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Editor and Proprietor.

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EDITORIAL NOTES.

A SHORT week ago nobody unconnected with the Dominion Government could safely have predicted the precise date of the impending dissolution, although the leading organ of the Opposition indulged in some very confident prophesying on the subject. These predictions were not borne out by the event. However, the dissolution is now an accomplished fact, and the writs for the elections are out. The anxiously-expected event will take place on the 22nd of February. The date of the meeting of the new Parliament has been fixed for the 7th of April, though of course that will be subject to future modification, according to the exigencies that may arise. The approaching contest will be fought out with a keenness unparalleled during recent years. The head and front of the Government is aware that thousands of his sometime friends have of late been sitting in judgment upon him—many of them with a leaning rather unfavourable to him than otherwise. He is an old man, much broken with affairs of State, and he well knows that if he should be defeated now his day will have passed away forever. His opponent, Mr. Blake, is probably equally convinced that the election day must be decisive of his own fate. He has worked patiently, albeit fitfully, for many years, to grasp the prize which has persistently eluded him, and it is hardly likely that he would continue in public life should the fruition of his hopes be any longer postponed.

THE political campaign has fairly set in. A few days more will see the opposing forces actively at work, and the succeeding weeks will be weeks of perpetual turmoil and agitation throughout the Dominion. Ordinary and legitimate business will be generally regarded as a secondary consideration to that of gaining the support of the "free and independent" voter. The emissaries of the Government seem to be pretty well organized under the general direction of Sir John himself and the Hon. Thomas White. Sir John's own share in the business will probably be confined to addressing public meetings in the West. A notable peculiarity of the campaign is the large number of new candidates who are already announced to take the field. Some of these are young men of high promise. Certainly an infusion of new blood is very much needed in public life in Canada. Young blood has a tendency to be aggressive, and whatever tends to break up the so-called "party lines" at present in vogue will afford good cause for congratulation.

ANOTHER noticeable feature is the number of those who were once staunch supporters of the Government, but who, for various reasons, have of late years arrayed themselves in Opposition. Conspicuous among these are the Hon. Peter Mitchell and Colonel Domville, two gentlemen from the Maritime Provinces, both of whom were vehement, out-and-out supporters of Sir John Macdonald's Government. Mr. Mitchell may fairly be classed as an Oppositionist for the future, as he attended a party caucus the other day, and must be held to have formally allied himself against his former colleagues. Another recalcitrant is the Hon. William McDougall, who has been out of public life for some years past, but who is likely to re-enter the political arena for an Ontario constituency. Mr. McDougall was a leading figure in the Canadian Parliament, both before and subsequent to Confederation, and if appearances are to be trusted he has lost little or

none of the virile energy which once made him distinguished there. It will be remembered that his last appearance in politics was as the champion and principal member of the Opposition in the Ontario Legislature. He was at that time in harmony with the Government at Ottawa, and had little in common with Mr. Blake. Of late he has manifested a willingness to co-operate with the last-named gentleman, and it is understood that the *rapprochement* between them was brought about through the diplomatic intervention of the Premier of Ontario. From a source which we have abundant reason to regard as trustworthy, we learn that within the last two days overtures have been made by the Reform Party to Mr. McDougall to become a candidate for Centre Toronto at the forthcoming elections. His response to the overtures has not yet been received. He would unquestionably be a strong candidate. In the event of his acceptance, and of his being successful in his election, he would in fact be a supporter of Mr. Blake; and in the event of a Reform Government succeeding to power, it would be no unlikely thing if "the people's William" were to accept an important office in it. To any one who knows the history of the past, the conjunction of such forces must appear ominous, to say the least of it. But there is no need to anticipate so far. Mr. McDougall has not yet gained his election, and Mr. Blake's party is still in Opposition. Sir John has always proved himself to be a hard man to beat, and there is no substantial reason for believing that he will falsify his record during the approaching contest. There are other defections from his side, in addition to those already named, but none of so great importance.

As for Sir John, it is hardly likely that he would much longer continue in active political life, even should the electorate again pronounce in his favour. His long fight has left its scars upon him, and he is no longer the active spirit of former years. His service has been a long one, and he doubtless feels that he is entitled to repose under the shadow of his laurels for the rest of his life. Sir Charles Tupper's return to Canada just at this juncture can only mean one of two things. Either he is coming to fight the battle in Nova Scotia, which no one else can fight so well, or else he is here to succeed Sir John. He is the only possible successor, and even he would labour under serious disadvantages in that capacity, as he lies under the stigma of a clouded past. His arrival is anxiously awaited at Ottawa.

THE Government is said to be much disturbed over the dissensions between Mr. Langevin and Mr. Chapleau. An unofficial despatch from Ottawa announces that the latter has actually resigned his place in the Cabinet. Up to the time of our going to press this report lacks confirmation, but there is no doubt that Mr. Chapleau has of late more than once been on the point of resigning, and that he has only been prevented from doing so by the intervention of other members of the Government. The dissensions between these two gentlemen are no new thing. They have disturbed the councils of the nation anytime these three years, and it looks as if these two stars cannot much longer con-

tinue to revolve in the same orbit, whatever may be the fate of the Government at the coming elections. There are few persons in this Province who would regard the final retirement from public life of either or both of them as a national calamity. Sir Hector's retirement, however, is not at present among the probabilities. There is much more likelihood of the retirement of the Minister of Marine and Fisheries, who is said to have been restive for some weeks past. The rumour that Sir Alexander Campbell is to retire, and that he will succeed the Hon. John Beverley Robinson as Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario has also been renewed within the last day or two. Should this programme be carried out it is presumed that Mr. Robinson would become a candidate for one of the Toronto constituencies—probably the Western Division, where he would certainly poll a large vote, and be a lion in the path of the Labour candidate, Mr. Edmund E. Sheppard. But how would Mr. Beatty like this arrangement?

NOTHING could well be more absurd than the attitude of those Canadian newspapers which persist in declaring, in the face of the clearest evidence, that the *Mail's* new departure is a mere blind: that it is playing a deep game in order to deceive the electors, and score an underhand victory for the Liberal Conservative party at the polls. It is hardly credible that any of those who harp the loudest to this senseless tune have any real belief in the quality of their music. The *Mail* may have made a false step. That would possibly be open to argument, though anybody who should undertake to maintain the affirmative would have no easy task on his hands. But to say that the *Mail* has adopted the independent cry for partisan purposes is to ignore all the facts. From this time forward that paper is irrevocably committed to an independent platform. The ex-organ of Liberal Conservatism has utterly cut the ground from under its feet, and has left itself no place for repentance—if by repentance is understood a return to party allegiance. No plausible reason has been assigned for such a tortuous policy. How the adoption of so senseless a course could benefit Sir John and his colleagues we have not been informed. That Sir John himself is immeasurably disgusted by the defection of his quondam organ has already been made sufficiently apparent. At the present moment he is looking anxiously about him for a journal which shall be the accredited exponent of his policy, and, so far as known to the public, he has not yet found one to his liking. There are several able aspirants for the position. All sorts of rumours are flying about. It is asserted that overtures have been made to the *Toronto World*, but that that journal holds its columns at a prohibitive price. The *Hamilton Spectator*, the *London Free Press* and the *Toronto Telegram* are also said to be in the field. Other stories, some of which are of a perfectly astounding nature, are afloat—the simple fact of the matter being that nothing is definitely settled, or, at any rate, definitely known. When Sir John thinks proper to show his hand we shall know all about it, and until that time arrives all must be idle speculation. One thing only may be accepted as hard fact: the *Mail* and

the Liberal Conservative party have permanently parted company.

WHEN one reads of the ferocities practised in by-gone centuries by the Spanish Inquisition, one is strongly tempted to call in question the truthfulness of some of the details. A similar disposition to doubt comes over the mind when one reads of the excruciating punishments which were inflicted, in mediæval times, for offences so slight as hardly to deserve any punishment at all. The history of European settlement in America, again, teems with accounts of cruelties so hideous that the imagination rises in revolt against them. Such narratives have to be gone through with as part of a liberal education, but they are far from pleasant reading. They make the reader ashamed of his species, and it is comforting to him to reflect that these things happened long ago, during a stage of civilization which humanity has long since outgrown.

