

MRS. SMITH'S ADVENTURES IN MONTREAL.

"Nell, my dear, what do you say to spending Christmas with your niece as lives in Canada," said Smith, coming into the room where I was busy hadding my week's account, as I 'old every careful housekeeper should do. I was just adding the column a second time, as it would not balance within sixpence, when Smith came in that hexcited that I first thought has 'ow 'e had got a telegram to say that 'is eggs 'ad arrived as 'e was hexpecting from Canada, but 'e went on to say that my neice 'ad written asking me to pay 'er a visit. I wouldn't 'ear of it at first, as I don't 'old with women a-gadding about when they 'ave a 'ome to look after; but Smith was that set on me going, that at last I consented, especially as 'ow I saw 'e was a-worrying about those eggs as 'ad never arrived.

Ever since the passing of the McKinley Bill, Smith 'ad spent a deal of time reading 'he reports of the egg trade, and as 'ow it would pay those in the old country to trade with Canada, and has that was in 'is line, being a provision merchant, 'e sent an order to a merchant in Montreal, but 'e didn't get any satisfaction. And as 'e couldn't get away 'imself, 'e was very glad when I said I would go, and was sure I would henj-y myself, and, 'aving a good business 'ead, I could pick up a deal of valuable information on the egg line, as there was nothing like being on the spot, where one could see for oneself if things were all right.

I arrived in Montreal a few days before Christmas, and was most haffectionately welcomed by my niece, Sara Ann, leastways Annie, as she says 'er name is, though 'ow that can be I don't know, as I was at the church when she was christened, and I saw 'er sign 'er name in the register the day she married Brown, a young man in the German sausage line, as was much given to foreign ways.

As I 'ad 'eard 'ow dreadfully cold it was, I 'ad come prepared with plenty of warm flannels, and was agreeably surprised to find the weather on the whole most henjoyable. Though I must say as 'ow the walking is somewhat dangerous owing to the sidewalks 'aving what Sarah Ann says are 'og backs in the middle, though I never could see any likeness between them and the 'ogs, and never 'eard tell of any that were different from our own; howsumever, the Canadian gentlemen are most attentive, a-walking up and down and a-standing at the corners just on purpose to pick up any of the ladies as fall, which, as I said to one young gentleman, who had the most beautiful brown eyes as ever I saw, was most kind of them, and I didn't know as how the ladies could do without them, and he smiled and said as 'ow lonesome it would be without the ladies a-walking about, which I thought was very nice of 'im to say so, and told 'im that if 'e ever came to England I would be pleased to see 'im.

Julia, as is the name of Sarah Ann's eldest daughter, and who is engaged to a young man in a bank on St. James street, a very nice young man, only, as I said to Sara Ann, I didn't quite 'old with 'is neglecting 'is business a-coming up every afternoon to take Julia for a walk, but Sara Ann said as 'ow 'e was in a bank and could get away early. Well Julia and Mr. Wilson, as his the name of her young man, said that I must go to the rink on Saturday afternoon and see them skate. Through it being so crowded that I could not see the skaters, Mr. Wilson said he would take me up to the directors' balcony, where I could be able to get a fine view of the rink, and hintroducted me to a Mr. Sampson, as who, 'e said, was one of the directors, and who very kindly came and sat with me, through my feeling kind of bashful to go up alone, as was somewhat conspicuous with the electric light a-shining that brightly as made me feel glad as 'ow I 'ad put on my bonnet with the cock's feathers, as is all the rage in Paris.

It was a pretty sight to see the ladies and gentlemen a-skating that beautiful and the band a-playing. One pretty young lady, as 'ad the loveliest 'ead of yellow 'air, glided over the ice like a fairy a-cutting of all kinds of fancy figures and a-rolling backwards most beautifully. Then Mr. Sampson pointed out a gentleman as who, 'e said, was the champion skater of the world, and that once he went to Russia and they were that jealous of 'im they wanted to put 'im in prison, which was most unkind treatment; but what can you expect of a nation as is tolerant of only one religion. The young lady with yellow 'air kept looking up and bowing and smiling to Mr. Sampson, and though

all the gentlemen were quarreling among themselves as to who should skate with her, I could see she didn't want any of them but Mr. Sampson, and so I said as 'ow 'e 'ad better join 'er and not to mind me, but 'e answered that I was most pleasant company and 'e would rather stay, as was very kind of him to say so; indeed, as I said to Smith afterward, 'e was a most perfect gentleman, which, as every one knows, is not plentiful.

