

The Toronto Star Weekly
March 6, 1920.

EDUCATION

A Free Shave

Submitting your face to beginners at barber college calls for grit. To bargain chasers, you may have twenty-five teeth extracted for \$2 at dental college.

The land of the free and the home of the brave is the modest phrase used by certain citizens of the republic to the south of us to designate the country they live in. They may be brave—but there is nothing free. Free lunch passed some time ago and on attempting to join the Freemasons you are informed it will cost you seventy-five dollars.

The true home of the free and the brave is the barber college. Everything is free there. And you have to be brave. If you want to save \$5.60 a month on shaves and haircuts, go to the barber college, but take your courage with you.

For a visit to the barber college requires the cold, naked valor of the man who walks clear-eyed to death. If you don't believe it, go to the beginner's department of the barber's college and offer yourself for a free shave. I did.

As you enter the building you come into a well-appointed barbershop on the main floor. This is where the students who will soon graduate work. Shaves cost five cents, haircuts fifteen.

"Next," called one of the students. The others looked expectant.

"I'm sorry," I said. "I'm going upstairs."

Upstairs is where the free work is done by the beginners.

A hush fell over the shop. The young barbers looked at one another significantly. One made an expressive gesture with his forefinger across his throat.

"He's going upstairs," said a barber in a hushed voice.

"He's going upstairs," the other echoed him and they looked at one another.

I went upstairs.

Upstairs there was a crowd of young fellows standing around in white jackets and a line of chairs ran down the wall. As I entered the room two or three went over and stood by their chairs. The others remained where they were.

"Come on you fellows, here's another one," called one of the white coats by the chairs.

"Let those work who want to," replied one of the group.

"You wouldn't talk that way if you were paying for your course," returned the industrious one.

"Shut up. The government sends me here," replied the nonworker and the group went on with their talking.

I seated myself in the chair attended by a red-haired young fellow.

"Been here long?" I asked to keep from thinking about the ordeal.

“Not very,” he grinned.

“How long before you will go downstairs?” I asked.

“Oh, I’ve been downstairs,” he said, lathering my face.

“Why did you come back up here?” said I.

“I had an accident,” he said, going on with the lathering.

Just then one of the non-workers came over and looked down at me.

“Say, do you want to have your throat cut?” he inquired pleasantly.

“No,” said I.

“Haw! Haw!” said the non-worker.

Just then I noticed that my barber had his left hand bandaged.

“How did you do that?” I asked.

“Darn near sliced my thumb off with the razor this morning,” he replied amiably.

The shave wasn’t so bad. Scientists say that hanging is really a very pleasant death. The pressure of the rope on the nerves and arteries of the neck produces a sort of anesthesia. It is waiting to be hanged that bothers a man.

According to the red-haired barber there are sometimes as many as one hundred men on some days who come for free shaves.

“They are not all ‘bums’ either. A lot of them take a chance just to get something for nothing.”

Free barbering is not the only free service to be obtained in Toronto. The Royal College of Dental Surgeons does dental work for all who come to the college at Huron and College streets. The only charge made is for materials used.

Approximately one thousand patients are treated, according to Dr. F. S. Jarman, D.D.S., head of the examination department of the clinic. All the work is done by the senior students under the direction of dental specialists.

Teeth are extracted free if only a local anesthetic is used, but a charge of two dollars is made for gas. According to Dr. Jarman, dentists in general practice charge three dollars to extract a single tooth. At the Dental College you can have twenty-five teeth extracted for two dollars! That should appeal to the bargain hunters.

Prophylaxis, or thorough cleaning of the teeth, is done at the college for from fifty cents to a dollar. In private practice this would cost from a dollar to ten dollars.

Teeth are filled if the patient defrays the costs of the gold. Usually from a dollar to two dollars. Bridgework is done under the same system.

No patients are refused at the Dental College. If they are unable to defray the cost of the materials used they are cared for just the same. The person who is willing to take a chance can surely save money on dentistry.

At Grace Hospital across Huron Street from the Dental College, there is a free dispensary for the needy poor that gives free medical attention to an average of 1,241 patients a month.

This service is only for the “needy” poor. Those of us who are poor, and are not adjudged needy by the social service nurse in charge, have to pay for the medical service. According to the figures at the Grace Hospital, over half of the cases treated last month were of Jewish nationality. The others were a conglomeration of English, Scotch, Italian, Macedonian and people of unknown origin.

Free meals were formerly served at the Fred Victor Mission, Queen and Jarvis streets. But the authorities at the mission state that there is almost no demand now. Prohibition and the

war solved the “bum” problem and where formerly there was a long queue of “down-and-outs” lined up to receive free meal tickets, there is now only an occasional supplicant.

If you wish to secure free board, free room, and free medical attention there is one infallible way of obtaining it. Walk up to the biggest policeman you can find and hit him in the face.

The length of your period of free board and room will depend on how Colonel Denison is feeling. And the amount of your free medical attention will depend on the size of the policeman.