Are we justified in laying this flattering unction to our souls? Do we really manage these things so much better than they were managed in the Middle Ages? Some features of a case which has just come to light in the Toronto Police Court may almost challenge comparison with the atrocities over which one grinds one's teeth when reading about "the Romans of the New World." A little child of eight years old—a girl—has within the last few days been veritably put to the torture in this city—this city which prides itself upon being the intellectual centre of Canada. The little sufferer has had the palms of her hands placed against a hot stove and held there until they were partly cooked. Then her lips and tongue were forcibly held against the same hissing stove until the skin adhered to the metal. One cold night in November last she was tied up in a stable, and left there until the following morning. The incarnate fiend who perpetrated these atrocities was a woman—the wife of the child's father, and by consequence the stepmother of the child. The father himself was *particeps criminis*, and upon the whole the more despicable of the two, for he was subservient to his wife, and too great a coward to take the part of the unhappy little martyr. Upon one occasion, when the child ran to him fresh from the torture, and with agonized cries exposed her blistered hands, she was informed by her loving parent that it served her right, and that she had not been burned enough. Such ghastly details as these seem hard to believe, but not only have they been established by the clearest evidence, but they have in all essential respects been admitted by the culprits themselves. The latter have been sentenced to a year's imprisonment each, the man going to the Central Prison and the woman to the Mercer Reformatory.

As was naturally to be expected, Henry George's espousal of the cause of Dr. McGlynn in the first number of his new paper has brought down upon his head the anathemas of the Roman Catholic Archbishop of New York. The proprietor of the *Standard* must be presumed to have counted the cost of the course he has seen fit to adopt, and is doubtless prepared to fight it out on that line. As one of the

most eloquent expounders of his peculiar platform, Mr. George was compelled to take a pronounced stand on this question, and is now reaping the fruits which he has sown. Many earnest Labour Reformers are deploring the inevitable split in their ranks, but Protestant opinion is of course almost a unit in favour of Mr. George's contention. As for the *Standard* itself, independently of this *casus belli*, it has started out under particularly favourable auspices, with a large capital at its back, and it will doubtless be an important factor in the moulding of opinion in the United States. But for some time to come, Mr. George must not expect to lie on a bed of roses.

A CORRESPONDENT in another column calls attention to the Sabbatarian wave which is sweeping with apparently resistless force over our city at the present time. The new organ of Secularism in Toronto has a note on the same subject in its last issue. It is impossible for anyone of liberal ideas to avoid feeling a certain degree of sympathy with the views expressed by these writers. The gloomiest and most unlovely periods in history have been those wherein this rigidly righteous principle has found most acceptance. Who would not pray to be delivered from a recurrence of the Puritan Sabbath? Religion is a thing which "exalteth a nation," as well as an individual, but there is no necessary connection between religion and Sabbatarianism, which is too often a mere synonym for bigotry and intolerance. Those who insist on a rigid observance of the first day of the week, to the inconvenience and discomfort of a large and respectable portion of the community, are surely oblivious of Who it was that said "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." They have forgotten how

"The Sabbath Breaker walked
Amid the golden corn,"

and how he inveighed against those who make clean the outside of the cup and the platter. It is hard, however, to kick against the pricks, more especially at the present time, when the labour organizations and the Sabbatarians find themselves upon the same platform on the Sunday question. The workingman is afraid that if street-cars are permitted to run on Sunday he will be compelled to do seven days' work for six days' pay, and that if milk is delivered or funerals are held on Sunday he will be placed at a similar disadvantage. The Sabbatarians are of course actuated by different motives. Most of them doubtless act from honest conviction; but there is a zeal which is not according to knowledge. Their star just at present is decidedly in the ascendant. They are in fact masters of the situation. But they would do well to bear in mind the old aphorism about the last straw and the camel's back. Several months ago Colonel Denison, in passing judgment in the Toronto Police Court on a case involving a similar question remarked: "There will be a revolt against this some day." Nothing is more certain than that after the wave comes the reaction; and this the ultra-Puritanical element in Toronto would do well to bear in mind.

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In the next number of ARCTURUS will appear a complete original story written specially for these columns, entitled **GAGTOOTH'S IMAGE.**

In the number for Saturday, February 5th, will appear an original sketch entitled

ASPECTS OF AUTHORSHIP.

In the number for Saturday, February 12th, will appear the first of a series of original sketches entitled

LITERARY EXPERIENCES,

embodying some remarkable unpublished letters by distinguished English men and women.

In an early number will appear the first of a series of original papers entitled

GHOSTS OF EMINENT CANADIANS.**THE CAUSE OF POLITICAL CORRUPTION.**

THERE is probably no constitutionally governed country—certainly no English-speaking country—where the charge of corruption is so continually brought against the ministry of the day as in Canada. Allowance must of course be made for the habitual exaggerations of the Opposition; but making every reasonable discount on this score, it may be said that nowhere is the expenditure of public money by the government, with the object of purchasing support, so systematic and shameless. Even those ardent supporters of the ministry who in public profess to deprecate the attacks of Opposition newspapers as unfounded will in private admit that government is carried on by wholesale corruption. The excuse which in the eyes of many amounts to a justification of this system is that it can be carried on in no other way. Corruption, in short, in the opinion of a much larger proportion of public men and political thinkers than is generally supposed, is a governmental necessity. Liberal newspapers may reply to such a statement with a shrill shriek of protest, but on what other ground can the complacency with which the majority of Canadians regard the matter be accounted for? There is no reason to suppose that the people of this country are on a lower plane of public morality than Englishmen or Americans. Yet despite the clearest evidence that the Dominion administration depends for its existence on purchased legislative votes: that it has reduced corruption to a system, and squandered the public money recklessly in order to retain power: it finds defenders and champions among men of excellent personal character, and the repeated exposures of the most flagrant acts of corruption by a vigilant Opposition press excite little indignation. To what is this due, but to a widespread conviction that such methods are really the only means by which a Canadian government can be conducted, and that a change in its *personnel* would be unavailing

to change the conditions which make corruption an essential feature of administration?

To denounce corruption in unsparing terms: to publish specific instances, showing the manner in which the government have expended public money in the bribery of provincial delegates, influential corporations or individual members of parliament: is unavailing in the face of a public opinion which is prepared to condone bribery as an unfortunate necessity. Should it not rather be the part of those sincerely anxious to remedy the evil to try to discover the root of the disease, instead of turning all their attentions to the symptoms? The underlying cause of corruption is the need which every administration is under of securing a working majority in a Parliament which consists of a number of cliques and sections having little in common but the general desire to turn their positions to account. Theoretically the Canadian people are politically divided between the Liberal Conservative and Reform parties. Practically, as our rulers know to their cost, the purely party tie is weak, excepting in Ontario, and the real dividing lines are those of locality, race and creed. Each party, instead of being a homogeneous whole, animated by distinctive principles and held together by the force of old associations, is divided and subdivided in a dozen directions. There is no real community of sentiment, for instance, between the Ontario Orangeman, the Quebec Bleu, and the ministerialist from Nova Scotia or British Columbia, whose sole reason for supporting Sir John Macdonald rather than Mr. Blake is that the former has shown his willingness to yield to repeated demands for "better terms." The elements which make up the Opposition are equally incongruous. The politics of Old Canada were always complicated by sectional divisions; the war-cries of race and creed, and the selfish clamours of petty cliques anxious to barter parliamentary support for the bestowal of patronage upon their adherents. And what but confusion worse confounded could be expected when the party divisions of Grit and Tory—which had largely lost any small significance they at one time possessed in the provinces where they originated—were forced upon the people of the other provinces on their admission to the Dominion?

It is the system of responsible government, applied to a country and a population to the requirements of which it is wholly unadapted, that puts a premium on corruption. When the essential condition of a government's existence is that it shall possess a continuous majority in a legislative body which is a fortuitous concourse of electoral delegations, cliques and factions, what but corruption could possibly result? Sir John Macdonald is the development of these political environments. Were he displaced to-morrow and Mr. Blake installed in power, he would either be compelled by the force of circumstances to adopt similar methods to those of his predecessor, or—if he maintained his integrity and determined to rule honestly—he would speedily find that he had undertaken an impossible task, and would be compelled to resign the leadership to less scrupulous hands. "But," exclaims the Reform reader, "Mr. Mackenzie was honest, as even his opponents now admit." True, and the fact that Mr. Mackenzie's administration lost ground from the outset, and only remained in power for one parliamentary term, is a strong illustration of the impossibility of honest government under our present system.

Responsible government, as practiced in England, is the outcome of a long period of growth under peculiar conditions which obtain nowhere else. It is only workable where the parlia-

mentary forces are divided into two parties, each having a well-defined policy, and being pervaded by a strong community of feeling. The appearance of the Irish party and the breaking up of the two historic English organizations into smaller factions are rapidly making responsible government impossible, even in the country where it originated. Parliamentary majorities are shifting and uncertain, and a succession of weak and unstable governments testifies to the unsuitability of the system to the altered conditions of public life. How much less is it adapted to a country like Canada, where party distinctions are largely adventitious? The election of the executive for a fixed term by a direct vote of the whole people, free from any interference or control by the legislature, is the only way to prevent the corruption that has made Canadian politics a byword. L. H.

