

GETTING INTO SOCIETY.

IT IS A STRUGGLE THAT DEVELOPS HUMAN MEANNESS.

Wealth Does Not Always Command Social Position—Some Aspirants Hang On to The Skirts of Those Already In—Friends Are Passed By.

I doubt whether there is any other single cause which produces so much unhappiness as the ambition to get into society. In this struggle we see developed all the meaness of which human nature is capable, while the rewards which come to the successful are generally of the very smallest possible magnitude, and, when grasped, are veritable apples of Sodom, which turn to dust on the lips of those who would partake of them.

Every community naturally divides itself up into different classes of society. New York has its four hundred, and every little town must imitate the great city in having its select society also, whether the number be four hundred or one hundred. It is not always easy to define what qualifications render a man or a woman eligible to belong to the four hundred. Perhaps we can get as close to the truth as we are likely to do by a service of negatives, that is by showing what qualifications will not necessarily admit the individual to the highest social circles.

It is not always wealth that commands social position; neither is it always good looks, or even good character or good manners. Certainly ability or intellectual strength in any direction has little or nothing to do with it, nor would it seem that good birth or ancient lineage is essential to acquire this position. Educational qualifications, of course, count for nothing in such a race as this. It is evident that the highest talents are neither essential nor demanded among the upper four hundred, yet there are some people who consider it so necessary to be admitted into this select circle that they are ready to sacrifice, not only their own self-respect, but any remnants of character they may have left, and to crawl in the very dust in order that they may be admitted into company which they consider better than they are themselves.

Let us suppose the case of a person from some other city or town who comes with a family of grown up daughters, homely or otherwise, who are determined to get "into society." If any one desires to see an illustration of what human nature is capable of in the way of humility he will find ample material for consideration and reflection, not to say amusement, in their manner of proceeding. It must have been after some such exhibition of the littleness of man that Swift wrote his dreadful satire contained in the fourth part of the travels of Mr. Lemuel Gulliver, wherein he likened human kind to the filthy Yahoo, and made their masters the horses appear infinitely superior to them in every noble quality.

The manner in which the determined aspirant for social recognition hangs on to the skirts of some person who has the entrée to the inner circle would be highly ludicrous were it not so pitiable. No amount of snubbing can repel the determined invader, who is climbing upward on the social ladder. Friends are necessarily cut and even the nearest and dearest relations who are not fashionable are regarded as so much troublesome ballast to be thrown overboard. All of us have seen people of this class, so that it is hardly necessary to paint the picture with a more minute hand or enlarge upon the theme.

It would seem that a person engaged in this troublesome quest for fashionable society would sometimes feel a little remorse at her conduct, and a sense of shame and humiliation. But it does not appear that such thoughts ever trouble individuals of this kind; it is only when they have attained the top of their ambition that they have time to reflect on the utter hollowness and uselessness of what they have been at such pains to win. They find that they are no happier, no more content and no better equipped for the battle of life than they were before, while in many cases wasted means have brought them unpleasant reminders of the cost of which this social battle has been won.

I have no desire to say anything against any class of society, from the highest to the humblest, but no one can look otherwise than with contempt on the struggle which some make, to win, what is not worth the trouble or humiliation they have to undergo to attain it.

If a man or a woman possesses qualifications which command respect, and attract attention, they will never have a lack of good company, no matter in what community they may live. If their qualifications are such as to make them unworthy of social recognition, even if they do succeed in getting into society, they will always be looked upon as intruders and parvenues, and will be accordingly despised. A. CLEGG.

What This "Observer" Saw.

TO THE EDITOR OF PROGRESS.—In your issue of the 27th ult. you mention a Policeman of St. John having seen something of the nature of a meteor.

Now, I will tell you my experience on the afternoon of Tuesday, Jan. 23.

At about a quarter to four o'clock I was walking down our main street, facing the north west, the sun shining brightly in a clear western sky, but overhead what we very often have in winter, a sort of haze;

when suddenly, out of the haze there shot a brilliant steel-blue ball of about ten or twelve inches in diameter, followed by a string of smaller balls, precisely like the trail of a rocket, but much larger. It disappeared behind the houses, and probably dropped into the river. I have seen several meteors but never one so large or distinct as this was. OBSERVER, Annapolis Royal.

WE MAY NOT FORGET HIM.

The Tribute of Pastor Felix to the Memory of a Brother Poet.

TO THE EDITOR OF PROGRESS: A prominent literateur and poet of Canada writes—"You have, no doubt, seen an announcement of Sangster's death. Two lines in an obscure corner of a daily sheet, with not a word as to his works, is the sum of fame for a creditable pioneer of Canadian literature. His later days were very far from having that passionless peace that we all hope for when we are old."

