

## A SUGGESTION.

The lad and lass were forced to part,  
They kissed and went along;  
The sight went into the poet's heart,  
And it came out a song.

The sun, down-sloping in the west,  
Made gold the evening air;  
They went into the painter's breast,  
And grew to a picture fair.

The mother murmured to her child,  
And hushed it yet again;  
The sound, as the musician smiled,  
Grew music in his brain.

The damsel turned, her hair to braid,  
A flower was in her zone;  
There grew from out the sculptor's mind,  
A damsel carved in stone.

The song was said, the tune was played,  
The girl in marble stood;  
The sunset in the picture stayed,  
And all was sweet and good.

And God, who made these things to be,  
The damsel and the sun,  
Color and sound, and you and me,  
Was pleased to see it done.

And all the angels would be glad  
If, in the world He built,  
Although there must be some things sad,  
No drop of joy were spilt.

But all the beauty in the earth,  
And skies, and hearts of men,  
Were gently gathered at its birth,  
And loved, and born again.

MATTHEW BROWNE.

## THE FRENCH AND THE CHANNEL TUNNEL.

Since the "Battle of Dorking" appeared nothing comparable to that most useful little brochure has been published—till now. Who "Grip" may be who has just written an account of "How John Bull Lost London; or, the Capture of the Channel Tunnel" (a shilling volume, published by Messrs Sampson, Low and Co.), we do not know; but his story of the future is admirably told—not too solemnly, with exaggerations, but with all the *vraisemblance* of actual history. It really does compare with the "Battle of Dorking," and no greater praise can be given to anything of the kind. In order to show what this little book is like, we reprint an account of what, according to this historian of the future, London will have to endure between the time of conquest and the time of its deliverance in 1890:—

"What London suffered during the period of its occupation will never be fully told. Very naturally, the bulk of the French army occupied certain strategic positions in the suburbs. But a very considerable number of troops were quartered inside the very heart of the metropolis, and did pretty much as they pleased. For two days the metropolis was in absolute disorder. Then the administration of the French officials began. Three acts preceded all others. Every arm and ammunition shop and householder were deprived of lethal weapons. All the available provisions of the capital were seized, no shopkeeper being allowed to touch more than a certain quantity of the stores in his own shop. And troops were placed in every public building specially available for the purpose.

"The deprivation of firearms was not perhaps a matter of much consequence. It would have been sheer madness on the part of a miserably armed mob of citizens to have attempted any resistance against the overwhelming force of the French armies, and no one much regretted, therefore, the loss of rifles and revolvers. The French, on the other hand, were much pleased to obtain for the asking English-made weapons, which were very much better than anything they could get in their own country. They wore the revolvers taken from the English shops with much pride, and greatly boasted of the acquisitions they had made. Had they confined themselves to the taking of weapons there would have been little complaint then. But although the French commander, on entering the city, issued a declaration to the effect that no plundering would be permitted, nearly every jeweler's shop had been broken into and emptied within a few hours of the arrival of the troops, and those who went to complain were received with jeers and laughter.

"The worst privation of all, however, from which the unfortunate people who were in the metropolis suffered was that of hunger. An embargo having been laid upon all stores of provisions, it is easy to see how this occurred. At first it was the intention of the French to have issued a full ration to every person without much stint. But as the news of the advances of English armies outside the capital came in and supplies were cut off, the French commander determined to save as much as he could for his men and give out to the people as little as possible. London is a huge city, peopled by millions, and it depends for its supply of provisions upon the ships, trains, and waggon that daily bring in vast stores of comestibles. Once stop this supply, and the actual quantity of food inside the capital would last but a very little while. The French commander saw this, and he determined that the lives of 600,000 Frenchmen were his first care, and he acted accordingly. He would not permit a general exodus, for he looked forward to the captive population being his principal bulwark should he suffer a reverse or be blocked in without being able to come to terms with the English. But while he detained the unhappy people in their homes, he gave them only a minimum of food for their support.

