OUR SOLEMN DUTY.

Our time to act is—daily practice,
To-morrow we may never see;
Eternity a solemn fact is,
To the souls on earth that be.

Suffer not procrastination
In your never dying soul,
While the joy of your salvation
Is as free as rivers roll.

Let the acts of your behavior
Be according to the "Word"
Offered by our blessed Saviour,
He, who is our God and Lord.

Be not overcome with sorrow,
He is waiting at our door;
Never wait until to-morrow,
Think on all the sins He bore.

God is love, who still endures us
Day by day in guilt and sin;
Jesus by his blood secures us,
"Come," He saith, "and enter in."

May the blessed, Holy Spirit,
Draw us in the bonds of love,
To the land the just inherit
In the Paradise above.

—*P. Murray.*

Athol Bank, Hamilton, Ont., Dec. 10, 1879.

COMIC BUDGET.

—Legal blanks—Peor lawyers.

—Best when rare—Family broils.

—Rifle practice—Picking pockets.

—A nightmare is a sort of cap a pie arrangement.

—Old maids think it's never too late to mend.

—"No place like comb," as the bee said to the honey.

—A hot discussion frequently makes a cool friendship.

—The man who walks fastest hasn't the most business.

—A clock pendulum is bound to keep time if it has to swing for it.

—The Czar's loving subjects desire to give him a blowing up occasionally.

—Motto for the fireman—Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be blistered.

—The man who borrows five dollars is still suffering from the panic of of '73.

—Fashion note—This winter oysters will be worn about the stomach, scalloped.

—Waiters frequently praise kinds of food which they never in their lives tasted.

—As his house is 800 feeti above the sea Tennyson is enabledto live n high style.

—Both Hanlan and Courtney seems to be champions when it comes to backing water.

—The gas man, when courting on the sly, says: My lamb, post me if there is danger.

—"I'll meet you later," was what the butcher said to a dog just brought to his shop.

—Some people judge an umbrella by the handle. The best way is to tickle it in the ribs.

—Guelph *Mercury*: It is unseemly of any minister to make a bulletin board of his pulpit.

—Glass eyes for horses are now so skilfully made, that the animal himself cannot tell the difference.

—The Chicago *Tribune* has discovered that a petrified body indicates that the man is stone dead.

—The Cincinnati *Gazette* has two of the prettiest fall libel suits on hand to be had in the market.

—The New York *World* speaks of the "tire" of a man's ear. We see the irony of that remark.

—Don't play with the devil when you are young lest you have to work for him when you are old.

—A correspondent wants to know what to do when a dog shows signs of hydrophobia. Climb a tree.

—An English writer says of mannish girls that he expects soon to find them trying to enter the army.

The habits of fruit are peculiar; we have seen a raisin box, fig drum and an apple stand all day on tile street.

—Everything is made to contribute to the sustenance of the American people. Even the oyster has to shell out.

—It is the easiest thing in the world to discover all the grease spots in a man's coat when you don't like him.

—Coal oil has been discovered in Peru, and there will, consequently, be a dearth of servant girls in that country.

—Most any grocer's clerk can sell at least four brands of chewing tobacco out of a pail hidden under the counter.

—No woman should ever give a plump "no" to an offer of marriage. Hold on to even a poor one and use it for bait.

—A thorough man of the world is one who can shake hands cordially with a friend whom he has just blackballed at a club.

—All the old jokes about Alfonso's first wedding were warmed over and did duty a second time for the last few weeks.

—When a boy becomes ashamed to sit in his mother's lap, he is generally in business for himself—holding some one in his lap.

—Young writer—You have chosen an excellent *nom de plume* for your first effusion, "Euripides," for you rip idea all to pieces.

—The most fashionable jewelry is always that which costs the most money. Pin this to your sleeve and it will save many inquiries.

—Magistrate—"Your profession?" Elegant man—"Artist in hair." Magistrate—"Express yourself more clearly—barber or brushmaker?"

—The chief resemblance between a locomotive and a euchre player is, that while one sometimes jumps the track, the other trumps the jack.

—The other day a barrel of hickory nuts, addressed to Prince Schwartzenberg, Vienna, Austria, passed through on the Canada Southern.

—There is a difference, you must know,
Atwix the Yankee girl and Greek,
The one she chalks her dainty heel,
The other paints her dainty cheek

—The Sub Committee on engines is preparing its report and everything points to an interesting time at the Council meeting Monday night.

—"If the Lord smiles on me," declared an enthusiastic young convert at a recent meeting, "I care not though the whole world snickers."

—A New York brewer said he could tell an honest man by looking into his eyes. Result: His bookkeeper beat him out of $12,000 in one year.

—Every word uttered in this life is echoed in the life to come. In the resurrection we shall meet these echoes, and they will decide our fate forever.

—Everything produces after its kind. Love begets love; offices of love, produces offices of love; smiles, smiles; gentleness, gentleness; activity, activity.

—"Couldn't you lend me $5?" "Yes, I could, but I won't." "Then do you think I wouldn't pay you back?" "Yes, you would, but you couldn't."

