

## THE ROCKWOOD REVIEW

### GRANDFATHER'S CORNER.

#### HIS OWN WORST ENEMY.

Bill Mansford was one of those Viking Englishmen who can row a boat, wrestle with a neighbor, box with a man of his own weight, and a little more, hold a plough straight from headland to headland, ride a horse like a Centaur, shoot on the wing with unerring aim, skate on the pattens at racing speed, and swim, and drink, too, alas! like a fish. And yet he was only a farm laborer, born in the Fen country, with almost unblemished Danish blood in his veins, and notwithstanding the want of schooling, of even the common sort, possessing brains as active as his body, and a memory so keen that nobody ever cheated him in reckoning, or successfully disputed his assertion of a fact. England could once boast many such men, but now their number is gradually but surely diminishing. For of like material have been thousands of her emigrants, from the days of the first Puritan exodus, and the stream, sensibly narrowing at last, has been more or less continuous. Bill would not have been an emigrant of his own free will, for he loved the little village in which he was born, and would have remained there, the possible father of a long line of stalwart Englishmen, but for an unfortunate liking and a little incident. Bill dearly loved a gun, and it was the proudest moment of his life when, a man then grown, he became the possessor of that owned by Dick Goodfornought, the oldest poacher in the parish, who had been arrested after a wholesale pheasant slaughter, tried, convicted and transported, but not before he had time to sell to Bill the cause of his own ruin. The gun was short enough to slip into a huge inside coat pocket, true enough to kill at

sixty yards, light enough to prove a mere fly's weight to robust Bill, and handy enough to drag a poor fellow into mischief. Game was plentiful because well preserved. Bill who loved a pot of beer as well as his gun, was weak, temptation was strong, opportunity came, and after a surprise by the keepers, a scuffle and a few blows, he was a marked man in a double sense, and must either become a fugitive from justice, or be sent at England's expense to help as a convict, in the enforced colonization of a New England in the southern seas. A hurried consultation with his friends ended in a reluctant determination on his part to seek a new home beyond the Atlantic, and carrying a few pounds, the savings of several years of hard labor, he bade an enforced farewell to his parents, and tramped across England to Liverpool to seek passage in an outward bound ship for an American port. It is needless to dwell upon the voyage and its incidents, although it was long, and they were many, but it must be told that the ship narrowly escaped destruction in a storm of unusual severity, that it became waterlogged and almost unmanageable, and that its Captain, intending to make New York was glad to land his passengers at Halifax, and that they were equally well pleased to escape from Davy's Locker, and to tread terra firma. The bulk of them went on to New York in another vessel, after some delay, but Bill resolved to start his new life in Nova Scotia, for he liked "the watter," although his work had been on the farm, and found employment in deep sea fishing, and at low wages spent some months in this perilous occupation. Then crossing to New Brunswick he engaged as a cook in a lumber shanty, made some acquaintance with the axe and its many uses, and