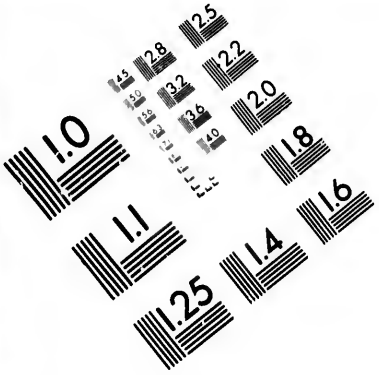

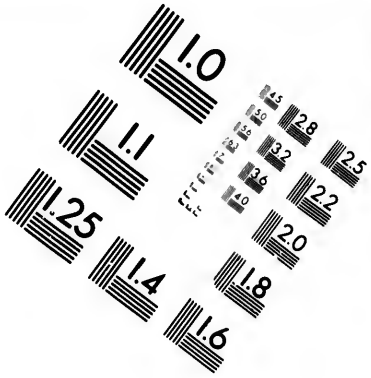

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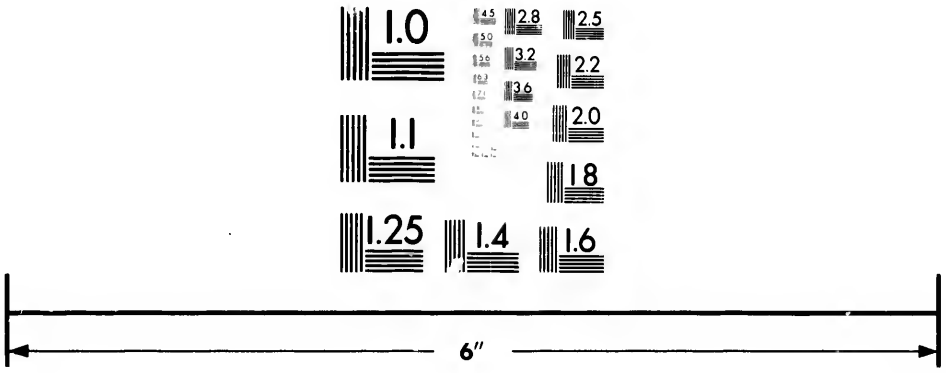

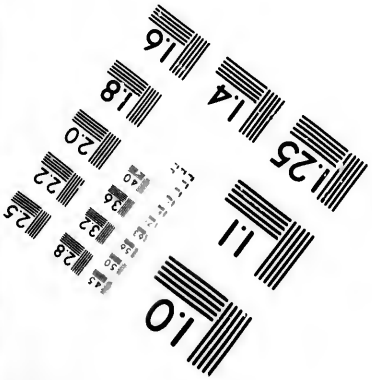

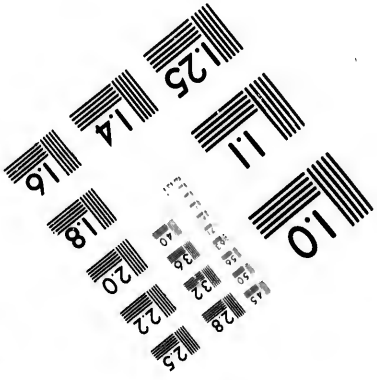

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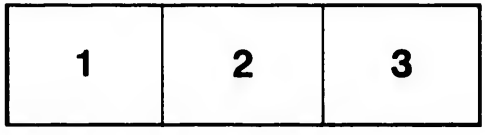

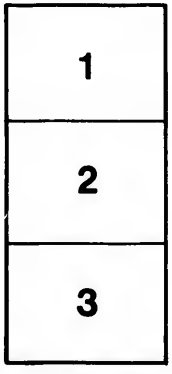

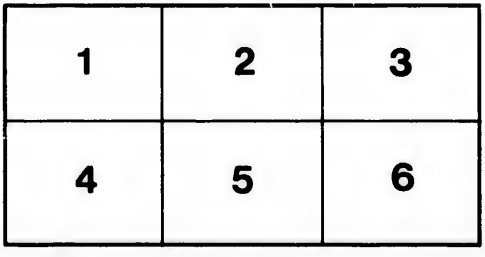

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Sketches in Nova Scotia.

No. 2.

A HOLIDAY,

By the Author of "Will Elson."

PRICE 10 CENTS.

HALIFAX, N. S.:
1884.

Sketches in Nova Scotia.

No. 2.

A HOLIDAY.

THE 21st June, 1882, was one of the longest days in the year.

No deep-seated melancholy with suicidal tendencies will result if a front seat among Christian scientists be not accorded for this announcement. The statement is reasonable, and can be proved true—beyond that I must admit it has no greater recommendation; and if people are not found on every door-step with finger excitedly tracing the words, I will endeavor to bear up, satisfied of a better reception when I publish my work entitled:—

"Will the comet to be discovered by the powerful telescope now in contemplated construction, strike the earth in the vicinity of Halifax? if so, at what time, and what are the probable dimensions of the largest splinter that will be left of the city?"

Still, in the face of what might be considered a discouraging want of appreciation of the first statement, I shall venture another remark respecting that day—it was superbly fine. Moreover, it was what a great many if not very great people would give me loud and prolonged applause for saying every fine day should be—it was a holiday, and I went "a fishing."

Possibly no people in the world so greatly enjoy a fine day in the country as those who live in Halifax do. This is not to be attributed so much to any inherent love of the beautiful and good as to the same cause that a tramp enjoys an occasional dinner of beefsteak and onions.

Introduction in a future edition.

From peculiarity of situation or from wickedness of the inhabitants the place has a remarkable climate. The punishment, though not so severe as that of the Cities of the Plain, makes up the difference in being more prolonged. Overcoats and mittens may be required any day through summer, while straw hats and dusters are heavy enough for comfort at times in winter. After weeks of east wind, drizzle, fog and mud, we pray for a little sunshine, and when the sunshine comes and is with us as a day, every zephyr wafts quantities of filth into eyes and mouth, and orisons go up again for a little more rain.

The exemption from the tornado that afflicts other places, transplanting and inverting trees and houses, should not be overlooked however. At night we ascend to our garrets, put up our hands, and say our "Now I lay me" with a reasonable assurance that if we wake at all it will be somewhere in the same spot and not in a basement of either of the neigbouring cities, Dartmouth or Africville.

The persistent efforts of our newspapers to keep a knowledge of climatic conditions prevailing, from outsiders, has not met with a full measure of success. It is known abroad; although, perhaps a consideration of sensitiveness on the subject prevents them harping on it as it is done here on the real or imaginary disadvantages of other places. St. John fogs are a never ending theme in Halifax, while the simple truth is, the dismal fog horns are heard here often, when St. John, canopied with cerulean blue, is bathed in undiluted sunshine.

It has been a custom from time immemorial with foreigners, when recommending a suitable place for bad people, to suggest indifferently Halifax, or the shorter word with the same initial. In essentials, the terms are considered synonymous. The cause of this has not heretofore been considered a burning question; not, it is said by western towns, through indifference to outside opinion so much as to the somnambulistic effects of the atmosphere of the place. But Halifax says to her more precocious sisters:—"You think I am asleep because my back is towards you, but I am looking seaward, and when the emergency arises you will find me awake, and some people will find to their cost probably that there is more truth than poetry in the comparison with the name." Meanwhile the subject is of interest and the time has come for a scientific investigation and explanation.

Though a surprising and by no means pleasing feature of the religious sentiments of the majority of people, it is nevertheless true, that future punishment occupies their attention to a very much greater extent than future happiness. The minds of these people appear to be engaged in one long, thoughtful worry to devise the method of torture to meet their notions of the fitness of things; resulting in minute descriptions, laughable often, only for their earnest "Wild Obi" savageness.

Though this is yet the leading orthodox religious tenet, its fierceness is gradually being modified, and, except in spots, hell is not the

place it formerly was. It is cooling down. Eventually the fires will only be kept up here and there by the persevering efforts of the more pious, in gathering the brands together and industriously blowing them.

Not only in religion, but in the arts, sciences, literature, politics, etc, this dismal inheritance from man's long tail and pointed ear condition (it is only a modification of the disposition savage animals have to tear one another) is ever exhibited. In architecture and works of decoration, in the earlier days of Christianity and extending almost if not quite to the present time, this prevailing sentiment is oppressively manifest.

In a description of church architecture of the Middle Ages, from an undoubted orthodox source, the writer is obliged to forego a description of much that would illustrate with striking effect the morbid influence of this feature of religion. It is the same with painting, and its effect is not less marked in the productions of some of the best Christian writers.

Only for "Paradise Lost," "Paradise Regained" would have consigned Milton to literary perdition. Satan and his abode was, to a deeply religious Christian like Milton, a congenial theme. Pandemonium is fitted up, regardless of expense, capacious enough to meet the expanded views of almost any magnate, ancient or modern.

As the devil has been the means of conferring immortal lustre on Milton, so "Inferno" has raised Dante to the skies. But Dante's devils are a more beastly lot than Milton's, and their apartments even less tenantable, consequently the Italian ranges ahead in reputation. Modern civilization prohibits a repetition of some of Dante's methods of punishment, and all are absurdly horrible.

He relates meeting one old acquaintance wandering about with his head off, which he carried in his hand by the hair. The eyes in the head rolled up at Dante, and in a sorrowful way it said "woe's me." Others had their heads turned completely around, so that when crying the tears ran down their backs; and all these things are told so earnestly that it requires deliberation to determine whether to cry or laugh over them. Now, after all, Dante was no favorite with the Church. Was there a suspicion that he had intentionally overdone the matter?

Why is it that we never find interesting details of future happiness dwelt on as these other descriptions are? It is curious to note the difference between the Christian and the Mahometan in this matter. The latter do certainly at times exhibit pictures of what is in store below for the unfaithful, which, if generally believed, would cause a lively stampede for the tents of Islam.

Hell, according to them, is a seven story establishment. In the upper, or mildest flat, the wayward ones on entering are shod with shoes so hot that they make the contents of the skull bubble and boil like a caldron, and, as the trouble increases with the descent, the condition of things in the basement is, for the best of

reasons left undescribed, but with admirable good judgment this apartment is reserved exclusively for people who smilingly speak soft pleasant words to your face and immediately after wisper lies and scandal—in short for hypocrites.

But the Mahometan does not appear to dwell on the subject with the gusto of the Christian. On the contrary, most of his descriptions of future life are of rewards and enjoyments, and these, let it be remembered, are no flimsy generalities, but solid comfort, meat and drink, good clothes, fruit and flowers, nothing to do, and the most charming and odoriferous company.

There is something worth striving for!

Now for this the christian mocks the mussulman, saying his ideas are low aud carnal; but it would appear that the carnal idea suits the christian 'elegantly' when engaged in his favorite topic, the torture of those who differ from him in his religious notions, and the mahometan may well say, carnal is our nature, and apart from it no conception of happiness or misery can be formed; if it suit so well for hell why object to its use for heaven.

This grim belief has thrown a shadow over the lives of many very good men, as Cowper, whose beautiful life was poisoned by it.

In Doddridge's "Religion in the Soul" I find that naturally kindhearted old gentleman discoursing on the subject in a way to make ones head assume the appearance of an inverted paint brush; terminating his view of the matter this way.

"Hell shall shut its mouth upon thee forever and the sad echo of thy groans and outcries shall be lost amidst the halelujas of heaven to all that find mercy of the Lord in that day. I firmly believe that every one who himself obtains salvation and glory *will bear so much of his Saviour's image in wisdom and goodness* in zeal for God and a steady regard to the happiness of the whole creation, that he will behold this sad scene with *calm approbation*, and without any painful commotion of mind."

Now these dreadful admonitions, the solemnity and truthfulness of which to many are unconsciously heightened by the antique phraseology, are, it must be noted, not directed to people of evil lives, as murderers and the like. They, if whipt off suddenly, will share the same fate perhaps, but they are generally firm believers and their chance of escape is infinitely better, because, in most cases, they have warning of the approach of death, and, at the termination of their depraved lives, a little legerdemain is performed, when *presto!* they scoot to glory, where, consistently enough it must be admitted, they find their enjoyment to consist in watching the suffering of their respectable neighbours.

No, these warnings are especially directed to people who exercise their intelligence by questioning the truth of such doctrine.

Doddridge was naturally a kind and good man, and he unwittingly in many places reveals his dislike of this perversion of justice, through his earnest pleading with people to endeavour to escape from in, and by admitting that it is only after he gets to heaven and is

filled up with a peculiar kind of goodness that bears a most suspicious resemblance to what we here recognize as the worst kind of badness, that he will enjoy a spectacle that on earth he would abhor.

That which above all things distinguishes the human from the lower animals, is reasoning intelligence. Advancement of civilization depends entirely on it. He who surrenders this faculty in any case voluntarily marks himself nearer the lower orders. There are people who do so. They say, especially in religious matters: "I sink my reasoning faculty in this case and accept without question what others dictate."