GREYHOUNDS OF THE ATLANTIC.

HERE is more than a little commotion among the owners of the various trans-Atlantic steamship lines just now, and there can be no doubt that some startling changes are about to be set on foot. A mileage record has been published in London and New York, showing the average rates of speed attained by vessels belonging to the principal lines. From this record it appears that there are eleven steamships traversing the Atlantic which average as much as, or slightly more than, sixteen knots a day. Of these eleven, only three are the property of British companies. Nine others, of which only four are British, average upwards of fifteen knots per diem. The best showing is made by the North German line, and the British Post Office Department, upon the impartial principle of getting the best value for the public money, have awarded a proportionate share of the trans-Atlantic mail contracts to that line. This has caused not a little animadversion in the English press, and it is suggested by several influential papers that from patriotic motives, English mails should be sent in English ships. The most marked effect, however, has been produced upon the Cunard line, which is the wealthiest of all the maritime companies, and which, moreover, has the great banking-house of the Barings at its back. For some years past no maritime enterprise has made money, and the Cunard Company has shared in the general depression, but it is financially able to stand much greater strains than any to which it has hitherto been subjected, and is regarded as an easy first. The Government's recent action in withdrawing the trans-Atlantic mail contract from this corporation, and in issuing an injunction against it, was altogether unexpected, and the company, which has carried the mails without interruption for about forty years, feels intense chagrin. It has projected a scheme which, if successfully carried out, bids fair to establish its supremacy among the great maritime companies of the world. It purposes to build a new fleet of steamers, each one of which is to be a veritable greyhound of the Atlantic. In respect of fittings and accommodation, as well as of speed, the new ships are to be ahead of anything now afloat, while as regards size they will be exceeded only by the *Great Eastern*, and perhaps the *City of Rome*. They are to be propelled by gas instead of coal, thus economizing a large amount of space, and each vessel is to be supplied with two screws, so as to obviate or abridge the wearisome delay consequent upon a broken shaft.

All this is significant, but there are other details of the scheme more significant still. The new fleet will sail from London direct, instead of from Liverpool, and will call at Plymouth instead of at Queenstown. This idea opens up endless possibilities

—nay, probabilities. Comparatively few passengers would sail from Liverpool if they had the option of embarking on a first-class steamer at London. London is the real starting point, as well as the main point of arrival, of four-fifths of trans-Atlantic passengers. The railway journey between there and Liverpool is long and wearisome, a thing which most persons would be thankful to avoid. The channel passage, though not unattended with danger, is most interesting, and except in a few isolated cases, the additional peril would really count for little or nothing. In a word, the new route would not only be the fashionable one, but from mere motives of convenience it would be patronized by pretty nearly everybody who had no particular reason for taking one of the old routes.

But a still more momentous result would be the blow inflicted upon Liverpool, with its thirteen miles of docks, its boundless forests of tall masts, and its long prestige as the most important shipping port in the world. Queenstown, of course, would also suffer in proportion, but the proportion would be so small that one almost loses sight of it.

Later developments of this important project will be looked for with interest and anxiety by all who are in the habit of going down to the sea in ships.

NOW OR NEVER—NOW AND FOREVER.

(From the *Toronto World* of January 20th.)

IN the pending contest Mr. Blake must either make a spoon or spoil a horn. With him it is a case of make or break. As one of his followers has said: "What we require is a leader who wins, as Mowat does." Mr. Mowat's phenomenal success as a winner long since excited admiration upon one side and envy upon the other, while Mr. Blake's failures to win have been conspicuous by their frequency. He has never won anything that can be called a considerable victory since the day he ousted John Sandfield Macdonald from the premiership of Ontario. He was not in the country when his party was scattered to the winds in 1878, but he necessarily shared in the consequences of that defeat, even to the extent of losing his own seat for South Bruce. He was badly beaten in 1882, his personal return for West Durham having been a matter of course. In the present contest Mr. Blake possesses adventitious aids such as he never enjoyed before since he confronted John Sandfield with the Scott and railway cries. The repealers of Nova Scotia, the Home Rulers and Rielites of New Brunswick, the Orangemen of Prince Edward Island, the Rielites of Quebec, the Catholic vote of Ontario—most of it at least—are all within his reach. To be beaten again under such circumstances would be to be beaten indeed. We are not now discussing the cost of victory under such circumstances. That will take care of itself should a victory be achieved.

At this juncture defeat would mean to Sir John the winding up of a long and heavy account with a country which is still his debtor. To Mr. Blake it would signify that he had missed his chance and must make way for Mr. Mowat, the man who wins victories.

It is now or never with the leader of the Federal Opposition, and now and forever with the leader of the Federal Government.

Is there anything which is more certain to sap the foundations of morality than the public maintenance of a creed which has long ceased to command the assent and even the respect of its recognized defenders?—*Farrar's Seekers After God.*

Poetry.

THE FOUNTAIN OF TEARS.

BY ARTHUR B. W. O'SHAUGHNESSY.

If you go over desert and mountain,
Far into the country of sorrow,
To-day and to-night and to-morrow,
And maybe for months and for years;
You shall come, with a heart that is bursting
For trouble and toiling and thirsting,
You shall certainly come to the fountain
At length—to the Fountain of Tears.

Very peaceful the place is, and solely
For piteous lamenting and sighing,
And those who come living or dying
Alike from their hopes and their fears;
Full of cypress-like shadows the place is,
And statues that cover their faces.
Rut out of the gloom springs the holy
And beautiful Fountain of Tears.

And it flows and it flows with a motion
So gently and lovely and listless;
And murmurs a tune so resistless
To him who hath suffered and hears—
You shall surely without a word spoken,
Kneel down there and know your heart broken,
And yield to the long curb'd emotion
That day by the Fountain of Tears.

You may feel, when a falling leaf brushes
Your face, as though some one had kissed you;
Or think at least some one who missed you
Hath sent you a thought—if that cheers;
Or a bird's little song, faint and broken,
May pass for a tender word spoken:
—Enough, while around you there rushes
That life-drowning torrent of tears.

And the tears shall flow faster and faster,
Brim over, and baffle resistance,
And roll down bleared roads to each distance
Of past desolation and years;
Till they cover the place of each sorrow,
And leave you no Past and no Morrow:
For what man is able to master
And stem the great Fountain of Tears?

But the floods of the tears meet and gather;
The sound of them all grows like thunder:
—O into what bosom, I wonder,
Is poured the whole sorrow of years?
For Eternity only seems keeping
Account of the great human weeping;
May God then, the Maker and Father—
May He find a place for the tears!

Correspondence.

Editor ARCTURUS:

A METHODIST clergyman, in a recent sermon delivered in this city, objected to the holding of funerals, the delivery of milk and hack-hiring on Sunday.

I suppose he thinks such things are sinful because they are done in pursuit of an ordinary calling. In other words no work must be permitted on Sunday. I take it that what he called "work" he believed to be a sin in the eyes of God, of whose will he professes to have a full and complete revelation. Hence it is his duty not only to abstain from "work" on Sunday himself, but to compel his fellow-citizens to do the same. The logical result of this reasoning is that in future all Sunday driving, etc., must cease, except in cases of "absolute necessity," whatever those words may mean.

Now, I, for one, object to the outhailing of any of these pursuits by law. Is it advisable or right, on principles of religious toleration or natural justice, for a majority of Toronto's citizens to force on a thinking and respectable minority, regulations which are the outcome of peculiar religious views? The acts complained of are not wrong in themselves, but are to be restrained only because it is imagined that they are displeasing to an Infinite Deity, whose only command on the subject refers to our *Saturday* and not our *Sunday*. If the "moral wave" means a wave of religious intolerance the Blue Law had better be re-enacted at once.—JOSHUA DAVIDSON.

AMY'S COUSIN.

BY AMY.

LET me begin with the very first mention of me which occurs in "Locksley Hall." It is that my "cheek was pale and thinner than should be for one so young." I pass over that with the observation that I was a year and a quarter older than my soulful cousin. "And her eyes on all my motions with a mute observance hung." Now, do just consider that. He hasn't said a syllable about his being in love with me. O dear no! I began, of course. The idea of pretending that the first thing he noticed was that I was making sheep's eyes at him! So like a little conceited wretch of a schoolboy, who deserves nothing better than to be whipped and sent home to bed! And that is exactly what my cousin was at the time to which he refers. Then he says he told me how all the current of his being set to me, and how I blushed. Gracious heavens! What girl with the most rudimentary knowledge of how to flirt with her cousin would have the smallest difficulty in producing a blush when he uttered such idiotic expressions? Besides, every one knows that trying very hard not to laugh makes one's face very red. But observe what follows. There am I, blushing and "Saying 'I have hid my feelings, fearing they should do me wrong; saying 'dost thou love me, cousin?' weeping, 'I have loved thee long.'" Notice particularly that even he, in the paroxysms of his ridiculous puerile jealousy, dare not so much as suggest that there was even the pretence of an engagement between us. I understand the world has changed very much in the last few years; but if cousins aged respectively nineteen and a quarter and eighteen mayn't go through this sort of thing without incurring the risk of an action for breach of promise, I can only say it is not nearly so good a place for girls as it was in my time. But he parades the walks we used to take "many a morning," and even the kisses that were allowed him. Much kissing he would have got if I had ever dreamt he was going to turn out such a perfect little sneak!

