

[For the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.]

TO E— AND F. I.—

IN MEMORY OF THEIR DEAD.

Dead,—can it be?
When earth rolls on so evenly,
When home birds sing so joyously,
And flowers bud, and bloom—as free
Now he is dead—!

Dead—one month ago
What love—what joyous hopes far into life?
What lusty plans! what generous strife!
Now all is changed. The form we loved is low
And he is dead.

Dead—Ah me—
That life's cup should so soon be filled
With draught from bitterest woe distilled
The veil is drawn, twixt us and thee
We cannot see.

Oh! heart of thine,
That beats not alone, this cold March day,
That aches to go—yet, waiting by the way
We say—O God! Thy will be done not mine
Since he is dead.

Dead...not so,
But present still—where fadeless flowers grow.
Where the hill wears a richer glow.
And noiseless rivers forever flow.
There Love has fled.

But over his grave
Birds soon will sing a happy song,
And soft spring winds bear it along
Unto that happy, listening throng
Who crown him—not dead.

F. E. K.

Brockville, March 24th, 1875.

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MAY DAY

OR

A SKETCH FROM VILLAGE LIFE.

By Festina Lente, Author of "Patty's Story," &c.

"Quite seventy years ago," said Dame Coldritch. I was a child, and, as the old woman spoke these words, I looked into her face with awe. Seventy years! My childish mind beheld a lapse of ages, grew perplexed in the effort it made to realize what May Day had been those seventy years ago.

Impossible. My feeble brain could not grapple with the question. I passed on to the next, which naturally arose from the first. If the Dame could remember seventy years ago—how old must she be now? How long would she continue to exist?

There were many old people in our village, and my mind reverted to them. Some lived on alms, others on the hard earned savings of an industrious middle age. Now their day was past, day by day found them sitting on the benches in the sunshine, half in life, half in dreams of what was, what had been, and eternity. But thinking of these old folk gave no solution to my present difficulty. My eyes looked upon a calm face, whose expression yet was of an intense energy, on blue eyes not yet dim, on busy fingers engaged now on some fine knitting; passed on to the many benches in the room, rested on the Dunce's Cap, the stick, the pile of dog's eared reading books. No sign here that Death was waited for, by one whose life's work was ended.

The Dame looked up. Her eyes brightened into a smile, she gently nodded to me, and went on working.

But I exclaimed eagerly, "Tell me all about it."

She rose as I spoke, and for a moment stood at the open cottage door. Opposite was the farm yard, and beside it the quaint village cross. Children were playing noisy games on the steps of the cross, women were gossiping at the foot. The Dame closed the door. Then she told me the story, and I think forgetting that her listener was a child. For the time, poor old Dame, again young, so glad to bask once more in the light of that one bright day of her life,—seventy years ago.

"We lived in the Forest," she began, "just on the confines of the park, where the brook bubbled over the banks, and made a marsh of the lower lands. We were very poor, mother and I worked hard from morning to night. We had to wash and dress and work for so many little ones, and with so little money coming in to buy fresh things; and ever increasing need for more. Father was weakly, and often overtasked his strength; at such times mother put on a brighter face than ever, and when need came, went out to work by the day, and so earn money for the rent. Then father stopped at home and helped me with the work, and went to meet mother when she came back from the village, and I would set the table by the fire, and set the children by the door to watch for both. Poverty is not the worst evil, child. There is so much happiness in bravely meeting it."

It happened one winter morning that I had to go to the spring for water; father brought it generally before he went out. I took my buckets, and set out. It was a beautiful morning, and the hoar frost lay on all the grass blades, and the sun was shining on the forest trees. It was warm in the sunshine, and when I had filled my buckets, I sat down on the moss grown stones, and I began to wonder and to think. To wonder at the hoar frost, and the sunshine, and the bubbling of the well, all evidences of a power I could not see; to think of wood spirits, that the old women told us they had seen, and of their gifts to the poor. Supposing one of them should

give me a fortune, should I do with it as Sally Pritchard had done, should I spend the money on fine clothes and—? My thoughts drifted on, and I forgot that it was a winter's morning, and that mother was waiting for the buckets.