Whatever may be thought of such a course, it cannot be denied that he who adopts it shows a consistency in accepting unreasonable things altogether wanting in him who rejects and protests against one doctrine for its absurdity, and immediately turns and angrily protests against questioning another equally at variance with established ideas of right. It is not half so hard or repugnant, for example, to accept the Roman Catholic view of any of the points of difference between it and Protestantism, as to believe that in an improved state we can contemplate with indifference, not to say with pleasure, the torturing of conscious beings.

Since Doddridge's time, though a short space in history, the world has improved. There is a great deal of evil and there are many bad people yet—so many indeed and so bad that those who take a gloomy view of things deny that there is any real improvement, forgetting always that the lighter the groundwork the plainer the black marks show.

There is evidently something the matter with the man who denies that the world is better now than at any past time. This improved condition has been brought about by the exercise of human intelligence, and largely by men such as Doddridge and others hope one day to see wriggling in the fire.

An evenly-balanced mind is the desideratum. This benefitting intelligence cannot be restricted in its exercise in any direction without impairing its health or throwing it out of balance. Doddridge's teaching is the orthodox belief to-day and all who agree with him are very culpably derelict in duty who fail to impress its importance on others as he did; but Protestant clergymen, at all events, do not linger on it as formerly, in the more intelligent communities especially, because they know that empty pews or pulpit would be the result.

Some people whose faith in fire and brimstone is not very strong, have yet a lingering belief that it should be maintained as a check to the more ignorant.

This is only a modification of the doctrine that the end justifies the means. It is doubtful if bad people are deterred much from committing crimes by fear of future punishment Such people are firm believers in a faith teaching that however bad they may be, they can, at the last moment, get the 'inside track' on the lifelong upright man who don't believe, and, instead of being a deterent, this is

actually an incentive to crime. If there are any kept in check by the fear of hell, they are a poor lot at most, and not worth hampering the progress of human intelligence for; besides, there is less fear than apprehended, the belief is of their nature, and they will not readily relinquish it. The last traces of a faith that has for a leading characteristic a gloating over diabolism will be found at the underside of the lowest stratum of society. In the meanwhile, its baneful influence can be seen when a naturally good man, like Doddridge, can anticipate the time when he will "lay off" in his jasper arm-chair and take pleasure in looking on at the pitiful suffering of people.

The position that points to the most advanced civilization as the result of this belief, is altogether untenable. About the reverse of this is the correct view. Christianity was fortunate in being adopted by people who would improve any religion. It can be illustrated in a way that will be convincing to some reade. of this sketch, that people mould the religion more than religion moulds the people.

The writer's Christian friends, apart from other considerations, will regret to see his opinions expressed here lest it prejudice people to his disadvantage.

The writer's Christian enemies would be glad to see strong expressions against Christianity in order to incite popular prejudice against him.

It is not necessary to give instances where Christianity has failed to civilize people, nor of civilized people of other religions. Just as erroneous is the notion of crediting Christianity so-called as the sole proprietor of the common property of many religions. The Egyptians, long before Christianity originated, believed in the resurrection of the body and gave practical effect to that belief by carefully preserving it to await the return of the spirit. The Greeks believed in the immortality of the soul, and Confucius taught the golden rule. If we reduce the prevailing religion to what is distinctive in it, we would find it possible in a limited area only.

One thing especially inculcated by it is utter disregard of property or provision for a "rainy day," and this is the very thing that Christians neither preach nor practice. It is surely very evident that it is not possible nor desirable to do so; what is the use of pretending? The effect would be to reduce all to the condition of tramps, with the marked disadvantage that that interesting class of people do not labor under—there would be no one to beg from, and nothing to steal.

In respect to moral teaching, the reformed religion of the Hindoos compares well with all the best features of Christianity, as may be learned by all who profit by the labors of such men as the author of "The Light of Asia," than which is no more beautiful Scripture, and no one with a mind not naturally depraved, or too much warped by prejudice, can read it and not reverently love the dear lord Buddha.

There are Buddhists, of course, who put their narrow quibbling constructions on the master's teachings as Christians do, but it is as unjust to charge the religion with their vagaries as to charge Christi-

anity with the dreadful things that have been committed in its name.

All forms of religion have elements of good in them from the earliest to the latest, and there are excrescences the growth of which, if fostered, will, in time, destroy it. But as these defects become visible, if they are carefully removed, the plant may become a beautiful tree. Mormonism is too recent to admit of much doubt concerning its origin or founders. Its divinely-commissioned prophet found sacred writings that had been buried for ages, and, by aid of the miraculous Urim and Thummin, was enabled to make it intelligible to men for whom it was intended for guidance and salvation. This man and his followers were derided and scoffed at, and for peace removed far into the wilderness and founded a city. They were hunted from this by Christians, who murdered their prophet, and they were obliged, with untold hardships and persecutions, to seek the protection of more remote and desert places, until they grew so numerous that they were able to make it uncomfortable for their assailants, and retaliated by killing any stray foes of the Lord's chosen people that refused to fall into line.

Now there are people who believe the story of the finding of the book, and that it was a divine book: they are Mormons. There are people who do not believe it: they are *non*-Mormons. "Which is right?" says the man in the moon.

That inquiring individual is informed that the Mormons have the direct testimony of their prophet and his immediate followers who assisted in the translation of the golden-leaved book. Their opponents have no direct evidence to the contrary, only circumstances and probability.

If we can rely on the latest statements of their industry, temperance and honesty—on the principle of judging a tree by its fruits—Mormonism is not such a dusty religion

Insinuations, generated by feelings not the most comfortable perhaps, induce the declaration, that, while respect cannot be paid to many things called after it, there is no desire that Christianity be supplanted. Why should there be? Its founder expelled with indignation those who made a trading mart of their holy places, but extended a friendly hand to the suffering and oppressed. He rebuked the shallow seeker after miracles, but stood apart and wept for the troubles of a city. He was maligned, persecuted, forsaken by friends in the hour of danger, betrayed and murdered by those he labored to elevate, their foreign ruler alone speaking a word for him, saying he had done nothing to merit such hard treatment. But blood alone would satisfy his wolfish foes.

It is a dismal sense of humour that finds a subject of ridicule in the life of Jesus of Nazareth. There were such humorists in that time. They wagged their heads at him, and jeered him. Has the breed become extinct? But there is, after all, less trouble with humorists of any kind than with the more serious people who insist on pitching an impossible standard for men and their doings.

The effects of such are well illustrated in the interminable conflicts th the truths revealed by the advancement of knowledge. These nflicts sooner or later have the same termination. Beginning always th vehement and angry denunciations, they end by claiming the w facts as evidence of the truth of the doctrine they were at first d, as the work of the powers of darkness, to undermine.

The latest exhibition of this peculiarity is claiming the theory led after Darwin as being in strict accord with the prevailing the-gical view.

The term radical is often applied or misapplied to men and their inions; but, as indicating the difference between the Mosaic and rwinian stories, it is most appropriate and its full import is required.

The man who wrote the first chapter of Genesis was above his roundings and is entitled to and receives respect from intelligent ple of any or no belief. Did he live at the present day, with ir advantages, there would probably be none to more ably demon-te the folly of those who would make him infallible; but at is there written was intended to be taken as it reads, and t contorted to meet conditions then impossible to be known to those om it was intended to instruct. The earth was the great central ture of creation, and the sun, moon and stars were appendages to The days of creation were ordinary days and so on.

As such, it has been, and continues to be, a satisfactory description many people: but the attempts to make it conform to more advanced wledge is always disastrous to the reputation for intelligence of se who engage in it.

The very word "beginning" is dependent on a conception of time viously for a meaning, and no idea of time can be formed apart m suns and planets and their motions.

Again, when the earth is described as being without form, what we to understand if we depart from the ordinary signification and into the subject scientifically and critically? Form is an essential he conception of any material thing, and this is as true of the air breathe as of a block of granite. Some things are indeed termed morphous, but this is by no means a solitary instance where, through city of words or for brevity sake, the literal expression is the re-se of the meaning intended to be conveyed.

Names can only be given to groups of shapes as square, round, etc. s that cannot be classed are too numerous to mention, and in r desperation we call them formless; but, as a matter of fact, to that a thing is formless is equivalent to saying there is no such g. Void means empty So that if Moses' announcement, over h so much profound eloquence has been expended, be examined cally and scientifically, the utmost that can be made of it is this:

"There was a time when there was no time, and God made some-which wasn't anything, and it was empty."

It was not intended to model this sketch after the Tassaud establishment or any other showy concern, but one may profit by a suggestion sometimes, no matter what motives or feelings prompt it; and so by the "eclectic" process the following chromo is presented to the readers, having been obtained from a recent rather clumsy though not uninteresting publication, where it was given as an extract from a book written by a reverend Christian teacher for the instruction of the young, and stamped with the approval of the church:—

"The roof is red hot, the walls are red hot, the floor is like a thick sheet of red hot iron. See, on the middle of that red hot iron floor stands a girl. She looks about sixteen years old She has neither shoes nor stockings on her feet. The door of this room has never been opened before since she first set her foot on this red hot floor. Now she sees the door open. She rushes forward. She has gone down on her knees on the red hot floor. Listen! She speaks. She says, "I have been standing with my feet on this red hot floor for years. Day and night my only standing-place for years has been this red hot floor. Sleep never came to me for a moment that I might forget this horrible burning floor. Look at my burnt and bleeding feet. Let me go off this burning floor for one moment—only for one single moment. Oh! that in this endless eternity of years I might forget the pain only for one single moment."

The Devil answers her question.

"Do you ask," he says, "for a moment, for one moment to forget your pain? No, not for one single moment during the never-ending eternity of years shall you ever leave this red hot floor."

"Is it so?" says the girl, with a sigh that seems to break her heart.

There now is a picture for you to delight in gazing at, saintly Christian, when you get fitted up with your fancy flying apparatus. Carnal enough, surely, and containing "sweetness and light" sufficient to run a sugar-mill without gas or West India produce.

Bad as it is, however, there is something in store worse yet.

Oh! I hear even some of the orthodox believers say, "Give us a rest." But there is no rest for the wicked, and any one more wicked than an orthodox Christian would be a curiosity worth going a long distance to see; and this on his own acknowledgment you must understand.

He is hoping for a time and condition when he will look on with "approbation" at the way the devil is using that sixteen-year-old girl. It is said to be a characteristic of devils to delight in the torture of the condemned, and if you do the same, will you figure out, O Christian, the difference between your saintly self and old bugaboo.

Terrible as these descriptions of the fate awaiting some of us are, they are yet not sufficiently effective to meet the requirements of the more far-seeing and truly pious.

They know that people will become accustomed to most anything. We learn to take pleasure in the use of tobacco, and to relish lager beer It is known even that by beginning with minute doses, people, after a time, can take considerable quantities of arsenic and Limburger cheese and live. It is related that a prisoner condemned for years to sleep on spike points, after being liberated and making trial of an ordinary bed, was found driving tenpenny nails through boards to make him a mattrass on which he could sleep in some kind of comfort. It has therefore been concluded that the ideas of future punishment heretofore entertained are defective inasmuch as people would get used to it. A bath of white hot brimstone would make them squirm well enough at first, but before eternity was half spent, anything cooler would be uncomfortable. A door left ajar reducing the temperature to that of molten iron would give them a cold in the head.

It was left to the scientific christian philosopher Whiston to discover a way out of this difficulty and find a use for comets at the same time. These celestial wanderers are known to circle the sun in very elliptical orbits. At perihelion they are warmed up sufficiently to make brick and granite fluid, while at aphelion, alcohol becomes solid.

Here then are, at last, the desired conditions ! ! torture from extremes in temperature with variation to prevent acclimatization.

Formulating the hellish idea was, no doubt, gradual—the wish, in this as in many cases being father to the thought. Savages carefully avoid striking a vital part of their captive victim in order to prolong the pleasure of watching their suffering, and when exhausted nature ends the religious ceremony before their cup of joy is half full, the lively imagination steps in to continue the good work in an unseen world.

Orpheus was the first to gather the scattered ideas on this subject to a nucleus, and propound the doctrine of the entity of hades among the people from whom the prevailing belief was derived, and he did a very singular thing. He went there in search of his wife and so charmed all hell with his music, that the government, at a cabinet council, with only one dissenting voice, agreed to allow him to take her providing he would not look back from starting until he got beyond the infernal boundaries. Before reaching the outer gate however, Eurydice induced him to look behind, and the goat had to go up to the world alone.

Here he went about lonesome places singing sweet melancholy songs. Some ladies took a fancy to him and because he would have nothing to say to them they tore him in pieces. They threw his head into the river, which, drifting down the tide, articulated, *Eurydice! Eurydice!*

From all that has been said on the subject, will it not be clear to discerning readers why New Brunswick and other foreigners have

acquired the habit of mentioning the name of this City in moments of bad temper.

