

Except the blast as it swept past,
In the midnight dark and drear.

From the dim Arctic Circle
That army issued forth :
They pass'd the glittering icebergs
And snow-fields of the North;
Bergs that have stood for ages,
Wild plains without a tree,
And reach'd at last the waters vast
Of the North Atlantic Sea.
Along the continent they stretch,
Their Southern course they win;
They gain the line where the dark pine
And stunted birch begin.
Like passing shade the mountain hare
Doth flit across their path,
And to his lair the sullen bear
Retreats to shun their wrath.
Still onward, ever onward,
They press their tireless march,
O'er many a mountain summit clad
With hemlock trees and larch.

So fiercely did these Northern sprites
Their Southern raid pursue,
That soon Quebec's embattled heights
Frown'd darkly on their view.
They hover'd round the citadel,
Their scouts explored the gates;
The sentries heard them whistle shrill
To call their tardy mates.
And so it was by nightfall,
I grieve to write it down,
The old Canadian capital
Was a beleaguered town.
Beleaguered ! aye, and sore beset,
So insolent the foe,
They scaled the walls and roam'd about
Where'er they pleased to go.

Still undespairing were the men
Who held that ancient town,
When from the mountains they beheld
A numerous train come down.
From Charlesbourg and from Laval,
A long and weary way,
Full many a sturdy *habitant*,
Full many a loaded sleigh,
From far off leafless forests,
With certain steps but slow,
Arrive at last munitions vast
Wherewith to face the foe.

This famous siege did last as long
As countless other sieges
Which in Quebec have been sustained
By Queen Victoria's leges.
One balmy day in April,
For that day Heaven be praised,
The sun shone down upon the town
So bright, the siege was raised.
And to his Polar stronghold,
His distant icy keep,
The foil'd invading spirit fled
To murmur and to sleep.

THE POET HOPKINS'S INTERVIEW WITH THE PUBLISHER.

"My name is Gridley," he said with modest gravity, as he entered the publisher's private room. "I have a note of introduction here from one of your authors, as I think he called himself,—a very popular writer for whom you publish."

The publisher rose and came forward in the most cordial and respectful manner. "Mr. Gridley?—Professor Byles Gridley,—author of 'Thoughts on the Universe?'"

The brave-hearted old man colored as if he had been a young girl. His dead book rose before him like an apparition. He groped in modest confusion for an answer. "A child I buried long ago, my dear sir," he said. "Its title-page was its tombstone. I have brought this young friend with me,—this is Mr. Gifted Hopkins of Oxbow Village,—who wishes to converse with you about—"

"I have come, sir—" the young poet began, interrupting him.

"Let me look at your manuscript, if you please, Mr. Popkins," said the publisher, interrupting in his turn.

"Hopkins, if you please, sir," Gifted suggested mildly, proceeding to extract the manuscript, which had got wedged into his pocket, and seemed to be holding on with all its might. He was wondering all the time over the extraordinary clairvoyance of the publisher, who had looked through so many thick folds, broadcloth, lining, brown paper, and seen his poems lying hidden in his breast pocket. The idea that a young person coming on such an errand should have to explain his intentions would have seemed very odd to the publisher. He knew the look which belongs to this class of enthusiasts just as a horse-dealer knows the look of a green purchaser with the equine fever raging in his veins. If a young author had come to him with a scrap of manuscript hidden in his boots, like Major Andre's papers, the publisher would have taken one glance at him and said, "Out with it!"

While he was battling for the refractory scroll with his pocket, which turned half wrong side out, and acted as things always do when people are nervous and in a hurry, the publisher directed his conversation again to Master Byles Gridley.

"A remarkable book, that of yours, Mr. Gridley,—would have had a great run if it were well handled. Came out twenty years too soon—that was the trouble. One of our leading scholars was speaking of it to me the other day. 'We must have a new edition,' he said; 'people are just ripe for that book. Did you ever think of that? Change the form of it a little, and give it a new title, and it will be a popular book. Five thousand or more, very likely.'"

Mr. Gridley felt as if he had been rapidly struck on the forehead with a dozen distinct