—Susan B. Anthony can lecture for three straight hours in a hall, and then go out and jaw a bachelor for forty-five minutes without straining her lungs.

—The best horse-shoer in Cedar Rapids, Ia., is a woman aged 25. When a mule kicks at her he finds himself on his back and can't tell how it was done.

—"Dublin"—No, it doesn't require a man with a car-load of brains to stand behind a hotel counter, and wear an alleged diamond, and not know anything.

—Let us, then, be up and clipping,
With an eye for every jest;
Still a-pasting, till a-snipping,
Fill our paper with the best.

—If your husband brings you home a $60 pair of fur cuffs, don't worry for fear they are not fashionable. You can wear them at either a wedding or a funeral.

—Mr. Emil Cliff, of Ann Arbor, killed himself with laudanum, when it would have been cheaper and much better to throw himself off the last half of his name.

—It is announced that Prince Alexander of Bulgaria writes for the newspaper. Wonder if he meets with any Bully-garian atrocities like Tom Baine out there.

—Burglars worked all night on a safe in Cayuga, N.Y., and got sixty-five cents for the job. Things don't boom half as much as some folks try to make out.

—Lawyer (to witness): "Did you say that an incompetent man could keep a hotel just as well as anybody?" Witness: No, I said an inn experienced man could."

"You just take a bottle of my medicine," said a quack doctor to a consumptive, "and you'll never cough again." "Is it so fatal as that?" gasped the consumptive.

—The question is not: "Will he love me when the roses bloom?" but: "Has he got a pacer and cutter, and will he take me along when he goes to clean out the boys?"

—Four per cent. of the men in the United States are color-blind, and women seem to have only these four-per-cents. in mind when they daub their faces with paint and powder.

—What is statesmanship? asks the Chicago *Inter-Ocean*. Statesmanship, we believe, is the peculiar gift some men have of robbing the Government withoutbeing caught.

—The fashion of putting 650 buttons down the back of a dress has disappeared, but they now use 1,300 hooks and eyes on the front, and a man can't lay up a dollar to save his life.

—When next you hear any one remark that youth is the spring-time of life, just refflind him that spring is full of slush, mud, snow, rain and lickings for going to the first circus.

—It is said if you sit down when assailed by a ferocious dog the beast will not touch you. But the judicious man will select as high a seat as possible—at the top of a tall tree, for example.

—Winter throws away half its strength to bluster. He'd live just as long to send down seventeen feet of snow in December and then lay back and get ready for his March howling.

—Since silk, it has been discovered, causes spontaneous combustion, young men should never hug a girl even in a dark parlor without having a bucket of water within reach of the sofa.

—Why an advance in lard should enhance the price of butter is about as difficult a problem as the true inwardness of the connection between the price of milk and a water famine.

—An unknown man was killed by the cars at Stratford the other day. The contents of his pockets, sixty cents and a pair of scissors, would indicate that he was connected with journalism.

—Advertisers at this season of the year should bear in mind that the SPECTATOR has a larger circulation in Hamilton and surrounding towns and villages than any other paper. Nuff ced.

—When the heel of a shoe has been pared down to the size of a knitting-needle, the whole female world will be happy—very happy, and instead of the word "gait" you will see the term "wobble."

—The Detroit *Free Press* says one handsome girl in the country will draw men "from a circle ten miles square." Our esteemed contemporary appears to have succeeded in "squaring a circle."

—The idea of teaching a girl music because she may some day have to depend on herself is a good one. If she had to depend on herself and know how to make her own dresses it would be outrageous.

—"Which side of the street do you live on, Mrs. Kipple?" asked a counsel cross-examining a witness. "On either side. If you go one way, its on the right side; if you go the other way, it's on the left."

—He who travels with his eyes open cannot fail to see that others, as well as himself, have their discomforts and drawbacks, and he will thus be all the more disposed to meet his own with a brave spirit.

—Can any one tell, asks an exchange, why a drayman will wollop a barrel of molasses around as if he wanted to burst every hoop, and then almost break his back to lift a barrel of brandy to a safe position.

—How is this for tone?
She gave her haughty head a shake,
The castor oil refused to take.
With an aristocratic shrug
Called it a vile plebian drug,
Fit only for working people.

—A Philadelphia woman swallowed $375 in greenbacks rather than let her grandson get hold of the pile and have a good time; and though she was awful sick for three days Providence carried her through.

—"Two ladies without any character!" was the loud announcement of a stupid usher at a fancy ball, who had been told to announce persons in the character assumed, and who saw that the ladies were in ordinary attire.

—The common brown owl's head is the fashion of the moment for trimming the side of hats, instead of the pompon, which has been so long popular; an owl's head is also fastened to the muff which is worn with the hat.

—All our exchange newspapers have this singular paragraph: "Texas boasts of a man born without a brain." Now, why should Texas boast of such an everyday occurrence as that?

—An advertiser in a New York paper recently demanded "a good, strong boy to work on bread and cake." The advertiser got him—and might have had a thousand more for the same job.