How pleasant is a ride in the railway cars. But this too is subject to qualification. The train hands would likely reverse the assertion and passengers too when the journeys are long or frequent. But it is pleasant enough when one only goes a short distance once a year or so; and one may live within daily sound of the trains and not go in them much oftener than one's friend in a more isolated situation.

The handsome and comfortably furnished carriages, speeding along so rapidly with little jolt or jar, must compel even the croakers to admit that we are moving ahead. The contrast between the old way and this wonderful machine drawing so swiftly a long train of splendid and commodious vehicles, on steel rails, over a road along which the hills have been cut down to fill the hollows for an interminable distance, is enough to make one believe that the fairy tales will all be realized yet.

Among the passengers are Christian clergymen returning from the city where they have met in deliberation on the best means of carrying into effect a system that would oblige them to make this journey on foot over stones and brushwood.

Their clothing, it can be observed, is of fine material and fashioned in the correct mode. Their appearance indicates that their diet does not consist exclusively of locust and wild honey.

Fancy them looking from their easy seats and seeing John the Baptist in his peculiar costume making his way over the rough places. Would they care to be seen speaking with him? Yet Mammon has made the difference between his condition and theirs.

And what has the man of opposite views—the evolutionist—to say on the subject?

Now the doctrine of descent from baboons is a beautiful theory, reasonable enough withal, and eminently satisfactory, when applied to people for whom one can have no abiding affection.

But to-day I point to this highly differentiated method of getting along which has heretofore been a hard road to travel; I ask him to consider the multitude and complicity of trades and professions necessary to make a journey like this possible, pointing out the *utile dulci* everywhere observable in the wonderful contrivance and the variety in appearance and aims of the voyagers.

Here is the self-conscious young man in his faultless attire; there a merchant busy with his mental calculations of gains and losses. Here is the politician with his uneasy look but warm and friendly-like greeting for all who approach, whether the underlying sentiments be indifference, contempt or dislike. There again is the finely-dressed lady and beautiful child with cheeks like the delicate coloring of the shell. I point these things to him and say:—"Think now of your beastly ape, slimy fish, and wriggling polyp."

He droops his head and says:—"O Simian ancestor, how far away you seem!"

And now within an hour an old time day's journey has been made at little expense and without fatigue, and, leaving the passengers to go their ways, I have this beautiful June day before me in the country.

Towards noon I came to a place where a brook entered the lake, and near which a man was fishing.

The poor old fellow was as far out as he could get, one foot perched in advance on a projecting rock, his whole soul and energy for the time directed to so manoeuvering the bait as to induce the fish to believe that it would be to their advantage to take it in, and to convince them that this would be the last chance, which, if they missed, they would lose a good thing that they might not have offered them again. And yet the offer of this great kindness was constantly repeated.

Political excitement was all laid aside; the prospective rise or fall in the prices of articles in which he traded troubled him nothing at all; though a devout christian, the desire to save sinners was, for the time, dormant.

But if one should say to him:—"You are a miserable old swindler, your time is spent in the effort to deceive others, so that you may profit by their misfortune. even to the extent of depriving those that never harmed you of liberty and life. Your moral preception is so low that this practice affords you pleasure, and is pursued for that purpose against those that enjoy life as well as you, but are too helpless to defend themselves." Then he would get indignant and resort to a legal process against you for defamation of character, He saw me approach, but there was no friendly greeting in his look, which said, "I claim the exclusive right to this place for the present, if not

from first discovery at least by priority of occupation, from here to a considerable distance south, thence north and back to the place of beginning, and I shall consider any intrusion a cause of war.

But he had no occasion for anxiety, I sat down among some old friends, watching his operations awhile. I had been fishing and got through. Before starting I provided myself with hook, line and bamboo rod; the latter appeared a marvel of cheapness and suitability as much for its telescopic proclivities as anything.

The result, from a fishing point of view, could not be considered a success. I had a great many bites but they were at the wrong end of the fishing appliance to cause much enthusiasm for the sport.

There! the old fellow has caught a trout, which has fallen from the hook near the edge of the water. What frantic plunges over rocks and through mire in his eagerness to prevent its escape!

Little speckled beauty! As much care has been taken with the coloring of the spots on your sides as with the eyes of a king, and now your joyous life is terminating in agony on the dry sand, lured to ruin with tinsel and fine feathers; never more to play bo-peep with the frogs among the lily roots, your happy life is sacrificed to the low pleasure of a larger animal with more cunning.

The old fellow looks up to me as much as to say:—"Don't you wish you could yank them in like that." But I answer him nothing, he is too selfish and not like some fishermen I know of.

I soon left the 'lone fisherman in undisturbed possession of his territory and loitered along with no particular object in view, and no wish to have. Following a bye road some distance I came to a farm, and seeing the proprietor near the house, went up after the manner of the newspaper person to interview him, taking a reserved seat on the wood-pile. The farmer was above the average size, florid complexion, blue eyes, red whiskers and yellow hair badly in need of clipping. He wore a pair of large coarse boots, which had a great accumulation of mud on them. It was so warm that I wanted very much to ask him to take them off and go awhile in his socks, but concluded that we were not long enough acquainted, and that the advice might not be taken in the same spirit that it would be given.

I made some general enquiries about the crops and farming, being careful to repress the inclination to give such directions about the management as occurred to me, because nothing so moves a farmer to commit deeds of violence as to have unemployed people come about giving agricultural advice. I had run too many narrow escapes not to be cautious.

In turn he questioned me about the elections of the day before. Looking at his boots, I told him that the successful party was elected, and that the other was all defeated up with an overwhelmingly small majority, and then, looking fair in his face, I was sorry for my flippant answer, and gave him what information I could about the affair. He did'nt throw his hat in the air and shout *hurra!* nor pitch it on the ground and jump on it. Hard enough it would be to

tell which side he was in favour of from any indication of satisfaction or the contrary shown. But it was soon evident that he was not indifferent to such things, and that he was the kind of man to surprise a troublesome canvasser who would endeavour to cajole him with fine promises or make overtures for buying his vote for a dollar or two. When the country has a majority of such voters the canvassers calling will be gone and public business will be conducted on commercial principles with the effects of increased efficiency and decreased cost.

"I noticed," he remarked, "that the elevator operations commenced a short time ago. It would appear that that bait did not have the desired effect."

I told him that the elevator was for shipping grain. That it was to be ten stories high and built into compartments by laying deals in mortar on the flat and would be slated on the outside and completely rat-proof. There would be a shoot extending the entire length of the wharf, on the north side, so as not to interfere with steamers loading on the south side, but by the expenditure of a few thousands extra another shoot could be run out on the south side to be used in cases of pressure.

"Yes, I know it can be used to ship grain," he said; "but I think it could be made rat-proof at a great deal less cost to the people."

"That may be, but if the people want to have it that way it is their business."

"But do they," he queried.

"Well, the politicians and the newspapers say so." It was this way: The politicians, out of a situation, told the people that the place was suffering for want of an elevator. When they got situations they would probably, in the press of business, have overlooked the matter, but the politicians on the other side said: "See here, we want that elevator right away,—why don't you build it?" And the newspapers, on their side, echoed the demand, so there was no getting out of it and the elevator is becoming a crystalized thought.

"Can it be used to elevate the leading Nova Scotia productions?"

"Can't say, there has been nothing in the newspapers to show that it can."

"Do you know what the newspapers are useful for?"

"They do," I said, "to wrap a fresh fish in to carry home when you can't find anything better."

"Yes, and they answer another purpose, one of their chief sources of profit to advertise quackery."

"From early times," he continued, "there has been almost a superstitious reverence for printed matter, which newspaper people are endeavouring and successfully to cure people of. The art of printing was looked on at first as a sort of mystery, and the mere possession of a printed book entitled the owner to be considered learned. Only things held in greatest estimation were printed, as on religion, necromancy, and the laws of gaining. For anything to be printed was equivalent to being unquestioned. Such expressions as: "Don't I believe my own eyes; I tell you I saw it in print," and others like it, are yet heard occasionally; but parallel with them now are running also such remarks as: "O, who would believe anything in the newspapers."

These opposing sentiments afford a world of material for consideration, which, in the end, point to the same conclusion—the habit people have of accepting 'ready made' opinions rather than the inability to exercise their own judgment.

In early days, through causes intimated, undue authority was accorded to anything printed. This has been taken advantage of to such an extent that reaction has set in, and now opinion is running to the opposite extreme. The newspaper occupies, par excellence, the position of instructor and civilizer, and when we see how that position in many cases is abused and degraded it is astonishing to find the deference paid to it by many people yet. It shows simply what a hold the old reverence for anything printed had.

There is nothing much more amusing than to see an individual with elevated or frowning brows reading with the same sonorous monotone the flimsy inanities of some bumptious scribbler, that he would read the Bible. You will often hear people read passages from books in a burial service tone and manner, which, if related to them as being the production of Mr. Ward, they would laugh boisterously, and say: "Well, no mistake, he was a comical cuss."

There is no obscurity about the cause of the political newspaper becoming a nuisance.

Boys, who cannot read, learn to set type sometimes, and so men learn in the same way to string words together to praise one party and abuse another. It don't matter which factory they engage in, party newspaper making is their business, and wherever the prospect is best they pitch in. The same old words and phrases, with a little mechanical shifting of names, answer either side, and the work of these word compositors passes with many people, when clothed with all the majesty of plural pronouns, as something very profound. But the average newspaper article is not only a nuisance but an impertinence as well.

"I have not met any one for years whose ideas on the subject so exactly coincide with my own," I said, "and when in addition to the peculiarities you have noted, we find the newspapers used as a vehicle of spite and hatred, not to speak of incitement to mean and cowardly murder by *accident or otherwise*, they reach a degradation beyond which they cannot go; and even without reaching this extreme, to continue using it as a ladle for personal venom against those who have no such means of defense is a most unmanly perversion of its use. There is no prize fighter in all the land that would continue striking a man with his hands tied; and as might be expected these are the very parties that wince most when they feel the whip they have so justly merited. Yes, the newspapers have worked perseveringly to establish a character for unreliability, and they have been successful. You rarely hear a word of censure for the misdeeds of the parties they are in favor of, you never hear a word of commendation for the goods of the other.

Were a colony of nude cannibals to settle in the suburbs, making game of any stray citizen found wandering intent on the contemplation of rural sights and sounds; then if there should be the remotest prospect of turning them to account for party purposes at elections, as by persuading them to feed on the opposition, we would immediately find editorials in this strain:—

"Persistent attempts have been made of late by our esteemed contemporary, the opposition rag, to insult and vilify our South Sea friends; but such low blackguardism will be estimated by the people thus wantonly assailed at its true value.

We may not entirely agree with them in the trifling matters of costume and material for alimentary sustenance, but is this any justification for the low insinuations thrown at them by a hireling press?

If scientific research has established anything on an unshaken basis, it is the fact that intelligence and a fleshly succulent condition of body is never found in the same individual. There is no gleam of intelligence in any member of the opposition ranks."

And then an ironclad reporter would be sent among them to explain at greater length where the juicyist cutlets could be found.

The same course, on the other side, would soon give the savages a high estimate of their importance, resulting eventually in a return to barbarism or a fight for dear life.

Now and then a man of intelligence and other natural good qualities will drift into the position of editor of a political newspaper, and there is no more mournful sight than his spasmodic and usually unsuccessful attempts to keep in or to regain the path of rectitude.

"Yes," he said, "the newspapers and the political parties in their bid for support act and re-act on each other for evil. The nature of politics is such as to bring to the front men of energy and ambition. These are not bad or undesirable qualities, but if not kept in check by a strong internal sense of right, or by external supervision, they

are apt to run riot. Public opinion is a strong curb but does not act quick enough and is often misled; were this defect supplied by the newspapers promptly exposing wrong doing, regardless of consequence to persons or parties, what a wholesome effect would result. The newspaper quiets its conscience for covering up rottenness by the sophistry of expediency. It says, "Well this is a wrong thing I know, but it will never do to wreck a party that on the whole is doing better than their opponents would do, for a trifling matter. This is the canker that is eating into the vitals of morality in the management of public business. When it is cast out we will have better times.

Of course this is not a sweeping denunciation of newspapers, for one can only see a few, and no doubt there are good ones if only you knew where to find them.

But if we had newspapers that would always stand firm for justice no public man would dare do wrong on any plea. We would then have public affairs managed on business principles and less of the mesmeric method."

"What kind of statesmanship may that be?"

"It is the kind that consists in the ability, after rising in the morning with a headache induced by physical derangement, and a mind so oppressed with care that existence seems an almost intolerable burden, and on being informed that some Judas, eager to sell his friends, his country, himself, or anything saleable, for "a little sordid gain," is waiting in an anteroom for an interview,—the mesmeric way consists in the ability, after a gulp and a shiver, to go out and meet him with a face wreathed in smiles and eyes sparkling with a delight like that of seeing a long absent and dear friend. Then if the political influence is considered equivalent, the bad bargain is made. It consists further in the ability to place one ringleader on the right and another on the left, and when the puppets so arranged exhibit the qualities of a governor of a Russian prison and an officer of the Inquisition, by acquiescence use the machine, as occasion requires, to cross the chasm of conjured up disaster.

