

(For the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.)

SUB NOCTE.

(A city incident in city idiom.)

Early dawn was lighting the eastern sky,
And the city was hushed in deep repose.
When two verdant youths from a stunning space
Came forth to encounter our northern foes.

Jack Frost was around in an Ulster wrap
Busy scattering gems from his icy horn;
And the beautiful snow some cubits deep
Lay glittering cold in the frosty morn.

"Which way shall we go?" asked the first fast gent,
As he lurched and fell on the slippery street;
"That craft has earned!" Jack merrily said
To a passing Bob on his nightly beat.

"Which way (dost) we go?" echoed number two,
"To home (his) land friends (his) by shortest trail;
And, while he thus lectured his fallen chum,
He lovingly clung to the nearest rail.

Samuel-like Jack tendered his aid,
And called on the Bob to lend him a hand;
"Grab you the coon hanging on by the rail,
I'll take the lubber who sprawls on the land.

Without more ado each grappled a cove,
And off to the station hastily sped;
"Does mother," said Jack, "know her child is out?"
To the youth he carried rather than led.

Jack's irate companion now called him a muff,
And swore in a crack he'd quiet his jaw;
Frost soothingly said, "here's Juro's ahead,
Where you will be jugged according to law."

Sharp Jack was well known to all the police,
Who, kindly saluting the northern brave,
Asked him to breakfast on coffee and toast,
To take off his tog and stay for a shave.

"Thanks, many thanks!" he quite blandly replied,
"But—Madam Frost I left in our fair;
And Benedicks know how ticklish it is
To raise the suspicion of being elsewhere."

He nodded adieu, and sorrowing turned
His face to the mountain,—filling the air
With regret that when May-poles are planted
And citizens dance, he can not be there.

Montreal.

A. B.

A TIDE OF SORROW.

Oh, those bells! those bells! Their sound
Steals through the drowsy summer air, a soft,
monotonous music, which, to many a heart, no
doubt, would speak peace and repose.

To mine they bring a dreary sense of desolation,
a dull, aching pain that none can realize
but those who, for one brief, bright period of life
have lived in the sunshine of perfect happiness,
profound contentment and peace, then to look
out upon a world in which the very sunbeams
seem sorrow-laden, a world from which all joy
appears to have fled, and from which a thousand
bright anticipations and joyous hopes have gone
out for ever—ay, for ever!

It is early autumn now, and the valley upon
which I look out, as I sit by my open window, is
clad in the richest luxuriance. Meadows are all
aglow with flowers, and woods are gently rustling
their ruddy foliage at the foot of hills which lift
their calm and smiling peaks to the glowing sun.
Ay, there it is just as it all was when I looked
out upon it with a rapture, which, sometimes,
induced strange, blissful tears.

There it is now, all exquisite beauty, I know;
but for me, at least, there is no gladness in that
scene. I close my weary eyes, and, as if with
the touch of a magician's wand, those russet
leaves and dainty flowers have vanished; the
mellow light of the sun has gone suddenly out,
and left only the cold glimmer of the stars to
look down upon a scene of wintry desolation.

Snow covers the meadows, and glimmers
through the darkness from the hedgerows beneath
the woods which sway sadly to and fro, and
mean in the keen wintry wind. Through the
gloom and desolation, I am wandering like one
in a dreadful dream. I have had a sudden blow
—a blow dead, it is true, in all gentleness and
compassion; but which, nevertheless, when it
fell, well-nigh bereft me of reason.

Down by yonder hill-side there, just where
the stream steals out from the woods, and goes
flashing and rolling out into the ruby light of
the setting sun, I wandered on just such an even-
ing as this.

There is a path down there which winds hither
and thither among overhanging trees, heath-
covered crags, and fuming little cascades, which
splash up and down among ferns and foxgloves
on their way to the broad stream below them.

There I wandered, and with my light hat
slung on my arm, I culled flowers and sang in
heer lightness of heart, as I thought of one
whose kindly smile had, as he bade me good
night, looked at me with an earnest, ineffable
tenderness that made me tremble.

And while I wandered, and sang, and gather-
ed my flowers, there came behind me a footfall
and a quiet, manly voice, and I turned, to find
the same gaze again bent on me.

The sun went down in a bed of rosy clouds;
the dews of evening stole lightly over the placid
surface of the river, and the last mellow notes of
the blackbird were ringing through the valley,
when a strong arm stole round me, and a deep,
but soft and tremulous voice told me of heartfelt
love and undying devotion.

I can hear it now; I can feel the quick beat-
ing of his heart as he pressed me to his side and
kissed my brow, and night after night have I
dreamed we were again coming forth from the
little church nestling among the trees there;
that friendly faces smiled upon us, that children
strewed flowers in our path, and that the old
organ pealed out upon the sunshine the joyous
strains of Mendelssohn's Wedding-march.

And yet it is a saddening dream; for while we
halt for a moment in the porch, the flowers

wither and die on the ground before us; the
sunshine becomes chilly; the triumphant mea-
sure of the music falls through a series of wail-
ful transitions, into an appalling funeral dirge,
and I peep into the organ-pew, and, lo! the
organist is a skeleton.

