

(For the Canadian Illustrated News.)

MOHAMMED.

(From the French of Voltaire).

BY JOHN KEADE.

I am ambitious : so is every man.  
But King or Pontiff, chief or citizen  
Never conceived a scheme so vast as mine.

Each race in turn has flourished on the earth  
By laws, by arts and, above all, by war,—  
And now Arabia's day has come at last.

This noble nation—far too long unknown  
Buried its glory in the desert sands.  
Lo! now its hour of triumph is arrived.

From North to South the world is desolate.  
The Persian breeds; his throne is overturned;  
The Indian is a slave; Egypt has fallen;  
The splendour of Byzantium is eclipsed;  
The Roman Empire totters to its fall;—  
Its giant body torn, its scattered limbs  
Languishing without honour, without life.

Arabia on the world's wreck let me raise,  
Found a new worship and new fetters forge.  
To the blind universe give a new god.  
Zerducht in Asia, by the Nile Osiris,  
Minos in Crete, Numa in Italy.  
To races without manners, gods or kings,  
I gave rule and rude laws fitted to their state—  
A thousand years ago. These boorish laws  
I'll change and to the nations of the world  
Bring a more noble thralldom. The false god  
I will abolish, for my purer faith  
Is of my new-born greatness the first step.  
Say not that thus my country I betray!  
I but destroy its weakness and its errors;  
Under one King, one God I re-unite it;  
And make it great by glorious servitude.

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A VISIT TO CACOUNA.

It requires as much courage to say you like Cacouna as to say you like African Port, or Rye Whiskey; yet I confess I like Cacouna. It is a favourable resort with young widows, too, the most interesting member of the fair sex if she does not happen to be *your own*. I was walking on what might be termed the esplanade one evening, when one of these charming bereaved ones passed me. "There's another," exclaimed one of two ladies who were seated in front of a charming little cottage, "how many does that make?" I guessed at once they were playing at "wives, widows and spinsters"—a popular amusement in some watering places, which consists in counting up, to the best of your knowledge, how many of each of the three classes pass in the course of half an hour—the game being in favour of the player who can number the most of either.

One of the chief charms of Cacouna is its being so thoroughly homely in character, you meet with so many hearty recognitions; for three hundred miles off a man gives you a cordial shake of the hand, who would hardly vouchsafe a passing nod at home; you can even get a passing chat with the ladies. One evening I was down on the beach below the cliff, engaged in helping my little ones to successfully launch a canoe in one of the indentations of the shore, when I heard some one in a bluff voice sing out behind me:—

So never sit down with a tear or a frown,  
But paddle your own canoe;

The all-popular refrain of this all-popular song, marked as it is with much philosophy in a general point of view, possessed in this particular instance a peculiar and personal wisdom; for all oblivious of the present Pacific Scandal, and the Royal Commission which is to settle the fate of John A., and the stringency in the money market, I had become as thoroughly interested in the satisfactory putting to sea of the little canoe as though it were the first of a fleet of steam yachts; while the peculiar risk on my part was nil. "Never sit down with a tear and a frown, but paddle your own canoe"; the principle is an old one and may be found in no less than seven passages in Solomon's proverbs. But it loses nothing of its cheery freshness from familiarity; it gives the *coup* to puling and repining; preaches up self-reliance, and inculcates good humour. I thanked my friend for his song and his sentiment, too, and nothing ashamed of my juvenile pastime, proceeded with my naval experiments.

Without being able in these days of high discounts, and dull trading—"nothing doing"—to enter fully into Longfellow's lofty sentiment,

Lives of great men all remind us  
We can make our lives sublime,  
And departing leave behind us  
Footsteps on the sand of time,

you may pass away a couple of hours each day most pleasantly on them, in company with the little people with the little spades and the little buckets. I became at last so well known to the infantine community at Cacouna that I found I had not only the charge of the circle of which I was the paternal centre, but the nursemaids were content to leave me the custody of more than one small family, which could assert no more right to my protection than is contained in the noble sentiment "Nil humani me alienum puto"—Nothing human can fail to interest me. Now and again, when from the effects of the pure air I fell asleep, I rarely woke without finding myself, like the Sphinx in the desert, half buried in the sand by the nimble hands and wooden spades of other people's babies as well as my own.