"'Tis rather neat upon her feet
A pair of skates to find;
'Tis rather drear upon her ear
When skates slip up behind."

—Pressed ferns make a very nice table ornament, but they won't save a single ounce of butter with the children. A small picture-book at each plate will answer the purpose much better.

—The leading character in a new play in a London theatre asks:
"Oh! while she
Is wife to me,
Is life worth living, Mr. Mallock?"

—A little boy of four was sleeping with his brother, when his mother said: "Why, Tommy, you are lying right in the middle of the bed; what will poor Harry do?" "Well, ma," he replied, "Harry's got both sides."

—"Never mind me, save my boy," was what old Samuel Mosely, a miner, yelled while buried under a mass of coal with his son at Wadesville shaft, near Pottsville, Pa. The boy was saved and the old man crushed to death.

—John Milton is the senior surgeon at St. John's Hospital for the Skin, in London. We judge from this that the sale of John's poems were not a success, and he has abandoned the poetical business for something more remunerative.

—To be Sheriff of a county in Eastern Kentucky a man wants to be right and left handed, brave, watchful, sleepless, enduring, and have grit enough to sit down and dig a bullet out of his leg with an old jack-knife.

—"How far," asks an exchange, "will bees go for honey?" The answer to this conundrum is unknown to us, but it is a well known fact that a bee will go miles out of its way for the purpose of stinging a barefooted boy on the heel.

—The Cincinnati *Gazette* irreverently perpetrated the following:
There was an old lady, Van Cott,
Who made her last sermon so hot
That the house took afire,
And a man in the choir
Cried out in his anguish, "Mein Gott!"

—There is great complaint up in Maine that the Signal Service at Washington doesn't furnish them with accurate reports. A Portland man says a dry spell was indicated one week, and he had more invitations to drink that week than he could possibly fill.

—The strange case is reported from Ohio of a middle-aged man, well dressed and well mannered, who has been trying for nine months past to remember who he is and where he lives—thus far without success.

—One month in the school of affliction is a big lesson, but if you want to make a man feel mean enough to chaw door-knobs off, look him up for two days a witness in an assault and battery case that he don't know anything about.

—John Burroughs says in *Scribner*: "I smile as I note that the woodpecker proves a refractory bird to Lowell as well as Emerson:

Emerson rhymes it with bear,
Lowell rhymes it with hear,
One makes it woodpeckair,
The other, woodpekear.

—Sophronia Melissa was gliding down James street the other afternoon, with a Derby hat on and carrying her hands in the pockets of her long ulster, when a small boy ran up and said, "Say, Miss, if yer had a cigar now, you'd be all right, wouldn't you?"

—"Four Jacks!" a beardless youth exclaimed,
'Is a hand we all esteems,
But 'taint a shadder to this 'ere,
By gum! I have got four queens.'
"But a quiet mannered gentleman
Who opened not his lips,
Exposed his little 'royal flush,'
And stowed away the chips."

—Ebenezer Elliott, the English "Corn law rhymer," had the following opinion of Communists:

What is a Communist? One who hath yearnings
For equal division of unequal earnings;
Idler or bungler, or both, he is willing
To fork out his penny and take up your shilling

—A young man who held a loaded pistol to his head and threatened to blow his brains out unless the girl who had refused him would consent to have him, was coolly told by the young lady he would have to blow some brains into his head first. He didn't blow.

—"Some there are whom glad fruition
'Neath the skies may never bless,
Some to whom long-urged petition
Ne'er will come the yearned for 'yes.'
"Why? God knoweth—He lendeth
Strength to suffer trustingly,
What He seeth best He sendeth—
Dinna weary, bide a wee."

—The Napanee *Beaver* publishes a black list showing up delinquent subscribers. Here is an extract: "Mr. Thomas O'Neill, a Napanee tailor and first-class Judas has betrayed our trust to the extent of $7." Say, old fellow, how much do we owe you? Send our account by next mail. Forgot all about it, but it's all right, you know.

—A dentist in Bristol, Vt., recently received by mail an order for a set of teeth, which read as follows:—"My mouth is three inches across, five-eighth inches through the jaw. Sam hummocky on the edge. Shaped like a horseshoe, the forrard. If you want me to be more partiklar, I shall have to come thar."

—Old Father Taylor, of Boston, was a strong and far-seeing man. Standing on a hill top which overlooked the village he noticed six little wooden boxes called meeting houses, and knowing that there were only as many hundred inhabitants in the place said, sententiously:—"Ah, I see you have had a religious war here."

—There's one thing that I love to hear,
To me 'tis ever sweet,
And that is nothing more or less
Than a band on the street.

There's one thing, too, these girls should do
That we so often meet,
And that is nothing more or less
Than abandon the street.

—There is a German society which rejoices in the title of the Worstenbroodmaatschappijen, translated, Sausage Bread-Maker's Society. The test of membership is the pronouncing of the name of the society with a piece of boarding house beef between the teeth, without reducing it to sausage meat or breaking the candidate's jaw.

