



The Gossips Say That

Work will commence this week on the street railway.

JURY's picture of the Attorney-General in last issue was a good un.

John V. Ellis is holding back to deal later on this session with the "Winter Port" question.

The *Globe* should give us a little of the Genesis—they have been giving us so much of the Exodus lately.

The "Short Line" will be completed in November of this year, bringing Montreal within thirteen hours' ride from St. John. The shortest line at present is thirty-six hours.

'Tis an imposition to ask New Brunswickers to send a donation to England to help found an Imperial Institute, unless we except Maritime Bank money.

ANOTHER OPEN LETTER.

PECCAVI! PECCAVI!

SOBANDGRIN HALL, April, 1887.

To the Editor:

I saw an item going the rounds once, to the effect that an "open winter" is generally one that is open at both ends and the wind blowing through it. Whether the same definition will apply to this "open letter" I will leave to your own judgment.

I can't say that I really owe you a letter, but I concluded I would try to give vent to my surcharged feelings to-night through the medium of pen and ink—violet ink, made from diamond dye. That last remark reminds me that it is her diamond eye that has etched its tracery across the palpitating heart of New Brunswick's humorist. [Reference, a back number of JURY.] Not to say, at all, that her eye is four-cornered, like a geometrical diamond. What I do mean is that from the liquid depths of her orbs there flashes and darts such genial fire as rivals the moon in all her argentiferous refulgence*, and such as makes even the lights o' Portland feel languid themselves. But all this, however, is digression. What I started out to say was —; but, on second thought, perhaps I had better drive right along and let the subject-matter of this epistle of St. John develop itself. It may not be disclosed till next issue—perhaps never! Who knows? Well, my own nose for that matter. What, the subject matter? Well, — that matter. What,

* Estimates furnished on application.

the subject-matter? Well, — what, ho, without there! Muriate of cocaine for one!

'Tis the gentle spring-time, Annie, and you cannot get a "hunk" of genuine maple sugar if you were willing to pay ten dollars an ounce for it. The last remaining traces of the beautiful snow are resolving themselves into silvery rivulets and go dashing and laughing down the hillsides and next week we're going to yank thirty-nine yards of past generation carpet from its moorings and pound respectability into it with a broom handle in the back-yard of to-day. The hoary frost-king has relaxed his icy grasp, and once more dame Nature prepares to deck herself in green — and, about this time of year, the chances are that it will be a hurricane deck, with storm fixtures. But, to change the digression.

Hanging up in the room in which I am at present writing, I have a collection of photographs of some six or eight personages whose names are inscribed high upon the tablets of humoristic literature, and while examining them the thought will ever protrude itself, why is it that humorists always look so disconsolate and weary of life? Who ever saw a portrait of a smiling humorist? I never did, and this is a subject in which I do most decidedly love to revel. It is my hobby. Every one, I believe, has a hobby of some sort. One person makes a collection of postage stamps. Another's tastes take an equine trend, and he fills his stables with noble specimens of man's four-footed friend. The poor benighted heathen on the sun-parched islands of the Pacific, he has his hobby. Give him a missionary, done to suit his taste, and he is supremely beatific. And so on, and so on. And thus it is with your humble correspondent. My hobby is humor, and humorists, and all that thereunto appertains. But, to return.

There are certain people who think that, because a man's profession is that of "doing his fellows good with the medicine of a laugh," he is necessarily a natural born idiot, and that his face wears a continual grin like Main street, Portland, in summer, when they're laying a sewer, or fixing gas-pipes, or water-pipes, or—or—or—OR! This idea is erroneous in the extreme. Often a man's choicest morsels of mirthful fancy are written at a time when his heart is bowed down with a sorrow not to be expressed by tongue or pen.

Did we but know thoroughly the inner lives of our humorous writers, we would find that they are all, with very few exceptions, subject to melancholia, caused possibly by the fact that their labor in the literary field is such a continual strain in one direction that in their private lives their minds involuntarily run in the opposite direction. The gloomy, apparently care-worn expression in Mark Twain's face suggests not the features of a funnyman, but rather those of the young man whose best girl's heart has had a change of venue. And while Bill Nye's physiognomy is not exactly sorrow-laden, there is a sober earnestness that is rather a startler to one who has read much of his writings.

Another case, I think, of the thoughtful expression of the humorists features is that they are, in fact, thoughtful persons. No class of people, perhaps, are greater students of human character, in its varied phases.

Again — however, as this note of hand is pretty well strung out already, I had better stop at once. I want to allow the JURY's advertisers some space in this issue, and so I will conclude with lines from Ella Wheeler-Wilcox:—

"Laugh, and the world laughs with you:

Weep, and you weep alone.

For this brave old earth must borrow its mirth,

It has troubles enough of its own."

Yours truly,

CASEY TAP.

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