

[For the Torch]  
A FRAGMENT.

"I seem to myself like a leaf,  
Floating hither and thither,  
On the wild and turbulent tide  
Of a deep flowing river—  
Tossed hither and thither, the sport  
Of stormy tempest and rain—  
Hurled amid rocks by thunder shocks,  
Or drifted out to the main.  
"I seem to myself like a leaf,  
Torn from the sheltering tree  
By winter's cold and ruthless hand,  
Despotic upon the sea—  
The prey of the elements wild,  
Buffeted, thrown to and fro,  
Perchance to perish 'neath the weight  
Of hyperborean snow."

GLOW-WORM.

[For the Torch]  
ESSAYS.

BY THE CHEVALIER DE BRASSY.

No. 5.—On Young Men.

The young male of the human species is the most obnoxious specimen of the animal kingdom. Nothing more clearly shows the wondrous power of Nature in evolving order from the most incongruous materia, than the evolution of many of these specimens into comparatively good christians and moderately good men.

With a view to simplify the scientific analysis of the Young Man, I separate the process of his development into three cycles: Firstly, the stand-up collar era; secondly, the shaving period; and, thirdly, the boot and girl epoch.

I should only distress the reader were I to dwell on the characteristics of the bullet-headed boy. There are few households that have not suffered from his presence. At a certain stage of the creature's existence, however, the close observer cannot fail to note a slight change in his habits. The mop-skulled youth takes to splitting his hair exactly in the middle, and objects any longer to have missing buttons substituted by pins. Passers by may observe him staring in at tailors' windows, and eventually his craving culminates in buying a box of paper collars. At length one Saturday night, (with a view to next day being Sunday), he creeps shamefacedly into the parlor and presents himself to his family. Mother and the girls gave a little scream, for lo! he stands confessed in an all-rounder! This completes the first stage of development. It is, generally, during this period that the neophyte encloses to the Jewelry company a one dollar bill, and receives in return a massive watch-cable of Montreal gold, to which it is his fondest desire to append a Waltham watch—which he has some vague idea of obtaining, together with a chrono, for procuring the largest number of subscribers to the *Bangtown Chronicle*.

Soon after the collar era the old man—as he already irreverently styles his father,—misses a razor, and observes the leather back of the family bible a good deal hacked, where some one has been sharpening. Bridget complains

to the missus that somebody has been stealing soap. Nancy and Sarah peep thro' brother Sam's keyhole and see him with his face lathered, and from that moment the hobbledeloy takes rank as a young man.

About this time the young man discovers that nature has provided him with feet about two sizes too large. All his efforts are thenceforth directed to compress them into smaller dimensions. Now he sows his crop of corns; the sowing of wild oats comes later. Our young man with his Sunday boots on, is like Nebuchadnezzar's image,—a front of brass and feet of clay. These sufferings of the young male are incurred with a view to finding favor in the eyes of the female of the species. Solomon professed himself unacquainted with "the way of a man with a maid," and it remains among the mysteries how the young man first becomes acquainted with the Girl of the period. Nevertheless the acquaintance progresses, causing great curiosity to young male's kin. The agonizing crisis that separates him for ever from his family, is reached when he walks up the aisle of the Institute, with the Girl on his arm, while his maternal parent sits at home and sadly sings: "Who will care for mother now?"

Such are the progressive steps by which the human cub is developed into the bearded swell. Nature has many such transformations, the most noticeable being that of the loathsome tadpole into the noble frog. Darwin says we have all been progressively evolved, but, looking around and noting many *who have been young men*, I think there must be some mistake about the survival of the fittest.

[For the Torch.]

NO. SEVEN OF THE WIDOW McKILLIGAN SERIES.

"Penny," said Aggy, as we were leisurely discussing our breakfast. "Do you know that this is St. Valentine's Day?"

"Yes," I replied, "look out for a lot of tender billet-doux."

"Nonsense, Penny," she replied, "ow you do talk." The next instant the front door bell rang, and Bridget trotted to open it, soliloquizing thus: "Oh whirra! whirra! masha-free-antha-britchen-ah, who's yan so airly?" In a moment she entered the room with her apron half full of valentines.

