and oxygen as ours, because the Yacht Club intend taking a cruise over there some fine day, if possible. He will also express a hope that they don't encourage centre board boats there.

Now that we are fairly into the subject of the moon, let us indulge in a few harmless speculations. We have now a fair opportunity of communicating with a hitherto obscurely known planet. Oursphere of acquaintance, society, commerce, war, and perhaps roguesry, rascality and villainy is about to be immensely extended. A Grumbler Agency will be established. The waste lands of the planet will be divided into Park lots. Messrs R. Cummings will set up a Bank there in connection with McGaffay. If circumstances turn out favourably for invasion and conquest, the Yorkville cavalry will go over per balloon, and the Toronto Field battery will be stationed in the high tower of the University building to cover the attack. A petition must be made to the home government for the permission to annex the moon to Canada, before the Yankee think of seizing it. When the moon becomes an integral part of Canada, who will represent the consistency of Moonshine. Colonel Playfair?