"I do assure you, sir," said one ambitious nursery maid, who discovered me in this half-buried state, "you quite reminded me of Mr. Gulliver and the Lilly Prussians, with the little dears all around you at work, like so many small sextons."

Unfortunately that speech, innocent though it was, was overheard by my wife, who came to call me to dinner, and who thinking it was part of a long colloquy, intimated "it was not quite the thing for persons of my age and gravity to be falling into easy conversation with every person one met on the beach at Cacouna." I took the hint, and kept awake for the future, so that there should be no more comparisons between Master Gulliver and myself.

Let no one say people cannot show children in undress at Cacouna. Ours, before we quitted the place were almost in no dress. My wife and I were seriously debating letting our

little boy Tommy have his Sunday clothes in common use, he so shredded himself and his every day apparel on the sands, when my eye fell on this seasonable heading in the facetious column of the Montreal *Gazette*—"How to make a boy's jacket last." "Here," I cried to my wife, "my dear is the very knowledge we are in search of." "Well," said she, "how can we make a boy's jacket last, for Tommy's in shreds and tatters." Reading from the newspaper, I replied, "By making his trowsers first." "Stuff," ejaculated my better half, equally disgusted and disappointed, "I never read such rubbish as is put in what you call the funny column of the *Gazette*."

But if Cacouna is bad for the clothes it is good for the whooping cough. My two youngsters had been for at least two months in full cry with it—every remedy or specific had been tried, from cream of tartar and cochineal to tarred rope and goose grease. "There's nothing for it," said the doctor "but change of air." That made me try Cacouna, it having been recommended for its salubrity. The first difficulty we experienced when we arrived was getting lodgings; aye, there was the rub, and we were in great fear we should not succeed. From cottage to cottage we trudged—a touching spectacle—enough to bring tears to the eyes of a statue—but lodging house keeper after lodging house keeper shook her head, and refused us and our money. We were, as the Turks say, "Compromised," and like the Otabeitans "taboed." We resolved to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth; but there was no need of any gratuitous display of veracity. We could not have kept our secret if we would. The two children told their own story at every cottage: "they came with a whoop, they came with a call, they came with a good will," but as far as accommodation was concerned, "they might as well have not come at all." No one would have us for love or money, and we began to think, as the shades of night were falling fast, that we should have to get a wigwam or bathing machine, when we luckily found a place where the lodgers were only four old ladies. The landlady, who was a widow, didn't know whether the ladies would object, but she'd ask them. Three of them on being asked whether they had ever had the whooping cough, were quite sure about it, the fourth was not positive, but rather liked the idea of catching anything that was juvenile, even though it was a complaint. We were therefore taken in and done for just as the clock struck nine.

Shakespeare says something about "plain unaccommodated man." Yes, privation is an element of philosophy. How to do without some things which at home are deemed vital and essential is one of the little items of knowledge which we learn in a yacht-voyage or in a fishing excursion, or in camp, or at the sea side. At home we grumble if Worcester Sauce is wanting to our matin-chop, but we are very thankful to get the chop without sauce when at either of the latter. A household of Sybarites at the one is animated with the spirit of Mark Tapley at the others. "Thus the world wags!"

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KID GLOVES.

BY

I picked up a kid glove the other day—a delicate little perfumed thing, primrose coloured, and just 4½ in size. Wanted, the owner of that glove and if I have a prince on hand with a dark moustache and broad shoulders, the Floribel who can put on that glove shall be wedded, and they shall drive away in a great silver and glass carriage and be so happy, so happy—till after the honeymoon. Can reasonable man, in possession of a stray kid glove, promise more?

There is something suggestive about a glove, it takes us away from our partners of last night—from the queenly Alice, the exquisite little Mabel or the darkly languishing Marie—whose small gloved hands on our shoulders, (I saw you, sir, dancing and flirting outrageously) set us all *en émoi*: it takes us away from the perfume and the music, back to the time of old Homer, who tells of Laertes at work in his garden with gloves on his hands to secure them from the thorns; we hear Xenophon describing the effeminacy of the Persians and sneering at their gloves, and Musonius declaring that it is shameful that a person in perfect health should cover their hands and feet with soft and hairy coverings. But *nous neons change tout cela*, we all go about gloved; you, *mes belles*, in your little Jouvins and others in their great leathern eights.