This is the performance that sapient spectators, who dismiss an honest and capable man because he has no mesmerism, pay for gazing at with open mouth and admiring eyes at the rate of—50 cents a ticket!"

The undoubted desire, seen through it all, to do well in the end, is not sufficient to lighten up the shadiness of the picture of ability so directed."

"Your emphatically expressed view of the mesmeric way," I said, "enables me to make an observation with composure that otherwise I would reserve or prefer to have the interval between us considerably extended first."

It is easy for one in an out-of-the-way place, on a small farm which does not in any remarkable degree exhibit superior capability of management on the part of the owner, to act the Solon.

The horse bears his burden without complaint, the cow patiently yields her milk and industriously grazes without bidding, to renew the supply; a commotion among the pigs is quieted with a pail of swill, and chickens of their own accord come home to roost. So with the vegetation. The cabbage with little care goes on expanding, and the potatoes, despite too many weeds, blossom like the rose. It is one thing to manage or mis-manage a small farm in the woods; it is another to guide the destinies of a nation."

At the mention of the weeds among the potatoes a suppressed cough convinced me that I was making very good time, and I let up a little, when he came again with a voice and manner slightly changed but very significant.

"There are more weeds among the potatoes than is good for them," he said, "but the wet spell has prevented as much work among them as would otherwise have been done; and the premises, I admit, offer a field for the exercise of greater energy; still health, contentment and competence are better than a greater display without either, one let alone all of them.

A greater extent under cultivation, with showy buildings and fine carriage, would, to a passer by, have a much better appearance; but, if in consequence, the owner lived in daily dread of a visit from the Sheriff, or had his managing ability constantly exercised with the problem how or where to negotiate a loan to meet the next pressing demand, his advantage in point of show over his quieter neighbour would be dearly bought, and, when at last turned out and found hanging around a rum shop, his former display only serves to show his degradation to greater advantage. It is an illusion to suppose that less intelligence is necessary to manage a farm properly than for any business, statesmanship not excepted. In the latter there are often great and difficult problems to deal with, but in many cases it will be found that the difficulties are owing to the methods employed —are born of them. In one very important feature it differs from farming business it is a position of trust and not ownership and trouble is constantly occurring because this fact, while it is mouthed out at election times, is, in practice, completely ignored.

Questions involving the utmost consequence will sometimes arise from trifling causes; then narrowness displays itself by fixing eyes on the trifling cause. But if instead of this, or when extraneous obstacles as *raison d'eglise* interpose, the difficulty, instead of being smoothed over by mesmerism, was fairly laid before the people for settlement, these wonderful feats of statesmanship would not be required nor would such difficulties so often recur.

If I hire a man to work on the farm it is clearly his duty to do work according to my wish whether right or wrong in his view.

When he is sent to regular routine as hoeing potatoes he wants no advice while at it, but he should not undertake any extraordinary work without asking the boss."

"I see you continue to make what is considered impossible comparisons. Don't you know that public opinion is a blind giant, incapable of guiding itself in a rational way."

Public opinion is not a blind giant, it is rather a giant with immature eyesight that distinguishes light from darkness but nothing quickly or very distinctly at first. This giant is surrounded by pigmy leaders whose eyes are very sharp for small near things. They all clamour to guide him, and in their narrow selfishness lead him over windfalls and through miry places. But it is rough on the urchins when he detects their tricks as he sometimes does, and puts his foot on them."

"What remedy is there for this state of things?"

"Improvement of the giant's eyesight. In the meantime he must flounder along some way."

"O! I perceive now. You are looking forward to a time when every man will, of his own accord, sit down and calculate his just proportion of the expense of anything of common necessity, and carry nd deposit the contribution in a receptacle left open day and night at the street corner for that purpose."

"You are giving me credit for a great range of vision; but now that you mention it, when we compare a state of society of which that is the key with what actually exists, it should be a wholesome check to undue vaunting over the progress we are making."

"I am afraid you have been reading something and imbibing communistic ideas."

"I have been reading something; your reference to giants reminds me that I read "Jack the Giant-killer" the other day, and I find, like smaller people, there are bad giants as well as good. I also imbibe all the ideas I can on any subject; but, objections to Bourbonism don't imply love for the pretty pranks of the *sans culotte*."

"Well, in the present rather defective condition of the visual organs of our esteemed friend, the machine must be run some way."

"Yes, and how to do it and how not to do it make considerable of a stir at times. On one side are the anarchists—the offspring of hereditary depravity and misrule. They would have every man mov-

ing stealthily about again with a knife or club. On the other side is the armour-plated despot whose fiat is law. Extremes meet, and these are consequently near related—they produce one another. Between these are all degrees of liberty and oppression, sense and nonsense. "If we look to nature, she evidently teaches that all social animals require a head around which to rally for defence or obtain counsel for guidance. A single bee could not prepare a place to store the winter's supply or for shelter, and must have a recognized head or perish. So the anarchists must go. The word "government" in its present use must eventually also go. It is growing into disfavor as tyrant and some other once respectable terms fell into disgrace. As a complimentary word to government would convey the idea of evil-doing by intention or from inability to distinguish right from wrong, its use in time will be limited to prisons and lunatic asylums. It would be easy to show that it has not to begin its transition period. Decent people are resenting being officially classed with lunatics and criminals."

"Well, I must say that to stamp out anarchy and abolish government, both in the same day, looks like considerable of a feat. Only that everything around wears its customary undisturbed appearance, I should infer that we were in the midst of the final cataclysm."

I laughed a little while making this remark, which, from his reply, appeared to have the effect of a counter-irritant, for he said:—

"The treatment accorded to people from town who come out into the country for a holiday differs from that which the countryman often meets with in the city. When they do grotesque things or make superficial remarks and laugh at them themselves, we don't immediately put them down for imbeciles. We make allowance for the reaction from narrow sidewalks and bricks walls where at every turn is met the commercial smile that would not give you a biscuit if starving; where the windows display bags of sawdust labelled in glowing colors, "Extra superfine flour," "Choice tea," "Pure Mocha coffee," or shoddy clothing marked "All-wool West of England," "Selling below cost;" where in the fine church the preacher is raising with eloquent harangue money for foreign missions, while within sound of his voice are people suffering with hunger or a widow's son sickens and dies without their clergy once crossing the threshold because of their poverty; where people are led to heaven through expensive churches built by lotteries and fraud."

"Well," I said, "I lived in the country once myself, but I have reformed. I'm a citizen now, and one must always try and keep one's end up, you know. The methods of advertising are not so much with the intent to deceive as to attract attention, which becomes a necessity among many competitors; but while we are on this subject, if it won't

put you to too much inconvenience, may I ask if you can throw any light on the reason that the strawberries offered for sale by country people invariably have the small, defective and mashed-up ones on top, while the fine large fresh berries are hidden away below. Or when in town we sit down to breakfast on new-laid eggs, these sometimes happen to be the identical ova that the farmer's old hen abandoned in disgust after trying for six weeks, with maternal assiduity, to convert into chickens. Or why the legend on the head of apple-barrels is so often in figurative language?"

"I am afraid," he said, "that our conversation is degenerating into frivolity. I found the direct line more interesting."

"Very well, suppose we return to where my remark diverted it—to where government was rejected to be replaced by something thing better, let us say; but before that you intimated that we might glean from nature some useful hints to guide us in the management of affairs of state, pointing out that lower social animals were instructed by our common mother to select a head or rallying point for the community. Now the greatest trouble with many of us wiser animals is to settle this very point of headship."

"Of course this is just what might be expected. Children and fools always begin at the wrong end of a job. Let us consider two communities—a hive of bees, and the United States. The former obtain their president by natural selection—the latter by unnatural selection. In one all is peace and harmony, in the other tumult and confusion. It is customary to say that in the United States the people chose the President. This is not true nor under their system can it be possible. Neither do a majority decide the matter. It is done by an oligarchy, Even if the people were all satisfied with the candidate placed before them by the self-interested oligarchy, of three States of nearly equal population if two decide by a small majority for one, while the third goes by a large majority for the other, then the minority rules the coast.

When in addition to this farce of pretending to do a thing that cannot be done, we see the expense, the corruption, extending cancer like to every corner of the land, the illwill, strife and murder enacted every four years for—what?—to obtain a man of ordinary ability to discharge what should be well defined and mainly routine duties, it looks like the freak of lunatics.

Good and sensible people in the United States say as much, and see in its continuation anarchy and disruption.

They admit that it would be infinitely better for them to ask some civilized community to select and send them a man of established reputation for character and ability to preside for a stated period with dignity and impartiality over their deliberations. What matters it to a native of California whether the four years presiding officer at the

Capital be from Maine or Australia. But whether or not he be fit for the position, not the least of which is to set an example of what manly conduct should be, and is free from all intangling influences of party or relationship, matters much.

In turn, should Australia ask the United States to do them a similar favour, the reactive beneficial influences would soon be evident

Every objection to such a method can be reasonably met except the objection that arises from that lowest kind of patriotism that don't differ at all from bigotry; and the United States is in the very position to break down that narrow-minded barrier.

The method of making the selection is a matter of detail. It might be given as the prerogative of the president who would have the strongest motives to make a wise and careful appointment or the representatives might be permitted to choose one from among themselves.

I have in my minds eye a deliberative assembly where even a blind man could fasten on a subject with the vivacity of youth, pristine vigour, and wisdom of age a llarrayed in the same individual."

"Well the United States is sometimes called a hive of industry, but it must be admitted that their method of getting a queen bee is a little troublesome to say the least."

"Yes, and with that example before our eyes, which the best people there see the evil of and lament their inability to remedy, there are yet people among us who clamour for political connection or an exchange of almost the only advantage we have over them for their system."

"Then you do think we are ahead of them in some things?"

"Yes I do. The corrupt spoils system in the civil service does not exist here. The appointment of judges is more likely to ensure able, impartial and fearless men for that very important position; and there are other things in our laws and regulations that I much prefer to theirs."

"I agree with you in the main, yet things are not always what they seem, and, without advocating the spoils system, I feel called on to observe that there is an element of corruption in the management of ours not exceeded by anything found there, and more dangerous because not so open to public notice."

"I am surprised to hear you say so; I thought everything in that branch of the public service worked quite smoothly."

No doubt of it, and so do the majority of people, and that's where the danger is. As a matter of fact there is as much need of reform here as in the United States.

A young man of average ability and intelligence obtains through political or other influence, a place in the public service. His friends are pleased and he is elated. He attends carefully to his duties with the natural and commendable aspirations for advancement. After awhile the political party that appointed him is succeeded by the other, then years go by without any improvement in his pay or position. While others, without regard to fitness or justice are placed over his head. Now the average young man is very likely under such circumstances to confound things. He is apt to look on his work not as the business of the public who pay him and do not wish him to be unjustly treated, but don't know about it—he is apt to consider it the work of the government—the half dozen or so of men who for the time have managed some way to get in the position of the peoples' agents.

The average young man is not always able to keep before him the fact that the signal "England expects that every man will do his duty" was "not for a day but for all time and in every station."

Overlooking the true position of things he becomes negligent and if opportunity occurs, more out of revenge than an inclination to steal, helps himself to a portion of what he considers he has been defrauded of.

Then sometimes follow detection and disgrace for himself and friends, and, in any case, it would be better for him and for the service to have been dismissed at the change of administration than to be so dealt by."

"Does this prevail to any considerable extent?"

"Yes."

"I have heard that the civil servants were a grumbling lot and very hard to satisfy."

"I expect that there is too much truth in it, but a table of names and dates, facts and figures, neither whines nor cringes."

"Don't you think a great deal of this results from oversight rather than from intention?"

"Not at all; repeated representations of injustice from proper official quarters have only brought forth tyrannical abuse.

There are other and darker features still that I will give you particulars of some other time."

"I am sorry to hear of wrong doing in any branch of public business, and, as you say, there is less to dread from open irregularities than from secret wrong doing; but the system must not be confounded with men who betray their trust. On the whole I see no reason to modify the opinion I expressed that many of our laws and regulations are better than those of the United States."

"Yet there are many people here who favor annexation."

"I don't think there are many."

"O yes there are."

"Not a majority."

"No not by any means, still quite a number."

"It would be interesting to know how they compare in respect to intelligence, character, &c., with the rest of the population."

"Well statistics on the subject are not available, and I can only form a general opinion and that is not unfavourable to those who oppose such a change.

There is one feature about it that is worth noting. The annexationists express their opinions very freely often in a way too that is offensive to loyal subjects, without molestation, while to speak in praise or defense of the flag that protects all alike, that ones fathers have died to make it the proud banner it is, or forsook their homes to follow it subjects him to sly persecution often."