THE THREE BIRDS.

—I said to the dove, Thou canst fly above me,
to where the corn fields are,
And find me the flower that will make her
love me;
The dove said—'Tis too far.

I said to the eagle, Heaven is before thee.
Help me to win her and die;
Go fetch me the fire of Jove, I implore thee;
The eagle said—'Tis too high.

I said to the vulture, Tear out and devour
Her love in my heart; to lone fate
Leave only what has escaped her power;
The vulture said—'Tis too late.

—A detective went down to Aldershot to search the ranks of a militia regiment for a criminal who was "wanted." Up and down went the investigator, till at last he stopped opposite the left hand man of the rear rank, and looked hard at him. "Come," said the colonel, his dignity and *esprit de corps* not a little offended, "this can't be the man you want surely? He's the best man I've got in the regiment. You don't mean to say you know him?" "No," replied the detective after a pause, "I don't—he's the only man in the regiment I don't know, and I was wondering where he come from!"

THE MILLER'S WOOING.

"Love meal little, love meal long,"
Sang the dusty miller
To his wheat art, and his song
Did a maize and thrill her.

"Bid me barley hope; Oh! give
Me one grain of comfort;
I would eat on thee and live
Holding on to some fort.

"In your eyes now love looks shine;
There rice cereal pleasure;
Oh! hominy joys are mine
Filling up my measure."

"Came the maiden's cornfull laugh
At the miller fawning,
"You can winnow girl with chaff—
Sir! to you good morning."

ENGLAND'S GREAT TALKERS.

Curious Statistics of Speeches and Words Delivered by English Statesmen and their cost of Telegraphing.

A curious tabular arrangement of the quantity of words uttered by distinguished statesmen has been published by one of the London press agencies, says the London *Daily News*. Statistics may be made to prove anything, among other things that Mr. Gladstone is the most popular public speaker at present living in England. Perhaps we need not go to statistics to demonstate that; but the arithmetical argument is popular just now, and why saould not we apply it to Mr. Gladstone? Professor Geldes applies it to Homer? The learned have taken of late to counting the words, and even the metrical feet, in the plays of Shakespeare and the poems of Homer. If the word "dog," for example, occurs sixty times in the "Iliad" and only thirty times in the "Odyssey," it is two to one we are told, that the same poet did not write both of the epics. And if Mr. Gladstone speaks 215,000 in seven years oratory, which words have been telegraphed to the papers at the cost of £724, while Lord Beaconsfield has only uttered £468 worth, or 90,300 words, Mr. Gladstone, it may be said, is nearly twice as much of a speaker as the Prime Minister. But this is the quantitative estimate which philosophy and common sense assure us is the easiest. It is not the man who talks longest that is the most effective speaker; but again, the man whose words are thought best of reporting is certainly the most popular orator. There can be no doubt that Mr. Gladstone occupies this position. The statistics contain facts enough for working purposes. The tables cover the time from January 1st, 1872, to October 1st, 1879, and thus neither Lord Beaconsfield's Mansion House speech nor the results of Mr. Gladstone's innings in Midlothian, can be added to the score. It must also be remembered, when we estimate the the quantity of talk which each orator has uttered, that the opposition are compelled to talk much more than the Ministry. The opposition have no weapons but their tongues; oratory is the only instrument by which they can influence events and public opinion. Ministers, on the other hand, are in possession of real power, and need not reply more than they please to their opponents.

CAPABILITIES OF SPEAKERS.