"It is needless here to dwell on the result of this policy—a fair policy, perhaps, from a military point of view, but one which brought in its train immense and needless suffering to the people. Well-to-do tradesmen and merchants of Clapham, quiet residents of Brixton, stock-brokers and City men in Notting Hill, the honest people of Hornsey, Clapton, Stoke Newington, shared with the residents of Bow the terror of a loose careless soldiery, who, however they might have been controlled in the interior of the city, were lawless and brutal in the quieter and more out-of-the-way places. Happy the householder who did not have four or five ruffians in his house to demand his constant services, and to rate him whenever he came within hearing or sight. The few who were free from this last torture counted themselves as fortunate in the extreme. The British householder is not used to attend at a district office presided over by a couple of Frenchmen, and to demand in turn a ticket for bread, and perhaps occasionally a little smoked meat, such as bacon or ham, to be honored per chance in his own shop by soldiers placed in charge. It was new to the London housekeepers to turn out *en queue*, and wait while the necessities of life were there served out to them; and as they took their turn they cursed from the bottom of their hearts the miserable national blunder which had brought all this suffering upon them. The tunnel, however, had done its work, and to curse it was just then useless.

"And now a new terror set in. The French commander-in-chief determined that all the strategic points of the metropolis should be fortified, and commanded every male in the capital to present himself at a certain specified station with a spade or a pick, ready for labor. The next morning saw the good citizens of Clapham all in a long row working away at the navy's task, under the immediate superintendence of French engineers, who taught them to throw up earth-works on the common, and fortify Balham and Tooting, pulling down here and there their own houses for the purpose of obtaining material for barricades where ordered. What transpired at Clapham went on everywhere; the people of Dulwich, Brixton, and New Cross; those of the north, as well as the east—not even excepting the west—were all made available, and initiated into the art of constructing fortifications without any delay. To protest was useless; it was worse, it was dangerous. The man who argued was either whipped or prodded with a bayonet; he who resisted was shot or hanged. So the work went on apace, and in a very short time London was, inside her boundaries, provided with a better series of fortifications than she had ever before possessed. When space was wanted in front of these works the houses were pulled or blown down; no respect for property or the owners caused the French to hesitate. They had to do the work thoroughly, and they knew it; and with so many laborers as they possessed they had very little difficulty.

"Possibly the worst of all which they suffered was the prospect in the event of a great battle within the suburbs of being compelled to remain under fire and repair the work of their alien defenders as the fight progressed. The probability of this held out to them did not constitute the least of their sorrows, certainly."

This is taken from not the least impressive chapter in the book; but other chapters—like those descriptive of the ingenious way in which the tunnel is seized, and the battle of Guildford—are far more exciting and equally true to the life. "Grip" evidently knows his business, and his book is likely to prove as useful as it is entertaining. It comes out at a most opportune moment, and is not unlikely to have a considerable effect in settling the question of the Channel Tunnel in many a mind at present bewildered by contending argument.

## MEDITATIONS UPON A BROOMSTICK.

Swift was in the habit of going to visit Lady Berkely, his patron's consort. She was an admirer of "Boyle's Pious Meditations," and used often to request the Dean to read aloud some portion from them. Such occupation, however, was too little congenial with the Dean's humor, and soon he resolved to revenge himself upon Boyle for the irksome task thus imposed upon him. In short, he wrote a parody upon him, which he printed, and entitled, "Meditations upon a Broomstick." This he sewed into a copy of Boyle, from which her Ladyship was accustomed to read. It was exactly the same paper, type, and so ingeniously inserted, that no one was likely to conjecture the deceit. So the next time, he opened the book at the "Meditations upon a Broomstick," which, with a very grave countenance, he read aloud—

Lady—"No jesting, if you please, Mr. Dean, upon so grave a subject."

Swift—"Jesting! I vow, my Lady, I read it as I find it,—here it is, 'Meditations upon a Broomstick.'"

Lady—"So it is—upon my word. What a singular subject. But let us see. Boyle is so full of ideas, that I am persuaded he will make it extremely edifying, though it looks so odd."

With great gravity, Swift proceeded to read a very original comparison between a broomstick and a man, and contrasting the destiny of mankind with that of the broomstick. "This stick," he continued, in a solemn tone, "this stick, that you see thrown ignominiously into a corner, was once flourishing in the woods, &c., &c."

"Oh, excellent Boyle!" exclaimed her Ladyship, "how admirably he has drawn the moral

from so trifling a subject. But whatever he touches he turns to gold."

