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Richmond Hill and Vicinity

The Merchant's Wife.

Once upon a time, as the story books say, there lived in our village a lady the wife of a well-to-do merchant, and a former postmaster. They were owners of one of the best mercantile establishments and residences in the village with pleasant surroundings. The husband, a jovial, pleasant gentleman, was a popular business man. His wife was a cheery, happy-faced, good-hearted lady, always ready to do an act of kindness or render help to the distressed. Unknown to her friends and neighbors she began to indulge in the deceitful beverage. Her husband, like many others of those days, did not see the danger of partaking as long as it did not result in visible intoxication and if that did occur occasionally it was looked upon as an accident either in miscalculating the strength of the wine, or a mistake in the mixing. To him high living brought the gout. The gout brought him in the prime of life to his grave. Previous to his death the business to a great extent depended on the Clerk, a well educated, rather fine specimen of the genus homo, a Cockney recently imported. To him the variety of stimulating beverages that the licenses of those days covered were equally attractive and soon developed themselves on his face. There was always on hand a large supply, readiness of access led to frequency of excess, and rumors of over indulgence began to circulate. The lady married the clerk and in dissipation they went down together. The property passed into the hands of others. The clerk died a sot. The lady became one of the most dissolute and depraved characters, a perfect virago. On the last visit to the scene of her former opulence and respectability on account of her violent and abusive temper she was not fit to be received in any home. Unknown to those who would have befriended her even in her wrecked condition she spent the night in the corner of a driving shed alone and uncared for. Drink is a great leveller. This unfortunate victim of a degrading habit may by this time have followed her husbands. Ladies in those times were not debarred from acquiring honors in the socialities of society and she was a sad success.

Among the prominent victims of the intoxicating glass in those days was a well-known old man. He was one of the jolliest fellows the writer ever knew. He drank much, was always civil and never irritable, always laughing and ever ready for a joke. On one occasion while reeling home from the hotel he was overtaken by a traveller in a light rig. Asking for a ride it was readily granted. As soon as seated he proposed to drive to which there was a decided objection. He at once bundled the owner out of the rig, and drove to his home. When the man almost breathless with running and rage caught up he handed him the lines, thanked him for the loan of the rig and went in convulsed with laughter at his exploit. His spirit of merriment would develop itself on all occasions. He would laugh over a broken bone, one occasion excepted. Of broken bones he had much experience. In his numerous sprees he had broken his legs and his arms, he had broken three of his ribs and dislocated one of his shoulders. While acting as hostler at one of the hotels he fell from the hayloft to the floor and was found next morning dead with a broken neck. But for drink this man might have lived a better life and died a more hopeful death.

Perhaps we never had among us a more genial and agreeable fellow than a young journeyman shoemaker with a wooden leg. He was a married man. When sober he was a gentleman when drunk he was Satan personified. While on a spree when he entered the front door of the house his wife had to fly out at the back. He amused himself by smashing the dishes and destroying the furniture until wearied with his mad exploits he would lie down and sleep when his wife would go in and try to fix things up. In one of his maniacal ravings he was with difficulty restrained from self-destruction. No amount of drinking blunted his keen sensibilities. He was generous to a fault, but quick to notice an insinuation or to resent an insult. It was astonishing what activity there was in that wooden leg. It seemed to have on one of the seven league boots. All he had to do was to look at a place and he "got there." One day a big bully met him on the street and thought that he could insult him with impunity. He twitted him about his peg. As quick as a flash some one was lying on his back squirming in the dust. When that "peg" got down to business and all its motive powers in full swing that fellow thought that he was under a patent double action pump handle. He was taught more "better manners" in the space of two minutes than he had learned in a life time. A day or

two after when he could get his eyes open he looked on that wooden leg with the most profound respect. Its owner moved away from our town.
(TO BE CONTINUED.)

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Our Ottawa Letter.

We can understand the natural chagrin of extreme Conservative partisans at the unqualified success of the efforts of the Liberal administration to give practical effect to the long existing desire for closer union with the Empire, more particularly as shown in the adoption of Preferential trade and Imperial penny postage, but we cannot understand why they persist in making themselves the laughing stock of the community. The "I. William Mulock," incident of a year ago was considered by those who could not look very far ahead a most excellent joke, but as a matter of fact the amount of attention which the persistent attempts at ridicule drew to the Postmaster General and his project, had the exact object which he desired of making the country and the Imperial authorities so familiar with the idea that when he went to London this summer to clinch the matter it was comparatively plain sailing.

Then again the manner in which a large number of the opponents of the Government persist in their attempts to "guy" Preferential trade is funny. Only this week the Mail & Empire treated its readers to a column leading article to demonstrate that "the policy of the Liberal Government is only one of drift from Great Britain to the United States. It is designed to keep British and Canadian interests asunder and to bring Canadian and United States interests in closer touch." Almost the same day that this oracular utterance appeared, there was published a copy of a cable sent by Sir Howard Vincent, M. P., on behalf of the United Empire Trade League to Sir Wilfrid Laurier expressing "the undying gratitude of the British race of to-day and forever to their brothers throughout the vast Dominion for the patriotic and filial inauguration of Preferential trade between British kith and kin;" adding "may this preferential trade grow and grow into the complete commercial federation of the British people and possessions the world over." Evidently the point of view makes the difference.

A SAMPLE OF ACCURACY.