"Surely you exaggerate; the people would tolerate nothing of the kind."

"If the people only knew of some things that are done on the quiet there would be a greater hum throughout the country than ever the N. P. will make."

"There is no recognized leader to any annexation or so-called independent movement that I have heard of."

"They are nearly all leaders, individuals who pine to be noticed. Some of them have the gift of talking incessantly without saying anything, as Mr. O'Toole would observe, and clothe worn things in such a cloud of words that people who are caught with show imagine they have something; like a package of "fine cut," it looks well, but a great part of the weight is in the wrapper.

"They frequently assume a lofty tone in exclaiming against the corruption of government by political parties. Most of us are aware

of this; what we want is a feasible remedy. Of this we hear little that is of value from them; but instead, we hear them advocating the adoption of a system that would increase this corrupting influence a hundred-fold with no compensating advantage. Their inconsistency is greater than that of people who vote to establish monopolies and then turn and make a god of any scoundrel who, for selfish motives, will tell them that they have a right to take forcible possession of other people's property.

"A pretentious exterior often covers a small soul. It don't look well in individuals who "lay back their ears" taking in at a glance a scope of 375 degrees of the horizon of human life, and commenting thereon like one standing aside and above it all, to exhibit the jealous petulance of an overgrown sulky booby.

"We are raw and green in Canada, of course—a little too much of the freshness of the backwoods about us to be pulled by the nose into a fancy political scheme by any disappointed would-be aristocrat.

"We are already very closely connected with the United States—essentially one people with them. It is not necessary to spend a great part of life at a college to understand one another. Many from amongst us go there to live, some of them no credit to either country. Not so many, yet some United States people come voluntarily to abide with us, and it would be hard to find one such that would not be a credit to any country. This fact should be studied carefully by those who express anxiety to build up a great nation, because there is such a thing as getting ahead too fast; and this brings us to the mathematical part of the subject, which is: How many feather-headed Bluenoses, in a mad chase, with lolling tongues, for dollars and noise, are equal to one level headed decent Yankee? This may serve as a standing question for civil service examination, not for candidates only, but for those already in of all grades."

"What is your opinion of competitive examinations?"

"Good and useful if we could have any guarantee of their honesty; but just imagine one going forward to answer a series of catch questions in a limited time with his hopes and anxieties, and competing with a fellow that has had them prepared at his leisure."

"I think no meaner thing could be done and no good could come of it, but surely nothing of the kind takes place."

"No, a bad tree don't yield good fruit, but it appears to me I heard a noise about something of the kind in Nova Scotia once. When even so simple a matter as a spelling exercise wears a sinister look, the parties at the bottom of it are worth watching.

"In respect to spelling, slips are not uncommon even when the writing is carefully revised. I could, for example, show very high

authority for spelling academy with double c, and can show far more serious faults in very pretentious productions. Some rainy day I will write you a letter on these matters and on competitive examinations ; it is too fine to-day to deal with such dull things."

"Don't you think the features of a country have something to do in moulding people's minds, especially leading people ?"

"Can there be any question about it ? Where everything is on a grand scale—rolling rivers, inland seas, and boundless prairies—who can doubt that it has an effect in raising men above littleness."

I resumed the conversation which had lulled while filling our pipes, by asking about the adjoining farm, the house on which appeared to be unoccupied, and was not a little interested in the account of his neighbour who was also a relative.

"He has been engaged in different occupations," he said, "but is of the rolling stone order of people, and a year ago went to the North-west. I have had a letter from him but it is not quite clear by it what he thinks of the place. He has a fashion of mixing things in the most promiscuous job-lot-way imaginable. The step between the sublime and the ridiculous is carried away, and these parties are found at times occupying the same rustic settee ; the stately lady, gracefully acknowledging the respectful, if awkward, attentions of her neighbour.

If his reports had been very favourable I thought of going out myself.

"Did he live long on this farm ?"

No. He began life as a school-master, next tried preaching, then after a time farming, but the extraordinary favorable accounts of the North-west which he read in a published description induced him to go and see this promised land for himself.

"Not remarkably successful in his first occupations likely?"

"Well perhaps not. He sometimes got into trouble with people about one thing or another. He was accused at times as most teachers are, of showing partiality. Once he punished a boy for misconduct, and the lad went home making such a doleful complaint that his mother shortly after presented herself at the place he was staying with a horsewhip and broke the nature of her business with him partly in words and disjointed sentences and partly in pantomime. He saw her coming, however, and concluding that her mission was

not one likely to cause her husband any uneasiness on the score of undue friendship, deployed to a position where the table formed a sort of breastwork. As soon as an opportunity occurred he told her that once in a while for insubordination or other improper conduct, he had found it necessary to inflict punishment; and, if it could be fairly shown that he himself had merited chastisement, he could not consistently object; but first he would like to ask her a question or two and make a few remarks.

His visitor, Mrs. Smith, charged him with frequent and inhuman whippings of her poor little boy, while he never so much as laid a finger on the Brown's young ones, and Brown was a drunken, good-for-nothing, worthless person that could'nt pay his debts, and his wife thought of nothing else but dressing herself, and she would let him see that she would not stand quietly by and have her poor little child pounded to death and other people's brats made favorites of.

"Mrs. Smith," he said, "I believe you have six children."

"Yes, I have six lawful children and what have you to say about it?"

On the legal side of the question nothing whatever. But I would ask you as an intelligent woman, do you never find any difficulty in managing them? Are they invariably obedient and respectful, and do you never see any necessity with a mother's care for their wellfare to reprimand or chastise them?

"Why I have my own troubles and enough of them dear only knows, and the burden falls altogether on me; as for Smith he would'nt say a word if the children spit in my face."

"Just so; I can understand your troubles and know how to sympathize with you; and now, suppose that in addition you had all the neighbours' children to care for?"

"What's the use of talking nonsense. I would'nt have all the neighbours' children."

"That confirms the opinion I formed of your good sense, but just suppose you had them to care for, don't you think your difficulties would be greatly increased?"

"We won't suppose anything of the kind, for I tell you I would not have them."

"Well I have them, not only yours, which with a parent's solicitude you find necessary to chastise occasionally, but all your neighbours' children as well to look after."

"Well, it is your business and you are paid for it."

"As usual you are quite right. It is my business and I am paid for it. But I am very much mistaken in my estimate of your judgment if you don't agree with me that that fact does not lessen the difficulty of managing them. Teachers, as a matter of course, like some children better than others, but it is part of their business to consider this and prevent it interfering with the honest and honorable discharge of the duties they are paid for. But it often happens that in the honest discharge of duty they will incur censure for showing favor or severity, for which at first sight, there will be apparent foundation. Two boys, for example, require the teacher's attention for neglect of work or other fault. The teacher knows from their dispositions that the method of dealing with one would entirely fail to accomplish the object in the case of the other. One, under persuasive encouragement, will do work that would be impossible to him under reprimand or severity, while gentle treatment would only induce the other to transgress the more. So that to honestly do the work he is paid for in a way that by experience he knows to be right and effective, he must often incur the charge of gratifying childish spite.

"Take the case of your boy, the second one I mean—that fine robust, healthy, good-looking lad that resembles yourself so much; a proper check on too great exuberance of spirits during school-hours not only prevents general demoralization among others, but diverts from ways that lead to ruin. Undue severity in any case is to be condemned, but among the boys of to-day are the politicians of the future; and you are always safe in discounting largely the tales of their own exploits and others' misdeeds.

"No one understands and can instruct children so well as a teacher, for the same simple reason that no one can make an article of use so well as he whose trade it is.

"I am about through now, and, would you prefer dusting the coat, or shall I take that garment off?"

"O nonsense! Drat the young ones. I don't know what they were sent into the world for. They are more bother than their necks are worth.

"I brought this whip out to drive the cow from the garden. She got in yesterday and eat half the cabbage up. Smith will never fix that gate until everything is destroyed. Saying which, she went home whip in hand, and Mr. Smith was seen coming suddenly out bareheaded, looking as if business of the utmost importance required his presence somewhere, but wasn't quite sure where.

"On the whole, his reputation as a successful teacher was not too bad, but a few years after he left the businsss on account of unjust treatment by the school law managers, and essayed preaching.

"Much was expected from him at first, for reasons not easy to explain, except on the principle that a new broom sweeps clean. He was even accused of being addicted to poetry, and it was supposed that some kind of Round-table Idylls might appear any time, with some of the politicians figuring as stainless knights that would make the leaves wither and fall off the Laureate's crown, leaving only the jewelled circlet.

"The people who were troubled a little about this were those who would like to figure in history as discerning and magnanimous patrons of struggling genius; but if it was to be a matter only of staying a punishing hand from a mere ordinary friendless mortal, why that was a horse of a different color. They maintained an observant attitude of armed neutrality, so to speak."

"What led them to expect that there might be a latent Homer around somewhere?"

"O, a pious fraud of a good-natured newspaper person, who found straightforward appeals for a little relaxation of the thumbscrews ineffectual."

"And was there no show of poetry to give a coloring of truth to those pious frauds, as you call them?"

"Not much."

"And about the quality?"

"Well, of that, I am able to put you in a position to judge for yourself. For my part, I do not take as much interest in poetry as some people, and my opinion on the subject generally is, I expect, at variance with that of many. For example, I consider 'Mary's Little Lamb' better than 'Paradise Lost.'"

"You astonish me."

"I thought as much; still, I can give a reason for the faith that is in me."

"Mary's Little Lamb" is short and sweet.

It is not necessary to dig amongst the dust of antiquity to glean the meaning of anything in it; neither does it bear the impress of an advertisement of the authors great learning and wonderful ability. It is read and remembered by thousands for every ten that read Milton. It is parodied and ridiculed, which is further testimony of its great acceptance; for, however the apes that do such things manage it, they never spend their labour on dead things. In after years it recalls to memory the happy careless days of childhood when learned, and

in this way helps to soften the asperities of life and make people better.

"Paradise Lost" is an extravagant romance, containing in higher language much in common with the ordinary dime novel. Indeed it is questionable if a modern dime novel could be found with anything so vicious and repulsive as some parts of this strange story. To most readers a great deal of it would be as unintelligible as if written in Sanscrit. Of those who quote any part of it from memory, many would be unable to tell whence the quotation came, and it is better so. Take the lines,

> "Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks
> "In Vallambrosa."

How very beautiful considered independent of the context. But when we learn that it was intended for illustration of the myriads of bright and happy spirits that were permitted to be misled by a crafty, ambitious and unscrupulous leader to misery and disgrace, it becomes as a flower spattered with blood. Again, how many can tell off-hand what or where Vallambrosa is. This is a case where a far fetched term is all right because any place where trees grow and brooks run is Vallambrosa enough, the beauty of the poetry consists in its ability to recall vividly pleasant walks through forest glades at a season especially conducive to sentimental reflection.

In my opinion the first essential to poetry as well as prose is candour. When we see stuff, either rhyming or prosaic, in which every line reveals the writer's vanity to be thought learned, overshadowing his craving for popular esteem, by having laboriously dragged into it out-of-the-way dead garbage, it gives the sky all around a leaden November look."

"But would you have all who write poetry deal only with such subjects as young sheep?"

"I have failed entirely to make my meaning clear if you infer anything of the kind from my remarks."

"Which of the poets do you consider the best."

"Now you make another mistake. It is surely possible to form and express opinions on matters within the easy comprehension of any one of common sense without presuming to sit in judgment on all creation."

"O yes, and no doubt there is a great deal of trash paraded before us under the name of poetry."

"Yes, and there is much, too, called trash only by people of blunted preception.

Few newspaper men feel that they can establish their claim to be considered clever journalists until they have repeated the requisite number of worn witticisms on the spring poet. But if instead of consigning much of this poetry to the waste basket it were given to us in the place of a great deal of the mixture of soap and vinegar of their own manufacture we would be all much better for it. A great deal of it is genuine poetry, however simple or defective the expression. It reveals aspirations to rise at times above the faculty that the world is attaching all importance to in every calling—the faculty possessed in common with the pigs that squeal and crowd one another at the swill trough.

We distinguish such poetry almost without reading it by a quick feeling akin to pain. We bless the writers and long to banish all evil from the world.

Does my explanation modify in any degree your surprise at my statement?"

"Well really your views are so at variance with established notions —violently rupturing them so to speak—that I prefer to be careful in pronouncing judgment. I will reserve the point for consideration; as you have no doubt already gone through considerable mental strain in reaching your conclusion, that will be considered, and you may rely on an opinion as impartial as is consistent with paramount obligations. In the meantime about the achievements of your friend? Was his poetry of the order that you have ranged ahead of Milton's?"

