

ocean. Of these one need never tire, and especially happy has the author been in his suggestive criticisms upon how best to enjoy them both.

To yachtsmen it will become a valuable book of reference, and to all tourists it will furnish entertaining reading wherever they may roam.

EDITH LYLE: A Novel. By Mrs. Mary J. Holmes. Toronto: Belford Brothers, 1876.

"Edith Lyle" looks so attractive in its Canadian dress, that it is disappointing to find that the tempting exterior is an introduction to a very trashy, third-rate American novel—and the third-rate American novel is apt to be more vulgar if not more weak than the corresponding English one. This one is unnatural and melodramatic in construction, slipshod and vulgar in execution, and, to a certain extent, false in moral tone. As an instance of the first, the youthful hero and heroine, whose deception and secret marriage is very lightly condoned by the authoress, have respectively the names of *Abelard* and *Heloise*—the first being an absurdly unlikely cognomen for the son of a peasant family in the north of England. The heroine, however, drops her French appellation as soon as it has ceased to be appropriate to her circumstances. The scene of the story is partially laid in England, and the English as well as the American characters talk American English—say "I reckon" and "I guess," and "I don't know as she had," while the authoress thus renders the north-country dialect into what she calls "good English." "Is the something which *he don't know a sin*?" The heroine's mother after her second marriage is continually called "Mrs. Dr. Barrett," while the American Colonel Schuyler's successive wives are not seldom styled "Lady Emily" and "Lady Edith," for no reason, apparently, except a very undemocratic fondness for titles. The phenomena of sea-sickness are described with a medical minuteness that we have never seen rivalled, and we have various curiously realistic particulars as to the demeanour of the principal characters. Here, for instance, is the way in which a fascinating and aristocratic American widower communicates an interesting piece of intelligence to his son, an equally fascinating young fellow of nineteen:

"Yes," and the colonel walked to the window and spat on a rosebush outside, and wiped his face, and mustering all his courage, added: 'Miss Lyle has promised to be my wife, and you will agree with me, I think, that she is a remarkable—yes, a very remarkable woman.'

"He had told his story, and waited for Godfrey's reply, which came first in a low suppressed whistle, and then in a merry laugh as he jumped up and, giving his pants a violent shake, said, 'I agree with you, father; she is a very remarkable woman, or she wouldn't consent to be my

mother and Julie's. My! won't she pick her eyes out, and aunt Christine will help her.'"

Godfrey's "pants" figure largely in the story—even in the conversation of his fiancée—e.g. "But you are hurt, Godfrey? Oh, I am afraid you are. Look, your pants are all dirt!"

Here is another scrap from this fashionable New York young lady's conversation. Her lover, who has been getting tired of her in proportion as he becomes fascinated by the *real* princess in disguise, tells her, when jealous and indignant with some reason, to "scratch and bite like a little cat, if she wanted to." "'I don't want to scratch or bite, and I ain't a little cat, but I do not think it fair in you to admire that girl so much, and take her lilies and violets and things, and you engaged to me.'"

The authoress appears anxious to show up the snobbishness of her high-class Americans, and their pride of wealth and caste. Unfortunately, the same ignoble spirit peeps out here and there in the narrator herself, as the following extract will show. It must be premised that the bride in question had married chiefly for financial reasons, without any warmer emotion for her husband than "liking him very much." Here is her reward:—

"The dining-room at Schuyler Hill was one of the pleasantest rooms in the house, and it looked beautifully now with its glass and silver and flowers, and Edith felt a pardonable glow of pride and satisfaction in the thought that this pleasant home, with all its luxury, was hers, the gift of the man who led her so proudly to her seat at the head of the table. The colonel, who was inclined to be a little stiff in his manners among strangers, appeared well at home, and especially well at his own table, and Edith, as she looked at him presiding with so much dignity and ease, thought what a handsome gentleman he was, and felt herself blessed in the possession of him."

The heroine, for whom our chief interest is claimed, is remarkable for little but her "exquisite beauty," her habit of fainting when anything painful occurs, and a peculiar affection of the throat—"iron fingers clutching it"—which miraculously disappears in the satisfactory *dénouement* of the story. Gertie Westbrooke is a far more interesting character, and her love-story is considerably more satisfactory, though it ends a little too much like the conventional fairytale. One good thing we must notice in the book, amidst much rubbish—the retributive remorse and painful repentance which at last overtakes the deceitful Mrs. Barrett. Here and there, too, is a bit of tolerable description, which seems to show that the authoress might have done better under more auspicious influences. As it is, however, it says little for the taste of American readers that she should have achieved so much popularity, and it is not easy to see why a book of such dreary twaddle should have been reprinted in Canada.