

The Rockwood Review.

GRANDFATHER'S CORNER.

BACK TO CURACAO.

Life the world over has its "Ups and Downs," but the tropics see more of them, probably, than are experienced in our northern clime, where Society is comparatively settled, and men and women run, more or less, in grooves. But a few months ago, our young Canadians landed in Curacao, big with expectations, saw everything in roseate hues: since then the tropical skies assumed their summer garb of threatening clouds, followed by torrential rains, and the bright picture has vanished. The summer, so crowded with great events in low latitudes, brought revolution in Venezuela, commercial disasters and temporary ruin to the hopes of the plucky if baffled Canadians, who have told their experiences in our pages, and we have now reluctantly to reverse the shield. Let us hope, however, that they have seen the worst of the dark days through which they have been passing, and that they may live to "pull through" their difficulties, and to find ample opportunity to prove that the British-American blood which courses through their veins has good staying powers, and that they have but stooped to conquer. We shall make further extracts from a correspondence which has hitherto been pleasing, and which cannot fail to have interest to all who may have read its early instalments. The writer of them, we may premise, has been forced to leave Venezuela, and writes from the Island of Curacao, where he and his companion have found a present home. We leave him to continue their story:—

W— is lying on his bed, in the Dormitory of this College, cursing the day upon which he landed here, while his face is swollen with heat, and he is hungering for civilized food which seems to be unattainable. I am denouncing the climate, and writing under stern

difficulties, for I can hardly manipulate my pen on account of my recently vaccinated arm. And that, strange as it may seem, really tells all that is actually disagreeable in our present position. But keep in subordination your curiosity, and listen to my story, for better than the needy knife-grinder, I have one to tell.

Six months ago we landed in Venezuela, a country which rich as it is in natural advantages, cannot be richer than were our expectations. Nothing within reason was left undone in our attempt to make a success of our venture. But we soon recognized that our entrance into the field was ill-advised, not altogether on our part, for we were ready for any consequences, but on the part of the Company as well, whose agents we were, and who had not made the investigations which business prudence demanded. On account of the ruin of coffee values, and as a result of revolution the people are poverty stricken, and although we determined to do business by sheer force of will, and dominating push, the effort was useless. Older hands than we made the attempt, and retired in disgust. Still we refused to give up. "Come home-go home" was urged, but we would not listen. We had not reached South America to return as failures. In the midst of our resolve to "do or die," W— went to bed for six weeks with some kind of low, malarial typhoid or typhus fever. That was emphatically the end. Several physicians were consulted, and of these one stuck to us. We two were the only persons who went near him during the trying time. He lived through it. The Company offered to return us to the North. Not willing to lose a last chance of getting out of the country, we postponed our reply. W— got well slowly, and we struggled on, determined to live, if that were possible, until times improved. It was useless. So we contrived to pay our debts—a big doctor's bill,