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COMMUNICATIONS.

To the Editor of The Watchman.

SIR,—I have for some time watched the truthfulness and integrity of your journal, and its purely liberal conservative principles, and I admire and appreciate them. And for that reason I address this article to you, and if you deem it worth placing in the columns of the WATCHMAN you can do so at your pleasure.

If there is anything we need in this country, it is truthful journalism, and for that reason I offer you a few remarks on that subject.

Between newspapers and newspapers there is as much difference as there is between an excellent saddle of mutton, well cooked, tender, juicy, delicious to the palate, and a tough sinewy steak cut from an animal of prehistoric times. So with newspapers, from the highest type of a good newspaper, for instance such as the London or Chicago Times, to the lowest, such as the Nihilistic organ, and Land Liberty, we pass through innumerable gradations of excellence until we reach those in which a microscopic inspection even fails to discover an intelligible reason for their existence. Let us analyze the process of newspaper reading as it is prosecuted by civilized christendom. In our description we follow in the main an astute observer of human nature, whose name, however, we are unable to rescue from oblivion. After the paper is obtained, the attention is first directed to the telegrams. But it would be erroneous to presume that anxiety about affairs of gravity occurring throughout the world is the motive. It is done for no better reason than because a habit has been acquired of wishing to be fed with the latest intelligence. A craving for news, like any other craving, once contracted must be satisfied. For this reason, then, all the telegraph news, home and foreign, great and small, is read with an equal amount of interest and an equal lack of reflection. After this the leading articles are turned to. The fate they meet is best described by saying "they are read," for it must not be imagined that any concern is felt whether their contents are true or false, exaggerated or misrepresented.

The eye runs over them to catch the general drift of what is written. Exceptions are made only in favor of political articles which may be only a criticism on the political party then in power, or anecdotes, or really quite startling paragraphs which are entrusted to memory for the sake of using them to create a sensation. Next comes the home and foreign correspondence, which is glanced over in the same. There is probably a letter from New York or London, or from San Francisco, each as likely to have been written by some obscure scribe in the garret of a cheap boarding-house as received by mail. But the spiciness of the one is sure to be properly balanced by the dullness of the other, while both team with a multitude of topics. Then follows divers articles, perhaps on the McKinley tariff, on the Peruvian insurrection, or Home Rule, a brilliant account of the marriage or the funeral of some "great personage," or of a railroad disaster, described in such a graphic way that one either regrets not to have been present or feels his hair stand on end with horror. The local news column follows next in order, and then comes sporting intelligence, law reports, shipping news, weather and money market. When the paper is put down an inconceivable variety of information has been jostled in a disorderly manner through the reader's mind, and the conclusion is generally drawn: "Nothing in the papers, to-day."

We think this is as fair an account of average newspaper reading as can be rendered. The evening journals are skimmed over in similar style, only with this difference that due allowance is made in the amount of attention bestowed upon them for the wear and tear on the brain of a whole day's work. Aware of this, the afternoon papers, as a rule, are the "me plus ultra" (perfection) of brevity and condensation. And here the fact must be recorded, that many fairly well educated persons have fallen slaves to so slovenly a habit of reading. We have extant in our days large numbers of confirmed newspaper readers. All those who devote whatever spare time they can secure to skimming over a morning paper in the morning and an evening paper in the evening, with, perhaps a weekly or two and a monthly on Sunday and at other leisure times, all these belong to one family, the family of confirmed newspaper readers. Excessive devotion to newspapers prevails mainly among men, but in our opinion, it is productive of the same evil effects that undue devotion to novels produces on females. News reading does not promote a healthy mental condition; on the contrary an individual that reads habitually in the above described manner, destroys by degrees his brain power. The judgment will become weakened, the sense of mental discrimination blunted, intellectual initiative discouraged, and the mental powers finally become deadened, or at least seriously impaired by substituting a habit of mechanical skimming for that of intellectual reading. The influence of the press on the class of confirmed readers, as we have styled them, consequently denotes no real intellectual advancement. For while a person who is not reading may be thinking, one who is engaged in mechanical reading is almost sure not to think. We have been speaking here of the better educated classes of society. If we descend a few steps on the social ladder, we encounter a state of affairs still more discouraging in its character. The laboring classes but a few generations