The sensational yarns originated by discontented American miners at Dawson and industriously copied from American newspapers by Conservative journals throughout the Dominion continue to appear with monotonous regularity. In view of the fact that thorough investigation will be instituted by the Government it is not worth while to occupy space to discuss it here. That the alleged facts are absolutely unreliable in the absence of testimony from responsible parties, may be judged from one sample statement copied in the Mail & Empire recently from the Seattle Post Intelligence where it is stated that Major Walsh has had the power to remit royalties on gold taken out of Klondike claims and that he has been exercising that power. Major Walsh has absolutely no such power, the regulation requiring the collections of 10% royalty is as definite as all the other regulations, and is being administered without qualification by the officials to the best of their ability.

ANOTHER ONE OF THE SAME.

Another allegation equally without any shadow of foundation is that Major Walsh has resigned because he is sick and tired of the wide-spread corruption and general difficulties of his position. While this statement may have originated in honest ignorance of those who started it, it is now well understood that the Major only accepted his commission for a year. Administrator Ogilvie had been practically selected as his successor long before he went to England, and the present reorganization of the governmental machinery is simply a carrying out of the general scheme which has been gradually formulated by the Minister of the Interior as he has become informed of the requirement of the case. So far however the Conservative press, that has so far industriously circled the mis-leading stories before referred to, have failed to rise to the requirements of honest journalism by correcting the error into which they have fallen.

FOOLISH OF HUGH JOHN.

If Mr. Hugh John Macdonald ever hopes to occupy his distinguished father's place in the estimation of the Canadian people he will have to exhibit more of the tact that was so characteristic of the old Chieftain.

There was a time when it appeared as if he appreciated the fact and was endeavoring to cultivate the suavity for which Sir John A. Macdonald was noted, but his recent exhibition of personal felling in refusing to preside at the banquet given by the Manitoba Club, of which he was President, to the Governor General was a break that has attracted considerable notice. We don't suppose it bothered Lord Aberdeen to any extent, but it has caused no little annoyance to Hugh John's political friends. Distributing legal advice and services gratuitously among those from whom he hopes to receive future favors is all very well, but it will not take the place of the ordinary amenities of public life.

GOOD IMMIGRATION WORK.

The report which Mr. Pedley, Superintendent of Immigration, makes of his trip of inspection to the United States agencies is decidedly gratifying. The interest throughout the North Western States in the Canadian North West is rapidly increasing, and the agencies throughout that district have had an excellent season's business. Mr. Pedley found abundant evidence of the splendid impression made upon the newspaper men, who have just returned from an extended trip taken at the suggestion of the Minister of the Interior and under the guidance of the representatives of the Government. Nearly every paper throughout that vast agricultural district is publishing from week to week, most glorious accounts of the resources and the opportunities of the Dominion. He also found out that the Canadian exhibit at Omaha was doing us an immense amount of good.

PROVINCIAL POLITICS.

Provincial politics are absorbing attention in Ontario just now, all interest being centered in Toronto. The Debate on the address has considerably cleared the atmosphere and the policy of the Government is now before the country in black and white. It differs in no material point from the outlined in the discussion that has been occupying so large an amount of space in the press for the last month and there is practically no question that another month will see the new legislation upon the statute book and the House adjourned until the new year.

Provincial affairs in British Columbia are also occupying a very large amount of public attention and the kaleidoscopic changes from day to day are at this distance quite bewildering. The one point that certainly appears settled is that the late administration has definitely dropped out of existence, and that the affairs of the Province will, for the next parliamentary term, be in the hands of new though not untried men whose past record for progress and knowledge of affairs is an excellent certificate for the future of the Pacific Province.

Agents.

Book business is better than for years past; also have better and faster selling books. Agents clearing from \$10 to \$40 weekly. A few leaders are:—"Queen Victoria," "Life of Mr. Gladstone," "My Mother's Bible Stories," "Progressive Speaker," "Klondike Gold Fields," "Woman," "Glimpses of the Unseen," "Breakfast, Dinner and Supper." Books on time. **BRADLEY-GARRETSON CO., LIMITED, TORONTO.**

Sherwood

Mrs. J. Campbell visited friends in York Friday.

Mrs. Watt of Toronto who visited Mr. T. Rankin has returned home.

Mr. Willis Lahmer met with an accident by falling off a load of peas. The large bone of his left arm was broken at the wrist.

Miss E. Campbell is spending a week with relatives at Tottenham.

Messrs. R. W. and R. Edgar of Nelson, New Zealand, arrived here Monday. While crossing the ocean they visited the Hawaiian Islands and while there attended a reception given by the ex Queen at her palace in Honolulu. Messrs. Edgar are the guests of their cousin Mr. Thos. Rupert.

Miss L. Rankin of York spent Sunday at her home here.

Men and Women

Who need to make money can do so without risk or capital, by soliciting orders for our memorial edition of "The Life of Gladstone," by Castell Hopkins, with introduction by the honorable the Minister of Education, Dr. Ross. This book is a Canadian classic. The story of his life is told with thrilling interest. His death and imposing national funeral will both be described and illustrated. 512 large quarto pages. It measures 8x10x1 1/2 inches. Retail \$2.50, worth \$4. Magnificent binding, profusely illustrated. Prospectus 75 cents. Liberal terms. **BRADLEY-GARRETSON CO., Limited, Toronto.**