

STORIES  
POETRY

## The Inglenook

SKETCHES  
TRAVEL

## A TOUCH OF NATURE.

"One touch of nature makes the whole world kin."

"Well, 'this is slavery," muttered Peter, the elevator man, to himself, as the bell sounded imperiously for the first floor. "Not a breath of fresh air have I had since noon. I might as well be a machine. No man can stand this never-ending down and up, up and down in a six-by-seven iron cage."

Peter was new to the running of the elevator. He had been a foreman in a big manufactory until the hard times that compelled his firm to shut down and discharge the majority of its workmen forced him to accept any kind of work he could find.

That day the breath of spring was in the air outdoors, while within, the burden of steamheat added to the season's languor an intolerable weight. Peter had sought repeatedly to escape for a moment's respite, but in vain. And now, as he slammed the door after his passengers, he drew his cap down over his surly eyes and pulled the cord with an angry jerk that indicated the desire to send the car either through the roof or the bottomless pit below. At least so it seemed to a portly grey-haired gentleman who had entered the elevator and had answered "Seventh," to Peter's gruff, "What floor?"

Peter frowned more deeply than ever as he observed the costly shoes and clothing of the gentleman.

"The bloated bond holder," thought he to himself.

"A murderous anarchist," was the essential comment of the elderly passenger, as he caught a glimpse of the dark face.

Up they flew for several floors, but suddenly stopped between the fourth and fifth, with such precipitousness that the passengers were thrown in sharp collision with one another and Peter.

"What's the matter?" exclaimed the gentleman.

No reply came from Peter save a pull of the rope that caused the car to descend a few feet, where it caught again. An upward pull and it rose, but not more than five feet. Then up and down, up and down succeeded in a sickening repetition for several minutes. Then the elderly man, holding his wrath in stern control, placed a firm hand on Peter's arm, and said:

"Young man, what do you think you are doing with this car?"

And Peter, with equal control of his unreasoning hatred for his passenger, answered coldly: "The machinery is out of order. It's not my fault, but we shall have to stay here until help can come."

"Hello!" he shouted, stopping to look through a small crack made between the floor of the elevator and the top of the door of the fourth floor.

A messenger boy was passing. He stopped aghast at the sound of a voice apparently close behind him, yet with no visible owner.

"Up here! I say, Johnnie look up here."

"Well, I never!" ejaculated the boy.

"No, we're not," growled Peter. "Say, run down to the boiler room and tell them the elevator is stuck between the fourth and fifth, and be quick, will you?"

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the boy. "That's a good one," as he raced three steps at a time down the stairs.

In a few minutes sounds of pounding and wrenching of machinery were heard below, and the boy reappeared.

"They said sumpin' broke in the machinery, but there nixin' it right up and they'll let you out in about five minutes. My! but you look like a Cocoin China in a hen coop." And not waiting for Peter's angry reply, he sped chuckling down the stairs.

The young girl seated herself on the one chair reserved for passengers and proceeded to unwrap a box she had evidently just received from the mail. The old gentleman paced angrily about the narrow space and Peter bent his sullen eyes upon the floor, turning his back to his passengers.

Gradually a delicate perfume filled the car. The girl had taken off the box cover and was lifting a handful of lilies of the valley, the dainty bells lying cool and sweet on long green leaves.

Neither of the men in the car noticed or realized the soothing sense of fragrance, but Peter's rebellious heart seemed suddenly calmed and the old gentleman curbed his restlessness.

Pictures formed themselves in Peter's mind of a cool green forest and a far-off German home, while to the old gentleman it was as though a soft hand touched his and the presence of one whose life had been to him as pure and sweet as the lilies that she loved seemed near. A tear rising to his eyelids fell gently on his cheeks; and Peter, raising his head just then, thought, "Poor old chap, how tired he looks," but he did not say so. He merely pushed back the cap from his eyes and turning toward the little girl caught sight of the lilies in her hands.