The Dean, preserving his gravity, made signs of assent, as if he quite agreed with her Ladyship, and then took his leave. In the evening her Ladyship had a party, and one of the first topics started was Boyle's excellent "Meditations upon a Broomstick." Some of the company began to laugh. "You may laugh," exclaimed her Ladyship, "but I am astonished you should not have heard of it; it is quite worthy the pen of this great moralist." Others, however, ventured to question its existence; when her Ladyship, in triumph, pointed out the part, which they saw sure enough. "Have I convinced you, gentlemen? I see you are quite confounded; but to tell you the truth, so was I at first. Indeed, I should still have been ignorant of the fact, but for Mr. Dean Swift, who was so good as to point it out to me, only to-day." "What!" cried some of the party, "was it Swift?—this is one of his tricks then; let us have another copy of Boyle." They went and looked, and looked, but no "Meditations upon a Broomstick" was to be found: it was plain that the whole had been interpolated. The lady concealed her chagrin; but, henceforth, she never imposed upon the author of "Gulliver" the reading of these edifying lectures. And this was what he wanted.

## BETROTHAL AND MARRIAGE IN POLAND.

In Poland, it seems, it is not the would-be bride-groom who proposes to his lady-love, but a friend. The two go together to the young lady's house, carrying with them a loaf of bread, a bottle of brandy, and a new pocket handkerchief. When they are shown into the "best" room the friend asks for a wine glass. If it is produced at once it is a good sign; if not, they take their leave without another word, as they understand that their proposal would not be accepted. Suppose, however, that the desired wine glass is forthcoming; then the friend drinks to the father's and mother's health, and then asks where their daughter is, upon which the mother goes to fetch her. When she comes into the room the friend (always the friend) offers her the glass, filled with brandy. If she puts it to her lips she is willing, and the proposal is made at once. But it is the fashion to refuse it several times before finally accepting it. Then the friend takes out the new handkerchief and ties the young people's hands together with it, after which it is tied round the lady's head, and she wears it as a sign of betrothal until her wedding day, which is very soon afterwards, as on the Sunday following the proposal the banns are published. On the wedding day all the bride-smen and bridesmaids go round to all the friends and acquaintances of the two families and invite them to the wedding. At each house they must dance a *cracovian*. During this the bride is being dressed by other young friends of hers, while young men sing virtuous strophes to her. When all the guests are assembled the bride kneels for her parents' blessing, and then she is placed in a carriage with her betrothed and a friend. Upon returning home, bread and salt are presented to the young people, and wheat thrown over their heads. The wheat is picked up, and afterwards sown. If it bears good fruit the young couple will be prosperous. Dancing, singing, and feasting are kept up till morning, when the young people are accompanied to their room. But before then the bride's hair has been cut off, and she dons the matron's cap. The wedding festivities are kept up for seven days and nights without interruption, after which the wedding visits begin, commencing with the older proprietor or lord of the neighborhood.

## A CANADIAN LEGEND.

An eclipse of the sun or moon alarms the habitant, who has heard from the fathers and the old men before them of the signs and tokens that preceded the great earthquake of 1663. Father Hierosme Lalemant, in the Relation for that year, says that in the fall of 1662 fiery serpents were seen in the heavens, and a ball of fire rushed from the moon, and, with a noise like thunder, burst and fell behind Mount Royal. On January 6, 1663 three suns and a rainbow appeared, and on February 7th, at 5 p.m., the first shock was felt of the earthquake that shook Lower Canada for six months. The year 1785 is known as the year of great darkness, the earth on two Sundays, October 9th and October 16th, having been enveloped in a "fiery yellow atmosphere." On April 11, 1782, tradition says darkness prevailed on the Saguenay River, the heavens mourning for the death of a Jesuit, Father Jean Baptiste Labrosse, who died at Tadousac on that day. The story of the miracles wrought when that good man died, as told by Dr. Taché in his "Forestiers et Voyageurs," and by l'Abbé Casgrain in "Un Pélerinage à la Ile-aux-Coudres," is a characteristic Gulf legend. Father Labrosse was a native of Poitou. He arrived in Quebec in 1754, and for nearly thirty years preached the gospel to white men and Indians along the St. Lawrence and down in the wilds of Acadia. On the night of his death he was at the house of an officer of the trading-post at Tadousac, and, although nearly seventy years old, appeared to be as strong and hearty as a man of forty. He was tall and robust, and his long white hair and saintly face made him look every inch an apostle. At nine p.m. he