"Yes, I remember now I promised to enable you to form your own opinion of it. He wrote two short poems which I committed to memory without intending or wishing to do so, but merely from repeated reading to get at the meaning of criticisms on them. The first was headed with curious wedge shaped figures and read:—

"If on Parnassian heights I stand and gaze,
Or through the Cyclades my barge I steer,
Or when the dread Charybdian dangers near,
Precipitately make Ausonian bays;
The tuneful muse that erst in Phaon's days,
Whispered despairing strains in Sappho's ear,
Or struck Apollo's lyre with sounds of fear
And joy, while gods around stand in amaze,
As stood the deep-voiced Pindar when his fame
Before Corinne's sank. The multitude,
At Isthmian, Pythian or at Nemean game,
With voices echoing through the solitude,
Long, loud, and laudative the victor's name.
In pool Lethean sinks the Kitter dude."

This met a very flattering reception from many of the literary people; several foreign names, as that of Zanchi and Camoens, were mentioned in connection with it. Nearly every word had a paragraph or two devoted to its appropriateness. The wide range of action and depth of thought were commented on separately and together. The first thirteen lines were singled out as a unique example of the absence of anything approaching a grating sound, and were said to be an indication of complete mastery of the situation."

"But as the boys say: What is all the racket of the first thirteen lines about anyway?"

"Ah! that I cannot tell," said he,
But 'twas a famous victory."

"And why were the first thirteen lines only selected for comment?"

"O, that's one of these deep things like electricity and gravity that it seems useless to wrestle with. But if the favourable reception this poem met with induced the succeeding effort, the effect must have been such as to bring on a longing to explore alone and unarmed some tiger-hunted jungle, or make a bed among the serpent holes of a far-away precipitous ravine.

"On its appearance, a low musical sound like the voice of a weak jackass with a bad cold caught it on the fly. The chorus was taken up by the brilliant performers around the literary cream cann, the local representative of the god of war acting in the double capacity of military and vocal instructor, while the parody-parrot maintained its long-established reputation for imitating the human voice.

"The chief offence in the poetry was want of conformity with the Italian standard; but the sweet Williams of the sanctified order sniffled in it also occluded immorality."

"You imbue me with mixed feelings of fear and desire to hear the production."

"Well, it was headed with a note of admiration and read this way:

Alas! when all around is fair and good,
And life appears to one a pleasant thing,
That evil then should come, and with it bring
Its chilling shadow—sad or gloomy mood.
I walked along the fields and through the wood,
When earth was bright and warm with sun of noon,
And all the orchard trees were white with bloom,
And the great summer clouds like mountains stood;
The swallows flew and twittered high in air,
The green fields waved before the gentle breeze,
I heard low rustling sounds and hum of bees,
Surely all life is happy. Ah no! There
A wounded song bird that would shelter seek,
Was pecked by carrion jay's filth crusted beak.

There it is, and now I suppose, as in the other case, you prefer to reserve judgment for consideration."

"I really see no sufficient reason for doing so. The verdict in my opinion is, he is a poet and an intelligent man, without recommendation for mercy."

"Well I must confess that I did not expect to hear as much from you."

"That's it. It is the things we don't expect that happen."

"Well as a preacher he failed to give universal satisfaction."

"Defective delivery perhaps," I said. "It often happens that men of intelligence pass through the world as very common place mortals; owing to inability to communicate their ideas readily. They listen to and read the chatter of the talking machines making no sign and living a life within themselves."

It was not so much that way although he was not gifted with any remarkable powers of eloquence. You have probably heard of people selecting a subject for discourse and afterwards making no reference to it whatever. I cannot say whether or not he did so intentionally, but it was always hard to trace any connection between text and sermon.

He usually chose a difficult or obscure passage and preached from it a plain sermon, dealing with the every day affairs of life. His hearers were troubled a good deal about it; some putting on one construction, others seeing an illustration in a different way.

A debate on the matter among some neighbors one evening at a grocery store grew so keen that much bad feeling resulted, and at one time there was danger of coming to blows. By the interposition of a peace-maker it was at last agreed to leave the subject in dispute to the preacher for decision, and a delegation of two waited on him for that purpose.

He heard them patiently, admitted the obscurity, and told them that he would make the explanation a subject for a special sermon, in the meanwhile they could consider the text and sermon independently, but the next sermon he preached was the last."

"Grew tired of the business, I suppose?"

"Not exactly. He got into trouble with a woman."

"Mercy on me! It must have been a serious affair to have cost him his situation?"

By the rejoinder I fear this was spoken with too much levity and I continued:

"I don't wish you to think that I am one to rejoice at every mishap that befalls a man, even though I differ very widely from him in opinion. Some people do so. They entertain such a deep feeling of hatred for expressing opinions on subjects of common interest at variance with theirs that they would rejoice at every misfortune and gloat over any indication of failing health, circulate lying, defamation of character, and resort to sly means to entice him to evil ways. This feeling is even sometimes carried to the extent of plotting murder, setting death traps and hiring assassins. The more cowardly give covert encouragement only, but are murderous all the same.

I often wonder if people who have not succeeded in committing a mean cowardly crime they had planned, realize that they are murderers as much as though they had accomplished their evil purpose. Conscience is in embryo, but they must dream at times that the deed was done, that by some trifling circumstance it has become known, the trial with all its formalities and uncertainties takes place, the just and sickening, *guilty*, is at last pronounced, the time till execution flies as time never flew before, they see the scaffold, feel the rope tighten, gasp, waken, and find it all a dream—Ah no, not all!

"The trouble with my friend was this way: I happened to be at his place and attended service on the eventful occasion. He selected for text a chapter in Chronicles, I am not quite sure of the number, the 34th, I think. The discourse that followed was very good in its way, but as usual it was very hard to trace any connection with the supposed scriptural subject. The congregation was mainly farmers and their families, and the sermon treated largely of things in the every day life of people. No great eloquence or flights of fancy, no frothing at the mouth nor banging of books or pulpit, but every word was distinctly spoken in language that all could understand.

Among other things he went on to say that while it was often remarked that cleanliness was next to godliness, the common but erroneous opinion is that it is next after it, whereas it is just before godliness, and if you get an extra o in the word you may snap your finger at the pedants, it won't alter the meaning.

There are men from whom we would expect better sense, who teach the reverse and say that a woman who attends regularly to her prayers and church formalities, though she be slovenly dirty and ignorant is more certain of heaven than the woman who does not so attend church formalities though she be neat, clean and morally upright. Now I believe such doctrine erroneous and that it has a retarding effect on civilization.

The result on the sum total of the affairs of life may be estimated by considering a few in detail. Take for example such a commonplace subject as the making of butter. The bulk of this article of food is of so poor a quality through dirt and bad management that the

manufacture of a spurious compound made of unwholesome and disgusting materials has become an extensive and profitable business. It is a greater sin to make dirty butter than to miss saying a prayer.

Observe the cleanly woman's dairy. In the coolest and airiest situation, the place and all connected with it has the impress of that essential to godliness. Her personal appearance from the same point of view corresponds with the surroundings. If you are fortunate enough to eat butter of her manufacture you will feel like returning thanks indeed; for the clean bright product of the churn retains the very perfume of the clover and flowers of the pasture.

Now for the dirty woman. Her dairy is near a manure heap; pigs are wallowing in mire near it and dogs are sleeping in it. An offensive stale smell pervades everything about it As we might expect, personal untidiness as she superintends the work completes the picture, which is not so pleasant as the other to look upon. The axlegrease that she turns out fills the consumer with gloomy thoughts, which sometimes find expression in bad words.

Now it is a reasonable belief that of these two, the first, though she never enter a church door or say a prayer, is much surer happiness than her dirty neighbor who never misses a service and prays unceasingly; and wherever they may go, the company of the first is very much to be preferred.

It will be said by some that this is a very worldly view of life's duties, and nothing truer could be said. It is the world we are concerned with now, and what we want to do is to make the best of it. It is contrary to reason and sound teaching that making the best of this world endangers our prospects in the next. Good bread and butter is nice to eat, and we are so constituted as to enjoy eating it; therefore it is right. But it does not follow that we should think of nothing but eating, and spend most of our time at it. That would be productive of misery and disease, which is not making the best of the world.

A Roman emperor was a noted example of more than beastliness in this respect, and perhaps it would not be necessary to look so high or so far back for illustrations of the evil effects of undue gratification of appetite. But this is no argument against having everything we eat, clean, of the best quality and sufficient quantity. Some people, like the gluttons of unevenly-balanced minds have thought so, have starved themselves, eat filthy and unwholesome things, clothing themselves in dirty rags worn constantly without change.

There are many instances recorded of most ridiculous conduct in this respect.

John Schad, Doctor of Philosophy at Jena about the first of this century, relates among many similar remarkable things in his experience, of people so determined to thwart their natural desire for food, as to partake of only one scanty meal of soup a day. This was placed in a bowl at the foot of a long ladder. The method was to take a spoonful, climb to the top of the ladder, eat it, return for another,

and so on; and this is not nearly so fantastical as some things that could be related as done by very religions people.

The epicurean glutton and the dirty ascetic are results of unevenly balanced minds, and are equally absurd.

Those who feel inclined to use the example of one against the teaching here, should bear in mind that the case of the other cancels the effect.

Among the congregation were some noted for untidiness, and especially a very religious woman who made butter not so clean as it ought to be. She left abruptly before the end of the discourse: Generally speaking, old women are very much nicer people than old men. They don't have that want-to-bite-your-head-off look and way with them, and they have more sense, but some kind of old women are vicious enough. Their tongues run very freely when dealing with the short comings of others, but just touch on a subject that shows up their own dirty ways and their vixen nature develops immediately. Finding established facts against them, they want their revenge, and resort to underhand means to obtain it, not unfrequently succeeding in inflicting material injury.

This old woman was not too religious to visit neighbours that very afternoon to incite feelings against the preacher, the result of which was an intimation conveyed to him that his usefulness was gone.

The only surprising part of it to him was to find men that he had always thought better of submitting to be pulled around by the nose in such a disgraceful way."

"And so he exchanged the pulpit for the plough and commenced farming here."

"Not immediately. He was employed for a time with a combination circus and comedy company to write programmes, but was unfortunate here again, as the agents illused and cheated him out of a great part of his pay.

In general circus agents and people who move about a great deal seeing many phases of character have their views broadened, but it is hard to eradicate inherent meanness. Education may give a surface polish, but every abrasion shows the inferior under material. Some of the agents acted through malice, but cowardly meanness was also evident through a belief that he was friendless and unable to defend himself. Their experience led them to believe that any indignity would be cringingly submitted to. In this affair they concluded, however, that honesty would have been the best policy, as the proprietors got an inkling of their doings, when fearing for their own situations, they resorted to crooked ways to quiet the matter.

It would not be just to say that all the agents were engaged in this affair, but many of them defended it on the score of expediency, solacing themselves with the thought that it was the less of two evils as a bad lot were on the watch to take advantage of any dissension to

obtain their situations. This was no justification even, if true, of their would be successors, which it was not, although true enough of some of their supporters who were sharp enough though to make those they hated strike their knuckles against a stone wall, using acquired positions of trust as vehicle of personal malignity and the clammy smile of satisfaction at the supposed effect would be a study for depicters of scenes in the nether world. We would never have had the proverb "Devils are not black as they're painted" had the originator seen the natural hue.

My friend grew weary of the hypocrites and swindlers, wrote a letter advising the circus company to simplify the management showing that it could be more efficiently and economically conducted by having its affairs under more careful supervision by the owners themselves. He showed that many of the animals were half starved because the income was used largely for the benefit or whims of an army of useless swindlers.

He gave this advice not so much in expectation that it would be acted on, but as people had always generously given him advice on every matter, he took this opportunity of returning the compliment. He then left the caboodle and commenced farming here, but, as I mentioned before, a glowing description induced him to visit the N. W.

People seem to have dealt roughly with your friend, but you must pardon me for saying that "hear both sides" is a religion with me. Employees often have exaggerated ideas of their own importance, and if their estimate is reduced a little, they are apt to complain of injustice. As in the case of the school-boys and some others, you must deduct largely to get at facts. In the matter of the circus engagement it is scarcely probable that without special cause he would be singled out for hard treatment. He was one of those people likely who considered life a failure."

He no doubt considered life a failure, but not especially so. All men's lives are failures to some extent; if not, there would be no incentive to improvement. Indeed a stationary state of perfection is inconceivable. It is like a riddle of course, but what we are striving for is not only unattainable, but, were attainment possible, life would no longer be worth anything."

I asked and obtained permission to copy his friend's letter for the newspapers, but they all found it deficient in the suponaceous ingredient. It, with a subsequent one, will be found appended to this sketch.

It was wearing towards evening now of this long June day, and I caught sound of as sweet music as one wants to hear at times—the cows were coming home, and I heard the cow bell.

A cowbell, considered as music, would not be a success in a street procession. Whether even it could with advantage take the place of much indoor music is a question involving too many and complex features to be hastily decided; but there are times and places when cowbell music, as executed by the old cow herself, is sweeter far than many of these, and where a brass band would be more discordant than a cowbell in a ballroom."

