



Canadian Literary Gem.

HUMANITY, TEMPERANCE, PROGRESS.

VOL. IV.

TORONTO, C.W. FEBRUARY 25, 1854.

NO. 8.

THE SONG OF THE SNOW-SPRIT.

In the polar seas, where the wild waves freeze,
Congealed in their billowy might,
And the iceberg rides o'er the gleaming tides—
In the flush of the Northern Light.

Pale gems embossed with a silvery frost,
Are the spray of the glittering brine,
And the jeweled strand by that fairy land
Yields a part of its wealth to thine.

The gift I bring, on my broad, white wing,
And it falls in a feathery snow,
When dense clouds lie in the leaden sky,
And the turf is brown below.

When, stripped and bound, on the bare hills round,
The shivering trees complain,
And the slumbering stream in a moaning dream
Still gnaws at his icy chain.

When Autumn grieves o'er the golden leaves—
The hoard of a life of cares—
But, locked from sight in a casket white,
I will keep them for his heirs.

Though the merry Spring is a spendthrift thing,
In the flush of her youthful hours,
And the gathered gold will be pledged and sold
By her, for a wreath of flowers.

But the precious trust of the hoarded dust
Shall be safe beneath my wing:
From the eagle's nest on the mountain crest,
I will watch for the fair young thing.

Till, bursting again from its silver chain,
The brook leaps high to the shore,
And the trees rejoice at the welcome voice
Of their feathered friends once more!

Till the violet waves o'er the sodded graves,
Where the mourner knelt in prayer,
And hope springs up, like the crocus cup,
From the wreck of an old despair.

Wendell, N. Y. Jan. 1st, 1824. F. M. C.

A REMARKABLE STORY.—THE EVIL OF TRUSTING TO CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE.

Jonathan Bradford kept an inn in Oxfordshire, on the London road to Oxford. He bore a respectable character. Mr. Hayes, a gentleman of fortune, being on the way to Oxford on a visit to a relation, put up at Bradford's. He there joined company with two gentlemen, with whom he supped, and in conversation unguardedly mentioned that he had about him a considerable sum of money. In due time they retired to their respective chambers; the gentlemen to a two-bedded room, leaving, as is customary with many, a candle burning in the chimney-corner.

Some hours after they went to bed, one of the gentlemen, being awake, thought he heard a groan in an adjoining chamber, and this being repeated, he softly awoke his friend. They listened together, and the groans increasing as of one dying and in pain, they both instantly arose and proceeded silently to the door of the next chamber, from which the groans had seemed to come. The door being ajar, they saw a light in the room. They entered, but it was impossible to paint their consternation on perceiving a person weltering in blood on the bed, and a man standing over him with a dark lantern in one hand and a knife in the other! The man seemed as much petrified as themselves, but his terror carried with it all the appearance of guilt.

The gentlemen soon discovered that the mur-

dered person was the stranger with whom they had that night supped, and that the man was the host. They seized Bradford directly, disarmed him of his lamp, and charged him with being the murderer. He assumed an air of innocence, positively denied the crime, and asserted that he came there with the same humane intentions as themselves, for that hearing a noise, which was succeeded by groaning, he got out of bed, struck a light, armed himself with a knife for his defence, and that minute entered the room before them. These assertions were of no avail, he was kept in close custody till morning, and then taken before a neighbouring Justice of the Peace. Bradford still denied the murder, but with such indications of guilt that the Justice hesitated not to make use of this extraordinary expression, on writing his mittimus: "Mr. Bradford, either you or myself committed this murder."

This remarkable affair became a topic of conversation to the whole country. Bradford was condemned by the general voice of every company. In the midst of all pre-determination came the assize at Oxford. Bradford was brought to trial; he pleaded not guilty. Nothing could be stronger than the evidence of the two gentlemen. They testified to the finding Mr. Hayes murdered in his bed, Bradford at the side of the body with a light and a knife, and that knife and the hand which held it bloody. They stated that on entering the room, he betrayed all the signs of a guilty man, and that but a few minutes preceding they had heard the groans of the deceased.

Bradford's defence on his trial was the same as before; he had heard a noise; he suspected that some villainy was transacting; he struck a light, matched up a knife, the only weapon at hand, to defend himself, and entered the room of the deceased; he averred that the terrors he betrayed were merely the feelings natural to innocence, as well as guilt, on beholding so horrid a scene. The defence, however, could not but be considered as weak, contrasted with the several powerful circumstances against him. Never was circumstantial evidence so strong, so far as it went. There was little need of comment from the judge in summing up the evidence: no room appeared for extenuation; and the prisoner was declared guilty by the jury without even leaving the box.

Bradford was executed shortly after, still declaring that he was not the murderer, nor privy to the murder of Mr. Hayes; but he died disbelieved by all.

Yet these assertions were not untrue. The murder was actually committed by the footman of Mr. Hayes, and the assassin, immediately on stabbing his master, rifled his pockets of his money, gold watch and snuff-box, and then escaped back to his own room. This could scarcely have been effected, as after circumstances showed, more than two minutes before Bradford entered the unfortunate gentleman's chamber. The world owes this information to remorse of conscience on the part of the footman, (eighteen months after the execution of Bradford,) when he lay on a bed of sickness. It was a death-bed repentance, and by that death the law lost its victim.

