



### THE GRAND OLD TACTICIAN.

MISS CANADA—"Let me congratulate you, Sir John, on your seventy-fifth birthday. You must be weary of public life by this time, and anxious to give way for younger men."

SIR JOHN—"Not a bit of it, my dear. I'm good for quite a lot of mischief yet!"

subject, I had no idea you kept a crockery store. Biz good?" "Crockery store! What do you mean?"

"Why, you don't want all them plates and pitchers and things for the family, surely?" said the Canadian, pointing to the porcelain on the walls and mantelpiece.

"Why, those are ceramics, young man," said the Hon. Octavius with a stern face.

"Which?"

"Ceramics—majolica and faience and other varieties of decorative art, such as are necessary to all who have the slightest pretensions to culture and artistic taste. Dear me, such ignorance is awful! But you are fatigued with your journey; will you not partake of some refreshments?"

"Thanks, I don't mind if I do."

"What will you have, sauterne, hock, marashino, madeira, or a good glass of sherry?"

"Thank you, I don't seem to tumble to them fancy beverages, but if you have a snifter of old rye in the house——"

"No, sir, we haven't. I am sorry we cannot gratify you in that respect, but our ways of living differ so essentially that I can neither offer you old rye, bread, nor the pemmican, nor beaver's tail, which, I am informed, are the staple food of your country."

### CHAPTER IV.

"Our relative is indeed sadly deficient in the æsthetic sense," said Mr. Snogglethorpe some days afterwards, "and yet methinks our cultured surroundings have vibrated some latent chords of his better nature."

"All untutored as he is," said Anastasia, "there are upwelling germs of soulfulness which at times flit athwart the gloom. Upon my inquiring, the other day, how he liked Joseph Cook as a lecturer, he replied in his native unsophisticated speech, that he was 'bully, and just knocked the spots off the Canadian preachers.' It was a sincere and heartfelt tribute, fraught with a depth of meaning that more polished phrasology might have lacked."

How trivial appear the conventionalities when the bosom is permeated with love's subtle thrill. On second thoughts, "trillsome subtleness" is a better expression. Canadian as he was, Anastasia saw beneath the uncouth diction and unpolished demeanour, a mind that might yet prove susceptible of those psychological emotions which require a number of long words and more space than we have at our disposal for their accurate definition.

In brief, she loved! All comprehensive and potent syllable! Old as Eden, yet fraught with eternal juvenescence.

"Percival, I fear me you are not happy here. You have lost your wonted flamboyancy and abandon. Why thus moodful?"

"Alas, Anastasia," he murmured yearnfully, "if you knew the aspirations which—but no! 'Tis but a fevered d-a-r-ream. It cannot be. You, the child of culture and the decorative arts, you never could love a crude Canadian."

"Percival," she said, in her most persuasive tones, "you know the philosophic dictum that evolution tends to bring all into harmony with their environments. The molecular attraction is potently synthetic, is it not? Oh, Percival, let us evolve!"

And the mellow autumn sun flooded the apartment with a blaze of golden light, symbolic of the aureole of hope which seemed to gild the brow of the future. Which is a fine sentence to conclude with, if not scrutinized too closely in the effort to make sense of it.

FOILED again, as the beer bottle said when it was refilled.