Next he gets on to the time of my marriage, which happened naturally enough some two years after all this childishness was over. He reviles me for being "falsar than all fancy fathoms, falsar than all songs have sung, Puppet to a father's threats and servile to ashrewish tongua." As if I wanted any threats to make me delighted to marry a model squire, excellent sportsman, and prince of good fellows. Nor do I think that to call his aunt a shrew was a nice return to make for all the kindness she showed in letting him stay at Locksley for all his holidays and allowing him to talk as much nonsense as he liked to his cousin. But do consider the vanity, the perfectly infantile vanity, of the lines that come next. He wants to know whether it is well to wish me happy, "having known ME to decline On a range of lower feelings and a narrower heart than mine." Really the expression "having known me" speaks for itself. Is it possible for the conceit of any merely human puppy to go further? As to my husband, he says in so many words "thou art mated with a clown." The meaning of this is that my husband, being a grown-up man, did not waste his time in imagining sickly nonsense about the Parliament of Man, and the war-drum throbbing no longer, and that sort of rubbish. As to the war-balloons which are to precede that delightful consummation, I dare say my husband would have taken a great deal of interest in them; only he came into his property and resigned his commission in the Engineers a good many years before balloons were used in war at all. This part of the poem is extremely juvenile and silly; but what follows is much worse. For I have always been sorry that my cousin could ever have been so entirely lost to every consideration of propriety, and I am afraid I must say of decency, as to imagine for himself discreditable scenes at which, if they or anything remotely resembling them had ever taken place, no person but me and my husband could possibly have been present. After which, having perhaps grace to feel a little bit ashamed of himself, he falls a-cursing like a very coal-heaver—cursing everything he can think of, in the most abusive language to which he can lay his tongue, in a manner certainly not suggestive of a nicely-balanced temper.

Not content with informing me that my husband is a drunken sot, and that I shall have to become as much like him as possible,

my amiable cousin goes on to prophesy, and declares that when I grow up I shall ill-treat my daughter, and preach down her heart, whatever that means, and obligingly recommends me to perish in my self-contempt. Then he intimates that he is perfectly ashamed of himself, not for his abominable behaviour, but for having "loved so slight a thing" as me, forsooth—the young imp! But, no matter; he will go and console himself with some nasty black woman. As he abandons this intention almost as soon as it has been formed, I think he would have spared this last insult if he had had any purpose in his mind except to mortify me!

The last thing I want to say about my modest and chivalrous relative is in reference to a matter which is not stated very explicitly in the ballad itself—and that is, how it came to be written. It will be remembered that he wrote it on revisiting Looksley, and that he did not come alone. "Comrades, leave me here a little, while as yet 'tis early morn." It was early morn: it was 3.45 a.m., and they were all on their way home from a subscription dance, following a local cricket match. My cousin speaks of the others as "my gay companions." "My merry [or, still better mellow] companions" would not have scanned so well, but to many minds it would have conveyed the poet's meaning with greater accuracy. They were excessively merry, and they had a "bugle-horn"—I should have called it a French-horn—and the noise that they made "sounding" upon it as they clattered up and down the road in their drag outside the park gates, while their companion, propped against a tree, poured out his maudlin verses, kept us all awake until it was pretty late morn. But of course we did not know till afterwards that they had come with my cousin, or what that ingenious lad was doing under cover of their remorseless tooting.—*The Bookmart.*

EDUCATIONAL NOTES.

On all the attempts of Ontario to develop a system of education, the great clog is Brag. We vie with the schools of Britain, of Germany and of the United States for the sake of Brag. We make pretentiously ostentatious displays at London and Philadelphia, simply because we want to Brag. The programmes for High and Public Schools are pedantically voluminous because dictated by a spirit of Brag. Our Normal Schools flourish on Brag, and on nothing (or very little) but Brag. Brag tinctures the management of many Collegiate Institutes, High Schools and Model Schools, and the newly-organized Training Institutes are largely based on Brag. The present Minister of Education is not to blame for the establishment of the Brag system, but he is blameworthy for its continuance by direct encouragement. The best teachers in the Province are painfully conscious that things educational are not what they seem. Many of those who are not the best are deeply impressed with a similar belief, and the others, who probably form the majority, have never given the subject any attention.

ONE of the most promising signs in connection with our elementary educational affairs is the wholesale plucking that took place recently in the examination of candidates for first-class certificates, at Kingston, Hamilton, Guelph and Strathroy. Hitherto, those who went up for the final ordeal seemed to regard the probabilities of failure as hardly worth taking into account. Should proper discrimination continue to be employed at the Training Institutes the time will come all the more speedily when holders of first-class certificates may be regarded as first-class teachers.

MR. MACKINTOSH, for several years second master in the Provincial Model School, has been appointed to the principalship of that institution. There is every reason to believe that he will aim to make the school true to its name. He will doubtless be ably seconded by Mr. Murray, who takes the second mastership, and who is also a gentleman of long experience and sound judgment. It would not be easy to find two better men.

If there is any truth in the rumour that our Sovereign Lady Queen Victoria purposes to signalize her jubilee by conferring knighthood and perhaps a few higher titles upon one or two thousand of her colonial dignitaries, it is high time for the democratic good sense of our people to assert itself by humble petition,

craving that Canada, at all events, may not have to suffer from any such infliction. We have had quite enough of that sort of thing, and when we take into account that men like Gladstone, Bright and Chamberlain in the old land, and Brown, Mackenzie and Blake in our own country, have refused to accept the titular bauble, we have one good reason at our command. But we have many more, as every intelligent Canadian knows, and it will be a matter of no difficulty to put these in the form of an earnest prayer, to be laid at the foot of the throne. At first sight this may not appear to be an educational note, but look at it again.

THE Minutes and Proceedings of the 26th Annual Convention of the Ontario Teachers' Association, held August 10th, 11th and 12th, 1886, have just been issued. Many of the papers read are excellent. That of Mr. D. C. McHenry, M.A., on Prizes and Scholarships, is perhaps the most thoughtful and suggestive, the writer being no friend to the prize system. Dr. Dewar's paper on Education and Progress betrays no lack of trust in Providence and humanity. He has no faith in "theorists and hobbyists, who exaggerate existing evils," and declares his firm belief that the "world moves onward, upward, heavenward, slowly but surely."

LITERARY NOTES.

THE countless admirers of Herbert Spencer will be glad to hear that his health is completely restored, and that a new work from his pen, enlarged from articles which have already appeared, is now in the press. Its title is "Factors of Organic Evolution," and it is said to contain some altogether novel ideas on the subject of the origin of species.

WE have received a copy of Parts II. and III. of the Special Report of the Bureau of Education convened at New Orleans two years ago, in connexion with the World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition. These parts contain a number of interesting papers on subjects relating to education in this Province, concerning which we may probably have something to say in a future number.

THE two volumes of Hayward's *Correspondence*, recently published in London, are full of interesting matter bearing upon the politics and literature of the last half century. One of the oddest things in them is an inquiry made by Macvey Napier about Thackeray, in 1845. At that date Mr. Napier was editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, to which periodical Hayward was a contributor. "Will you tell me," writes Napier, "confidentially, of course, whether you know anything of a Mr. Thackeray, about whom Longman has written me, thinking he would be a good hand for light articles? He says that this Mr. Thackeray is one of the best writers in *Punch*." A Mr. Thackeray is good, considering that he had already given to the world *Barry Lyndon*, the *Great Gogarty Diamond*, and a score of minor sketches wherein all the world can now recognize the hand of a man of genius.

THE fourth volume of the *Narrative and Critical History of America*, edited by Mr. Justin Winsor, librarian of Harvard University, is now in process of delivery to Toronto subscribers. The chapters on Jacques Cartier and his successors, Champlain, Acadia, the Jesuit Relations, and Frontenac and his Times are of special interest to Canadian readers. The last-named is written by Mr. George Stewart, jr., of Quebec, whose writings are widely known in this country. Mr. Stewart has never done better work than in this volume, and he is to be congratulated upon his share in the production of the most noteworthy series of historical writings that have ever been issued on this continent. We hope ere long to refer at some length to the specially characteristic features of this praiseworthy enterprise. Meanwhile it will be sufficient to say that the possession of all the other histories of America from the earliest settlement of the continent down to the present day will not compensate for the absence of this all-comprehending work. Nobody who is unfamiliar with its pages can truly say that he has studied the subject down to the latest developments of American scholarship.