Well, I was enjoying myself very much, when suddenly I 'eard a cock crow, which gave me such a turn as made Mr. Sampson think I was going to faint, and 'e was very hanxious to get me a glass of water, but I assured 'im I was better, and would 'e kindly tell me something about the Canadian hen, leastways 'ow eggs were selling. He kind of so looked dazed, as though 'e didn't know what I meant, said as 'ow perhaps 'e wan't in that line, and then I told 'im as 'ow Smith was hanxious to know all about eggs, and if I could find some honest dealers 'e would like to deal with them. Well, he brightened up at once, and said as 'ow 'e wasn't in the line, but would be most 'appy to give me all the hinformation 'e could and would introduce me to some traders as was most honest. Just then Julia came and said it was time to go, and Mr. Sampson said 'e would call for me some day and take me to see some of the traders. I am not superstitious, but I will never forget that cock a-crowing just at that time. I 'ad been that selfish enjoying myself and forgetting all about poor Smith's interest, and if that ere cock had not crowed and warned me, I would never 'ave thought of asking Mr. Sampson, as is a most perfect gentleman.

Christmas was most lively at the 'ouse, as Julia gave a dance in the evening, and I must say as I never saw so many pretty girls. I was watching them dance when Sara Ann came up and said as 'ow they were playing whist in the library and would I like a 'and. I started for the library, but I thought I would like a peep at the conservatories first, as they looked very inviting. I was turning round an orange tree, when I saw a young lady a-sitting down and a gentleman bending over 'er and she a-looking just as though she was going to faint, and I 'astened to give 'er my smelling salts, as I 'ave always carried round with me ever since the time I took faint in church and Smith 'ad to take me out, and 'e made such a fuss about it, a-saying has 'ow I might 'ave waited till I got 'ome, which was unkind of 'im, as though I 'ad done it on purpose, as I said to Sara Ann before she married Brown, but she only laughed, and said as 'ow I didn't know how to manage Smith, though I never could see as 'ow she managed Brown any better. Howsumever, the young lady thanked me and said as 'ow she felt better and would go back with me to the rooms, but the gentleman 'e took 'old of 'er 'and and begged 'er to stay, which I thought was selfish of 'im, a-seeing, no doubt, as 'ow some could not stand the smell of flowers through them turning faint, as I said to 'im, but lor'! 'e was that selfish 'e wouldnt listen, and muttered something about throwing 'imself in the river if she didn't stay, and I said as 'ow 'e couldn't do that, for somebody 'ad told me as 'ow it 'ad took firm and fast a day or two ago, at which the young lady commenced to laugh and the gentleman 'e got very red in the face; but just then Sarah Ann came up and said they were a waiting for me to take a 'and, and the young lady said she would come and look on as she took a deep interest in the game.

The gentleman as was my partner I didn't care for very much, as 'e was that bent on gaining everything 'e wouldn't say a word, and when I entered into conversation with my opponent about the egg line, 'e got so angry, and said as 'ow 'e thought whist was a silent game, which I said as 'ow 'e was mistaken, seeing Smith said it was always the time for ladies to talk.

I never did see such a 'ouse as Sara Ann's, there is always something going on, and I was kept that busy that I was afraid Smith would think I was not taking enough interest in the eggs, though I 'ad written 'im quite a long letter on the subject. And Julia she insisted on my seeing as much as possible of Canadian life. One day she said as 'ow I must go and see her hact, as she belonged to a school of hacting which was going to give a performance in aid of some charitable purpose. We left early so as to

get good seats. I had on my best black silk, which, as the saying is, can stand alone, and Mr. Wilson said as 'ow I looked like a picture with my fresh English complexion.