"Maiblumen!" he exclaimed. Die schönen Maiblumen—that is their name in Germany. They grow wild there in the woods," and a bright smile changed the hitherto dark face.

"Would you like a few?" she said, extending a small bunch to each.

The old gentleman took his with trembling hands.

"They remind me of one whom I have loved and lost," he said.

Peter touched his cap respectfully. "It seems good to see the spring again, sir," he said hesitatingly.

"It does indeed," replied the gentleman. "The winter had been hard—very hard—but with spring comes hope. I have lost every cent I have, I am alone in the world, but I have not lost hope."

A look of surprise passed over Peter's face. He had not thought of the winter as hard for any but the laboring man.

But a rapping on the pipes and a voice from below calling, "All right there, Peter," made him spring to the rope. The car rose smoothly. He stopped it carefully at the seventh floor, and as the old gentleman got out he again touched his cap and said heartily, "Anything I can do to serve you, sir, I would be glad to do."

"Thank you," replied his passenger. "I'll not forget that."

Then the car rising to the eighth, the little girl and her box of lilies went their way, not knowing that she had brought summer to wintry hearts.

No one is ever poorer for giving appreciation, nor richer for withholding it.

## THE APPROACH TO CANADA.

(Correspondence of the London Times.)

Few things give a Canadian a keener thrill of pleasure than to come up the St. Lawrence in fine summer weather with English friends who are seeing the country for the first time. He feels that they will at last understand his enthusiasms. No other approach to the American continent can, for an instant, compare with this. No other continent has an approach from the sea so noble and impressive. A sense of breadth and space and vast distance dominates everything. The feeling is quite different from that experienced in mid-ocean, since the neighborhood of land gives the mind the means of measurement. As the traveller comes through the narrow straits of Belle Isle, and almost instinctively thinks that his voyage must be drawing to an end, he learns that ahead of him are as many miles of navigable waters as he has already passed over since leaving Liverpool. On the waters of the gulf he again loses sight of land. When Anticosti has been passed, and the mouth of the river is entered, a whole day and night of voyaging along the southern shore comes dimly in sight. Then, as the river gradually narrows to 15, 10 or 5 miles in breadth, from the higher upper deck of the stately steamship which carries him, the eye of the passenger turns with alternate interest to the rugged, verdure-clad hills of Gaspé, rent with many a gorge, on his near left, and to the remote, dimly blue, exquisite outline of the Laurentian range of mountains far away to the right, stretching further and further westward till lost in vague distance. Beneath him the great river, sparkling in the sunrises, dazzling at noon-day, rich in the colors of sunset, or softly sombre in the moonlight, sweeps along to the sea in the vast volume of water which represents the drainage of the greatest fresh water system of the globe. Above, the clouds, peculiar to a continent warmed by summer heat and yet plentifully supplied with moisture, shift and change with a rapid play of form and color, unknown to the grey skies of the British Isles.

The whole forms a scene to impress the most casual tourist; no wonder that it stirs Canadian feeling to its depth. It will do more than arouse emotion. If Devonshire lanes or Yorkshire fells, to take illustrations of local influence, have had their part in moulding English character, if rugged Highland scenery has intensified Scottish patriotism, surely this broad and expansive outlook and surroundings must have their effect in shaping the typical Canadian of the future.

Cowards die many times before their deaths;  
The valiant never taste of death but once.  
—Shakespeare.

With tears streaming down his face a man stood beside the coffin of his dead friend and simply said: "He made me better." Is there anyone who can conscientiously say this of you when you lie dead?

A single dewdrop, as it quivers on a leaf on a June morning, mirrors and reflects the whole blue sky; yet what a miniature picture it gives of that vast expanse of heaven! So human fatherhood is a dewdrop which mirrors the divine fatherhood; but it is only a picture compressed into minutest size and with only dim, broken reflection of a glorious love which is infinite in its length and breadth and height and depth.—Rev. J. R. Miller.