Has not a glove often a tender episode? When I was young I snatched a glove from the fair Glycera. It is true it was a little frayed about the finger tips and slightly soiled; but I looked upon it as a treasure then, for had it not pressed the ivory whiteness of her cheek? I hung above that glove and kissed it and hid it away in a side pocket, as being nearest the heart, and made a fool of myself; *volentibus annis*, a whole shopfull of gloves could not raise such emotions now!

Advance ladies and hold up your hands. Fie, fie, what deception! What squeezing of fat fingers into delicate kids, what skeleton claws are hidden out of sight, what warts, what stains and blemishes, and nothing seen but the lavender or the primrose that you delight in. What useless hands, brought up in idleness, and whitened with Magnolia Balm and kept hidden up in oatmeal poultices at night: take off those gloves, mademoiselle, and what can you do? Can you sew, can you cook a chop, can you make a pie? Oh, what a chorus of negatives. Then I'll have none of you. Your delicate hands and "gloves as sweet as damask roses" are too expensive a luxury for such as me. My lovely Floribels, you must wait for Prince Prettman to keep you in idleness. I am moral, and preach thus for your good; but come into the confessional, draw the curtain and I own I have a *défaut*. I passionately admire a plump white hand, and a closely fitting glove is a delight. This is *entre nous*. When I get into the pulpit I declaim against vice, but in private shall I not have a darling sin?

Young ladies are kid glove creatures—*souple comme un gant*—but they like men who take up subjects bare-handed. They like to see hard hitting, and though the timid darlings will scream at a spider and faint should a mouse cross their paths, they will take the great rough soldier to their arms and fondle his rugged, weather-beaten chops and take off his battered helmet and remove his blood-stained sword. Venus still nestles in the embrace of Mars, and takes his hand with silky touch while he relates his hair-breadth 'scapes. They don't like those squeamish young men who go delicately, who mince their words into little pieces, who smile in a lady-like way and in all their actions wear kid gloves. *Ma foi*, neither do I. Let us have some straight hitting from the shoulder. If a vice has to be handled, let it be done firmly, and if a vice

is to be indulged in, let it be in a manly natural way. I join with you, *ma belle*, those sickly little blonds, with their waists in stays, and their feet in prunella boots, are an abomination. They add water to their sherry and haven't the courage even to get drunk. Not that we approve of such a thing; no, no, but then that jolly boisterous laugh of Captain Rubicheck, with the dash of colour on his flaming nose, as he cackles and roars over his fourth tumbler, does one more good than the simpering of a regiment of Ensign Snippers, sipping their *eau sucrée*.

Then we have the kid glove parson, the young man of consumptive tendencies with the angelic smile (a little weak) and a habit of looking heavenward and sighing. How he minces his subject and perpetually reminds one of water gruel. Why cannot he take off his glove and give us some hard hitting? The devil will never be circumvented by those delicate scoldings nor will people be lured into the right path by his mealy platitudes. Stand up like a man, sir, and tell us of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, let us hear both the thunder and the still small voice; but don't pelt us with little poetic pellets, wrapt up in rose-coloured silk. I heard a clergyman—in confidence mind you—characterize an empty little swell as a damned prig, and there was a heartiness in his expression that made me grasp his hand—which I couldn't do with the perfumed fingers of his weak-kneed brethren!

Eheu, ehcu! Are there not some of us who smart inwardly when we see a kid glove? Jack Tomkins, you remember that night you flung yourself into my chamber with a pale face and a wild expression of pain in your timorous eyes? You were tender about Bella Cruxton in those days, and followed her hither and thither and whispered soft *mots d'amour* to her slyly, and held her hand softly in yours and peered into her eyes while your heart came palpitating to your lips. You made your declaration and Belle Cruxton laughed in your face and gave you the mitten. And you came to me wild with mortification and flung yourself into my apartment and vowed terrible vows against the sex, and declared you would never get married, and then, sir, you got terribly drunk on my brandy—kept strictly for medicinal purposes—and three weeks after you married the pretty little Maud Methersaw. Those terrible mittens! We do not carry them above our hearts, but the recipient is apt to make vigorous quotations not found in the church catechism!