A movement of surprise and a pang of regret come together. I have looked elsewhere for an announcement of the sad fact, and I this morning looked confidently to certain quarters, but in vain. Yet I have no doubt but that the report is well founded; nor can I think it is one upon which the press and the literary people of Canada will be content with silence. Scott wrote sympathetically.—

Call it not vain: they do not err, Who say, that when the Poet dies, Mute Nature mourns her worshipper, And celebrates his obsequies; Who say tall cliff, and cavern lone, For the departed bard make moan: That mountains weep in crystal rill; That flowers in tears of balm distill; Through his loved groves that breezes sigh, And oaks, in deeper groan, reply; And rivers teach their rushing wave To murmur dirges round his grave. Not that, in sooth, o'er mortal urn Those things inanimate can mourn; But that the stream, the wood, the gale, Is vocal with the plaintive wail Of those, who, else forgotten long, Lived in the poet's faithful song, And, with the poet's parting breath, Whose memory feels a second death.

And Sangster was a true child and poet of nature. No votary among us was more evidently endowed, and filled with the desire of song from his birth. His was the rhythmic voice of the Canadian wilderness, and from him I first learned those "wood-notes wild" that are peculiar to the land of mighty rivers and of giant hills, that, since he began to sing, has been called a Dominion.

It is true that for some years past he has been withdrawn from the public view, and his harp has been silent; yet it has not been alone the chill which disappointment brings, when high hopes fail us, and the world to which we have given worthily, and our best seems "adverse to desert." The writer of these lines has letters that tell of nerve-crushing sorrows of a more private, domestic character; long watchings without sleep, and overpressure of cares that were relentless, which checked his farther voice, and left him silent among the singers of his native land. Yet can I not think that he who gave us "Hesperus" and "The St. Lawrence and the Saguenay," is, or can be, forgotten among us. It is too late for anything we can do or say to soothe his heart, or reward his merit; but it is due to ourselves, that the writer of such lyrics as "Brook," "The Rapid," "The Grand Old Woods," "A Song For Canada," and the like, be at least henceforth a cherished memory, and that the lovers of his verse testify to its worth. A new generation of singers has come, hopeful, buoyant as any of old, with their songs of fire. We hail them, we give them a loyal welcome. But we cannot be mindless of the honor due the fathers of Canadian song. We bring our laurel to those who have crossed the narrow stream and to those who linger near the margin,—to Heavysege, to Sangster, to Kirby, to McLachlan, to Crawford, to Reade, to Martin, to Davar. While we bow our head at the passing of the statesman, the orator, the inventor, or the preacher, we will not count the name of a departed poet as lacking in significance. If we are to remember any of his kind in Canada, we may not forget him, for he is not less emphatically a poet of nature, than he is a poet of Canada. He laid his "check to nature," and "put his hands in hers." As Mr. Lighthall says: "Glowingly he takes us, in 'St. Lawrence and the Saguenay,' down the grandeur of that unrivalled tour—the great river, its rapids, cities, mountains, and 'Isles of the Blest.'"

So, with all the humiliation that is felt by the cherishers of poetic labors, when one with such exceptional gifts goes from among us, without a prompt and generous tribute from the press of our land; we cannot doubt but that the meditative labors of the earnest and thoughtful will eventually atone, and that our poet,—whose very name, "happy omened," as much as that of Bloomfield's, "bespeaks continuance of his fame,"—will not be left without suitable memorials. PASTOR FELIX, Cherryfield, Me., Jan. 29.

Hogmanay, hogmanay, hogmanay, is in Scotland the last day of the year. The etymology of the word is said to be doubtful, but the weight of opinion is in favor of the word being a corruption, through Norman-French forms, au-gui-lan neuf, "to the mistletoe! the New Year!"—au, to the; guy (now gui), mistletoe; lan, the year; neuf, new. On Hogmanay boys went about begging money. The custom of begging on Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's days may be derived from the Scotch Hogmanay; it is a nuisance in many of the suburban towns.

An interesting addition has just been made to the Baedeker Guide Books, in a new volume devoted to the United States, including, also, an excursion to Mexico. It has been prepared by Mr. J. F. Muirhead, a compiler of Baedeker's Guide to Great Britain, and the general manager of the English editions of the Baedeker Guides, and is issued by the Scribners, the Ameri-

THE MAYOR TOOK PRECAUTIONS.

And Poor Ackhurst was not Allowed Sight of Him.