rose, and in solemn tones told his friends that the hour of his death was at hand. At midnight he should die, and the church bell of Tadousac would announce the news to his Indian children, who were camped there for the spring trade in peltries, and to all the Gulf. He bade the company farewell, charging them, as he left the house, to go to Ile-aux-Coudres and bring Father Compain, the curé, to give his body Christian sepulture. The party sat in silence, listening for the bells, which on the stroke of midnight began to toll. The village was aroused, and the people hurried to the chapel, and there, before the altar, lay the old Jesuit, dead. They watched by the corpse until daylight, when the post officer ordered four men to take a canoe and go to Ile-aux-Coudres. A fearful storm was raging in the Gulf, and ice floes almost choked the wide expanse of water. "Fear not," said the officer to the fishermen; "Father Labrosse will protect you." They launched the canoe, and great was their surprise to find that, while the tempest howled and the waves and the ice seethed like a caldron on each side of them, a peaceful channel was formed by some invisible hand for their craft. They reached Ile-aux-Coudres—over sixty miles, as the crow flies, from Tadousac—without accident. Father Compain was standing on the cliff, and, as they neared the shore, he cried out, "Father Labrosse is dead, and you have come to take me to Tadousac to bury him!" How did he know this? The night previous he was sitting alone in his house, reading his breviary, when suddenly the bell in the church (dedicated to St. Louis) began to toll. He ran down to the church, but the doors were locked, and when he opened them he found no one within, and still the passing bell was tolling. As he approached the altar, Father Compain heard a voice saying, "Father Labrosse is dead. This bell announces his departure. To-morrow do thou stand at the lower end of the island and await the arrival of a canoe from Tadousac. Return with it, and give him burial." And at all the mission posts where Father Labrosse had preached—Chicoutimi, l'Ile Verte, Trois Pistoles, Rimouski, and along the Baie-des-Chaleurs—the bells, of their own accord, rang out the death of the old Jesuit at the same hour. And for many a year, whenever the Indians of the Saguenay visited Tadousac, they made a pilgrimage to his grave, and whispered to the dead within through a hole in the slab of the vault, believing that he would lay their petitions before God. —*Atlantic*.

## AMONG THE RIFLE-PITS.

Fifty yards in front of the abatis the pickets were stationed. When first the siege began, picketing was dangerous business. Both armies were bent on fight, and picketing meant simply sharp-shooting. As a consequence, at first the pickets were posted only at night, so that from midnight to midnight the poor fellows lay in their rifle-pits under a broiling July sun, with no protection from the intolerable heat, excepting the scanty shade of a little pine brush erected overhead, or in front of the pit as a screen. There the picket lay, flat on his face, picking off the enemy's men whenever he could catch sight of a head or even so much as a hand; and right glad would he be if, when the long-awaited relief came at length, he had no wounds to show.

But later on, as the siege progressed, this murderous state of affairs gradually disappeared. Neither side found it pleasant, nor profitable, and nothing was gained by it. It decided nothing, and only wasted powder and ball. And so, gradually, the pickets on both sides began to be on quite friendly terms. It was no unusual thing to see a Johnny picket—who would be posted scarcely a hundred yards away, so near were the lines—lay down his gun, wave a piece of white paper as a signal of truce, walk out into the neutral ground between the picket-lines, and meet one of our own pickets, who, also dropping his gun, would go out to inquire what Johnny might want to-day.

"Well, Yank, I want some coffee, and I'll trade tobacco for it."

"Has any of you fellows back there some coffee to trade for tobacco? 'Johnny Picket,' here, wants some coffee."

Or, may be he wanted to trade papers, a *Richmond Enquirer* for a New York *Herald* or *Tribune*, "even up and no odds." Or, he only wanted to talk about the news of the day—how "we" uns whipped you "uns" up the valley the other day; or how, "if we had Stonewall Jackson yet, we'd be in Washington before winter"; or maybe he only wished to have a friendly game of cards!

There was a certain chivalrous etiquette developed through this social intercourse of deadly foemen, and it was really admirable. Seldom was there breach of confidence on either side. It would have gone hard with the comrade who should have ventured to shoot down a man in gray who had left his gun and come out of his pit under the sacred protection of a piece of white paper. If disagreement ever occurred in bartering, or high words arose in discussion, shots were never fired until due notice had been given. And I find mentioned in one of my old army letters that a general fire along our entire front grew out of some disagreement on the picket line about trading coffee for tobacco. The two pickets couldn't agree, jumped into their pits, and began firing, the one calling out: "Look out, Yank, here comes your tobacco." Bang!

And the other replying: "All right, Johnny, here comes your coffee." Bang! —*St. Nicholas*.