Out of the thirty-five most copious English speakers three can hardly be reckoned at present as party men. Lord Derby was on the Conservative side during most of the period examined. So was Lord Carnarvon, while Mr. Roebuck's exact shade of political prejudice would be indicated rather by J. (for Jingo) than by either L. or C. This leaves thirty-two speakers, and of these no fewer than twenty-one, or nearly two-thirds, are Liberals. We shall not allege that the Conservative party almost entirely consists of persons like Lord Dalkeith, who is unrivalled in getting some one else to speak for him. The fact is, as we have said, that an opposition must be comparatively active or it will exercise no influence at all. Easily at the head of the score, as has been observed, comes Mr. Gladstone, with thirty-four speeches, 215,000 words and telegraphic expenses to the amount of £724. It may surprise some readers to find that Mr. Bright, who for three or four years was unable to take a very active part in politics, comes second on the list. His speeches are twenty-four, his words, 129,300, and to telegraph his remarks cost £571. It must be kept in mind that Mr. Bright is always reported at full length, while there may be more copious speakers of both political parties on whose lips reporters do not hang with such anxious care. Thus there is some indication of quality as well as of quantity in these statistics. It may be taken as proved that an orator whom no one reports is, however excellent, not yet possessed of much influence. A very fair third, after Mr. Bright, comes Lord Beaconsfield. He has made as many speeches as the distinguished member from Birmingham, but then he has not uttered so many words by nearly 40,000. Yet silence is so far from being golden to telegraph companies, that Lord Beaconsfield's speeches cost (to report) only a little more than a £100 less than those of Mr. Bright. Lord Hartington runs into the fourth place, as far as expenses go, but he has made one more speech than Mr. Bright, and has uttered 23,000 words more than Beaconsfield. Very close on Lord Hartington comes Sir Stafford Northcote, followed by Mr. Forster, who has made thirty-two speeches, nearly as many as Mr. Gladstone, but who has never "put on" so many words in any one innings. Mr. Cross, Lord Salisbury, Lord Derby, Lord Cranbrook and Sir William Harcourt come next, in the order of their names; but it must be remembered that they are classified by expense of telegraphy, not by extent of oratory. Sir William Harcourt has spoken nearly twice as much as Lord Cranbrook, but he has cost £1 less to report. These differences are not due to any peculiar value attached to Tory utterances, or any difficulty in telegraphing them (though Lord Cranbrook's may seem rather heavy to carry), but to local arrangements. If Lord Cranbrook were thundering at Tobermory or Saline the local supply of material and of clerks might not be equal to the occasion. And we presume that Lord Cranbrook must have harangued to some benighted yokels somewhere, while Sir William Harcourt has been speaking at places like Liverpool and Oxford. Among other facts of interest it may be noted that five speeches of Mr. Lowe's are nearly as long as eight of Lord Cranbrook. Among minor curiosities of silence, rather than of speech, it may be noted that Lord Sandon has brought the telegraph companies but £8, while Mr. W. H. Smith has only £12 worth of reporting. It would be quite in the style of Shakespearian and Homeric word-counting critics to argue that Mr. Gladstone is ninety time the man Lord Sandon is and ninety times as popular. But we leave such frivolties to be learned.

—Another Northeast Aretic expedition is spoken of. In a letter to M. Sibiarakoff, Professor Nordenskjold expresses his intention of undertaking another voyage to the northern coast of Asia as soon as circumstances permit. "After my return," he says, "I think of spending a year on preparing an account of the voyage of the Vega, and it is my desire to continue the exploration of the icy ocean along the coast of Siberia, making the River Lena the point of departure and the New Siberian Isles the basis of operations. For the object I have proposed to myself—namely, the rendering of the northern part of Asia completely accessible to commercial shipping—the prosecution of these researches is of paramount importance."

A RELIGIOUS FRAUD.

From Our Popular Dime Series.

(Slabtown Gazette.)

CHAPTER I.

In a comfortably furnished office in town sat a man of middle age, immersed in business. He was intently investigating the books of the firm. As he glanced over the pages and noted the cash returns his countenance changed and he hastily summoned the manager. "I see," said Mr. Skinem to his fawning follower, "there has been quite a falling off in the receipts of the last month; they don't foot up by some hundreds as high as the previous month."

"Yes," said the manager, "there is some difference; trade is somewhat slack, everyone is complaining, but I have no doubt things will take a turn."

"Very true," said Mr. Skinem, "but we can't afford to lose money. We must try and keep the receipts ahead, not let them fall behind. You must try the old plan, reduce the working expenses, cut down the salaries of the clerks, and curtail in all departments. Most of these clerks are overpaid and cut on as much style as I do. It don't do to let some people have money. They go to the devil headlong."

"I'm afraid," said the manager, "they will hardly stand a farther reduction. They grumbled loudly at the last and will be very apt to kick against it."

Mr. Skinem—"Let 'em kick. Times are hard; we can get all the clerks we want for less wages. The winter is coming on and situations are scarce. They may growl a little, but half a loaf is better than no bread. Why, you can get men for half nothing. I had a man working in my garden for a month for his board, and a good honest worker he was. I gave him 50 cents when he left just to help him along. Never mind their objecting. We must cut down the expenses."

The manager turned to make arrangements for carrying out the selfish projects of his superior when Mr. Skinem remarked, "If Mr. Cabriole, of the coach factory, calls, tell him I wish to seem him particularly. Mrs. S. wants to have the family carriage revarnished, the silver plating renewed and the whole trimmed with the best material you get. I have purchased the [illegible] span of greys I was telling you about for one thousand dollars; it's a high figure, but they'll take the shine out of anything in town."

While this conversation was taking place an old woman had entered the store and was standing in the wareroom. Her wardrobe, though scanty, was neat and clean. There was about her that air of quiet meekness that comes from patient suffering, long endured. Her thin, meagre face and shrivelled hands testified to the fact that her life had not been an idle one. As she looked round nervously a clerk approached and said, "What can I do for you, ma'am?"

"I wish to see the proprietor," she said. The clerk went off and Mr. Skinem made his appearance. Seeing the old woman, and imagining she was about to appeal for charity, he said in a snappy manner, "What do you want?" Laying a bundle on the counter she said in a feeble and tremulous tone, "I have brought back some pants which your foreman objected to the last time I was here. I have tried to do them as well as I could. I should have them done sooner but my health has been very bad of late. My sight is not so good as it was and I am not as quick at the work as I used to be, but I must strive to live. If you could give me a little more for them, I should feel much obliged to you. I have hard work to get along. I don't know what I should have done lately, had it not been for one of your clerks, a kindly young man, who trusted me with a few yards of stuff and gave me 50 cents to get some little necessaries."