"You will catch cold," said a voice, and I turned to see Joe Coldritch quietly standing by. I felt the colour come into my face, as I stood looking at him. I knew my frock was very threadbare and that I had no bright ribbons for my neck, and my feet were bare. But in a minute I looked at him quite quietly, for I knew how clean and neat I was, and I could not help the poorness of my clothes. You see all this came through my mind in a flash, and I answered slowly:

"Yes! I shall catch cold, and I must go."

He said nothing, but took up the pails to carry them home for me. He went on up the winding path, and I followed.

"Are you not the wood-cutter's daughter," he said, "and do I not see you at church sometimes?"

"Yes," I said briefly. I knew it was easy for him to recognize me, no other girls wore frocks so bare as I.

"This is hard work for you," he said gently. "Father does it," I answered, "but I often do hard work, I am used to it. I dig, and wash, and brew, I am eldest, you know, and there is no one else."

I said this with a sore feeling in my heart. Report said Joe came from "foreign parts," that he was rich, and a great favourite in the village. Report provided him already with a village maiden for a wife, and as I thought of Sally Pritchard with her fine clothes, I felt distressed that Joe should do my work for me. For I felt that it was mine to work hard and I owned it as mine, with dignity.

"The young people play games on the Green in the village, at sunset," he said, "why do I never see you there except on Sundays?"

"Sunday evening there is not much to do," I said, "other days are very busy. We spin, mother and I."

We had reached the door now, and he set the buckets down. Mother came out, and the children gathered round.

"The work is behind," said mother, scarce noticing Joe, and I went into the wash house. But the cottage door was open, and I heard Joe ask mother if he might sit down on the bench outside and rest. Then I heard him at play with the children, and then they rested and the children talked, telling him about Nancy.

"Do not talk about me," I said quite rudely, going to the door. Then Joe got up, and came nearer.

"They cannot help it," he said in a kind voice.

"They bother her life out," grumbled mother.

Then some of them came and hung on to my old gown, and the baby cried and put out his arms for me to take him, and Joe stood looking and saying nothing, until my face grew hot, and tears came into my eyes. It was not very kind, I thought, to stare like that when I could not get away. He came close up then, and patted the children on the head, and I saw tears in his eyes then. He said gently "he was very sorry he had vexed me, and would go." I stood then with the children and watched him down the glen.

"He looks back very often," said little Bill.

"He is a decent lad," said mother, wiping the soap suds off her arms.

Three months passed by and May was near.

In the forest the trees were budding green, and underfoot the primroses and snow drops covered the ground. Far down in the marshy lands grew rich coloured "Bulls eyes" and fragrant "Daffodils." In favoured spots were clumps of cowslips. In evenings, when the sun was bright, the children begged the hours for me till bed time, and we strolled into the forest, flower gathering, or Joe came, and took them all to search for cowslips, and I sat at work with mother until they returned. Then I sat down on the grass and they clustered round me, as I broke off the fragrant heads, and bound them together with a worsted belt, and laid in each little palm a soft yellow ball. The Spring days came and went so fast, so brightly and so happily, that I could not feel weary, though I worked as hard as ever. Joe had work to do, in the park grounds, and often stopped at our cottage to chat, as he passed to-and-fro. He came at all times of the day, and seemed never to tire of our homely ways, and of play with the children.

"He seems fond of coming up here," said mother, "though he always finds us so hard at work. You might have put off scrubbing the floor, child, till he was gone."

"No," I answered, "he knows it has to be done, let him keep away if he likes us the less for doing it."

It was afternoon, and time for us to get our sewing. I set aside the scrubbing brush, and went up stairs to change my working dress, for one scarcely less threadbare, but as clean as hands could make it. Mother and I sat down at the cottage door to sew, the children played by the brook. At six o'clock father came home.

"Joe has been talking to me, to-day," he said to mother.

"Again?" said mother. Then after a pause, "Well, what did you say?"

Father looked uncomfortable, and mother did not press the question; but when I had gone in to lay the cloth for supper, they talked together in a low voice.

After supper Joe came up. I was putting away the supper dishes, and father was smoking his

pipe on the porch. Joe stood at the door, and told father he had taken a cottage in the village and was going to settle there. He told all this to father, but he looked at me, and I felt my cheeks grow hot and then very white. The cottage seemed to go round and round, and I put out my arms for support.

"What, giddy, child?" said mother. Then to Joe, "She has worked too hard to-day."

They had put me in a chair and gathered round me.

"Do not you like it?" said Joe. "I hoped you would."

