

The Fenelon Falls Gazette.

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Graduate of Toronto University and Royal College of Dental Surgeons.

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R. M. Hamilton, Mgr. Fenelon Falls Branch

Prenatal Robbery.

If the Chinese hash-house keeper had done you down for ten cents, or even if you only thought he had robbed you of ten cents, would n't there be a lovely row? Your righteous indignation would know no bounds. The crockery would fly, the house would be wrecked, while the police would probably arrive too late to save the Celestial's life. It might cost you a fortnight's wages or a month of your time, but you would be satisfied to take it out of the "Chink," even if it cost you more. Your mates would sympathize with you and you would become a hero; for it is a great crime, says the lawyer, the politician and the capitalist, to rob a poor workman of even ten cents.

The above thoughts remind me of the story of a cruel and pitiless robbery. The victim's name must be suppressed for obvious reasons, though you are at liberty to guess it if you can. This man was robbed before his birth as well as after. His mother was robbed of her share of nourishment and comfort; as a result the babe was born into the world poor in physique, lacking in good rich blood, which nature says is essential to a healthy child. The baby's childhood days need not be described in detail. Think of your own, and add a few miseries to it; for remember that, as the years have gone, the struggle for existence has become keener, even among children. Of course, the child was robbed of a few years of childhood, for a child should be happy, care free, developing body and mind along natural lines. Naturally, with its inherited poor physique and its lack of nourishment, the child was slow in assimilating education. This fact, combined with the necessity of cutting short its school-days owing to the need of aiding its father to provide the daily menu, simply meant that the child was robbed of its education. The child was sent to work among men in an iron foundry, and became a man in all but years. For a time the lad labored on, doing a man's work, till slack times came. Then, of course, he was fired. Work was scarce, and funds were low. The lad drifted away from home. Odd jobs came his way; he became a casual laborer. Finally, when casual work became even more casual, he became a hobo, drifting around. He was jailed for vagrancy, jailed for trying to beat a freight out of a workless town, jailed again because he could not give a good account of himself or of what he was doing for a living; and because he had two previous convictions against him. Now he is a man in years, but in nothing else. His manhood has gone, or perhaps it will be better to say that his manhood has not yet arrived.

He never realizes that he has been

robbed of all that makes life worth living. No suspicion of the truth has crossed his mind. They who robbed him have woven the most cunning web across his eyes. They have convinced him that it is his own folly and sin which are responsible for his misery. That his past suffering and present condition are but a reflex of his own wickedness. "As a child," they say to him, "you refused to make the most of your opportunities while at school. Later you drifted into casual work instead of getting regular employment. You broke the laws of man and were jailed. Shake yourself together, assert your manhood, or think where you will spend eternity."

The poor sufferer makes spasmodic efforts to shake himself together; but, from childhood onward, all that was essential to the development of a healthy, strong will has been denied him. He fails; and when he sees his spiritual and moral advisers, well clad, healthy and happy, he is ashamed and slinks across the street to hide himself from their sight.

Some day he will awaken, tear the web from his eyes and see himself as he is, not as others say he is. He will realize that he and others like him are what they are because his moral, spiritual and legal advisers are what they are. He will realize that robbery means victims; that robbery by a class from a class means a class of victims. Then his docility will give place to anger, and when his anger is swelled by the anger of his class, the reckoning will come.—W. Lewis.

Honest Confession.

One day I sat with half a dozen of the best writers in the country. One of them earns a salary as large as that of the president of the United States. Another earns more than \$50,000 a year. The other three or four earn no less than \$20,000 a year each. You can hardly pick up a magazine without seeing their names. What one of them writes, ten million persons read. Hundreds of thousands read eagerly every word written by the others.

But there is no single one of these wage earners who is not heartily sick of his job. No one of them will write lies, but no one of them can write the whole truth. One evening one of them said to me, "I've got to quit it. I can stand it no longer. I spent all day yesterday with the proprietor of a great magazine. I had to fight for every line and every word I wrote." Another said to me, "Do you suppose, if I came into the Socialist and labor movement, I could make a living? I want a bare living, and a chance to say the whole truth."

The whole truth—for these men are Socialists.

Not a single magazine or newspaper will permit them to preach the truth.—Robert Hunter.

1836 THE BANK OF 1912

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Fenelon Falls Branch

M.W. Reive, Manager