To say that the servant-girl question presents one of the most perplexing problems which will have to be solved in the not dis-

tant future, would merely be to repeat what has already become an old story. The proprietors of *Cassell's Magazine* would appear to have pondered on the subject until they have become positively desperate. They have offered a prize of \$25 for the best practical paper on "The Domestic Service Difficulty in America," and a condition is imposed that no paper sent in for competition shall contain fewer than 2,000 words. The first idea which presents itself to the mind on reading this announcement is that the prize-money seems ludicrously small, when the importance of the subject matter is considered. No writer whose opinions count for much—certainly no writer of acknowledged eminence—would deem it worth his while to enter the lists. Several of the great New York dailies pay at a higher rate for editorial matter every day in the week. Messrs. Cassell & Co. should improve on their bid by a cipher or two. Important social reforms, however, are seldom brought about by such means.

APROPOS of the servant-girl question, a distinguished English man of letters has recently been compelled to pass through an ordeal to which we will venture to say no parallel can be found in the annals of literature. Persons who follow literary matters with attention are more or less familiar with the nature of the late controversy between Edmund W. Gosse and Mr. Churton Collins. For the enlightenment of those who are unacquainted with the facts, it may briefly be said that some time ago Mr. Gosse published a series of lectures on English literature, previously delivered by him as Clark Lecturer in Trinity College, Cambridge. His quondam friend and fellow-worker, Mr. Collins, attacked it in the *Quarterly Review* with a malignant ferocity which reminded old stagers of the days of John Wilson Croker. Articles in the *Quarterly* are not signed, and the literary assassin, skulking behind the mask of the anonymous, deemed himself safe from discovery. But the attack was too base and shameful to admit of its being allowed to pass by in quietness. It became the talk of the clubs, the drawing-rooms, the green-rooms and the newspaper offices. Then the authorship came out, and for once a sense of the claims of truth and justice over-rode literary jealousy. All that was respectable in London journalism and periodical literature arrayed itself on Mr. Gosse's side, and administered a pretty effectual quietus to his assailant, who has doubtless learned a lesson which will last him his lifetime. The correspondence published on the subject would make a portly volume, and Mr. Gosse's name was brought more prominently before the public than it had ever been. At the present day he stands several notches higher in public estimation than he did before the onslaught upon him. But his troubles did not end when the public verdict had been pronounced in his favour. He received a shock from an altogether unexpected quarter. Is it not written: "A man's foes shall be they of his own household?" His cook suddenly and solemnly gave notice of her intention to leave his service. She was a good cook, and her mistress had no desire to lose her. Upon instituting an inquiry into the matter Mr. Gosse found, to his intense disgust, that her determination to leave was due to the fact that "master's name had been so much in the papers," and she had been tormented by some of her associates on that score until she really couldn't endure it any longer. It is consoling, on Mr. Gosse's account, to learn that this sensitive female proved amenable to remonstrance, and finally consented to withdraw her notice to quit. The whole story sounds like fiction, but it is simple unadorned fact. It is even worse than the case of the poet Rogers's valet. The latter worthy gave notice of his intention to leave his master's service, and upon being interrogated by the poet as to his reasons, replied, "You are so dull in the buggy."

The writer of *Sibylline Leaves*, in the *London Daily News*—understood to be Mr. Andrew Lang—has been liberating his mind on the subject of Frank Stockton. He is of opinion that Mr. S. is on the whole rather a clever writer; a matter as to which no competent critic ought to be long in making up his mind. He complains, however, that the humour is not sufficiently laughter-provoking, and declares that he got only one very small grin out of the adventures of Mrs. Lecks and Mrs. Aleshine. So accom-

plished a scholar as Mr. Lang ought to know that much of the brightest humour in the English language is provocative of laughter to only a very moderate degree, while some of it is even provocative of tears. Mr. Stockton's humour is fine and delicate. It is far removed from the hilarious horse play that shoots out the tongue. It has a quality which belongs to itself alone, and which is not soon likely to find a successful imitator. But perhaps Mr. Lang is only indulging his own quiet humour, after all, in this little preachment. Certainly one can hardly suppose him to be in serious earnest when he objects that Mrs. Lecks and Mr. Aleshine never refer to "the consolations of religion." When one comes to a phrase like this, used in such a connection, it is clearly time to drop the subject.

WILLIAM BLACK has just been figuring in the courts. He brought an action against John Dicks, the well-known publisher of a number of the cheapest class of books and periodicals, for having published a libel upon him in *Bow Bells*. Mr. Black, like many of his contemporaries, has had to pay the penalty of success, and has been subjected to a large amount of envious tittle-tattle and back-biting. It appears that there has been a good deal of gossip in the clubs about his ancestry and family relations. Some of this gossip found its way into a recent number of *Bow Bells*, where it was alleged that Mr. Black was of very lowly origin, and that he was ashamed of his poor relations. An aunt of his was alleged to be in the poor-house, owing to her nephew's refusal to provide her with half a crown a week. He was declared to be mean and close-fisted, with an eye always open to the main chance. He was charged with having married for money on the two occasions when he has slipped his head within the matrimonial noose. Not one of these statements has any foundation in fact, and Mr. Black determined to put a stop to the slanders in circulation against him. He dragged the wealthy but miserly publisher of *Bow Bells* before a jury of his countrymen, and demanded damages for the injury he had sustained. On the trial he went into the witness box and testified to the facts. It appears that his first wife had no portion whatever, and that his second wife had nothing but the expectation of succeeding to £3,000 upon the death of her father. Mr. Black testified that he never refused to provide his aunt with the weekly half crown, inasmuch as he never had an aunt, who was a purely imaginary personage. The jury gave him a verdict of £100, which will probably be devoted to festivities for himself and his friends at one of the clubs to which he belongs. The writer of these lines had the good fortune to spend several days in Mr. Black's company during last summer, at the Shakespeare Inn, Stratford-upon-Avon; and he can certainly bear testimony to the fact that penuriousness is one of the very last infirmities which can truthfully be laid to the charge of the author of *A Princess of Thule* and *Judith Shakespeare*.

A CITY contemporary had a short article on Henry George's new paper a few days ago, in the course of which it remarked upon the general incapacity of literary men for the editorial chair. Its comments upon Thackeray and Mark Twain were in the main just enough. But "in the main" is a saving clause. Thackeray failed as editor of the *Cornhill* because his heart was larger than his head, in which respect the general run of editors are not in the least like him. Mark Twain, again, failed because he was too well off financially, and too indolent physically, to undertake the laborious drudgery which must perforce fall to the share of every editor who does his work faithfully. But where did our contemporary stumble on its original information about Dickens? It declares that "although Charles Dickens began life as a newspaper reporter he did not make a great success of popular editing, even upon magazines, which approach the book style much more closely than the newspaper does." This is a singular mistake. Dickens was for about two weeks the nominal editor of the *Daily News*. In this rôle he was not a success. He lacked the necessary training to enable him to discharge the duties of editor of a daily newspaper with credit to himself, and he had the good sense to resign his position. Upon no other occasion that we can call to mind did he ever undertake editorial duties in connection with a newspaper. But Dickens was probably the best magazine editor

the world has ever seen. His discrimination as to the value of copy almost seemed to savour of inspiration. He was regarded by the entire magazine press of London as a phenomenon. He established *Household Words*, and made a remarkable success of it, and the magazine was only discontinued because of the refusal of the publishers to permit him to tell in its pages his own version of the story of the trouble between himself and his wife. He next published *All the Year Round*, which during his lifetime was one of the greatest successes known to the history of periodical literature. The aroma of success still clings to it, notwithstanding the incompetence of his son and namesake, who, however, has sufficient judgment to depute the really important duties of the editorial chair to more capable hands.

THE attention of readers of this department is called to several interesting announcements to be found in the first column of the editorial page. All the sketches and papers there announced as shortly to appear have been, or will be, written specially for ARCTURUS. All, or most of them, have a local colouring, and are tolerably certain to be read with avidity upon their appearance. We have received a good many letters of inquiry concerning *The Garrard Street Mystery*, which is concluded in the present number. The conclusion itself forms the most satisfactory answer to these inquiries, and to it our correspondents are respectfully referred.