ago could not be counted as forming an integral part of the educated world. The laboring classes of to-day, with the exceptions, perhaps, of some rural districts where the much vaunted benefits of a liberal education have not as yet gained a strong foothold, are now mostly habitual readers. Scanty means, and a limited amount of time, which is all they can devote to mental culture, narrows down for them the field of reading matter. In the majority of cases a cheap newspaper is at once the Alpha and Omega of intellectual food. They read not like those whose station in life is less humble, but they plod their way through from beginning to end, not omitting even the advertisement. Besides, the papers especially destined for the laborers have not that wide scope nor that diversity of matter, which first-class papers display. The articles are written so as to be within the understanding of the readers for whom they are intended, and a large space is generally devoted to a discussion of their own grievances and misfortunes, coupled with suggestions often very ill-judged for the amelioration of their condition. Every transaction enacted by the political party in power is twisted and misrepresented by the political party out of power. They are, in fact, political levers, used alike by ambitious candidates for office, who court popularity in order to seek votes, and by unscrupulous schemers to secure their godwits under the pretence of having in view the improvement of their condition, but really to use them for their own selfish purposes.

The public dangers of our times, the social discontentment, the political corruption, the almost entire loss of correct judgment, the absence of the principles of justice and morality, and almost utter destruction of faith and the principles of religion, which are gradually creeping into this country, form an army of facts that must be ascribed to the pernicious effects produced by the circulation of cheap and bad newspaper organs among the masses.

A few men without principles, or whose is worse still, and yet often the case, a few men with bad principles, acquire by means of cheap "laborers' journals" and other one-horse papers, and a few sometimes called first-class papers, such as the "Toronto Globe," the direction of the intellect of the many of the man himself. All this class of journals, great and small, and their abettors, pretend to be the advocate and friend of the laboring class, when in reality their own selfish interest is what they seek. If in a state like Germany the suppression of or three hundred papers of socialistic tendencies became a necessity, it was because the authority which is vested in every government could not allow the further corruption of its subjects. Could any stronger illustration be required to illustrate the detrimental influence of a large portion of the newspaper press upon society? If so, we refer to the reign of terror in Russia. Unless it be a progress from barbarism to civilization to advocate murder and assassination, unless it be an intellectual advance to have one's life threatened in print for being an officer of the crown, unless bloodshed and incendiarism, crime and rapine be the heralds of civilization, unless this be so the Nihilistic press merits unqualified condemnation. It may be argued against us that we have painted our picture darker than the reality, and that we are doing the benefits conferred upon mankind by the institution called "the press." This is not the case. We gladly acknowledge real merits when we find them, and we hesitate not to say that a large number of our journals deserve high praise. But if the evils produced are not counterbalanced by the advantages accruing from the existence of an institution; if it is not to be denied, as it cannot be denied in these days, that the mischief wrought by the corrupt portion of venal newspapers is far beyond the control and influence of not only the uncorrupt press, but also almost beyond the control of national governments and civilized society, how can it be asserted by people who think that the institution which is the cause of such a state of things, or if not the first cause, is at least indisputably the agent without which the evil referred to could not have been spread to such an appalling extent, how can it be asserted that the universal prevalence of a habit of indiscriminate unreflective reading is evidence of the intellectual advancement claimed for our age? The question is one of profit and loss, and simply which has been the greater, the influence of the press for evil or its influence for good? To this question the answer is furnished by facts of such gravity that there can be no room for doubt as to what the answer should be.

Thus far, Mr. Editor, I have written of the newspaper press in general, and what bad effects may arise from unprincipled editors, backed by bad principled men. Instances of this might be seen in our past three elections in this county and elsewhere, in which it seemed the business of the reform press of the country to distort and vilify every act of our conservative administration. They tried to make the people believe that free trade could be obtained from the Republican party in the United States. This I said at the time could not be obtained, but the cry of "mad dogs" raised and thousands joined in the chase. Past events verified my assertion. We saw the Reform paper of this town of Lindsay distort every act of the member for South Victoria into a ball of binder twine at six cents an acre, but the revolving force of the wheel was the spindle of the yarn, and the binder-twine yarn would not tie the sheaf. This work was not very creditable to the spinner. Perhaps this will be a good lesson to his successor not to follow in his foot prints. The member for South Victoria may not have had the advantage of a liberal education in his youth, as many of us had not, but such as he had, he has made the most possible out of it, and his judgment, since he has entered on his parliamentary duties, shows him to be no mediocrity. The press at least should be pervaded by a spirit of truth and justice, free from prejudice, etc. But unfortunately such seems not to be the case; and here the question may arise, where are we, in this Dominion of Canada drifting to? Is it not nihilism or socialism or perhaps some worse ism?