He said it right out, before them all, and looked straight at my father, who was looking a little puzzled.

"You gave me leave to ask her?" he said appealingly, "I spoke out to you directly I found it out."

"True, lad," father muttered. "And mother, I told her nigh three months ago. She and I are of the same mind, lad, now and always."

There was a pause then, in which we heard the voices of the children coming to the cottage-door. Father and mother hurried on to meet them.

"Nancy," said Joe, coming nearer.

But before he could say more I found wings to my feet and sped away to my room. Joe went away.

To-morrow would be May Day.

A party of merry village girls came up to our cottage. They wanted to make me promise to be May Queen. I hid away from them. I heard their voices calling, and mother knowing my hiding place called to me. "Come, child! It is your turn to be Queen. You have been everything else to us, at any rate," she added with a sad laugh. "Joe says," said Sally Pritchard, "she is a forest flower. I told him you were not used to the kind of thing."

"Sally was Queen three years," said another girl.

Sally's glib tongue rattled on. She told us village gossip and repeated things Joe had said of us, that made my cheeks flame.

"Be our May Queen!" they entreated of me.

"I will not be your Queen," I said, "I am a forest girl, I am used to dig, to scrub, to work. I cannot play at being Queen." I spoke bitterly, and as I raised my eyes to Sally's face I saw instead Joe's eyes earnestly fixed on me.

"I have unwillingly heard my name used," he said severely to Sally, "if you will think again, you will remember as I do, that I have never spoken of my friends here to you or any other person in the village."

"Oh, we were only talking," said Sally, as her cheeks burned, "do ask her to be Queen, she will do nothing for us."

His eyes rested so kindly on me, and turning he said, "I shall not ask her. I should not like her to be May Queen."

"Well, I never!" they said in one voice, and Sally Pritchard laughed and told the girls it was time to go home.

"Are you coming?" they asked Joe.

"I have business here," he said, in his quiet way. We stood and watched the girls until they were lost to sight by the forest trees, and then I moved quietly to the cottage door. Joe stood there with his arm across the entrance.

"Do not run away again," he said. "Come with me down to the Forest."

"Go, child," said mother's voice from behind Joe.

The sun was setting, and only a few gleams of light straying through the thicket to the path, but we knew that path so well. Down the glen, across the brook, and then under the trees to a mossgrown crag.

We found seats there.

"Nancy," said Joe, "I have come to-night to say to you what I have told your father and mother, ever since I have begun to come to your cottage."

But his words were few, and are very sacred to me, meant only for me in that quiet forest.

(To be concluded next week.)

[For the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.]

KATY DID.

BY BELLE CAMPBELL.

"Katy did!"

"Katy did n't?"

"Katy did!"

"I do not believe you!"

"That does n't alter the fact! And why should you not believe me, I'd like to know?"

Every body but yourself, Ben Turner, knows that my sister Katy is the bravest and best woman in the world! She is a great deal too good for you, and was a fool to marry you!"

I had no patience with the man! Anything the least bit out of the common, he always received with the greatest incredulity.

Katy was upstairs, putting the baby to sleep by singing the singularly appropriate air of "Awake thee, little sleeper! No longer slumbering lie."

Just as we finished speaking, she came in.

"What's the matter, now? You two are everlastingly quarrelling."

"Nothing; only he won't believe it was you who saved old Jack Carter's life. There's no use talking to him—He's such a mule!" After having expressed my opinion of my brother-in-law to this effect, I felt better.

"Tell us all about it, Katy!" said Ben.

"It was not such an incredible thing, Ben. Any person, man or woman, would have done

the same. I had promised to take the children down to see the train go by, and the evening being cool and pleasant we started out about five o'clock, and walked down to the track. We were early, and crossed over to the edge of the water, where Mox and Flox played at throwing pebbles into it. There was no one around that I could see, so I sat down on a stone with Katy, to rest. Presently, we heard the noise of the train, though it was not yet visible. I walked forward, making the little ones keep close beside me, while I carried Baby, to see it come round the corner. Just as it came in sight, I caught a glimpse of something black lying across the track. Without a moment's thought, I dropped the baby on the soft sand—Oh, I was so terrified lest he should roll over into the water—and calling to the twins to mind him as I ran, I just reached the object, stooped, and jerked it off the track, when the horrid rushing thing swooped down the hill, and over the very spot where it had lain an instant before!"