A small white hand and a delicate kid glove are very well from an æsthetic point; but they have drawbacks. They are skillful in the *manège*, and like holding the ribbons of the domestic chariot. I have run too long in single harness to make a good match and would be apt to turn out sulky. I would not have my bachelor ways disturbed, I would not give up my club and my rubbers of whist for homely bread and butter. I know I am to blame; but Glycera fixed my fate in the Long Ago. Then—bah, my liver is out of order, I grow sentimental. John, take that old glove to the kitchen and throw it into the fire and bring up the brandy and the iced water.

AN EPISODE OF THE WINTER OF 1870-71.

A recent number of the *Revue des Deux Mondes* gives us a very interesting narrative of one of the petty local contests of the late war, which contains—unconsciously on the part of the writer, M. Louandre—a sufficient justification for much more severity than the Germans, in this case at any rate, showed to armed peasants. The place spoken of is Longpré, a large village about ten miles on the road from Abbeville towards Amiens, and the period just after the fall of the latter city into the hands of General Manteuffel. The inhabitants of Longpré, having suffered from certain Prussian requisitions, took up arms individually with the intention of avenging themselves and preventing a repetition of the demand. They resolved, to quote their own words as reported by M. Louandre, "*s'amuser sur les Châlais*," and they succeeded, by occupying bits of ground near the roads with armed parties, in driving off several patrols of the dreaded cavalry. One of them in particular, who had sworn to avenge the loss of a horse upon the Châlais, and in his turn to cause as many of them as possible, in his own phrase, to dismount, kept his word to the full. Vengeance for this sort of thing was of course to come sooner or later; but the commandant at Abbeville, willing to protect the bold villagers as long as possible, sent a detachment of 500 Mobiles to garrison Longpré against any small force detached to punish it. A preliminary skirmish in which an advance guard of Prussians—very probably a mere reconnaissance, as it seems to us—was repulsed by the Mobiles, was followed next day by a real advance made by Colonel Pestel, who was sent from Amiens with three companies of Infantry and a strong body of cavalry to take the place. After a short fight, in which some of the Mobiles behaved decidedly ill, he effected his object. But it was late in the day, and the bulk of the Mobiles got off towards Abbeville, leaving 120 of their number in the hands of the Prussians, and abandoning to their fate the unlucky villagers. Trusting to the darkness, some of these threw the fowling-pieces which they had used in the fight into ditches and hid themselves in their cottages. Others more prudently fled across the marshes of the Somme for security. The Prussians plundered the place, but forbore to destroy it, from fear, says M. Louandre, of the garrison of Abbeville; but, as we judge from what came later, much more probable from motives of humanity. Retreating that night as far as Atraines, the next village towards Amiens, they carried off their prisoners of course, adding to them twenty-two "hostages," picked out of the male adults found in the village, for the express purpose of being publicly shot at Amiens as a punishment to the offending place. The prisoners were kept in the village church of Atraines, where the curé proved to be a man of good address and venerable air, who at once interested himself warmly in favour of the unfortunate hostages. In vain, however, did he address himself that night to Colonel Pestel. The Colonel was polite but inexorable. "An example has to be made, and they must go on to Amiens and undergo their fate." On repeated solicitation, however, the curé obtained the promise of the life of the oldest of the captives, a villager of sixty-five. Not daunted by his poor success, the venerable man renewed his suit in the morning when the troops were preparing to march off. The old man was given up to him. He turned to the colonel and begged hard for the lives of all the rest. "After all, they have but defended their own homes. Would you slay them for that in cold blood? The laws of war cannot—I appeal to the God of mercy as my witness—justify such a deed." The colonel listened for some time in silence, then stretching out his hand he said—"You may have them all; let them go to their families." The French writer, with national exaggeration, speaks of this as the sole act of mercy shown by the Prussians during the war. Despite what we know of Abis, Nogent, and Fontenoy, we are very far from believing this. If Colonel Pestel, of whom this is told by a hater of his countrymen, be indeed the same who so gallantly defended Saarbrück at the beginning of the war with three companies against Frossard's whole corps advancing under the eye of the Emperor, it is but a new proof that the highest courage and the truest humanity are often to be found together.