"There's to ye," said she throwing them on the table, "an may the devil fly away wid 'em, bad cess to em."

Aggy tossed them over a moment, and throwing three into my lap, commenced her own. I looked at mine a moment, and then thrust them into my pocket to be dissected at leisure, like the senders' hearts, if they had any, which is doubtful. Besides, I wanted to watch Aggy.

Presently she threw down one she had been reading, and burst into a ringing peal of laughter. "What is it?" I asked, snatching at the Valentine. "It's that 'orril 'omeycomb,'" said she. Here it is:

"Agatha, my queen, my beautiful one!

Fairer than lilies, bright as the sun,

Of female perfections the total and sum!

Hear my prayer:

Beloved, Oh force me no longer to roam,  
Nor an idolator make of your own Honeycomb,  
But conent, and at once to be bone of my bone—

Or I swear—

When I had got so far, a shriek from Aggy made me drop the missive. She slipped from

her chair and rolled to the floor convulsed with laughter, holding her sides to keep from bursting. I picked up the cause of her merriment. It ran thus, as Artenau Ward would say:

*Spoon O'ik, tother side beaver dan.*

"Few the feminine gender at Hickory-holler,  
How in creation do ye dew?  
I'm as lunsome ivar as a big thomas cat  
Spitting out a two-forty mew.

Chorus—

Thars a bullfrog croaking all alone  
Down in the mudder,  
Corn shocks an muss kit-tees,  
I'm gwine fir the Widder—  
Er blew-bell; don't keer which, two forty ont.

I feel jist like a one-shot gun,  
Er the fint without the steel,  
Er a gander goose without its mate  
A goin round on his heel

I feel, I feel like a staggerin bob  
A huntin fur his mammy,  
Er like the fox down by the barn  
A lookin for a lammie.

Chorus—

Thars a bull-frog croakin all alone  
Down in the mudder,  
Corn shocks an muss kit-teers,  
I'm gwine fir the Widder.

When I had got so far, Aggy interrupted me by crying out: "This yer one must be from the Torch hi hantipate. 'Ow delightful! hi jist dote on heditors, they're so hintellectable han that."

"How do you know it's from the Torch?" I asked.

"That's jist like you, Penny Fowler," she said, "to be so bagravatin has that, because de-a-r-Joe's made ha bridge hof your nose. Jist see now wat a sweet poic ee is!"

"Since Eve was brought to Adam,  
A lonely and listless man,  
There's never been such another  
As peerless McKilligan.

"Such grace, such form, such action—  
Pray match her, ye who can;  
My sweetest, most substantial,  
Bewitching McKilligan!

"Were mine the lovely fingers  
That clasp that jewelled fan,  
Ye gods! I'd not change places  
With Tartary's great Khan!"  
Your devoted lover, T—H.

"Oh my, ow sweet, ow," ejaculated Aggy. Just there came a rat tat tat at the door. Aggy seized all the Valentines and bundled them under the sofa without any ceremony, and composed herself to receive her guest, who proved to be old Aunt Mahala Crossgrain.

"How do ye do, Niece McKilligan," said she sailing solemnly into the room. "Mornin, Penny. I jist thought I'd drop in a minute. Ye hear tell o' the wonderful sudden death yesterday. Brother Grindhard's got over the river to last, an Sister Hepzibah Hardscrabble that's fit the fight so long, has gone."

"His hit possible," said Aggy, quite shocked, "hi didn't ear of hit."

"Oh no, belikes not: giddy high-flyin folks, sich as live to here ain't like to hear no hallelujahs when the warfare's ended, an the fight all fit—"

"Good massey, whatever's under my feet?" she cried out jumping up. Instantly Bounce emerged from under her skirt, his mouth filled with the precious Valentines. The grim mistress gave one glance at them.

"Agatha McKilligan," said she in frigid tones, "is it possible that a woman of your time of life should go foolin' around with such carnal valentines as Valentines? Why, I'm ashamed of you; but mebbe they belong tew Penny Fowler?"

Aggy's face grew red as fire.

"H'd like to know what you mean by my