

ada is engaged in maturing an emigration scheme which embraces most of the points deemed essential by Mr. Arch. I am not at liberty to divulge the scheme, as it is at present but very imperfectly developed. Suffice it to say that it is contemplated to supplement the free grants of land with some provision for the immediate starting in life of the settler who, like our agricultural labourers, has no capital. A rough home will be built for him, seed will be supplied, a portion of his land cleared. The cost will be repaid after, say, the third year, by annual instalments, to be paid for, say, in ten years.

"Here we have all that reasonable men could desire, and should the results of Mr. Arch's personal investigation of the grants, and contact with those who have already availed themselves of them, be satisfactory, a stream of emigration will probably flow out westward next spring which, for good or bad, will exert a considerable influence on British agriculture."

(For the Canadian Illustrated News.)

MANITOBA.

Manitoba Lake, which has given a title to the Province formed out of the Red River region, derives its name from a small island from which, in the stillness of night, issues a "mysterious voice," though there is no real "mystery" about it. On no account will the Ojibways approach or land upon this island, supposing it to be the home of the Manitoba—"the speaking God." The cause of this curious sound is the heating of the waves on the "shingle," or large pebbles lining the shores. Along the northern coast of the island there is a long low cliff of fine grained compact limestone, which, under the stroke of the hammer, clicks like steel. The waves heating on the shore at the foot of the cliff cause the fallen fragments to rub against each other, and to give out a sound resembling the chiming of distant church bells. This phenomenon occurs when the gales blow from the north, and then, as the winds subside, low, wailing sounds like whispering voices, are heard in the air. English travellers assert that the effect is very impressive and have been awakened at night under the impression that the were listening to church bells.

Manitoba! I would bring thee
Honours meet to deck thy isle:
Deign to listen while I sing thee,
Cease thy tinkling chimes awhile:
Manitoba! Manitoba!
Speaking god! upon me smile.

Gods less noble crowd the pages
Of the ancient scrolls of fame,
Till the growing dust of ages
Hides one half their guilt and shame:
Manitoba! Manitoba!
Thine be a more honour'd name.

God of mystery and wonder,
First unsung in poets' rhymes:
Long ere Jupiter's loud thunder
Shook the old barbaric times,
Manitoba! Manitoba!
Spoke thy sad and plaintive chimes.

Are they warning voices only
Calling to the Northern blast?
Was thy home not bare and lonely
Through the cycles of the past?
Manitoba! Manitoba!
Shall thy ruin forever last?

Long respected by the savage—
Wilt thou still maintain thy power,
When the White Men come to ravage
And invade thy sacred tower?
Manitoba! Manitoba!
Dawns for thee the trying hour.

When the steamer plows the billows,
Dashing on thy shore the foam:
When the axe assails thy willow—
And the furrows mark thy home:
Manitoba! Manitoba!
Will thy whispering voices roam?

THOMAS DEATY, JR.

(For the Canadian Illustrated News.)

TWO THOUSAND FRANCS.

By NED P. MAH.

It was a great haunt of mine that Bains au Mer pier. For many reasons it was my favourite resort. It was the coolest spot in Bains au Mer, in that warm summer, the hottest within the memory of the oldest inhabitant, when the dazzling white flags scorched the feet like white-hot iron, when the sitting-room of my humble domicile over the pastry cook's, despite its eligible situation on the shady side of the street, despite its two large *jalousie* guarded windows, despite the frequent imbibition of cooling and well-iced beverages, supplied in unlimited quantities, on unlimited tick, and at unlimited charges by the urbane Restaurateur below, was like the one in which those miraculous *pâtés* and *bricoles* and *petits pains* which graced my table at convenient seasons, were baked; when it was too hot to walk, or ride, or drive, or play dominoes, or smoke, or move, or speak, or think—too hot even to carry on a telegraphic flirtation with the pretty modiste over the way, so exasperatingly cool in her white wrapper, with her shining black braids, watering her choice flowers with coquettish air. Cool as a cucumber although she lived on the sunny side of that terrifically close Rue Sybillaire. O my brothers! what mysterious dispensation of Nature is it that enables the smooth skinned brunettes to live untroubled in their frigid comfort when the red fluid in those elegant little tubes labelled Fahrenheit and Réaumur rises to the height of its wildest ambition unmoved by the abuse of suffocating mortars. Will no married brother, initiated into the arcana of life feminine, impart the secret for the benefit of suffering male humanity? Is it some subtle mystery of the toilette, some wondrous lotion the offspring of the fertile brain of some Parisian chemist or artist in perfumery? Is it the invention of a Rimmel or an importation from some Eastern harem—or is it merely the result of that patient endurance of all sublimary matters, and events and phases of things which enables women to bear with equanimity physical agony and mental pain, and heights of prosperity and depths of adversity which would kill, or idiotic, or madden the most stoical of the boasted lords of creation. When I say the *haute ville* was a purgatory, and the *basse ville* was as Hades, then there was always a cool breeze, or a gentle zephyr to soothe the heated brow, or the flushed cheeks on the Bains au Mer pier.