It is to be wished that this account might close here; but there is more to be told. Bradford, though innocent of the murder and not even privy to it, was nevertheless a murderer in design. He had heard, as well as the footman, what Mr. Hayes

declared at supper as having a sum of money about him, and he went to the chamber of the deceased with the same deadly intentions as the servant. He was struck with amazement on beholding him self anticipated in the crime. He could not believe his senses, and in turning back the bed-clothes to assure himself of the fact, he in his agitation dropped his knife on the bleeding body, by which means both his hands and the weapon became bloody. These circumstances Bradford acknowledged to the clergyman who attended him after sentence, but who, it is extremely probable, would not believe them at the time.

Besides the graver lesson to be drawn from this extraordinary case, in which we behold the simple intention of crime so signally punished, these events furnish a striking warning against careless or it may be vain, display of money or other property in strange places. To heedlessness on this score the unfortunate Mr. Hayes fell a victim. The temptation, we have seen, proved too strong for two persons out of the few who heard his ill-timed disclosure.

GENERAL HERKIMER'S LAST BATTLE IN THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR.

Seventy-six years ago was fought the battle of Oriskany, now a flourishing town in Oneida county, New York. That now quiet place resounded with the booming of guns, the clash of knives, the war-whoop of the Indian, and the blows of his merciless tomahawk; neighbour fought against neighbour, and yielded only as he died. The battle ground is two miles west of the village, which is at the confluence of the Oriskany Creek with the Mohawk. When the British forces, under Colonel St. Leger, laid siege to Fort Schuyler now at Rome—General Herkimer put himself at the head of the militia in Tryon county, and marched to the rescue. He halted on the evening of the 5th of August, 1777, with his 800 men, near Oriskany, determining to await reinforcements, or at all events not to make an attack until he received the signal of a *sortie* from the Fort. His officers, eager for the fray, upbraided him with cowardice, to which he replied that he intended to guard them as a father, and would not lead them into a place from which he could not get them out. However, when in addition to this they charged him with acting the part of a traitor, he became irritated, and gave the signal to "march." The excited troops rushed forward in confusion, and only repented of the error when it was too late. Their road lay across a marshy ravine crossed by a causeway. Just before this they crossed an elevated wooded plain, on which St. Leger had laid an ambuscade, drawing up his men in the form of a circle leaving open only a small segment, by which Herkimer and his men entered. This was immediately closed and a murderous fire was opened on all sides upon the unsuspecting militia. All was disorder. General Herkimer was soon wounded, but being placed on his saddle against the trunk of a tree, he continued to order the battle. He ordered his men to fight in circles. By his means their resistance was rendered much more effective. The firing ceased, and they fought with bayonets. After an hour of deadly conflict, a violent shower separated the combatants. Herkimer's men now formed themselves in a circle, by his instruction, two being placed behind a tree. In the early part of the fight, whenever a man fired from behind a tree, an Indian would run up and

tomahawk him before he could reload. Now, when the battle was renewed, one fired and the other avoided his fire for the Indian. By these means the Indians suffered so severely that they began to yield. At this time a reinforcement of Tories, mostly natives of Tryon county, came up. Many of these were personally known to the militia, and all their vindictive feelings were at once aroused. They fought like tigers in such combat—rolling together until pierced through with knives or throttled by a neighbour's hand, they held in each other's embrace. The Indians could hold out no longer, and precipitately fled. The Greaves and Rangers under St. Leger, hearing a firing at some distance, thought they were needed elsewhere and retired, leaving the Tryon militia victors. The American account is that they lost two hundred, exclusive of wounded and prisoners. The British, that four hundred were killed, and two hundred taken prisoners. This is more likely. The British loss was little inferior. General Herkimer, wounded as he was, issued orders during the whole six hours, with the most unflinching coolness and fortitude. In the course of the battle, he even took out his tinder-box, lit his pipe, and smoked composedly. After the battle, he was carried to his residence, two miles from Little Falls. The old house is still standing, and in good repair; the port-holes still remain, and the bricks seem to be almost as durable as on the day on which they were first brought from England. The General's leg having been shattered, it was unskillfully amputated, and the attendants were unable to stop the blood. His good spirits did not forsake him now. He smoked, and conversed cheerfully, after the operation, though he died that night. Feeling that death was near, he called for a Bible, read the 38th Psalm—most singularly appropriate—and died soon after with the utmost calmness. He was buried in the grave yard at Herkimer, and Congress passed a resolution appropriating \$500 for a monument to be placed over his remains, provided a certain other sum was raised from other sources. The other sum was not raised—the monument was not erected—the original appropriation was diverted to some other object—and there is now no token whatever of the gratitude of the republic for the services of Nicholas Herkimer. The following year, the village of Herkimer, four miles up the Mohawk, was burned by the notorious Brandt. It does one good to stand where such scenes have been enacted. It reminds one of his privileges and fits him for his duties.

BABEL.

The most ancient temple of Paganism was the Tower of Babel, erected in honour of Bel, the power the Romans worshipped under the name of Jupiter. The Power, Bel, was the same as the Phœnician Beel, or Baal as the Hebrews called it, and which any Solomon will tell you signified the "Lerd." It was also called Beel-Berith, "the spirit that binds together." And although the names under which the Chaldeans, Babylonians, and Phœnicians worshipped the sun, Baal, Beel or Bel, does not signify sun-light, but the power that abides in the light. Beel Phœgor signifies the purifying Lord, Baal-Gad the Lord of Fortuity. Bel was also the spirit of strategy (hence is derived the Latin bellum), in a word, the great external energy of the universe and at the same time, the individual internal energy, which communicates with the external through the medium of the senses.