"Good for you, little woman!" exclaimed Ben, kissing her rosy flushed face; then capering around the room like an old goose, as he was, he tossed his hat to the ceiling, and shouted, "Hurra! what a bully little wife have I!"

"Not so brave as you think, Ben," said Katy laughing. "I was frightened half out of my wits after it was all over. Poor old Carter was insensible with drink. I do n't know how he came to choose that dangerous place for a bed, I'm sure. As I said, there was no one around, so I sent Mox over to the "Lake View" to tell them that there was a man lying intoxicated on the road-side. I did not wish any one to make a fuss about it, so I was glad no one was there to be a witness. Unfortunately, however, Tim Reggan and his wife were on the train going to the first station, and they recognised me from the car window. They returned by the next train back, and now, of course, everybody knows all about it."

Just as she ceased speaking, the door flew open, and Old Mrs. Carter, the faithful, unhappy, and much abused wife of the rescued man, came in, breathless with running, and wild with excitement and gratitude.

"Which of ye's did it?" cried she, looking at me.

"Aidy did!" answered I, with a triumphant nod at Ben.

HUMOUROUS.

A COTEMPORARY says that "a child was run over in the street by a wagon three years old and cross eyed, with pantalets on, which never spoke afterward."

THEN you won't lend me that time novel, eh?" inquired one boy of another in the Post-Office on Saturday. "No, I won't." "All right, then; next time our chimney burns out you shan't come into the yard and whoop and holler."

PUDDING time is precious time. Mamma: "Do you like this pudding, Franky?" [No answer.] "You should say, 'Yes, mamma, dear.'" Little Franky [who is three years and a half old]: "But you told me yes day, I shouldn't talk when eating; 'sides, dis is too good to lose time over."

A YOUNG man from the interior who had been visiting abroad came home recently, and at breakfast remarked, as he reached his plate over: "Father, a little of the mixture in the brown dish, if you please, and a small piece of the prepared meat." The old gentleman, who is a plain, matter-of-fact man, replied, as he loaded up the outstretched plate: "We like to have you come a visitin' us, John, but just remember that while you're eatin' here, if you want hash, say so; and if you want sausage, call for sausage, and not go to spreadin' on any Brooklyn misery at my table."

JIMMY Brown came running into Mrs. Jones's house the other day saying:

"Oh dear, Mrs. Jones! Such an accident has happened. Your son John got under a four-horse wagon-load of pig-iron down at the river, and it ran right over his head." "Oh dear!"

Poor Mrs. Jones screamed and nearly fainted, when the little rascal added:

"Don't cry, Mrs. Jones; he wasn't hurt a bit."

"Why, what do you mean? Run over by a four-horse wagon-load of pig-iron and not hurt?"

"Well, you see, the wagon was passing over the bridge and he was sitting under it fishing," replied the little rascal, shooting out at the open door.

MUSICAL AND DRAMATIC.

MME. MIOLAN CAVALHO is pronounced the best representative of *Ophelia* since Nilsson.

FECHTER has been playing *Armand* in Philadelphia in a revision of "La Dame aux Camélias" called "Lady Camelia." He was, it will be remembered, the original *Armand* to the *Marguerite* of Madame Doche.

THE Centennial drama, for which French dramatists are to compete, must be lofty, pure, and wholly moral in tone. If French authors can keep to these conditions the first prize—a gold medal, a bronze and \$5,000—will be well deserved.

At the close of her present engagement at the Lyceum Theatre, N. Y., Mlle. Aimeé will proceed to Paris, where she will appear next winter in a new piece to be brought out at the Gaité. She will have a farewell benefit at New York.

CLARA MORRIS expresses the opinion that the original material for the American drama yet is to be in the humor of the negro and the tragic history of the Indian. "Let the last of them all be killed," she suggests, "and then relegate the subject to the region of romance."

SALVINI's acting has made such an impression in London, that nearly all the members of the dramatic profession have signed a request to him to give a day, performance of "Othello," in order that they may have an opportunity of witnessing his impersonation. He has yielded to the request.

MME. MARETZK, who played the incidental harp solo so charmingly in "L'Ombra," at New York, was once Mlle. Betucca, a favourite *prima donna*. It is related that Signor Tagliapetra and she took possession of the stage during a rehearsal a short time ago, and sang a scene from "Ernani" with no little effect.