

erately sets to work to screw out dollars as salve for his wounded sensibilities, he at once forfeits the respect of his neighbours. The world may laugh, shrug its shoulders, and call him a long-headed man, but, notwithstanding, the world has but a mean opinion of him at bottom. We strongly doubt if the sympathy of the country will go with the Hon. George Brown in the suits he has instituted against certain Ontario papers. Three of these journals have reflected on Mr. Brown's character to the tune of \$10,000 apiece, and a fourth to the extent of \$5,000, and this by copying the well-known statements of the *National*, which paper, however, has, for some inexplicable reason, been, until a day or two ago, passed over. As the *National* is irrepressible, and confidently repeats the statements week after week, we presume that Mr. Brown has been waiting until the measure of its guilt is full; that he has been nursing his injured feelings in pleasant expectancy of the tremendous damages he will then be able to claim. Seriously, Mr. Brown has made a fatal step. If he had entered criminal proceedings against the offending journals, the feeling of the country would have been with him. As it is he has forfeited its sympathy.

The escape of Bazaine from his island prison at Sainte Marguerite, is another instance of female ingenuity and conjugal devotion such as the history of the world has frequently afforded. We have the authority of Madame Bazaine herself for saying that she only is responsible for the escape of her husband and that she only planned the means of effecting it. We shall anxiously await full particulars of the event which we believe will be found invested with the romance of tenderness and heroism. But while unqualified praise is to be meted out to the faithful wife, it is not sure that the ex-marshal himself deserves equal commendation. Our impression is that Bazaine was allowed considerable liberty of movement and a relaxation of other prison rules, on his word of honour that he would not attempt to escape from the island. Some of the Paris papers allege the same thing. If such is the fact, he has put the seal to his disgrace by his flight and France need not trouble herself to demand his extradition. It is presumable that he will yield no influence with the Bonapartist faction, even though he should attempt to head a political movement.

## EXPERIENCES OF A COMMERCIAL TRAVELLER.

BY "ONE OF THEM."

Toronto, August 11th, 1874.—I left my readers last week at Penetanguishene, a name as mongrel as the population, which comprises Frenchmen, half-breeds, full-blooded Indians, Canadians, and a fair sprinkling of the three nationalities supposed to constitute old-country folk. Strange, that although the French element and its half-breed variety so strongly predominate, none of them participate in the mercantile transactions of the place, though the hotels, without an exception, are kept by French Canadians, and queer places they are. One of them, the "Globe," rejoices in the possession of a ragged old billiard-table, an attraction considered sufficient to make it rank as the first-class house, and also supposed to make it particularly attractive to commercial travellers. Still, I would have dispensed with it, and not grieved much, especially as it was made to apologize for the absence of a great many real comforts; fish and fowl seemed to me to be tabooed at the table, but fish abounded—fish fried for breakfast, fish boiled for dinner, and cold fish for tea. Perhaps I happened then on a fast-day, or perhaps they are believers in Liebig's theory as to fish being brain-food, and being a little deficient in brains they want to replenish. I never asked them their reasons for having such a fishy diet, but I certainly got very tired of it before I left; then I was in a continual state of dread at every meal lest I should choke with fish-bones, and have to be patted on the back to bring me to, like a gluttonous baby. And it's wonderful the implicit faith that the residents of a place have in the quality of their hotels, especially if the hotel-keeper happens to trade with them. In that case you will mortally offend them if you suggest that the house is not just what it might be. Not long ago I was unfortunate to get stuck one Saturday at a village south of Brantford which shall be nameless. Being late when I got in, and a Saturday, I soon discovered that I must make the best of my quarters, and put up there for Sunday, and as I had never tested the quality of its accommodations before, I asked a customer in a quiet way how he thought I would fare. A smile of pity at my ignorance overspread his face. "How will you fare? Why, my dear fellow, it's the best little house west of Toronto—nothing in Brantford can touch it," &c., &c., until I really began to congratulate myself on having been so lucky as to fall into such a "land flowing with milk and honey." But Sunday's experiences sadly disenchanted me. Cold rooms, poor food badly cooked, no milk, bad liquors and worse cigars—such was the dismal record. After that experience put not your trust in customers was my motto, at least not when asked to express an opinion concerning their pet and, perhaps, only hotel.