The answer may be given in this way: Ancient Rome, so long as she resisted the encroachments of vice, and maintained a sense of honor and chivalry, truth and justice, piety and devotion among her citizens, preserved her political frame firm and unbroken. But the "fell destroyer" came. Vice opened its flood-gates of destruction,

and a thousand streams of pollution swept away every remnant of moral principles. The cords of her government became relaxed, her laws were disregarded, licentiousness and corruption sapped the very foundations of the Empire. Rome fell, and from her fall succeeding nations may learn that the principles of truth, justice and morality are the supporting pillars of their political institutions.

Integrity in word and deed is the backbone of character, and the strength, the industry, and the civilization of nations depend on individual character, yes, the very foundations of civil security rest upon it and laws and institutions are but its out-growth. In the just balance of nature, individuals, and nations, and races, will obtain just so much as they deserve and no more. And as effect finds its cause so surely does quality of character amongst a people produce its befitting results. The noble people will be nobly ruled, and the ignorant and corrupt ignobly. In the formation of the character and government of a nation the newspaper press becomes a great factor, and therefore should be above cavil.

This, Mr. Editor, you may consider a prosaical communication, but if you deem it worth your notice and wish something more on this subject we can furnish it. If any one takes a hint, or feels hurt he can make his grievances known and we can accommodate them with a few more remarks on this same subject.—Yours respectfully,
AN OLD CONSERVATIVE.
Downeyville, Aug. 6, 1892.

Caught in a Cruel Trap

RALEIGH, N. C., Aug. 8.—A young man named Myatt was engaged to marry a young woman in Gaston County, but her parents forbade him the house.

The girl's father discovered a few days ago that Myatt was making secret visits to her at night, entering the house through a widow, and prepared a savage trap.

The father sharpened a scythe blade and so arranged it that when Myatt crawled in through the window the blade inflicted an ugly wound in the abdomen.

Suffering intensely from the wound Myatt had to walk four miles before he could get surgical aid.

An Infernal Box

DUBLIN, Aug. 6.—Some miscreants today placed an iron box filled with gunpowder outside the public room of an hotel in Pathkall, County Limerick, and after igniting the fuse attached to the box made their escape. In a few seconds the occupants of the public room were thrown into a state of consternation by an explosion which smashed the windows of the room and wrecked the furniture contained therein. A number of persons in the room were thrown to the floor and sustained slight injuries but no one was seriously hurt. The outrage is believed to have been perpetrated by members of the Parnellite faction of the Irish party as an act of revenge against the hotel-keeper who is a vigorous supporter of the McCarthyite branch of the party.

A Duel for a Pretty Grape Picker

ROME, Aug. 7.—A tragic tale comes from the village of Mercigliano, in North Italy. Saccone, a farmer's son, was enamoured of a pretty grape picker named Bionda. The girl was already betrothed to one Costa and rejected the advances of Saccone who thereupon forced a quarrel with Costa, hoping to put him out of the way and then win Signorina Bionda's hand. It was agreed that the rivals should fight a duel with pistols. The girl learning of the rendezvous planned to aid her lover, and hiding behind him she fired at Saccone when the signal was given. Costa fired at the same instant. Saccone fell dead pierced by Costa's bullet, but Costa also fell, his sweetheart's aim having been so unskillful that the bullet from her revolver struck him in the back of his head instead of reaching its intended victim. More remarkable still Saccone's bullet missing Costa buried itself in the bosom of the devoted maiden who had come to her lover's assistance. The doctors pronounce Costa's wound mortal, but think that the young woman may survive.

A Monster Buffalo

OTTAWA, August 6.—There has just been placed in the Geological Museum one of the finest specimens of the wood buffalo that has ever been shot in Canada. It was presented to the museum by Warburton Pyke, an English gentleman, who has been making a tour of the Canadian North-West, British Columbia and Alaska. The taxidermist, who has done his work well, was Mr. Ward, of Rochester, New York. The animal when alive would stand about six feet, and is considered to be superior in size, weight and general appearance to the best of the prairie buffaloes which are placed in the National Museum at Washington. For these there was a special hunt made, the finest being captured in Montana. It stands 5 feet 10 inches, which shows that the one now in the geological museum is slightly higher. The age of the biggest one in Washington is said to be 11 years, while the one in question, counting the age by the rings on the horns which is the general way of doing, is between 8 and 9 years. The average life of a buffalo is put down at 25 years. Professor Selwyn, who along with several members of his staff was placing the specimen in position at the extreme end of the upper flat of the building yesterday afternoon, said that he was not aware where Mr. Pyke killed or procured the animal. The letter making a present of it to the museum was written by Mr. Pyke from the Victoria Club, Victoria, B. C. It is an attraction of great value to the museum.