THE story of *Gagtooth's Image*, which is to appear next week, is for the most part a story of Illinois, but its starting-point is "old Bob Southworth's" curiosity shop, on the east side of Yonge Street, Toronto, nearly opposite St. Mary Street. Every Montonian knows the place, which was kept by Southworth until somewhat more than a year ago. *Gagtooth's Image* is a pathetic and rather sombre narrative, likely to touch many hearts in a tender place. *Aspects of Authorship* deals with the methods pursued by many hack writers for the press, whose literary workshop is laid bare to the reader's view. *Literary Experiences* will embody interesting unpublished letters from the late Charles Reade, George Henry Lewes, Lady Lytton, W. Hepworth Dixon, John Hain Friswell (author of *The Gentle Life*), and others. *Ghosts of Eminent Canadians* will be of a totally different character from any of the preceding, and will appeal to a different class of readers.

MANON LESCAUT, of which mention was made in last week's issue, has reached this office from Messrs. F. T. Jones & Co., the New York publishers. It will receive due attention in a future number.

VERY nearly every Canadian author of repute has been requested to lecture before the Canadian Club in New York, and several of them have already lectured there with acceptance. There is a large Canadian colony in New York, and the club has been the means of bringing the various members of it into close and cordial relations. It is understood to be now fully established on a satisfactory financial basis.

TRULY, of the making of books there is no end. The English statistics for 1886 show a manifest falling off from the preceding year, but even in 1886 no fewer than 3,984 new books were published, and this was exclusive of more than 1,200 issues of new editions. The American market is yet to be heard from. There would appear to be some ground for Mr. Lowell's contention that this nineteenth century is reading itself into superficiality.

MR. THOMAS HODGINS'S *Manual on Voters' Lists* and his other little book on the Canadian Franchise Acts have both received favourable notice from the *English Law Quarterly Review*. The author is an acknowledged authority in this country on the law and practice of Parliament. Many readers will remember the series of letters on this subject published a few years ago in one of the city papers, and signed "Parliamentum." Mr. Hodgins is understood to be the author of those letters, which embody a kind of suggestive matter in very brief compass.

"WHAT is education?" asks a writer. Well, it is something a college graduate thinks he has until he becomes a newspaper man.

CURIOUS CENTRAL AFRICAN PEOPLES.

THE Rev. T. J. Coomber, a Baptist missionary, has given to the Royal Geographical Society an account of his voyage, in company with the Rev. George Grenfell and in the missionary steamer *Peace*, up the Congo to the Bangala, and up the Bochini to the junction of Kwango. The width of the river, from Stanley Pool to the Bochini, varies from twelve hundred yards to two miles. It is swift and strong, and navigation has to be performed carefully, on account of up cropping feldspathic rocks. An interesting feature of the first days' sails was the little clusters of huts on the sand banks in twos, fours, and sixes, inhabited by Ba-Buma people, who sold beer and caught fish. The people are ruled by a queen, Nga Nkabe, whose husband, or "prince consort," Nchielo, "knows his place, and sits quietly by, smoking his pipe meekly and philosophically, while his wife rules." She is tall, brawny, and dignified, and about fifty years old, but "did not seem to think it beneath her to take her paddle, and, entering into a little canoe with another woman, to go herself to cut us a bunch of plantains." Her great desire was to possess a double-barrelled gun, and she was evidently pleased with a present of cloths, a big bell, a soldier's great-coat, and some brass. The Ba-Buma were the best specimens of the African encountered on the journey. The women wear brass collars weighing from twenty-five to thirty pounds. The most primitive people seen by the travellers were the Ikelemba, about the great Ruki River, who go about with bow and arrow, or spears and shield, or a murderous sacrificial knife, wearing hats made of monkey-skins, of which the head of the animal comes to the front of their heads, while the tail hangs down behind. They are cruel, ingeniously cruel, and indulge among other amusements in chasing their human victims across the country as our hunters would chase a fox. Another exercise of their braves is inflicting "death by the knife," in which the head of the victim is so adjusted that, when it is cut off by a blow of a sickle-shaped knife, it is tossed by the spring of a sapling high into the air. In strange contrast with these revolting practices was "a pretty little performance by children, lasting several hours, and consisting, first, of clever dancing, and then of a little bit of operatic acting, after the style of a Greek play, the chorus part of which was very prettily rendered by little girls of eight to twelve years old. A strange-looking bier was carried in on the shoulders of four men. On the top of it was somebody or something covered over with red baize cloth. Sitting up at one end was a little girl looking sad and mournful. This bier (a native bamboo bed) was placed on the ground and surrounded by the 'chorus'—six little girls. A plaintive song was chanted by a woman who came to the side of the bier, which was chorused by the little girls. It was really pretty and effective; the idea of a drama in Central Africa surprised us altogether. We could understand but little of the words sung, but caught the frequent repetition at the end of the chorus of 'Ka-wa-ka' ('He is not dead'). After a time the spells of incantation were considered to have worked, and there was a noticeable heaving and shuddering in the covered mass at the girl's feet. The red cloth was drawn aside, and a girl was discovered, her chest heaving quickly and her limbs trembling as if in a paroxysm of epilepsy. Two persons came forward, and, taking her by her arms, raised her to her feet. . . . The little performance was enacted to please the white man."—*Popular Science Monthly*.

PROFESSOR ZWEIBEER is a very absent-minded man. He was busily engaged in solving some scientific problem. The servant hastily opened the door of his studio and announced a great family event: "A little stranger has arrived." "Eh?" "It is a little boy." "Little boy? Well, ask him what he wants."

Nobody outside of the profession has any idea how difficult it is for an editor to satisfy his patrons. For instance: A Western paper announced as follows: "Mr. Maguire will wash himself before he assumes the office of sheriff." This made Maguire mad, and he demanded a retraction, which the paper made thus: "Mr. Maguire requests us to deny that he will wash himself before he assumes the office of sheriff." Oddly enough, this only enraged Maguire the more. Some people are so hard to please.

THE GERRARD STREET MYSTERY.

(Continued from last week.)

II.

I don't know how long I sat there, trying to think, with my face buried in my hands. My mind had been kept on a strain during the last thirty hours, and the succession of surprises to which I had been subjected had temporarily paralyzed my faculties. For a few moments after Alice's announcement I must have been in a sort of stupor. My imagination, I remember, ran riot about everything in general, and nothing in particular. My cousin's momentary impression was that I had met with an accident of some kind, which had unhinged my brain. The first distinct remembrance I have after this is, that I suddenly awoke from my stupor to find Alice kneeling at my feet, and holding me by the hand. Then my mental powers came back to me, and I recalled all the incidents of the evening.

"When did uncle's death take place?" I asked.

"On the 3rd of November, about four o'clock in the afternoon. It was quite unexpected, though he had not enjoyed his usual health for some weeks before. He fell down in the hall, just as he was returning from a walk, and died within two hours. He never spoke or recognized any one after his seizure."

"What has become of his old overcoat?" I asked.

"His old overcoat, Willie—what a question?" replied Alice, evidently thinking that I was again drifting back into insensibility. "Did he continue to wear it up to the day of his death?" I asked.

"No. Cold weather set in very early this last fall, and he was compelled to don his winter clothing earlier than usual. He had a new overcoat made within a fortnight before he died. He had it on at the time of his seizure. But why do you ask?"

"Was the new coat cut by a fashionable tailor, and had it a fur collar and cuffs?"

"It was cut at Stovel's, I think. It had a fur collar and cuffs."

"When did he begin to wear a wig?"

"About the same time that he began to wear his new overcoat. I wrote you a letter at the time, making merry over his youthful appearance and hinting—of course only in jest—that he was looking out for a young wife. But you surely did not receive my letter. You must have been on your way home before it was written."

"I left Melbourne on the 11th of October. The wig, I suppose, was buried with him?"

"Yes."

"And where is the overcoat?"

"In the wardrobe upstairs, in uncle's room."

"Come and show it to me."

I led the way upstairs, my cousin following. In the hall on the first floor we encountered my old friend Mrs. Daly, the housekeeper. She threw up her hands in surprise at seeing me. Our greeting was very brief; I was too intent on solving the problem which had exercised my mind ever since receiving the letter at Boston, to pay much attention to anything else. Two words, however, explained to her where we were going, and at our request she accompanied us. We passed into my uncle's room. My cousin drew the key of the wardrobe from a drawer where it was kept, and unlocked the door. There hung the overcoat. A single glance was sufficient. It was the same.

The dazed sensation in my head began to make itself felt again. The atmosphere of the room seemed to oppress me, and closing the door of the wardrobe, I led the way down stairs again to the dining-room, followed by my cousin. Mrs. Daly had sense enough to perceive that we were discussing family matters, and retired to her own room.

I took my cousin's hand in mine, and asked:

"Will you tell me what you know of Mr. Marcus Weatherley?"