But to return to Penetanguishene, or rather Barrie, for I did return there the day after going out to the place with a long name. And glad enough to get back I was. Ten p. m. was the somewhat late hour at which we reached Barrie, and after having had a couple of refreshers in the shape of "hot Scotch," I went to bed, to dream of being scalped by Indians, and of other unpleasant operations being performed on me, doubtless the result of my Penetanguishene experiences superinduced by an overdose of hot Scotch. However, I woke up in the

morning, and found that "my har" hadn't been "lifted," a discovery that gave me great joy, as it never was over-abundant, and is already showing a tendency to premature baldness. From Barrie to Angus, Angus to Stayner, Stayner to Collingwood, the scenery is illustrative of the "pancake" character of the country, and the ride deeply impresses you with the strange and wonderful way in which the Northern Railway is built, as the line indulges in a vast number of eccentric curves. The train stops at one station called Utopia, and it might well be asked in reference to the place, "What's in a name?" Whether the man who is responsible for the grim pleasantry intended it as a satire, or whether he was one of the three residents, and really believed the place was destined to be the Utopia, I cannot say. But if the latter is the case his Utopia will assuredly be a lunatic asylum, if he isn't here already. If there were a place to describe, I would attempt a description of it, but as I couldn't see the place myself I will save my readers the infliction.

Collingwood reached, I found the same eagerness for custom displayed at the station as I had been subjected to at Orillia. Here, again, indecision is ruin. No matter what the hotel may be you have decided to patronize, go there in spite of all the allurements of rival touters. Name your house, give your checks to its porter, and take its 'buss. Then you can stroll up and down the platform till your Jehu tells you he is ready to start, smoke your cigar, and gaze with a lofty pity on those poor misguided men who are listening to the disinterested importunities of half-a-score of eager hotel drummers.

Collingwood in winter is a bleak, uninviting place to live in. On a January night, with the thermometer away down below zero, it is a place calculated to make you keenly appreciate the generous warmth of a big log-fire on the hearth—a place that seems specially created to test the inviolateness of the pledge of a member of the Prohibition League. For let any one of that august body drive from Meaford to Collingwood on such a night, when the bitter north wind howls over the Georgian Bay and nips his ears, and seems to try to find crevices in his body—let him reach Collingwood (if he can), chilled to the marrow, and with the long icicles hanging from his beard, giving him a resemblance to a dismal Santa Claus, and when he does get there, and walks through the hall past the half-closed door of the bar, past that door just opened wide enough to let him sniff the grateful odour of a hot whiskey punch—I say let this happen, and if he doesn't swallow his scruples and a glass of whiskey punch at the same time, why, he deserves to be canonized for his martyrdom. With the majority of us travellers we make it a rule to swallow the latter but have none of the former to swallow, for commercial travellers are neither cynics, misanthropes, nor anchorites.

But Collingwood—I'm forgetting the place entirely—well, whatever disadvantages it may have in inclemency of weather during the winter are fully compensated by its delightful climate in the summer months, for the north wind that in the winter months froze your very marrow then lends a delightful coolness to the air. Then that frightful drive in the freezing months between Collingwood and Meaford is now dispensed with, for at the latter place commerce has told its old story, and compelled the advent of the iron horse. On this occasion the metallic steed had all his gear prepared and his road ready for him, so I took passage behind him for Meaford. Rushing through the country with the snow-spray beating against the windows of the car, I could not help contrasting the cosy comfort of the well-warmed and well-ventilated travelling coach with the desolate equipment of the lumbering stage in which, on my previous trip, I was so unfortunate as to be a passenger, and making the comparison I came to the conclusion that all such comparisons are odious.