One of the scenes was a grand ball, and Julia and Mr. Wilson were there among the rest as natural as possible, and then they all danced a most beautiful dance, where the ladies kept a-courtesying to the gentlemen, and the gentlemen a-putting their 'ands on their 'eart and bowing back to the ladies very slow and solemn-like, as though their whole mind was given to that line. It was all so beautiful that I couldn't help the tears a-trickling down my cheeks, which is a 'abit of mine when I feel moved, and which Smith says is foolish, there being nothing to cry about, but lor'! men can't enter into women's feelings. Then there was a duel, where one of the seconds was a most disagreeable man, hinsisting that one of the men as was fighting the duel should be killed, which was very unkind of 'im, seeing that tht two wanted badly to be friends. I was glad the poor wife and 'usband as 'ad suffered so much through the misunderstanding made it up and lived 'apily ever afterwards, and I said to Sarah Ann as 'ow it ought to be a warning to the ladies and gentlemen as were present.

Curious things them snowshoes are, and never would I have believed that I would be able to use them, but Julia she was that set on my going for a tramp round the mountain that nothing would do but I must practice in the yard till I was able to walk, and then, as the Hindians used them, I thought as 'ow it would be encouraging them if they knew the people in England took an interest in their 'abits, for I don't 'old with laughing at the ways of conquered people, and if the Americans 'ad been kinder to their Hindians they would not have been looking for Mes'siahs a-coming to help them. Howsumever, the night arrived for Julia's snowshoe party, and away we started, going up Peel street and getting on the Park road, which, as every one knows, is the mountain. It was a beautiful night, the moon shining that bright that it made me feel homesick, and I couldn't help wondering what Smith was doing, but I really felt unable to talk about him, it seemed somehow out of place on such a night, and so I just gave myself up to the henjoyment of the scene and it really was grand, the mountain a-lifting up its snow-capped summit and the city below with its lights flashing in all directions, while the keen, hinvigourating hair made me feel as though I could walk for miles. And the road was that pleasant, so smooth and well kept that it was quite easy walking. But presently we came to a steep bank, as Mr. Brown said as 'ow we 'ad to get over it. "Just give a little run and you will be over," they said to me. "See, this way," and they scrambled over in no time, which was all very well for them, but seeing as I hadn't practiced on going over hills, for Julia 'ad never said as 'ow I would 'ave to go over any; howsumever, I tried it, and did get half way up, when down I rolled, but Mr. Wilson and another gentleman helped me on my feet again, for it is impossible to get up alone with them snowshoes on. Then two of them took 'old of me and two pushed behind, and finally I got over and said as 'ow I hoped they would be no more 'ills to climb, but law! I was only a-beginning my adventures, for the next thing I knew we 'ad come to a steep place covered with ice, and weren't they a-sliding down that ere 'ill on their snowshoes and a-laughing and a-shrieking as though it were the greatest fun out. "Put your snowshoes close together and sit on the back of them," said Julia, laughing at my fear, but child, I gasped, there is nothing to sit on! "Why yes, don't you see those two sticks sticking out? Now that's the way," and she gave me a push and down I went as nice as you please. It was really surprising to see how nice they all came down, some of them going up to 'ave another slide. Presently we came to some open fields where the snow was very soft, and 'ere I couldn't get along at all; first one leg would disappear away down till I thought as 'ow I would never get it up again, and a two hassisting me on each side, till finally I fell and dragged my hescorts down into a deep ditch as was covered with snow, and there we all three lay as 'elpless as could be till they came to our assistance, and, as the saying is, misfortunes never come alone, I broke one of my snowshoes, and such a time as they 'ad a-getting me across those fields, and me that tired and weary as could hardly stand and a-feeling somewhat put out with the way they laughed, as though they thought it was great fun. Not for all the Hindians in the world will I hever be tempted to go on their queer shoes again."