



THE EARL OF ABERDEEN AND FAMILY.

From Down by the Sea.

Things have been very gay lately in the "city by the sea," the visits of the Governor-General and of His Royal Highness Prince George having necessarily created no little stir in social circles. We are not near enough to "the land of the free" to feel anything of the grand indifference to royalty and titled greatness possessed by our American brothers. We are still so small and unenlightened that the titles tickle our ears, and we feel honoured when our rulers or our potentates condescend to be entertained by us and graciously accept our homage.

Speaking of our American brothers, reminds me of a proposal made by one of them the other day, after witnessing the wonderful Oberammergau Passion Play. He offered to "transfer the whole thing for a winter show to Staten Island," adding, as an inducement, that he would "put a hundred instead of only twelve apostles on the stage." Evidently the directors of these old-time ceremonies need Brother Jonathan to "show them how to do things." But to return to our "sheep."

Halifax has been holding a "Nautical Fair" in aid of the "Seaman's Rest," which has been a great success, both financially and otherwise. Though the ladies tired themselves out with their indefatigable efforts, it was in such a good cause that I am sure their guardian angels will not allow any permanent harm to follow their exertions. Each booth in the fair was decorated to represent some part of a ship, and all the young lady-traders were most tastefully attired in sailor costume. The pretty little frocks were exchanged for more imposing gowns on the Tuesday following the conclusion of the fair, when a grand ball was given at Maplewood, that lovely spot at the Northwest Arm, by the officers of the Army Service corps. Chinese lanterns and gay marquees made the scene beautiful, and the inner man was satisfied by a choice repast, prepared by Street, the well-known caterer. His Royal Highness was, of course, the star of the assembly, and the hearts of many fair ones fluttered when close to the royal arm.

The students at our several universities are hard at work again after the summer slackening of the mental bow. King's College, Windsor, the oldest university of all, has opened with fair prospects in the autumn of its centennial year. We fear that the race of naughty fellows who shaved the president's horse, fished for his geese out of the bedroom windows, and committed other charming atrocities in the days gone by, is becoming extinct. These

docile and industrious young men remind one of the crew described by "Bab" of the immortal "Ballads" in the "Bumboat Woman's Story." However, I suppose the honoured president who to-day trains the young minds, would scarcely view the matter in the same light. I believe some of the initiatory exercises compulsorily performed each term by the unlucky freshmen, are entertaining in a high degree to all but the principal actors. I remember a short time ago hearing a rather amusing, though not original, practical joke, which was played upon a young man who came to King's prepared to reside in college immediately upon passing his matriculation examination. Some mischievous juniors dressed themselves up in degree gowns, and with much gravity conducted him to a classroom to pass an examination, which he supposed was in due order. A paper of most impossible questions was given him, through which he laboured as his abilities allowed him; a want of the necessary comprehension preventing his appreciating the obvious absurdity of the work he was called upon to do. In some cases, however, he displayed no little ingenuity in his answers. Here are some of the questions over which the unfortunate youth pored for hours:

- I. Define a parallel straight line?
- II. Parse *Amans*, and compare it with the English *A man*, and also *Amen* at the end of the prayers?
- III. Compare the careers of the two prophets—El Mahdi and El Wiggins?
- IV. Suppose in travelling by train from Annapolis to Windsor you were to get out at Kentville and walk the rest of the way, how much sooner should you arrive in Windsor than the train?

The answer given to this last question was very much to the point. He "had never travelled on the Windsor and Annapolis Railway."

The poor little W. & A. Railway does not deserve all the hard things that are said of it, though certainly there is room for improvement in the matter of speed. Perhaps you do not remember the story of a Yankee's first excursion by this line. Near Newport station the train had to be stopped to dislodge a cow which was standing on the track, which proceeding amused the Yankee vastly. Near Windsor Junction, about twenty-six miles further on, the train was again stopped. On going forward to ascertain the cause, our friend saw that the same thing had occurred a second time. "Wall! I'm dashed," he said, "if we haven't caught up to that — old cow again."

The road still continues to be popular, and it is scarcely to be wondered at, while such obliging and genial conductors as Joe Edwards and Addie LeCain retain their positions.

The following is culled from a late Halifax paper:—"The jury on the inquest to inquire into the cause of the death of ———, returned the following verdict: 'That ——— came to his death on Water street, in the city of Halifax, by tripping on a certain plank laid on the sidewalk to cover a hatchway, and, in tripping, fell through an opening in a fence into a pit or excavation for a cellar, and striking with violence upon a large stone, lying in the said excavation, the said being about eight feet deep, the said ——— received a blow on his neck whereby his spine was broken, and from which injury he died.' " From the foregoing I should judge that the man was dead! Whether the jury has survived the wonderful exertion of brain employed in manufacturing this verdict I do not know.

Societies seem to be the order of the day in the university town of Windsor. A Philharmonic Society educates the musical taste of the young people, and its members discourse sweet strains at concerts given every now and then for the benefit of the society.

The members of a Shakesperian Society meet every week at different houses. The anxiety of these students to learn the wisdom and poetry of the immortal bard is something delightful, and ere long I should imagine that their knowledge would equal the combined lore of Shakespeare commentators of all ages. The study of the play under consideration lasts from eight till nine, and the rest of the evening is devoted to the Muse Terpsichore. Of course those who prefer the Goddess to the Sage can show their partiality by coming to the place of meeting a little late. Seriously though, there is at least a most decided leaning towards elevating occupations that is not usual among young people of most communities. A French and a German class, formed within the last few months, are well attended, some industrious and ambitious students attending both. To the clever and kindly professor who is striving to leaven the tastes of the community in which he lives with drops from his own store of learning, our sweet-voiced poet of the Maritime Provinces, all success in his efforts. It will not be his fault, at all events, if the desired end is not gained.

Next time I shall talk to you about the sister province. My pen has run away with me, so that I have left no space for more this time.