The holiday is nearly over, and I must go to meet the train.

Now we are "all aboard," another bell sounds, and we are off.

The people gather in at every station on their return. Their manner is different. They are less precise and affected than in the morning. Their holiday in the country has made them better.

If people who contribute money to convert the Hindoos to a belief in the red hot iron floor arrangement would use it for hiring Sunday trains to carry poor people away for a little while from dirt, sin and misery and have one happy day in the week, their charity would be more wisely directed

The young people and especially the beautiful young ladies talk incessantly with a delightful absence of any glimmer of common sense in anything they say. This shows their wisdom, because, for young people to talk sense on a holiday would be sheer nonsense and very tiresome.

Now we are back to town. Here is the crowd and clamour, the carriages and trucks, workers and loafers. Here we are on the street again with the foul smells and clouds of dust. There is a distressed looking fellow who has spent his holiday about a rumshop, reeling along uttering incoherent curses and a desire to damage some one, the blood from a fall or a blow giving a worse than savage look to his features. Here are two bargaining, each keenly intent on deceiving the other. There again is one brute whipping another half starved one with his heavy load up the hill, and the evolutionist says: "Simian Ancestor, you seem nearer now."

APPENDIX.

LETTER No. 1.

N. W., ¾ N.

My dear Friend,—

To respond to your request for my opinion of the advantages offered here to intending immigrants, affords me a double pleasure, inasmuch as the satisfaction I feel in being able to contribute, even to a very small extent, to the information respecting this vast region, is only exceeded by my desire to oblige you.

It is true, showers of pamphlets and circulars descriptive of the "great lone land" have, of late, fallen like snow-flakes on the people of both hemispheres; but the information contained in such is partial and not always wholly reliable.

When selfish hope of gain prompts an opinion, due caution and enquiry are advisable before accepting it, whether the recommendation be for a patent cure all pill or an easy way of climbing the golden stair.

Governments, Land, Steamship and Railway Co.'s and other speculators have direct and indirect interest in immigration. It is therefore in the usual course of things that information emanating from such sources would have the advantages dwelt on, while drawbacks would not be made a tax on the powers of eloquence.

For obvious reasons we rarely see adverse accounts. Some, it is true, who have not had their expectations realized, and have returned or remained because they were unable to return, make efforts to caution others; but it must be admitted that in painting their picture, the brush is apt to be dipped too often in the darker pigments.

I particularly wish that if in this letter you should find anything that you might consider an especial attraction, you will give the subject the fullest consideration before deciding, because, next to shuffling off this mortal coil, I think the saddest thing in life is to see people cutting connection with home and friends and old associations to begin existence anew in a distant country under different conditions; and, taking a turn as I have done occasionally through the sheds where a shipload of emigrants from the old countries awaited the trains, the prevailing feeling was always one of melancholy.

Old people and children, young men and women, in groups around their possessions, strong boxes, trunks and chests, containing,

among other portable property, many of the smaller household gods which will be pointed at by old people not yet born as brought in the long ago by grandparents from their far-away home over the sea.

How like a people by themselves these groups of wanderers feel! Surrounded by crowds moving to and fro, some on one kind of business, some on another, and yet some with no business at all; but all to them are the same—strangers.

A rough word of notice or a jeer is not resented, neither will a kindly spoken word elicit any expression of friendly cheerfulness. They are on guard, and know that the guise of friendship is often assumed to more successfully accomplish treachery and fraud. But under all the hurry and turmoil can be detected often a look of wistfulness or regret.

The unseen home to be is far ahead: the old familiar home is far behind. Many friends and acquaintances, and perhaps near relatives, have been parted with it may be forever; and if, as sometimes happens, a member of the family has sickened and died on the voyage, how inexpressibly sad to have him given to the great sea. A grassy mound in the churchyard may be visited, but the ever changing billows obliterate all trace of the lost one. Even the solemn burial-service is not observed. The pressing demands of commerce refuse to permit the great engines to cease for a moment their panting activity. What signifies a human life, and that of a steerage passenger, where the making or losing of money is concerned? But to the little group of friends to have him thrown into the boundless ocean, how utterly lost he is.

> "Like the dew on the mountain,
> Like the foam on the river,
> Like the bubble on the fountain,
> He is gone, and forever."

Other troubles are before these people, many of whom were fairly contented and happy, but have been lured to go in search of what they will never find.

There are always adventurous people to whom the monotony of quiet home-life is intolerably irksome. They require no persuasion and promises to emigrate. The very hardships and dangers that others seek to avoid are to them an inducement to wander. These voluntary emigrants are the natural pioneers for new settlements. But it is a sin to hire agents to persuade people who are more happy at home than they will be elsewhere to become exiles.

When philanthropic individuals who have personal knowledge of distress from overcrowding or oppressive laws, will, at their own expense or superintendence, endeavor to better the condition of others by immigration or any means, who can speak enough in praise of such benefactors of humanity? But the case is quite different when avarice or ambition is the guiding principle, notwithstanding the fine things said about building up a great nation and working for posterity.

The way to care for the future is to do what is just and of most benefit at present In the matter of immigration, as in others, it is positive fraud when money is forcibly taken from some people to make others more unhappy, or import among them paupers and criminals to be a further source of expense and danger.

The business of legislators is to conduct affairs according to the wish of their employers—the people. Like others, they are entitled to form their own opinions and give expression to them without being punished therefor. Should these opinions meet the approval of the majority, well and good; but until that time they should not arrogantly enforce them.

Among other ways of classifying people, they are divided into the hopeful fellows and the Jeremiahs. Outside of bandits, there is probably no instance of people deciding intentionally to do wrong in their collective capacity. The converse of this will bear hardly in some directions, but it can't be helped. Unless these views can be proved incorrect, the pessimists must fall in the rear, because, as the voice of the people, as a whole, is always for the right, great things may be expected as understanding improves and knowledge increases

There may be instances of extraordinary individual wisdom; but the legislator will do better not to act on the presumption that he is a living illustration of such, but to legislate according to the wish of the people; and if it is not always necessary to buy, cajole or intimidate them into voting for one out of two individuals placed before them, to determine what their wish in any case may be.

Let an average voter be asked if he is willing to pay a man whose object in the matter is to obtain a situation combining easy times and high salary, to persuade people three or more thousand miles east of him, about whom he knows nothing, to emigrate as far west, where he will never know more of them, and can there be any doubt of the answer?

The limits of a letter will not admit of other and serious objections to speculating with human lives to accomplish the selfish aims of individuals. Of course, many unfortunate people are so miserably situated that any change must be for the better; but this is not applicable to cases like yours, where, with a climate not subject to very great extremes of temperature, you enjoy good health, and, if your wealth is not so great as you might reasonably desire, you at least have no fear of great privation. Your surplus products can always find a ready market at remunerative prices, and you can obtain in exchange many things which, though not absolutely necessary to existence, you would, from long custom, find it hard to be deprived of. If not exactly in the vanguard of civilization, you are yet not far enough removed from it to be in danger of relapsing into a primitive state of existence.

With these cautionary remarks I will proceed; but for the present confine my attention to a point or two, which, remarkable as it may

appear have been overlooked by those who have been employed to write the country up.

The feature most dwelt on, and the centre of all other attractions, is the unlimited extent of land. Here the rack-rent payers of other countries may, under easy conditions, become proprietors of real estate—land owners. And if with the land they also acquire habits of thrift and industry, they will, in time, become here, as in other places, rack-landlords themselves. It must be admitted that there has been no exaggeration in respect to the extent of land here. Indeed it is nearly all land except the lakes, but the number and other features of the latter have been astonishingly overlooked; for, besides the more southern "magnificent water stretches," nature, with a prodigal hand, has sprinkled this region with innumerable lakes, varying in size from small ponds to millions of acres in superficial area. Now the bottoms of these lakes consist of a great depth of alluvium brought down in the course of ages by the numberless streams that enter them. It has also been placed beyond doubt by scientific research that the water of these is steadily growing shallower and must eventually entirely disappear. "The practically inexhaustible fertility" of these lake bottoms opens out to the ever-wakeful eye of speculation a vista of wealth perfectly startling from its unbounded dimensions. Miles of uninterrupted fields of waving golden grain of prodigious yield will reward the fortunate pioneers in this northern Eldorado with riches that can already be a subject of mathematical calculation by the simple rule of supposition.

The most unaccountable thing about this matter is the fact, that, neither in descriptive pamphlets, nor in parliamentary oratory, has this great source of wealth been alluded to. No information is at hand to show that a syndicate has even been thought of to have this heritage surveyed into lots for sale to actual settlers with alternate reservations.

That this great subject has not been expatiated on in the Council Chambers of the nation seems like a lost opportunity. What an opening here for a patriot seeking the position of representative, not as a mounting block, but solely through an overmastering Howard-like hanker, to improve the miserable condition of a suffering people.

What an opportunity for an elaborate machine made speech redolent of school days and defiance of Bohemian criticism and reading equally well, beginning at either end.

The space and time at my disposal warn me not to linger, but this lake bottom matter is of such an attractive nature that when one gets well into it it is difficult getting away.

I believe it is generally admitted that winter up here has its drawbacks. At present, however, I am not dealing with this side of the subject; the brighter aspect must have attention first. All people of cultivated taste look on unsullied snow as the emblem of beauty and purity, and our finer sentiments recoil in disgust from the expression

of newspaper people who speak of the accumulations about the streets in the spring when mixed with mud and filth as 'the beautiful.'

These poor people work so much among material of the opposite color and quality that if properly dissected, the stain would be found to have penetrated to the very wellspring of their existence.

Here the sensibilities are never offended by snow mixed and trampeled into grey slush. On the contrary, for the greater part of the year, the immense tract for miles and hundreds of miles is covered with beauty undefiled of such dazzling whiteness that the unprotected eye cannot gaze upon it long with safety.

The rivers, too, now converted into solid material to which plate-glass for polish and hardness is a poor comparison, serve as roadways more level than engineering skill of man has ever constructed railway.

The lowering temperature, always accompanied with an increase of ozone in the atmosphere, has a remarkably exhilirating effect on the system. Think, now, of the puny skating rinks of more southern towns! Here, with a pair of bright steel runners firmly bound on the feet, you can speed on like the wind towards the far north, ever surrounded by the same unblemished expanse of beautiful snow; the fatigue of exercise counteracted by the increasing exhilirating effect of ozone, and, as an additional incentive to action, the howling bark of the grey pursuers, spurred on by that strongest inducement to exertion—the need of refreshments—breaks the stillness profound. And on you speed until the land is reached where the sun pursues the moon around the horizon, and the stars never rise nor set. There, under the scintillating glory of Ursa Majoris, you enter a region where the temperature would enable cutting implements to be made of butter rivalling in keenness of edge and elasticity the famed blades of Toledo and Damascus. Here, breathing ozone only, unvexed by sandflies, unannoyed by the foul odors begot of filth, heat and moisture, you glide in and under the ever-changing and resplendently-variegated canopy of the boreal aurora—azure, crimson, purple, gold—joining the spirits of Franklin and other adventurous heroes in undulating unison with the music of the spheres, waltz round the pole in a never-ending whirl of intoxicating delight.

LETTER No. 2.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—

In a former letter you were given opinions on the suitability of this region for the various pursuits necessary to maintain a population in a civilized condition with its possibilities and prospects. I will now briefly note a few impressions respecting the social condition of the people who form the settlement where I live at present.

Although the community is quite isolated, there is the same diversity of opinion on most subjects that is found in the older places from which they came; and, of course, this is most distinctly marked in politics and religion.

In respect to the former, there is the best possible exemplification of the absence, in many people, of an intelligent appreciation of the importance to them of the broad principles of social polity. Their ideas on these matters do not differ so very much from those of the baron's vassals centuries ago. They continue to look on their local political magnate as a mighty man and their lord and master, and they act in his presence the part of suppliant and dependent, and are not yet capable of realizing that the reverse is much nearer the true position. They would never dream of the propriety of leading him out for a walk by the auricular appendage should he make improper proposals for their support, or attempt to beguile them with visionary promises of great things. It will be some time yet before the average man rises in these matters to the dignity of his birthright.

As the individual members of the settlement came from different directions, where their politics consisted mainly of a faction like adherence to a party through some local wire puller unknown outside his constituency, the opinions of each about the prowess of their respective champions go without question.

The leading features in the management of public business they have not been able to note with sufficient distinctness to make their opinions of any value or of much interest.

This is also in a measure true in religion with them. Attention to details keeps principles out of view, although it may be said and is said often that these details are after all principal things.

The methods of observing distinctive ceremonies are debated with genuine orthodox bitterness.

Nearly all of the christian denominations are represented here, but Methodists and Baptists form the majority and are the only sects with clergymen.