The time passed quickly in these reflections, and I soon found myself at Meaford, and inside Mrs. Paull's 'buss; for no "Commercial" ever dreams of going elsewhere than to Mrs. Paull's. I don't want the worthy editor of the *Canadian* nor its host of readers to imagine that I am a hotel-advertising agent, but really I must give a good word to the amiable proprietress of the "Meaford Hotel." I know there won't be one dissentient voice among my fellow-travellers, when I say that, like Dexter's trotting-time, "it can't be beat." Such warmth, such comfort, such rooms, such home-made bread, such ham, such pickled fish, such coffee!—the climax is reached in the coffee. No weary, foot-sore Mecca pilgrim could wish for a better decoction of his favourite berry than Mrs. Paull prepares. Well, I got there, and revelled in all these things, and now that I am at Meaford there can be no better opportunity for relating a most ludicrous adventure which befel me on a previous visit. As usual I was there over Sunday, and Sunday not being a very fatiguing day I did not feel particularly tired nor sleepy; so taking a book I sat at my window and read until nearly midnight. Tired at last of reading I sat and listened to the monotonous drip, drip of the rain that had been falling all the afternoon. Listlessly listening, with my thoughts far away, I gradually became conscious of another and unfamiliar sound mingling with the pattering of the rain-drops. Rasp, rasp, saw, saw, now near now far, now so low as scarcely to be heard, now so unpleasantly loud and harsh as to jar on the ear, the mysterious sound gradually intruded itself into my consciousness, till thoroughly aroused I listened intently. To make what follows plain, I must tell my readers that directly opposite my room in the hotel was situated the store of Mr. S., and as the strange sound continued I became satisfied that it was caused by the grating of a saw or file against some hard substance. Cautiously turning down the lamp I put my head out of the window, but the night was pitch dark, and I could make out nothing with my eyes, although the sound was far more distinct, and more pronounced in its character, and I now became satisfied that burglars were trying to effect an entrance into the store. Drawing on my slippers I crept cautiously down stairs, and rousing the hostler I informed him of the terrible fact. My courage was rapidly oozing out at my finger ends, but as for him—after I had taken him to the door and letting him hear the sounds, he positively declined stepping outside. However, I found an immense iron boot-jack and armed myself with that, and, attired in a very incomplete costume, I crept outside. When half-way across the road I could, or fancied I could, discern figures moving about outside the building. And now—must I confess it?—my courage failed me utterly, and I beat a hasty retreat into the house. I at length screwed my courage to the sticking point again, and venturing out I stole down the street, keeping close against the side of the building till I had reached a point directly opposite the private dwelling of Mr. S., for, thinking discretion the better part of valour, I had wisely determined that he should run a portion of the risk while sharing in the glory of

the capture of the midnight marauders. Rapping softly at the door produced no response, so I assailed it vigorously with the boot-jack, an assault that brought a night-capped head out of the window above me. The first intimation I had of the proximity of the head was a voice sleepily enquiring "What I wanted?" I had hardly begun my hurried explanation ere the head was hastily withdrawn, and its owner made his appearance in a costume almost as scanty as mine. He had armed himself with—let me see, was it an axe-handle or a gun—really I forget, but I know he had some murderous weapon. Reinforced by Mr. S., but with a beating heart, I crept down the walk and out into the street. We listened, still the sound continued, and we felt that the tug of war was at hand. And now my excited imagination enabled me plainly to see figures moving with stealthy footfalls through the gloom. Visions of a deadly combat fitted through my brain; already in fancy I could hear the rapid pistol-shots, and see the cold gleam of the assassin's knife, and feel its keen edge entering my vitals. Clutching the boot-jack with a nervous, tightening grip, while Mr. S. poised his axe-handle in the most approved shillelah fashion, we advance upon them—we are upon them, to find—two peaceful cows engaged in industriously licking Mr. S.'s pile of salt-barrels! These were the midnight burglars, and their rough tongues scraping on the barrel staves are the files and saws that were endeavouring to effect a breach in the iron window-bars. Mr. S. laughs in his sleeve, and I retire to bed a sadder and a wiser man. Such was the ignoble end of my first and only "adventure with burglars."

Next morning my customers regard me with a quizzical leer, and seem to have taken a new interest in dairy matters, for they are continually making references to cows and their known fondness for salt; and I really felt relieved when I had got out of the town and was well on the road to Owen Sound. Since that occasion I always anticipate their anxious enquiries by asking them if the village has since been disturbed by burglars. Leaving my readers to reflect on the liability of all men to be sold, I must bid them good-bye for a time.