Mr. S.—"Indeed! He is very liberal with my goods, giving them on trust and money too. I should not wonder if she money was mine too. I must see to it, that this kind of business must be stopped." Taking from the bundle a pair of pants he strained at the stitches till some of them gave way, and twitching savagely at the buttons some of which came off in his hands, he tossed them back and said in a sneering manner: "How do you think I can pay for such work as that? You had better take them back and do them over. I can't afford to pay 20 cents for pants and have them come to pieces in my hands. We want value for our money, and we always give it when we can afford to. We will pay you for them when you finish them."

Mr. S. walked to his office with the air of a man who had given some valuable moral advice, while the old woman cast a pleading, hopeless look at his retreating figure and tottered sadly out. Hardly had she regained the street when the office bell rang violently, and Mr. Skinem told the boy to send up the clerk whom the old woman had mentioned. As he entered the office Mr. Skinem said: "Who has given you orders to trust every Tom, Dick or Harry that comes to my establishment."

Clerk.—"I don't trust anyone that I know of."

Mr. S.—"Don't trust anyone, eh! Why, an old woman who has just gone out says you have trusted her with goods. If you trust her there is nothing to hinder you from trusting anyone you please."

Clerk.—"It was a mere trifle and she will pay it. She is thoroughly honest. If not, I will pay it myself."

Mr. S.—"You seem to have plenty of money to give away. She says you gave her money. Your salary, though good, won't afford this liberality. It looks suspicious, to say the least. I don't want men who trust my goods and then deny it, or who give money when they don't have it to spare. You had better see the cashier and get the balance of your salary."

Clerk.—"I hope, sir, that you don't mean to insinuate that I am taking what don't belong to me. As to giving the old woman trust, it was only 25 cents worth, which you can deduct from my wages. I am sure if you were to see the wretched way in which the poor old creature has to live, or the miserable pittance she gets, you would not blame me for giving her a paltry 50 cents.

Mr. S.—"So you think she gets a miserable pittance, eh! It's as much as they pay elsewhere. I am not going to be dictated to by you. I want men whom I can trust, and who prefer to attend strictly to my business, and not to the business of others. You can go. I don't want your services any longer. And so the clerk ended his connection with Mr. Skinem, and so we end this chapter.

CHAPTER II.

The lights were burning brilliantly in the gorgeously decorated church in Long-face square; the frescoed ceilings, the richly carved pillars, the gilded cornices, and the magnificent organ looked grand in the blaze of gas that streamed from the highly ornate chandeliers. Soft cushions filled the rich pews, and the finest of Brussels carpet covered the floors and pulpit platform and lined the aisles. Wealth seemed to hover with golden wings and fill the very temple with its presence, while every surrounding added to the solid comfort of those lowly followers of Him who had not whereon to lay His head. But this superfluous show was only a delusion, and this seeming pagentry was a thorn that goaded the tender consciences of the faithful. The black shadow of debt, like Poe's raven, perched upon the door of the sanctuary and its melancholy croakings mingled with the prayers of the parson. So it came to pass that the office bearers of the church took council how they should fright this unholy thing from their midst. A mighty man of Israel, who dwelt in Gotham, was besought by the offer of a goodly sum to come to the help of the Lord against the mighty. The Rev. Zachariah Forcepump, the most noted drummer in the army of the cross, the forlorn hope of debt-stranded congregations, the greatest financial thumbscrew of the church, had arrived in order to shame these dilatory Christians into cancelling their unnecessary indebtedness. The church was crowded. The text was to the point. The flail of gospel authority was handled in the freest manner, while the golden wheat was being thrashed out of the brow-beaten congregation. The rev. gentleman kindly furnished an unlimited quantity of chaff. From flattery to personal inuende, all the adjuncts of coercion were brought into play to swell the stakes in this grand religious game of bluff. Over $20,000 were subscribed by those present and Mr. Skinem, whose natural selfishness unchecked by public judgment could take the last cent from the earnings of poor humanity, subscribed the magnificen sum of $5,000 under the pressure of this unhallowed excitement. The Rev. Forcepump was highly successful; he had done his work nobly; he had faithfully earned his pay; he had in a few hours accomplished what love for Christ had failed to accomplish for years, and while the altar was heaped with these vain-glorious offerings of vanity the poor worked on, half paid and half fed. But why make a fuss about the poor? The incubus of debt had been lifted from the church and the members felt too happy to let any trifles interfere with their buoyant feelings of relief. Nothing makes a man so happy, or adds to his stock of happiness, like true religion. So thought these people, so to finish the good work a series of revivals were held to purge away any of the leaven of worldly-mindedness which might have crept into the minds of those who had been forced into giving through the mesmeric influence of public opinion, and whose limited incomes rebelled at such innovations. Foremost in the good work was the Rev. Mr. Flareup, a noted revivalist. He had heard of the high standing of Mr. Skinem, his great wealth and his handsome donation to the church. He was an ardent admirer of such Christian philantrophy and yearned towards this brother in the Lord. At one of those meetings, after telling that the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much, and referring in eulogistic terms to Mr. Skinem as a worthy disciple of his Master, he called upon this dear brother Skinem to lend in prayer, when that gentleman condescended to favor the meeting with the following characteristic specimen of the reviving influence of lip worship: "O God, we thank Thee for the rich outpouring of Thy spirit. We thank Thee that Thou hast sent Thy servant amongst us and that there is a shaking among the dry bones. May Thy spirit touch the hardened sinner and soften his stony heart. We thank Thee that we have seen the error of our ways and that we have found salvation. O, come down with great power and fill our souls with Thy glory. I thank Thee, O Lord, that Thou hast blessed me abundantly with this world's goods. May we ever ready to spend our strength and substance in the cause of Christ. May the poor and needy receive help of Thee from whence cometh all aid. O, pity their sinful condition and comfort them with Thy presence. O Lord, continue to prosper Thy church; carry on the good work. Bless Thy humble servant as Thou hast done in the past. May I be a tower of strength in Zion and a shield and buckler to the oppressed. May those who are suffering through want or affliction be fed with the spiritual manna. O, temper the wind to the shorn lamb. Teach us to feel for the wretched and cast down, for Thou hast said, 'Inasmuch as ye do it unto the least of these, my brethren, ye do it unto me.' Fill us with humility; take away our proud, stubborn heart and give us hearts of flesh. Give us every needed blessing, guide us and keep us and at last bring us to Thy kingdom, for Christ's sake, amen."

