

Where are ye, shipmates?' Captain Rounceville whispered to his men, saying: 'Whisper your best, boys! now—all at once!' So they sent out an eight-fold whisper in hoarse concert: 'Here!' There was life in it if it succeeded; death if it failed. After that supreme moment Captain Rounceville was conscious of nothing until he came to himself on board of the saving ship. Said the Reverend, concluding,—

'There was one little moment of time in which that raft could be visible from that ship, and only one. If that one little fleeting moment had passed unfruitful, those men's doom was sealed. As close as that does God shave events foreordained from the beginning of the world. When the sun reached the water's edge that day, the captain of that ship was sitting on deck reading

his prayer-book. The book fell; he stooped to pick it up, and happened to glance at the sun. In that instant that far-off raft appeared for a second against the red disk, its needle-like oar and diminutive signal cut sharp and black against the bright surface, and in the next instant was thrust away into the dusk again. But that ship, that captain, and that pregnant instant had had their work appointed for them in the dawn of time and could not fail of the performance. The chronometer of God never errs!'

There was deep, thoughtful silence for some moments. Then the grave, pale young man said,—

'What is the chronometer of God?'

MARK TWAIN.

ALEXANDER M'LACHLAN'S POEMS AND SONGS.

I FIRST learned that Canada had a poet, Alexander McLachlan, from an article on 'The Scottish-American Poets,' in the *Scottish American Journal*, of Jan. 20th, 1876. I therein read, among other things: 'Alexander McLachlan, judging by his poems, is no ordinary man or mere rhymster. He thinks and ponders over the great problems of life in the solitude of his rural home, and, if we do not always agree with his conclusions, we are bound to admire the honesty with which he expresses his opinions and the manner in which he clothes them. As a poet, for sentiment, simile, and grace, he is at least equal to any of his countrymen here,' &c. The article came to me like a revelation; and, as I was then specially interested in Canadian Literature, nothing, except the poems themselves, could have been more welcome. Of course, I wanted, if possible, to get a hold of such poetry; and still more was that desire increased when, about the

same time, I had Morgan's 'Bibliotheca Canadensis' put into my hands, and therein read such favorable notices of the same poet's works from critics so competent as the late Dr. George, the Hon. D'Arcy McGee, and Sir Archibald Alison. 'We have always taken a deep interest in Canada,' Sir Archibald is therein represented as saying, 'and will henceforth take a deeper interest, from knowing that it contains a citizen so truly inspired with the genius of poetry as the author of these beautiful Lyrics,'—his 'Lyrics and Miscellaneous Poems.' And from the *Toronto Globe*, which is usually sound and trustworthy in its literary criticisms, if not in its political representations, we have this high commendation of 'The Emigrant and other Poems':—'No one capable of judging of high poetical talent can rise from the perusal of this volume without the conviction, that, at length, a poet has arisen among us. The world has innumerable good versifiers,