I might make the most of the pier and the breeze now while I had liberty and leisure to enjoy them. Next week the Imperatrice would open again, with new decorations and a new drop scene, and I should be called upon again to undergo the misery of rehearsals, to endure the bickerings and backbitings and petty jealousies of the green room in order that I might strut and fret my little hour upon the stage successfully.

But to-night it was sultry even upon the pier head. Hot

gusts flapped fitfully the pennants on the mast heads. It grew dark early and the lightning flashed at intervals with sheeted glare upon the waters. We were going to have a storm, people said, and prophesied the mail boat as she steamed defiantly out of the harbour a hazardous trip. But she dashed saucily over the bar with a dip, and a graze, and a bound, and went stoically out amid the black waves with her two funnels flaming like large torches. I watched her speed swiftly on, straight as an arrow over the silent highway, till the glare of her furnace shone on the far horizon like the faint reflection of some distant conflagration and then I became lost to all outward things, and fell into a fit of musing, into an odd jumble of childish recollections, and recent memories—new experiences throwing a new light on old wonderings, and old thoughts quaintly illustrated in the practice of a more advanced existence. Yes, I became totally unconscious of present surroundings. Vanished hands touched me, dead lips caressed me, ghostly voices spoke to me, far off scenes rose before me. I lived again the past which is always so pleasant to revive since we forget its miseries and recall only its enjoyments. How long I thus dreamt I cannot say, but when I awoke to a consciousness of the actual present the pier seemed almost deserted, yet I was not alone.

Not alone, for close beside me, seated half sideways upon her chair, her hands clasped upon its back and her chin rested upon her hands, gazing intently out into the semi obscurity of the distance, sat, so far as I could judge by the treacherous light of the moon which strove to shine through the interstices of the dense canopy of cloud, one of the fairest of the daughters of Eve.

She too, it seemed, was in a reverie—for presently she said apparently to herself.

"It is a charming evening. It gives one a melancholy which is ravishing."

"If there be such a charm in melancholy it must be from its novelty," I remarked. "I hope it may never lose its charm to you."

"Merci," she said, "but I must show my gratitude" she continued, half rising and putting one knee upon her seat, "by running away to look for papa and mamma who are doubtless ignorant that they have left me here in the dark with a stranger."

There was an archness in her tone which provoked me to beg that her lips might give me my reward otherwise than in words. Silently she stooped over me, pressed two velvet lips upon my moustache, and with a little musical laugh, vanished round the lighthouse, swift and noiseless as a bird. Ten minutes afterwards I rose to return to the town. I walked round to the sheltered side of the lighthouse, took my cigar case from the right hand pocket of my linen jacket, lit a cigar, and replaced it. Then tucking my cane beneath my arm buried my left hand and its silver mounted head in my left pocket and prepared to saunter townwards.

I had taken only two steps when I halted as though a chasm lay at my feet. When I had paid for my coffee and petit verre at the Café Bellevue I had placed my cigar case in my right and my purse in my left hand pocket. My right hand still grasped my cigar case but my left pocket, save that it contained my left hand and the cane head, was empty.

I went back, lit a match, examined every nook and cranny of the planking on the spot I had occupied, but the search was fruitless.