A 3-year-old child of Mr. R. T. Couch was drowned in the Thames river at Mitchell last evening.

A Bishop Murdered on a Train

ROME, Aug. 8.—On the arrival of the train from Florence at Foligno to-day the Bishop of Foligno was found lying dead in one of the carriages, with several wounds on his head. The police have arrested the suspected murderer.

Over the Precipice

GUTHRIE, Ont., Aug. 8.—A whole family consisting of a man and wife and four children names unknown were killed to-day. The family had been in this city buying provisions and while returning to their claim their team ran away and went over the precipice.

Raisins Killed Her

BRIDGEPORT, Conn., Aug. 8.—Fredericka Gorman, aged 18, is dead from eating too many raisins. The girl suffered from peritonitis and an operation was performed, when it was found that a large quantity of raisins had collected in her stomach. She had been in the habit of eating freely of raisin cake.

A Dynamite Cartridge in a Wheat Sheaf

OGDEN, Utah, Aug. 8.—While Charles Hadlock was threshing wheat near here yesterday a sheaf in which a dynamite cartridge had been concealed was fed into the separator. The result was an explosion, which tore the machine to pieces and threw the threshers in all directions. It is thought that two of them, whose names have not been learned, are fatally injured. There is no clue to the perpetrators of the deed.

Two Boys Burned to Death

KINCARDINE, Aug. 8.—This morning about 5 o'clock Mrs. Young, wife of Robt. Young, living on lot 35, concession 5, Greerock, started a fire in the kitchen stove and then went out to the barn. In some unaccountable manner the kitchen took fire, and the flames and smoke soon ascended by the staircase upstairs. The eldest boy, aged 21 years, escaped and ran to the barn for a ladder. On breaking the window and attempting to enter the smoke and flames drove him back, and two boys, Thomas, aged 16, and George, aged 12, were burned to death.

Reward For Bravery

On the 20th December last the Yarmouth, N.S., ship Arlington sighted in the north Atlantic a derelict British barque, the Countess of Dufferin, of Londonderry, whose crew were lashed to the rigging and in imminent peril of death. Capt. Davis, of the Arlington, ordered the ship's lifeboat to be launched, and calling for volunteers the mate and three sailors manned the boat and managed to rescue the shipwrecked seamen. Monday the Department of Marine was notified that the British Board of Trade had awarded a gold watch to the captain, a silver medal to the mate, and a bronze medal and \$15 to each of the three seamen of the Arlington in recognition of their bravery.

RESURRECTION IN A MORGUE

An Attendant Badly Scared by a Supposed Corpse.

CINCINNATI, Aug. 8.—About noon Monday a man was carried into the morgue, to all appearances dead, a victim of the heat. He was placed in a cooling box, washed and prepared for identification, covered with ice and a sheet spread over the rigid face. Henry Brunstrop went about his work as usual, when, some time later, glancing through the half open door of the dead room, a sight met his gaze that almost froze the blood in his veins.

There, slowly rising, with the sheet still clinging to him and the ice sliding off to the bottom of the box with metallic clicks, was the "corpse" so recently prepared for the grave. Recovering himself Brunstrop hastily called Superintendent Shaw, and they assisted the man, now clearly alive, to the adjoining room. A patrol wagon took the revived man to the hospital. He was Henry Klass, who had been overcome by heat and pronounced dead by his fellow laborers. Klass died at the hospital.

A Cow on the Track

PETERBORO, Aug. 8.—A smashup occurred here on the spur line of the C. P. R. which runs along the river bank to Melrum & Davidson's mill, at the Hunter street crossing this morning. A cow that was being driven to pasture along Hunter street turned into the track, and was struck by the rear car of a train of 21 empty flats and box cars which was being pushed up the spur line to the Dickson Co's yard to be loaded with ties and slabs. The cow went under the wheels, causing the rear flat car to lift, and five of them were piled up in an instant in an indescribable wreck. Four men, employees of the Dickson Co., who were employed loading the cars, were on one of the cars which had been partially loaded. Three of them were thrown into the air. One, Daniel Turcott, went clear of the wreck and alighted in the saw dust. George Johnston also fell clear of the demolished car and escaped with some bruises. John Kerr was buried beneath the wreck, and pinned down by the box of one of the cars. He was rescued in a few minutes and taken to the hospital, where it was found that his thigh was dislocated, his left arm fractured, and his ribs broken. The trainmen all escaped. An auxiliary came up from Havelock and started this afternoon to remove the wreck.