This was evidently another surprise for her. How could I have heard of Marcus Weatherley? She answered, however, without hesitation:

"I know very little of him. Uncle Richard and he had some dealings a few months since, and in that way he became a visitor

here. After a while he began to call pretty often, but his visits suddenly ceased a short time before uncle's death. I need not affect any reserve with you. Uncle Richard thought he came after me, and gave him a hint that you had a prior claim. He never called afterwards. I am rather glad that he didn't, for there is something about him that I don't quite like. I am at a loss to say what the something is; but his manner always impressed me with the idea that he was not exactly what he seemed to be on the surface. Perhaps I misjudged him. Indeed, I think I must have done so, for he stands well with everybody, and is highly respected."

I looked at the clock on the mantelpiece. It was ten minutes to seven. I rose from my seat.

"I will ask you to excuse me for an hour or two, Alice. I must find Johnny Gray."

"But you will not leave me, Willie, until you have given me some clue to your unexpected arrival, and to the strange questions you have been asking? Dinner is ready, and can be served at once. Pray don't go out again till you have dined."

She clung to my arm. It was evident that she considered me mad, and thought it probable that I might make away with myself. This I could not bear. As for eating any dinner, that was simply impossible in my then frame of mind, although I had not tasted food since leaving Rochester. I resolved to tell her all. I resumed my seat. She placed herself on a stool at my feet, and listened while I told her all that I have set down as happening to me subsequently to my last letter to her from Melbourne.

"And now, Alice, you know why I wish to see Johnny Gray."

She would have accompanied me, but I thought it better to prosecute my inquiries alone. I promised to return sometime during the night, and tell her the result of my interview with Gray. That gentleman had married, and become a householder on his own account during my absence in Australia. Alice knew his address, and gave me the number of his house, which was on Church Street. A few minutes rapid walking brought me to his door. I had no great expectation of finding him at home, as I deemed it probable that he had not returned from wherever he had been going when I met him; but I should be able to find out when he was expected, and would either wait or go in search of him. Fortune favoured me for once, however; he had returned more than an hour before. I was ushered into the drawing-room, where I found him playing cribbage with his wife.

"Why, Willie," he exclaimed, advancing to welcome me, "this is kinder than I expected. I hardly looked for you before to-morrow. All the better; we have just been speaking of you. Ellen, this is my old friend, Willie Furlong, the returned convict, whose banishment you have so often heard me deplore."

After exchanging brief courtesies with Mrs. Gray, I turned to her husband.

"Johnny, did you notice anything remarkable about the old gentleman who was with me when we met on Yonge Street this evening?"

"Old gentleman! who? There was no one with you when I met you."

"Think again. He and I were walking arm in arm, and you had passed us before you recognized me, and mentioned my name."

He looked hard in my face for a moment, and then said positively:

"You are wrong, Willie. You were certainly alone when we met. You were walking slowly, and I must have noticed if any one had been with you."

"It is you who are wrong," I retorted, almost sternly. "I was accompanied by an elderly gentleman, who wore a great coat with fur collar and cuffs, and we were conversing earnestly together when you passed us."

He hesitated an instant, and seemed to consider, but there was no shade of doubt on his face.

"Have it your own way, old boy," he said. "All I can say is, that I saw no one but yourself, and neither did Charley Leitch, who was with me. After parting from you we commented upon your evident abstraction, and the sombre expression of your countenance, which we attributed to your having only recently heard of the sudden death of your Uncle Richard. If any old gentleman

had been with you we could not possibly have failed to notice him."

Without a single word by way of explanation or apology, I jumped from my seat, passed out into the hall, seized my hat, and left the house.

III.

OUT into the street I rushed like a madman, banging the door after me. I knew that Johnny would follow me for an explanation, so I ran like lightning round the next corner, and thence down to Yonge Street. Then I dropped into a walk, regained my breath, and asked myself what I should do next.

Suddenly I bethought me of Dr. Marsden, an old friend of my uncle's. I hailed a passing cab, and drove to his house. The doctor was in his consultation-room, and alone.

Of course he was surprised to see me, and gave expression to some appropriate words of sympathy at my bereavement. "But how is it that I see you so soon?" he asked—"I understood that you were not expected for some months to come."

Then I began my story, which I related with great circumstantiality of detail, bringing it down to the moment of my arrival at his house. He listened with the closest attention, never interrupting me by a single exclamation until I had finished. Then he began to ask questions, some of which I thought strangely irrelevant.

"Have you enjoyed your usual good health during your residence abroad?"

"Never better in my life. I have not had a moment's illness since you last saw me."

"And how have you prospered in your business enterprises?"

"Reasonably well; but pray doctor, let us confine ourselves to the matter in hand. I have come for friendly, not professional, advice."

"All in good time, my 'boy," he calmly remarked. This was tantalizing. My strange narrative did not seem to have disturbed his serenity in the least degree.

"Did you have a pleasant passage?" he asked, after a brief pause. "The ocean, I believe, is generally rough at this time of year."

"I felt a little squeamish for a day or two after leaving Melbourne," I replied, "but I soon got over it, and it was not very bad even while it lasted. I am a tolerably good sailor."

"And you have had no special ground of anxiety of late? At least not until you received this wonderful letter"—he added, with a perceptible contraction of his lips, as though trying to repress a smile.

Then I saw what he was driving at.

"Doctor," I exclaimed, with some exasperation in my tone—"pray dismiss from your mind the idea that what I have told you is the result of a diseased imagination. I am as sane as you are. The letter itself affords sufficient evidence that I am not quite such a fool as you take me for."

"My dear boy, I don't take you for a fool at all, although you are a little excited just at present. But I thought you said you returned the letter to—ahem—your uncle."

For the moment I had forgotten that important fact. But I was not altogether without evidence that I had not been the victim of a disordered brain. My friend Gridley could corroborate the receipt of the letter, and its contents. My cousin could bear witness that I had displayed an acquaintance with facts which I would not have been likely to learn from any one but my uncle. I had referred to his wig and overcoat, and had mentioned to her the name of Mr. Marcus Weatherley—a name which I had never heard before in my life. I called Dr. Marsden's attention to these matters, and asked him to explain them if he could.

"I admit," said the doctor, "that I don't quite see my way to a satisfactory explanation just at present. But let us look the thing squarely in the face. During an acquaintance of nearly thirty years, I always found your uncle a truthful man, who was cautious enough to make no statements about his neighbours that he was not able to prove. Your informant, on the other hand, does not seem to have confined himself to facts. He made a charge of forgery against a gentleman whose moral and commercial integrity are unquestioned by all who know him. I know Marcus

Weatherley pretty well, and am not disposed to pronounce him a forger and a scoundrel upon the unsupported evidence of a shadowy old gentleman who appears and disappears in the most mysterious manner, and who cannot be laid hold of and held responsible for his slanders in a court of law. And it is not true, as far as I know and believe, that Marcus Weatherley is embarrassed in his circumstances. Such confidence have I in his solvency and integrity that I would not be afraid to take up all his outstanding paper without asking a question. If you will make inquiry, you will find that my opinion is shared by all the bankers in the city. And I have no hesitation in saying that you will find no acceptances with your uncle's name to them, either in this market or elsewhere."

"That I will try to ascertain to-morrow," I replied. "Meanwhile, Dr. Marsden, will you oblige your old friend's nephew by writing to Mr. Junius Gridley, and asking him to acquaint you with the contents of the letter, and with the circumstances under which I received it?"

"It seems an absurd thing to do," he said, "but I will if you like. What shall I say?" and he sat down at his desk to write the letter.

It was written in less than five minutes. It simply asked for the desired information, and requested an immediate reply. Below the doctor's signature I added a short postscript in these words:—

"My story about the letter and its contents is discredited. Pray answer fully, and at once.—W. F. F."

At my request the doctor accompanied me to the Post-office, on Toronto Street, and dropped the letter into the box with his own hands. I bade him good night, and repaired to the Rossin House. I did not feel like encountering Alice again until I could place myself in a more satisfactory light before her. I despatched a messenger to her with a short note stating that I had not discovered anything important, and requesting her not to wait up for me. Then I engaged a room and went to bed.

But not to sleep. All night long I tossed about from one side of the bed to the other; and at daylight, feverish and unrefreshed, I strolled out. I returned in time for breakfast, but ate little or nothing. I longed for the arrival of ten o'clock, when the banks would open.

After breakfast I sat down in the reading-room of the hotel, and vainly tried to fix my attention upon the local columns of that morning's paper. I remember reading over several items time after time, without any comprehension of their meaning. After that I remember—nothing.

Nothing! All was blank for more than five weeks. When consciousness came back to me I found myself in bed in my own old room, in the house on Gerrard Street, and Alice and Dr. Marsden were standing by my bedside.