WAYFARER.

## OUR ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE NEW GRAND OPERA HOUSE. TORONTO.

The new and elegant Opera House now being erected by the Toronto Opera House Company for Mrs. Charlotte Morrison, under the direction of the celebrated Architect of the New York Academy of Music, Thomas R. Jackson, Esq., is situated on Adelaide Street, West of Yonge Street, the most central and desirable location in the city. It has a front on Adelaide Street of ninety-one feet, and a depth of two hundred and eight feet, and is perfectly isolated from surrounding buildings by a street on the west and a lane on the east side. The principal entrance to the Opera House is on a level with the street, through a spacious corridor fifteen feet wide, fifty feet long, and fourteen feet high, to the main vestibule, twenty-four feet by sixty-five feet, and eighteen feet high, in which are the Box and Ticket Offices, stairs to Family Circle, etc. Beyond the vestibule is the inner lobby, from which access is had either to the Parquet or Balcony or by wide and easy stairs to the Dress Circle. The Auditorium is arranged with Parquet, containing 324 Orchestra stall chairs; Parquet Balcony, containing 275 chairs; Dress Circle, containing 324 seats; Family Circle 270, and eight Private Boxes, with four chairs in each, making a seating capacity of 1,323 and camp-stool and standing room for 500 more, every one having a perfect view of the stage. The chairs in the Parquet and Balcony will be the latest improved folding-seat Opera chairs, upholstered with leather. The sofa seats in the Dress Circle will be upholstered with reps. There are also ladies' and gentlemen's cloak and hat rooms, crush-room, dressing rooms, etc. The Proscenium and Arch, of chaste and ornate design, will contain eight private boxes. The orchestra will be depressed below the floor, so as not to obstruct the view. The Stage, 53 by 65 feet, will be fitted up with all the latest improvements and equipped with a full stock of Scenery, Curtains, Properties and Appointments. For the necessary accommodations of the Opera House and the accommodation of its attachés, there is a two-story building adjoining, in which are a spacious scene-room, property-room, green-room, dressing-rooms, Manager's and Treasurer's offices, etc., all above ground, with windows and entrances opening on a street, and fitted up in the most comfortable manner. The facilities for egress in case of fire have been fully provided by a fire escape, and four wide doorways opening out of the side street and lane, and of such capacity that a full house with all its attendants can be emptied in two minutes. The entire building will be heated by steam at a low pressure from a safety boiler in a fire-proof cellar, outside of the main building; and ample provision will be made to guard against fire by placing on the stage two fire-plugs with hose ready for instant use, and fire extinguishers distributed through the building. The Auditorium will be brilliantly illuminated by a centre sun-light in the dome, chandeliers under galleries, and brackets on the walls, and lighted by electricity. The construction of the building is of the most substantial character, and the decorations and furnishing will be in the most artistic taste and style; and, taken as a whole it will be one of the finest Opera Houses on this continent. The building will be opened for the season of 1874-5 about the middle of next month. A first-class dramatic troupe, including Mrs. Morrison and Mr. Couldred, has been engaged, and arrangements have been made with a number of first-class stars, such as Fechter, Ristori, Carlotta Leclercq, J. L. Toole, the great English comedian, etc. The Kellogg, Aimée, and Soldene opera troupes will also make their appearance on these boards during the season.

We trust that Mrs. Morrison's commendable energy in catering for the Toronto public will meet with the full measure of success it deserves. Montreal theatre-goers will have reason to be envious of the good-fortune that has fallen on their Toronto brethren; but we hope that the cause for envy will speedily be removed by the erection of a suitable Opera House in Montreal, and that the commercial metropolis will be relieved of a reproach that has too long rested upon its citizens.

THE CARLISTS AT CUENCA.

The taking of Cuenca by the Carlists on the 15th ult., has been a very serious affair. The accounts given of the scenes enacted in the devoted little town make one's blood run cold. The Carlists, enraged by the persistent defence of the besieged who, with vastly inferior forces, held out for fifty-six hours, murdered on the spot all who were taken with arms, as well as the occupants of all houses where arms were found. Those