

mainly out of curiosity to hear what the commissioners would say at the conclusion of the commission, but I was treated to one of the alleged eccentricities of our Chief Justice. He was commenting on some items in a detailed statement of municipal expenditure which before was under the comprehensive heading "Miscellaneous." There was an expenditure of \$700 for entertaining the Seattle Mayor and Council here, and to that his lordship strongly objected, seemingly on the ground that it did him no good individually for the Mayor and Council of Victoria to go over to Seattle "to be filled full as whiskey kegs," and return the compliment to the civic board of Seattle when it visited Victoria. This was rather a strong way of putting it, but then the Chief Justice is a very strong and a very strange man. He makes some remarkably peculiar statements at times, and frequently brings down the abuse of certain quarters on his devoted head. For myself I cannot see the justice of all the unfavorable remarks that are often made about Sir Matthew. I often come in contact with him in his judicial capacity and as a private gentleman, and I really cannot point to one instance where he has not been the soul of affability and good humor. He is a splendid conversationalist, is full of anecdote, is very musical, and is very widely read. In fact, I always look forward with pleasurable anticipation to a chat with Sir Matthew Begbie. He is eccentric, perhaps, but I don't think he deserves many hard things that are said against him.

It has struck me as significant that, since the last issue of THE HOME JOURNAL, the daily papers have stopped the back-door editorial squabble, without which an issue was scarcely ever published, and have taken the more dignified mode of discussing public affairs. I hope the good effect of my few remarks in this respect will be lasting.

The variety theatre, if it is a theatre, is evidently going to be a bone of contention which the ultra-moralists intend to pick till the last shred of meat has been gnawed off, and then to polish the bare bone. As I have remarked on a previous occasion, my opinion is only that of one individual, but I am general enough in forming

my opinion at all times to take into consideration the fact that there are always two sides to a question as well as two ends to a barrel. The variety theatre may or may not be a good place; there may or may not be, or have been questionable practices carried on there, but that fact does not justify a professing Christian to go there with slouched hat and turned-up collar, tempting (for tempting it is) already over-tempted and much-fallen girls, "just to see what could be done." Really the man who would undertake a duty so contemptible, so utterly beneath all honorable principles of manhood is deserving—well, certainly not of commendation. I am afraid that the cause of Christianity cannot be very much furthered by such a course. "Lead us not into temptation," says the prayer of prayers; let us practise it.

Let it be borne in mind that I am no more a champion of the variety theatre than I am of these religious extremists. If that institution is a stumbling-block to public morality, close it up; but if that is done, the class of young fellows and men who go there will go somewhere much worse. It is simply a choice of evils; but I see no more reasonableness in the wholesale condemnation of a saloon-keeper or theatre-owner for what his customers do than I do in blaming an entire church congregation because one of its members falls away. This is why I disagree with the stand taken by the lawyer employed by the opposers of the theatre license. He works too faithfully for his clients; the engagement gives him ample scope for narrow bigotry and pettiness of mind, which the public can decide whether or not he takes advantage of. His witness was allowed extraordinary latitude in giving testimony from hearsay and opinion; statements of criminal offences were made against the management with how much support I leave to my readers to say, and to thoroughly deprive the other side of any chance of defence, both names and dates were withheld "for fear of disgrace to respectable parties," and the court upheld this course. I maintain it is scarcely fair play.

While on the subject of religious tolerance and intolerance, I would respectfully ask the Salvation Army to be

tolerant enough to allow me some of the sidewalk—just sufficient to walk on. I have to clean my own boots, since our Chinaman went back to China for the winter, and I am a little careful in consequence about turning into the street this wet weather. Aside from that, however, I think the Salvation Army should proceed with a little more care for persons with delicate nerves. That awful howling and unmusical banging of the big drum will not cure a headache, nor will it incite the majority of people to pious thought. It may be that my want of appreciation of the music furnished by the army will be attributed by certain members of the church choirs to my lack of musical culture.



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Wanted

FOR CASH.

Good:
: Lots.

MUST BE BARGAINS

YOUNG &

BARTLETT,

9 TROUNCE AVE.