We travelled into foreign lands during our
honeymoon, and saw many of earth's fairest
spots, and rambled amid the most enchanting
scenery of Europe; but none of it had for me so
great a charm as this valley, with its meadow-
lands and woods, its shady walks and ringing
waterfalls, which had become almost a part of
our home during the spring and summer months
of our courtship; and it was with a happiness I
know not how to express, that I came and took
up my abode in the charming little residence,
which from my earliest childhood, had always
been my *beau ideal* of a pleasant dwelling.

Not very large is Rockhall Cottage, and it
makes no pretensions whatever to architectural
beauty; but it is universally held to be a charm-
ing residence, for all that. Its overhanging
eaves shelter clustering masses of roses and
honeysuckle, clematis, and the purple wisteria,
just now interspersed with the crimson foliage of
the Virginia creeper—all training in wilful lux-
uriance over the porch, and peeping in at the
pleasant old-fashioned windows, while the moss-
grown stone roof and dull-red chimney-stacks
nestle under the solemn shade of venerable elms.

At the back, stretching away to a rising
wooded ground, is an extensive garden, with its
soft, level lawn, thickets of evergreens, and
tastefully planned flower-beds—once all aglow
with flowers—now, alas! all a wilderness, aban-
doned to weeds and desolation.

I seldom venture into that garden now; and
when I do, I steal into one of the secluded little
summer-houses, and weep in lonely misery,
where once I was wont to sit in the enjoyment
of happiness, such as I fear rarely brightens a
human existence—a happiness such as now only
deepens my despondency.

And yet how passionately I cling to the recol-
lection of it! Not for all this world can give
would I, if I could, blot out that time from my
memory, or lose that dear image from my heart.

Summer faded softly into autumn, and not a
single ripple disturbed the calm enjoyment of
our lives.

My husband, a hard toiler with his pen,
usually confined himself to his study during the
working hours of the day, and only as a special
pleasure for both of us, and on rare occasions,
came for an hour out into some shady nook in
the garden, to read aloud while I sat busy with
my needle.

But, oh, those evenings!—when work was
done for the day, the table in that little sanctum
of his cleared up and set in order for the morrow,
and we went forth into the woods—he with his
sketch-book or his fishing-rod, and I with a
satchel-bag, that served for the trophies of my
never-failing botanical discoveries.

Who that has never enjoyed a pleasure like
that, and especially after earning it by a previous
day's work of some kind, can possibly know
what it is to wander thus, hand-in-hand, with
one we love, without a care in the present, with-
out a sorrow in remembrance, or an apprehension
for the future?

Now, alas! it is all gone! All gone!—never
to be known again!

It was one day, when the autumn trees hung
still and lazy over the sleeping river, ruddy
chestnuts lay gleaming among the yellow leaves
and struggling grass under the half-stripped
boughs, and the swallows were whirling and
clustering around the chimney-stacks up under
the elms, that we parted.

It was only for a few weeks—a short sea
voyage, a little important business rapidly got
through, and then a joyous return, to await
together the advent of a little stranger, that was,
if possible, to bind us closer in our lives, and to
add a new pleasure and interest to our daily ex-
istence.

Oh, the loneliness and tediousness of those
few weeks, and the bitter disappointment when
the vessel that should have brought him back,
brought instead a letter, full of the tenderest
affection; but telling me that the business he
had gone out upon had been somewhat more
complicated than he had anticipated, and that
his return was unavoidably postponed for a short
time.

Sad and tearful, I turned me homeward, and
counted the weary days that must yet elapse
before my life should again become the thing it
had been.

And while I waited and waited, autumn gave
place to winter, and I lay at nights and trembled
and prayed as the wild bleak winds roared in the
elms and shook the four corners of the house,
and as I thought of the raging seas that lay be-
tween us.

The weeks sped on—slowly and wearily
enough—but still they sped away, and at length
the long-looked-for day arrived.

From the little seaport that lies just over the
hills, came a message that the vessel had been
signalled, and would come into the harbour on
the late tide that would be after dusk, and my
husband, I knew, would not expect me to meet
him on the pier, but to await his arrival at home.

I resolved to welcome him with a surprise, and
to be there when he set foot on shore; and, with
a heart brimming over with thankfulness and
joy, I set out.

It was a wintry afternoon, and, as I made my
way along the hard frozen road, the sky was

lowering, and the country round looked bleak
and desolate.

But what cared I for lowering skies, or bleak
winds now? The vessel was safe, lay only two
or three miles over the hills there, and my hus-
band was aboard, and in a few short hours now
we should tread that path together.

Blithe and light-hearted I made my way over
the crisp frozen snow, and an hour before the
daylight faded I stood on the pier, and, with a
glowing cheek and a beating heart, I gazed on
the long-expected vessel.

Impatiently I watched the rising tide. How
little did I think that for me it was the rising
tide of sorrow, a deep, boundless, overwhelming
sorrow, rising to my heart with steady and re-
morseless flow, never to ebb again!