My purse was gone, and with it the two thousand francs that Hortense and I were to begin housekeeping on.

II.

"A note for Monsieur," said my dresser, as I entered my dressing room in order to be transmogrified into Don Cesar de Bazan. "It has been left by a Commissionnaire at the box office to-day."

"Some dun," I thought as I glanced at the envelope, which was directed in a cramped back hand, and thrust it into the pocket of my own proper coat. I was late, and had no time to busy myself with the concerns of my ordinary existence. I surrendered myself to the hands of my dresser and commenced to seem and to be Don Cesar.

But when in the privacy of my own apartment in the Rue Sybillaire I sat in the happy ease of dressing gown and slippers and lit my long pipe for my customary smoke before I retired to rest, I own it was not entirely without curiosity that I broke the seal of the mysterious document.

The envelope, I have said, was directed in a cramped back hand; but within, the characters which covered the rose-colored paper were the tiny, exquisitely formed characters of a charming lady hand. The faint odour of some subtle essence rose like an incense from the tinted page. With a lively interest I devoured its contents.

"Monsieur," it began, "Pardon the temerity which leads me, a poor dull country girl, to address you. Perhaps when Monsieur learns that his correspondent is only nineteen years of age, that her glass and the few admirers who have been permitted to enliven the gloom of the old chateau, her home in the country, tell her she is pretty; that this is the first time that she has tasted of the gaieties of a city and that her head has been turned by the talent by which he depicts with the versatility of a great genius, a vast range of character; that she has wept over him in the 'Hunchback,' laughed at him in 'Vingt-sept centimes'; that her soul has prostrated itself in adoration before the noble integrity of the Marquis in the 'Adventures of a Poor Young Man'; that, *bref*, she has discovered a new display of genius in every fresh rôle which she has witnessed, and that she has been struck no less by Monsieur's noble carriage and charming exterior than by the attractions of his clever delineation of every phase of life from high to low, from grave to gay, he will the more readily excuse the audacity which may prove to him the overture to a romantic little adventure."

"Monsieur, I have heard wise people say that great actors are very ordinary mortals when once they are separated from the illusion and the tinsel of the magic boards. Monsieur, since I have seen you, the poor dull country girl has permitted herself to doubt the decision of these wise people, and has determined to reserve to herself with Monsieur's permission, the privilege of judging for herself. She purposes to present herself, always with Monsieur's permission, and in a guise which shall compromise neither Monsieur nor herself, at the residence of Monsieur, on the afternoon of Thursday next, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, at which hour her parents will have absented themselves on a visit to some very dull people in which she has no desire to participate, and from which a severe headache will have excused her which will confine her to her chamber."

"Monsieur, to-morrow evening, to which I look forward

with an ungovernable impatience, you appear once more in the rôle of *Le jeune homme pauvre*. If Monsieur will be complaisant enough not to cross the caprice of a wilful child it will not be necessary to alter one word of his rôle. But if, in spite of the gallantry of Monsieur, to which I appeal in the character of a pretty girl who is not accustomed to be refused, there should arise some impediment which should render his compliance impossible, then I entreat that in the last scene, instead of the words 'Est-ce à toi que je pardonnerai. Ah je t'adore!' he will say, 'Ah je t'implore!' The alteration, undistinguishable to the audience, will not pass unnoticed by

AIMÉE DE M.

Next evening I dressed my part with extra care, and felt that I played it to perfection. Without vanity I may say I was always a favourite with the public of Bains au Mer, never had it declared its partiality so demonstratively until now.

Encouraged by the applause and the evident sensation among the audience I became wrapt up in my rôle, and all thought of my mysterious correspondent faded from my memory till I uttered the words 'je t'adore.' Then suddenly recollecting the watch-word of our tryst I felt myself blush scarlet. I became confused, and M^{me} B., who was bending gracefully before me, looked on me with concern, evidently doubting if my confusion were not in some measure actually due to her own charms. How I got through the rest of the piece until the curtain fell I know not, but that I had given satisfaction was evidenced by the deafening and prolonged applause which rose, as in answer to repeated calls I appeared with M^{me} B. to make my final bow. As I did so I stole a glance at the boxes but failed to recognise any face I could connect with my undefined idea of the fair unknown.