HALIFAX, Feb. 8.—Mayor Keele was in hourly fear of bodily harm for several days last week, the object of his terror was a clerk in the board of works office whom he and chairman Saul Mosher had appointed six months ago. The ridiculous nature of the appointment was the subject of some talk when it was made, and the mayor's tribulation since is a sort of mild retribution. When poor William Ackhurst was put into the Board of Works office it is true enough some one was needed there who knew a little about book-keeping. Everything was in an almost helpless tangle. The appointment of Ackhurst was not at all calculated to improve matters, however. The unfortunate man's name was then on the books of Mount Hope insane asylum as a patient uncurd of mental trouble, and he was generally known to be feeble-minded, or worse. Yet the influence of an alderman who was interested in Ackhurst was sufficient to secure for him the position of accountant to the board of works. Some time ago it was seen that Ackhurst was becoming worse and it was determined to remove him from the office, notice being given. The example of Prendergast in Chicago furnishes what might have been a line of action for Ackhurst. At least had not the public interfered there is no telling what would have happened. Ackhurst wrote threatening letters to Mayor Keele and chairman Mosher. He demanded work and complained of the dismissal which was impending. His worship became alarmed, and said he had no desire to become famous in any tragic manner. He wanted to be spared a fate like that of the late mayor Harrison of Chicago. Accordingly the police were ordered to keep watch over him. An officer was stationed in front of the mayor's house and another was placed at the wharf where his place of business is situated, and his worship was otherwise shadowed. Orders were given that Ackhurst was not to be allowed an entrance to Mr. Keele's house nor to his office. Ackhurst more than once came to the city hall and poured out the vials of his wrath upon the police, mayor and others. At last the nuisance or the danger, whichever it was, became unbearable and the afflicted man was arrested. He was kept at the police station for a few hours and then taken to the insane asylum. The friends of the lunatic are sympathized with on all sides, and Mayor Keele has been the recipient of not a few congratulations on his escape.

For Breakfast. Get Rolled Wheat Flakes or "Petti Johns Col Breakfast Food" and Evaporated Cream, they are most delicious. Western Grey Buckwheat for Griddle cakes with Dunn's Ham, or Bacon, are no mean substitutes; you can get those and others from J. S. ARMSTRONG & Bro, Grocers, 32 Charlotte St.

The highest waves ever met with in the ocean are said to be those off the Cape of Good Hope. Under the influence of a northwesterly gale they have been known to exceed forty feet in height. Mr. Layton, manager K. D. C. Co., New Glasgow, offers a Silver Medal for the best advt written by our scholars. Life Scholarship \$30. SNEEL'S BUSINESS COLLEGE, TRURO, N. S.

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can agents of the Baedeker Guides. Mr. Muirhead has spent three years in this country, traversing every section of it and gathering his materials with the utmost care. The volume contains numerous maps and is fully up to date.

Animals Do Talk. The language of the lower animals is not so articulate; it is largely a sign language. The horse does a deal of talking by motions of the head, and by his wonderfully expressive looks. He also, upon occasion, talks with the peculiar switches of his tail; and a threat to kick is surely an equine form of speech. The darkey was not far wrong who said of the kicking mule: "It's just his way of talking."

The intelligent dog is able not only to look volumes, but can express whole sentences by wags of the tail more readily than can the waving flags of the signal corps. All that is necessary is to learn his code. We expect our domestic animals to learn our language and obey our commands; yet with our higher intelligence we fail to learn their language, by means of which we might better understand their wants and dispositions, so as to control them by kindness instead of harsh and arbitrary treatment. Horses in the street say by every look and motion that they are suffering acute torture because of a tight check-rein. Their drivers are often people who would be shocked if they could comprehend their own cruelty. But they do not understand horse language, and some of them do not seem to have horse sense.

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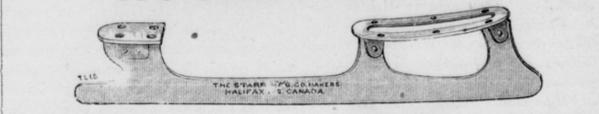
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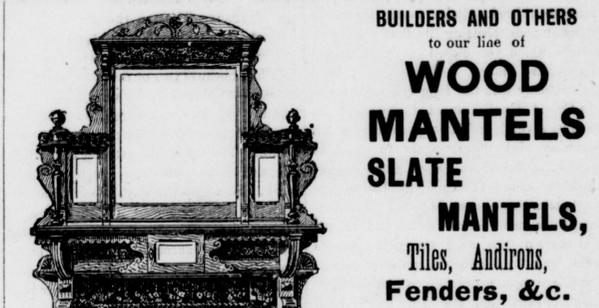


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