The prayer was a masterpiece of stereotyped hypocrisy, which, after being interspersed with numerous Ohs and Ahs and swelling to a torrent of sound, died away like the distant wail of a retreating tom cat, and a refreshing silence reigned. As the prayer of Skinem went up, the sighs of distress riven from the deep anguish of hopless poverty, which the selfishness of such whitewashed sepulchres tends to nourish, went up also to the throne of Him and appealed in the language of the apostle: "Behold the hire of the laborers that have reaped down your vineyard, which is of you kept back by fraud crieth and the cries of them that have reaped have entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth." Why do not these reverend gentlemen, who strain their energies to lift the increasing load of debt from the gilded tabernacle, try to lift the veil of hidden misery that shrouds the wretched fortunes of the poor, kept in the suffering bonds of poverty by the small souled selfish policy of those who make a business of religion to flaunt their wealth on hypocritical glory? "Woe unto him who buildeth his house by fraud and his churches by wrong; that useth his neighbor's service without wages and giveth him not for his work."

RUNNING A NEWSPAPER.

The following extracts are from an article on this subject in the Milton *Champion*:—

"We have recently heard so many crude and peculiar ideas expressed by well-meaning people regarding the objects a publisher has in issuing a newspaper and the sources from which he derives his remuneration that we think a little information on the subject may be interesting and useful to some of our readers. It appears to be the general opinion among subscribers to a weekly paper that the amount received in subscriptions is ample repayment for the trouble and money expended in its publication and that he who for some real or imaginary offence says 'stop my paper' inflicts a heavy and lasting punisment upon the publisher. It should be understood, then, that the cash expenditure for one year upon a properly conducted journal with 1,000 subscribers is from $1,500 to $2,000, while the publisher is fortunate if he receives $800 in subscriptions during the year, having to depend on job work and advertising to make up the loss and keep him in bread and butter. * * We have been asked to insert a $5 advt. of 'farm for sale' gratis because the advertiser was a subscriber * * We once threatened a man with a suit who owed us for several years' subscription. He is a merchant and lumber dealer and when he came in to pay us said that the paper was of no use to him but he just took it to help us along. We told him it would not take many hundred such friends as he to ruin us but that our rule worked both ways we wouldn't mind taking a few thousand feet of lumber from him gratis just to help him along * * Every individual and corporation should understand than the man who undertakes the publication of a newspaper does so in the hope of making his living out of it. He pays the price of a farm for the plant and it is to him what the farm is to the farmer. It costs him more per inch for management than a farm does per acre, and he who asks the publisher to give him space of one inch for a gratis puff, write it, set it up and publish it, might go with the equal assurance and justice to a farmer and say, 'Give me an acre of your farm for a year; plant it with something that will yield me heavy profit, take good care of it till the stuff is matured and I will come and gather the proceeds.'"

ENGLISH FARMERS ON RED RIVER.

(From the London Echo, Nov. 22.)