III.

I began to feel a little nervous when the hands of the ormolu clock upon the mantelpiece in my apartment pointed to three o'clock next day.

Not that I was a tyro in adventures. I suppose no actor who has risen to any distinction in his profession but has had his *bonnes fortunes*. But my present correspondent was evidently a young and innocent girl, totally thoughtless of the ill consequences her thoughtless frolic might cause.

Again and again I cursed my forgetfulness of last night.

With my mind in a ferment I strode up and down the floor of my room till the hands of the clock pointed a quarter to four.

Then there came a tap at my door, which was thrown open by my landlady, who exclaimed, "Un Monsieur pour Monsieur."

A pink and white faced boy, about fifteen, stood in the doorway with his hat on. Her page, I supposed.

"Ha! you bring me a letter from —?" said I, advancing.

"No, Monsieur, I bring you no letter," said the boy colouring. Then he made a little nervous rush into the room, while I, obeying some inward impulse, closed the door upon the landlady, who still lingered on the landing, taking the precaution to touch the spring which secured the latch, and fling a screen before the key-hole—and taking off his hat, out of which a profusion of bright curls fell helter-skelter upon his shoulders, "Monsieur, I only bring myself."

Then I knew that before me, her bright head sunk upon her bosom, which heaved and sank beneath the snowy linen, her cheeks now pale, now scarlet, her tiny hands toying nervously with her silken hat, agitated, trembling, irresistibly lovely, stood M^{lle}. Aimée de M., confessed.

"Mademoiselle," I said, affecting a sternness I was far from feeling, "it is necessary that I represent to you that this is a very wild freak."

"O, Monsieur," said the culprit, shaking back her curls and gazing at me with her great blue eyes and rapidly regaining the natural confidence of a young, fearless, and innocent nature, "you must not begin to lecture me already, I have so much of it at home."

"Nevertheless, Mademoiselle must picture to herself that a young lady of good family has a position to maintain and a dignity to uphold and an ancient and noble name which her thoughtless actions, however innocent in themselves, may easily compromise."

"That's it," she cried, passionately stamping her little foot, "good family, position, dignity, name—one can actually do nothing but one has those terrible words ringing in her ears.—'Aimée don't run, it is not dignified,' 'don't whistle, Aimée, young ladies of good family don't whistle,' 'don't talk so much to your groom, my dear, remember your position,' 'you must not dance with such abandon, Aimée, remember your good name.' So it goes, just like that, from morning until evening. But you, cannot you be grateful that a young lady of such good family, with such a terribly time-honoured name, has condescended to grace your plebeian lodgment with her distinguished presence," said she, laughing a little timidly. "Bref, can you not forget that you are an actor, and talk like any ordinary mortal?"

"Thereby confirming the decision of the wise people?"

"Ha, ha! I forgot," she said, "that would not do at all."

"Believe me," I said, leading her to a seat and retaining the little hand as I sat beside her, "I am not insensible to the honour Mademoiselle does me in visiting my little domicile: still less am I insensible to the beauty and the charm of manner of Mademoiselle. Alone, I am inexpressibly pained to see one of such refinement and talent lending herself to a freak which more befits the thoughtless levity of a grisette than the conduct of a young lady."

"Believe me," I continued, turning off my staid manner, for I saw tears of anger and humiliation glistening on the long lashes, "it pains me to scold you, especially as it is in a great measure my fault that you are here. If it had not been for my want of thought last night I might have prevented this foolish step altogether. Forgive me. But I must entreat you, at the risk of seeming a prig or a peacock, to remember that there are higher things in the world than the gratification of our whims or the indulgence of our momentary desires, that we have duties, too, according to our station in life, that your duties are very high ones, that you should be an ornament to the society in which you move, an object of esteem, an angel of bounty and benevolence to your dependents."

"I must be dreadfully wicked to come here," she said archly, but there were tears in her eyes again. "Give me two things and let me go home, like a good child."

"Anything in my power," I began.

Her arms were round my neck in a moment, a shower of golden hair fell about my face, and a kiss, slight as the touch of a feather, was upon my lips, and too hot tears fell upon my forehead.