No need to tell how my hair had been removed, nor about the bags of ice that had been applied to my head. No need to linger over any details of the "pitiless fever that burned in my brain." No need, either, to linger over my progress back to convalescence, and thence to complete recovery. In a week from the time I have mentioned, I was permitted to sit up in bed, propped up by a mountain of pillows. My impatience would brook no further delay, and I was allowed to ask questions about what had happened in the interval which had elapsed since my overwrought nerves gave way under the prolonged strain upon them. First, Junius Gridley's letter in reply to Dr. Marsden was placed in my hands. I have it still in my possession, and I transcribe the following copy from the original now lying before me:—

"DR. MARSDEN :

BOSTON, Dec. 22nd, 1861.

"In reply to your letter, which has just been received, I have to say that Mr. Furlong and myself became acquainted for the first time during our recent passage from Liverpool to Boston, in the *Persia*, which arrived here on Monday last. Mr. Furlong accompanied me home, and remained until Tuesday morning, when I took him to see the Public Library, the State House, the Athenæum, Faneuil Hall, and other points of interest. We casually dropped into the post-office, and he remarked upon the great number of letters there. At my instigation—made, of course, in jest—he applied at the General Delivery for letters for himself. He received one bearing the Toronto post-mark. He was naturally very much surprised at receiving it, and was not less so at its contents. After reading it he handed

t to me, and I also read it carefully. I cannot recollect it word for word, but it professed to come from his affectionate uncle, Richard Yardington. It expressed pleasure at his coming home sooner than had been anticipated, and hinted in rather vague terms at some calamity. It referred to a lady called Alice, and stated that she had not been informed of Mr. Furlong's intended arrival. There was something too, about his presence at home being a recompense to her for recent grief which she had sustained. It also expressed the writer's intention to meet his nephew at the Toronto railway station upon his arrival, and stated that no telegram need be sent. This, as nearly as I can remember, was about all there was in the letter. Mr. Furlong professed to recognize the handwriting as his uncle's. It was a cramped hand, not easy to read, and the signature was so peculiarly formed that I was hardly able to decipher it. The peculiarity consisted of the extreme irregularity in the formation of the letters, no two of which were of equal size; and capitals were interspersed promiscuously, more especially throughout the surname.

"Mr. Furlong was much agitated by the contents of the letter, and was anxious for the arrival of the time of his departure. He left by the B. & A. train at 11.30. This is really all I know about the matter, and I have been anxiously expecting to hear from him ever since he left. I confess that I feel curious, and should be glad to hear from him—that is, of course, unless something is involved which it would be impertinent for a comparative stranger to pry into.

"Yours, &c.,
"JUNUS H. GRIDLEY."

So that my friend had completely corroborated my account, so far as the letter was concerned. My account, however, stood in no need of corroboration, as will presently appear.

When I was stricken down, Alice and Dr. Marsden were the only persons to whom I had communicated what my uncle had said to me during our walk from the station. They both maintained silence on the matter, except to each other. Between themselves, in the early days of my illness, they discussed it with a good deal of feeling on each side. Alice implicitly believed my story from first to last. She was wise enough to see that I had been made acquainted with matters that I could not possibly have learned through any of the ordinary channels of communication. In short, she was not so enamoured of professional jargon as to have lost her common sense. The doctor, however, with the mole-blindness of many of his tribe, refused to believe. Nothing of this kind had previously come within the range of his own experience, and it was therefore impossible. He accounted for it all upon the hypothesis of my impending fever. He is not the only physician who mistakes cause for effect, and *vice versa*.

During the second week of my prostration, Mr. Marcus Weatherley absconded. This event, so totally unlooked for by those who had had dealings with him, at once brought his financial condition to light. It was found that he had been really insolvent for several months past. The day after his departure a number of his acceptances became due. These acceptances proved to be four in number, amounting to exactly forty-two thousand dollars. So that that part of my uncle's story was confirmed. One of the acceptances was payable in Montreal, and was for \$2,283.76. The other three were payable at different banks in Toronto. These last had been drawn at sixty days, and each of them bore a signature presumed to be that of Richard Yardington. One of them was for \$8,972.11; another was for \$10,114.63; and the third and last was for \$20,629.50. A short sum in simple addition will show us the aggregate of these three amounts—

\$8,972 11
10,114 63
20,629 50

\$39,716 24

which was the amount for which my uncle claimed that his name had been forged.

Within a week after these things came to light, a letter addressed to the manager of one of the leading banking institutions of Toronto arrived from Mr. Marcus Weatherley. He wrote from New York, but stated that he should leave there within an hour from the time of posting his letter. He voluntarily admitted having forged my uncle's name to the three acceptances above referred to, and entered into other details about his affairs which, though interesting enough to his creditors at that time, would have no special interest for the public at the present day. The banks where the acceptances had been discounted were wise after the fact, and detected numerous little details wherein the forged signatures differed from genuine signatures of my Uncle Richard.

In each case they pocketed the loss and held their tongues, and I dare say they will not thank me for calling attention to the matter, even at this distance of time:

There is not much more to tell. Marcus Weatherley, the forger, met his fate within a few days after writing his letter from New York. He took passage at New Bedford, Massachusetts, in a sailing vessel called the *Petrel*, bound for Havana. The *Petrel* sailed from port on the 12th of January, 1862, and went down in mid-ocean with all hands on the 23rd of the same month. She sank in full sight of the captain and crew of the *City of Baltimore* (Inman Line), but the hurricane prevailing was such that the latter were unable to render any assistance, or to save one of the ill-fated crew from the fury of the waves.

At an early stage in the story I mentioned that the only fictitious element should be the name of one of the characters introduced. The name is that of Marcus Weatherley himself. The person whom I have so designated really bore a different name—one that is still remembered by scores of people in Toronto. He has paid the penalty of his misdeeds, and I see nothing to be gained by perpetuating them in connection with his own proper name. In all other particulars the foregoing narrative is as true as a tolerably retentive memory has enabled me to record it.

I do not propose to attempt any psychological explanation of the events here recorded, for the very sufficient reason that only one explanation is possible. The weird letter and its contents, as has been seen, do not rest upon my testimony alone. With respect to my walk from the station with Uncle Richard, and the communication made by him to me, all the details are as real to my mind as any other incidents of my life. The only obvious deduction is, that I was made the recipient of a communication of the kind which the world is accustomed to regard as supernatural.

Mr. Owen has my full permission to appropriate this story in the next edition of his "Debatable Land between this World and the Next." Should he do so, his readers will doubtless be favoured with an elaborate analysis of the facts, and with a pseudo-philosophic theory about spiritual communion with human beings. My wife, who is an enthusiastic student of electro-biology, is disposed to believe that Weatherley's mind, overweighted by the knowledge of his forgery, was in some occult manner, and unconsciously to himself, constrained to act upon my own senses. I prefer, however, simply to narrate the facts. I may or may not have my own theory about those facts. The reader is at perfect liberty to form one of his own if he so pleases. I may mention that Dr. Marsden professes to believe to the present day that my brain was disordered by the approach of the fever which eventually struck me down, and that all I have described was merely the result of what he, with delightful periphrasis, calls "an abnormal condition of the system, induced by causes too remote for specific diagnosis."

It will be observed that, whether I was under an hallucination or not, the information supposed to be derived from my uncle was strictly accurate in all its details. The fact that the disclosure subsequently became unnecessary through the confession of Weatherley does not seem to me to afford any argument for the hallucination theory. My uncle's communication was important at the time when it was given to me; and we have no reason for believing that "those who are gone before" are universally gifted with a knowledge of the future.

It was open to me to make the facts public as soon as they became known to me, and had I done so, Marcus Weatherley might have been arrested and punished for his crime. Had not my illness supervened, I think I should have made discoveries in the course of the day following my arrival in Toronto which would have led to his arrest.

Such speculations are profitless enough, but they have often formed the topic of discussion between my wife and myself. Gridley, too, whenever he pays us a visit, invariably revives the subject, which he long ago christened "The Gerrard Street Mystery," although it might just as correctly be called "The Yonge Street Mystery," or, "The Mystery at the Union Station." He has urged me a hundred times over to publish the story; and now, after all these years, I follow his counsel, and adopt his nomenclature in the title.

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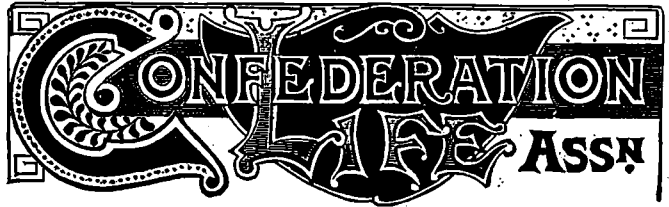
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