Considerable bad feeling exists at present between these people, occasioned by a dispute about occupying the place of worship. A building was erected by the first settlers to serve the common purpose of school and church, which answered very well until the Baptists imported a minister, when a difficulty occurred respecting the hours of holding service. The Baptists throughout showed an accom-

modating disposition; but their strong desire to avoid unpleasantness was not met in the same spirit by the Methodists, who, being greatly in the majority, were overbearing; and, if their treatment of the Baptists could not be called persecution, it probably went nearly as far in that direction as the times will admit of.

A compromise was at last effected, allowing alternate choice, which worked well enough until the enthusiasm of one preacher caused him to intrude on the time of the other. A little retaliation fanned the flame, which might have resulted in a serious conflagration but for the suggestion of outside parties, who proposed running a partition through the building; thus making ample accommodation for both at the same time. This however would necessitate a rear entrance which neither would consent to take, and the result has been that service has been held at private houses pending the erection of new edifices.

The Baptist minister is a genuine old time specimen of the first water, and his views of the absolute necessity of baptism by immersion are forcibly impressed, so much so, indeed, that last January one of the congregation being a little unwell and feeling his great danger determined to be baptized.

The man heretofore had not been noted for good neighborship or scrupulous uprightness of character. He always appeared to enjoy good health, but was of an irritable temper. At this time having taken a cold he considered himself dangerously unwell, and, under the stirring preaching of his spiritual adviser, felt that any delay in the saving right was a risk that could not be entertained, and preparations were accordingly made for the emergency.

When the time and conditions are taken into consideration, the difficulty of performing a ceremony of this kind will be apparent. For household purposes, as well as for cattle, all water must be obtained by melting snow; and, as this church had not been provided with a suitable or any receptacle for water enough for baptism by immersion, the obstacle at first appeared almost insurmountable. But ardor in any cause, it is well known, will overcome extraordinary difficulties.

With considerable trouble, enough boards were found to construct a fount, if that is the proper designation, which, by corking, was made water-tight or nearly so. On the day appointed for solemnizing the ceremony, snow was melted at the nearest house and carried in buckets to the church, but here another trouble intervened. With the thermometer registering 40 below zero, the water, by the time other preparations were made, would again assume the solid form. To provide against this, pots and kettles full were placed on the church stove to keep enough hot water to regulate the temperature of that in the fount until used. This accomplished the purpose, though not quite successfully, because the church stove was not adapted to the purpose.

No one can well understand how necessary to the impressiveness of any ceremony, the correct observance of even small details is who has not witnessed its performance under disadvantages similar to those described here.

In the summer time, in southern latitudes, by the picturesque river side, with the officiating minister leading the convert in suitable garments out into the placid and tepid water under the inspiring influence of the melodious voices of sympathizing church members; the solemn descriptions of scenes in old times are brought to memory, and even those who come to look on out of mere curiosity are impressed with feelings very different from ridicule.

Surrounding conditions and a careful attention to details of ceremony are the life of a religion of ceremonies. On this occasion, the penitent wore a very matter-of-fact garment of unbleached cotton, rather short. The onlookers were electrified to see him, on the attempt at submergence, make a violent start, during which an improper expression escaped him, and one of the boards was displaced, allowing the entire contents of the tank to run over the church floor. This trouble was afterwards found to be caused by a nail, which, by oversight, was left protruding, and against which, on being lowered into the water, he struck and injured himself.

Now these people were devout believers and piously did the best they could under the circumstances; but the scene presented then, of the rough and wrecked tank, flooded church floor, overturned black pots and kettles, and general disorder and confusion, forced the question on one, whether baptism by immersion was intended for a saving ordinance in high latitudes in winter-time.

It was mentioned before that among the settlers here was to be found the usual variety of religious opinions; but even in a few years a perceptible diminution of the relative strength of Roman Catholics is noticeable. The percentage of deaths among them for the last two years was more than double that of Protestants. This an investigation would show to be the result of abstinence from meat during Lent and at other times.

In cold countries and seasons, the daily use of a sufficient quantity of animal food is necessary to enable the system to withstand the rigours of climate. That nature requires it is further indicated by the fact that people who could not bear fat pork before coming here, soon acquire a great relish for it, and abstinence from food of that kind invariably results in impaired health and early death; so that by the inexorable law of the survival of the fittest, expounded in this case by one of nature's untiring missionaries, Rev. J. Frost, the R. C.'s will become extinct above the isothermal line of — 35° much sooner than elsewhere.

There are Nova Scotians here as there are in other parts of the world—many of them. This, with other considerations, inclines one to think that for the land of the Bluenose, Nova Scotia is a misnomer.

In mechanical, manufacturing and commercial, not to speak of agricultural and other industries, Scotland has made for herself a name that will last; while for intelligence and uprightness her people will compare favorably with any in ancient or modern times. To speak in praise of their patriotism and bravery would be gilding fine gold. They write their own record, not in words, but in deeds, and the story is always the same from Bannockburn to Tamai. May some one in the future, speaking truthfully, say as much for New Scotland. At present New Ireland would be a more appropriate name for the little foggy peninsula. Like Ireland, it contribute[illegible]he population of other countries out of all proportion to its size, [illegible], at the present rate, they will eventually have all the world to themselves, and other nationalities will be obliged to find accommodation in Cape Breton.

There is further resemblance in the fact that both have been taken into political matrimony without being wooed and won in the way coy maidens prefer; and the results should be a lesson to matchmakers in future.

While her sister, New Brunswick, after having had her own say in the matter, has settled down like a trusting and contented matron, accepting without murmur and as a matter of course the showers with the sunshine, Nova Scotia acts the slattern, scolds or sulks when not asleep, and shows decided inclination to jilt the old man.

Nova Scotia, too, has her dynamite scum and jackal abettors of crime prowling around to batten on social carnage. Newspapers detail repeated ruffianly attacks on a farmer, with attempt[illegible]o burn his house at night over the sleeping family, and those outra[illegible]ersisted in until he is obliged to leave his crops to destruction, [illegible]eek safety in a by-street of the city; this, too, almost within call of the police and patent detectives, and no adequate efforts made to protect him or to hunt the savages down.

It is but simple justice to the Bluenose abroad, however, to say, that, as a rule, he is considered a valuable addition to the population by the people among whom he has decided to pitch his tent; and, as exceptions are said to confirm the rule, there will be no shadow of doubt about this being established on a firm basis, because, in a competition among countries for the champion mean man abroad, Nova Scotia would range right ahead.

When a Bluenose abroad will, through well-understood motives, glean and publish the scandal of slandering gossips about the domestic affairs of those at home and of individuals that never knew or had anything to do with him, it would not be right to deprive such a character of the pleasure of an acknowledgment of its effect, even though it be not so great as hoped for.

There is no home throughout the country that would care to have every little domestic affair published in the newspapers. The desperate efforts of the party who would do such a thing, ought to be successful to make a mark in the world, though a dirty one. How

delectable a composit disquisition on the want of appreciation of men of elevated thought, by a great nation, reads at times.

The indignation of decent people, published or other, against such a character and his prompters is as misapplied as if used in shaming a pole-cat for using the means that nature has provided it with for attack or defence, and by a well known axiom its effect must be the same.

But while making allowance for nature's niggardliness it may be useful to enquire what kind of moral teaching such Bluenoses get.

It must be such as that of a "constant hearer" whose best point in a controversy on a religious subject is in derision of the physical infirmity of the person attacked. Such are the hounds that the church has used to *hunt* heretics with in all time. Many people do not understand why some lectures on the authenticity of miracles and the like have such an effect in silencing cavil. Now another question occurs, what can such constant hearers constantly hear? Broad principles of uprightness of conduct shown to be above petty distinctions and formalities of sect, or that the eastern attitude correct cut of toggary and gimcrack ornaments are all in all.

Does their religious training consist in such as this and in hearing people who will not stand silently by and see the liberty of the people that has cost so much, slyly undermined without raising a warning voice, called sneak thieves. Can we see an explanation here of the fact, that while people have more knowledge and the world is better than at any past time, religion is falling into discredit.

It ought to be, and no doubt is, a serious question with sensible church people, whether their institution is in more danger from the fierce attacks of infidels outside or from narrow heads within. Between them the spires are reeling like a drunken man; prevented from falling with a crash only by the unyielding solidity of the base.

The oldest inhabitant known about here is a blue-nose—one Peter Stone. He is far advanced in years now and has a remarkable appearance; never shaving or clipping his hair, and clothing himself in Arctic bear skins only. Of late years he is rarely seen—about once a year or so, when he comes to the settlement to dispose of furs, after which he goes away north and even the Indians are baffled on his trail. He is reputed to have a great deal of money hidden away in a cave near his hunting ground.

The history of his life though simple and briefly told is not without interest.

All these long years he has worked perseveringly and endured untold hardships to accomplish a single purpose, never once faltering or dreading failure.

He has been heard to say that no matter what position in life a man occupies he can accomplish great things by singleness of purpose and persistent effort, and two historical personages he considers his prototypes. One, the tramp Peter, who made Europe tremble with the march of armies led by kings and princes to drive infidel invaders

from holy land; the other the Imperial Peter, who raised his country and himself to greatness by stooping to learn the use of the broad-axe and rule.

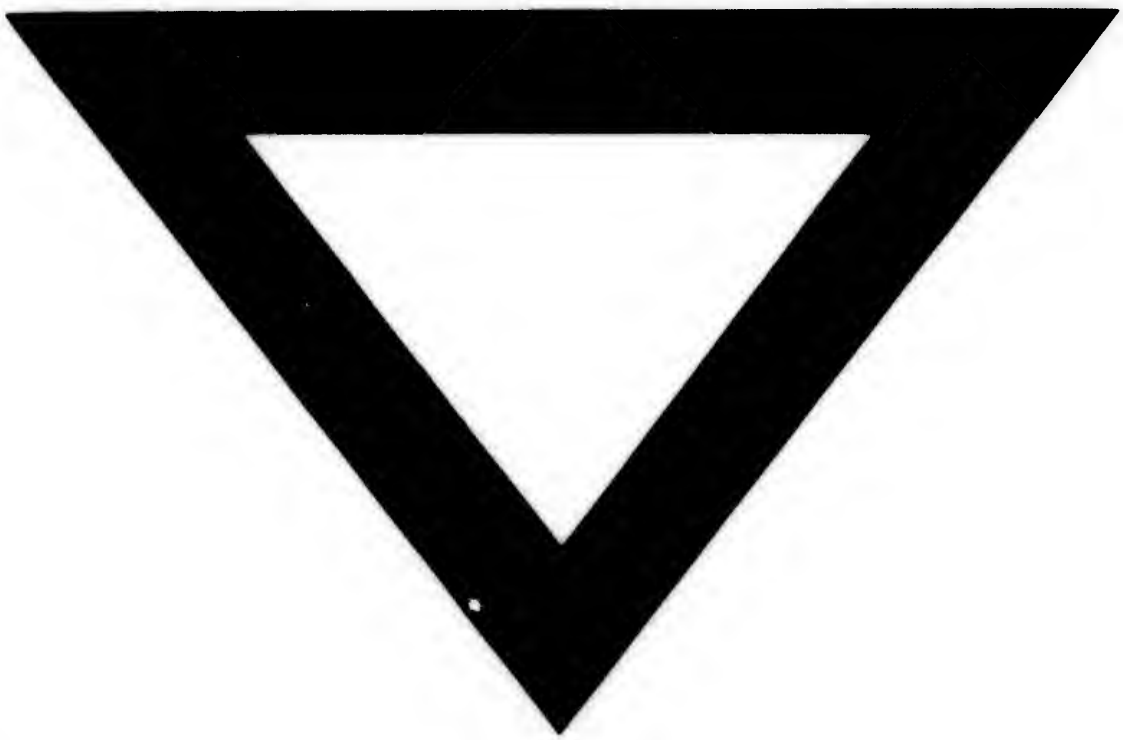
In like manner Peter Stone has directed his energies to accomplish a purpose.

It appears that in early life he made a visit to Halifax and put up at a house on Barrington Street. A tall, attenuated excursionist from Boston was staying at the same hotel. One day the American after moving restlessly about the room awhile sat down in a chair the reverse way looking out of the open window, asking no questions for some time.

After calculating the distance to an object on the opposite sidewalk and hitting the mark he said: "Stranger, in my country when people are dead in a room they turn the picters face to the wall or kiver them over; now don't you think that air picter out there ought to be turned tother side up."

Peter, who was too full for reply, there and then formed a resolution to wipe out the reproach in a way to fill impertinent foreigners with envy and wonder.

Believing that his chance of doing so by remaining in Nova Scotia was not good, while a settled aversion against the American made even a temporary stay in the United States impossible, he went to Canada and thence Northwest.

His aim has been to accumulate enough money to place on the Grand Parade, and as large as the ground will admit of, a rectangular pyramid of solid granite.

NOTE.—Sketch No. 3 will be of Lunenburg.