To-morrow the English farmers who were sent out to Canada, at the instance and at the expense of the Dominion Government, to "spy out the land" on behalf of certain tenant farmers in the northern counties of England, are expected to arrive at Liverpool. They will present a favorable report of the country generally, but especially will they advise the emigration of small capitalists to the young and exceedingly fertile Province of Manitoba. The Red River Valley, which is included in Manitoba, promises to become in a very short time one of the greatest wheat producing regions of the American continent, and the wise alterations recently made, by an order in Council of the Canadian Government, in the conditions upon which homesteads may be acquired upon land contiguous to the proposed "Canada Pacific Railway," will contribute to that result. Farms of 160 acres are to be granted free to settlers on the condition of a three years' occupancy and cultivation, and additional lots of 160 acres may be purchased, in addition, at prices varying from $1 to $2.50 per acre, according to proximity to the line of the railway. The whole of the lots, to a width of five miles on either side of the railway, are to be appropriated under these free grant and pre-emption regulations. The soil of this region is as fertile as any part of the continent. It is said to consist of twenty feet of black earth, easily friable, resting on a subsoil of aluminous clay. It is mostly prairie, so that there is no clearing to be done. But by putting the plough in in June, crops ploughing about August or September, sowing in the spring while the frost is still in the ground, the husbandman may look for a bountiful harvest in the second August of settlement. Who would not choose to be a freeholder under such circumstances, rather than a tenant-farmer under the burdens and restrictions which prevail here?

THE SUGAR BEET.

There would seem to be pretty fair prospects for a sugar beet factory in Nova Scotia—probably in Colchester county. The Truro *Sun* says:—"Col. Blair, at the Onslow Agricultural Society's meeting, on Tuesday, said that a company would start the manufacture of sugar from the beets, just as soon as they were satisfied that a sufficient area was growing to supply the factory. He also asked for orders from individual farmers for the quantity of seed that they will require, or take, for the next season's sowing, as an effort was being made to import the seed—a good article—at cost and charges to those wishing to obtain it." The *Sun* say of the beet for feeding purposes:—"As to the quality of the sugar beet for feeding purposes, as compared with the mangolds, etc., etc., opinions differ, many, the majority we think, of those who profess to know, being in favor of the sugar beet. Of this, however, we may feel certain, that they are excellent food for cattle, even after the sugar is extracted from them."

—The value of land in Ireland is so depreciated at this moment, says the London *Vanity Fair*, that in the Landed Estates Court, last week, Judge Flanagan declined to allow the sale of an estate in Roscommon, for which no higher offer could be obtained than fourteen years' purchase. There were no fewer than seven estates for sale that day, November 7, but only four were sold. For two of these there was absolutely no bidding. Is this the result of Mr. Gladstone's Irish Land Act or of the state of the country? Whatever the cause, it is most serious to landowners and can hardly last.

OUR SPECIAL COLUMN.

A life of Gilbert Stuart, the famous American painter, is shortly to be published, with illustrations from his pictures.

A history of the Zulu war in South Africa, is to be written by the daughter of the famous Bishop Colenso, of Natal. The father has shown a decided preference for the Zulu. It remains to be seen how the daughter regards him. The book is soon to appear.

A biography of eminent Scotchmen is soon to appear from the pen of Mr. Gardner, of Paisley.

A daughter of one of the Harper firms succeeded in getting off a story in *Harper's Magazine* for the current month without it being known who wrote the paper.

Mr. Edward Carswell, the temperance lecturer, is being honored by the publication of his sketches and songs.

Mr. John Bright, in a speech he delivered at Manchester a short time since, said: "I recollect that when the word 'divi-divi' was pronounced in the House of Commons there was a universal looking at one another among the members. Nearly everybody laughed, and everybody admitted that he had never heard of it before." How strange that a whole House of Commons should have been in ignorance of the word and its meaning. Even now the question is asked in England what is the article called "divi-divi?" It is not found in any ordinary dictionary, but Simmonds, in his "Dictionary of Trade, Products and Commercial Terms," defines it as "a commercial name for the wrinkled pods of the *cæsalpina coriaria* used in tanning.

Alexander Anderson, a Scottish poet, known by the *nom de plume* of "Surfaceman," has translated some of Heine's, the German poets poems into the Scottish dialect.

"Ten months in an ox wagon" is the title of a book of travels in South Africa, by Mr. Edward F. Sandeman. It treats of Beer life and the chief characteristics.

"Gems of Thought" is rather a taking title of a book which contains the wise sayings from nearly four hundred and fifty authors. It is published in New York.

The great, perhaps the ideal, dramatist has at length arisen, in the person of Mr. Ross Neil, who has recently published a volume of plays in London. The *Academy* says of him:

"Ross Neil's new plays exhibit so assured and sound a progress in dramatic art, such careful work, albeit under the veil of ease and spontaneity, such subordination of vagrant fancy to the exigencies of scenic consistency, that one is emboldened to believe at last in the advent of the born and ideal playwright who is to retrieve the failures of our modern "makers" that have ventured on dramatic poetry."

Mrs. Kate Bowes Watson, a daughter of the late Charles Lever, the Irish novelist, has written to the London *Atheneum*, finding fault with the biography of her father, recently given to the world. She says it abounds with errors and mis-statements, and had not the sanction of Mr. Lever's children and executors. The author, she says, had scarcely any personal knowledge of the novelist, and the sketch of his character is much more of a caricature