An hour—two hours—of feverish, happy ex-
citement, and then came the supreme moment.
How little remains that I distinctly recollect,
and yet how much! A boat—the captain's gig—
came skimming through the darkness, and
then stepped ashore two or three passengers,
strangers to me, and then, *not* my husband, but
only the captain, whom I knew well, and whose
face turned deathly pale as he saw me.

He took my hand, but he spoke never a word,
and I stood before him, mysteriously, awfully
conscious of what he had to tell me, but petrified,
staring vacantly before me, and incapable of
moving a limb or uttering a sound.

I know that I was drawn gently towards a
warm fireside, and I heard dreamily, and afar off
as it were, something of an accident—a man
overboard—my husband one of the party to the
rescue—all being lost.

I heard his praises whispered; I have a dim
recollection of weeping around me, and of
throbbing hands in mine, and compassionate
faces bending over me, and then I was wander-
ing homeward again.

Oh, that awful night! To wander in wintry
darkness and desolation through lonely hillsides
and dreary woods, while the wind howls through
the gloom, sweeps in raw, angry gusts over bleak
exposures of snow, and in the black feathery
three-tops, towering like giant hearse plumes
into the drifting sky, sings the requiem of all we
love on earth!

And as, through that pitiless night, heedlessly
and wildly—not because I wished to go thither
again, but because I had no greater reason for
going anywhere else—I made my way back
home, those bells, just as they are ringing now,
kept up a joyous peal, to me like some malignant
spirit of the stormy night, mocking my misery.

And they mock me still. They mock me every
week, and they will ever do so. They shook out
their monotonous tale the night before he went
away, and they pealed out on the blast when the
tidings came of his death; and, all unaltered,
they ring on still, though my heart is slowly
breaking, and though I never hear them but I
steal away and weep.

It will not be for long. His child has gone,
too. Born on the day succeeding that terrible
night, it was born but to die; and I care not
how soon I may be removed from a world in
which my life's happiness seems to have culminat-
ed in one rapturous year, and then gone out
for ever under that dark, relentless tide.

Nearly three years have elapsed since I wrote
the preceding, and I am sitting now beneath a
canopy of lilac and laburnum.

The lawn before me is again smooth as velvet,
and the streams of sunlight that pour down
through the bright young verdure of the garbled
and knotted old elms gleam once more on flower-
beds, gay as the brightest of early summer flowers
can make them.

I had thought, and I often said, that nothing
in this world could ever again awaken my inter-
est, or very seriously affect the profound
melancholy of my life. Events proved that I
was wrong.

I sat one evening by the open window, at
which, in fine weather, I was wont to sit by the
hour together, gazing along the valley, and living
again in the past, when an aged clergyman drew
up to the gate—a gray-haired, handsome old
gentleman, with a face which, as I have since
learned, is at all times cheery and pleasant, but
which, as he came towards me, was lighted up
with a radiance positively beautiful.

It was with a strange flutter at my heart I
went into the room, into which a servant had
shown him, and it was with a dizzy, half-stupe-
fied brain that I listened to what he had to say.

What "great joy" could there be for me, save
the restoration of him whom the sea had swal-
lowed up?

And yet he had come to break to me "tidings
of great joy." Sudden tidings of joy, he said,
were sometimes as disastrous as a tale of over-
whelming calamity; and as I was in delicate
health, he had come to beg me to prepare for an
unexpected pleasure.

Gently and kindly he talked on; but the sil-
eary tones of the good old man grew fainter and
fainter, and before I had more than vaguely
apprehended the strange story he had come to
tell, I swooned.

When I recovered, he was still by my side,
assisting and directing my maid in her efforts to
restore me. And then I wept, and begged him
to tell me again, and to be explicit, assuring
him that I would be calm and strong now what-
ever he might say.

And accordingly, he told me—told me my
husband lived; that the boat in which, with
three sailors, he had put off to save a drowning
man had drifted away, and they had got lost in
a fog; that they had gone thus for two days
and three nights in the open sea; and that they

had finally been picked up by a vessel bound on
a four months' outward voyage, and that he had
found no means of communicating with me.

And while I listened with a still bewildered
brain, the room door opened, and in an instant
I was clasped in the arms of my long-lost hus-
band!

Seasons have changed several times since
then, and every week those old bells clang out
through the valley as though they had known of
the misery they had so cruelly mocked, and
would now ring the more heartily in partici-
pation of my happiness.

One wild night, when on a keen and bluster-
ing wind heavy clouds were drifting across a
landscape sheeted in frozen snow, I heard their
sound come swelling and dying through the
gloom, and an irresistible impulse seized me.

I clad myself warmly, and, to the astonish-
ment of my husband, begged for a walk along
the narrow roadway leading up through the
woods.

We went together, and, from the midst of my
happiness restored, I presently stood and looked
around at the dark avenues of the woods, listen-
ed to the weird music in the tree-tops, and to
the hoarse clangour from the steeple in the dis-
tance. I stood and listened, and wept.

Not until we got home did my husband seek
for any explanation of my whim, and then I put
into his hands the sheets, stained with my tears,
on which I had told the early part of my story.

I left him alone to read it, and when I return-
ed to the room I found the manuscript pushed
from him, and him with his face hidden in his
hands and his head bowed upon the table,
whether weeping or not I never knew.

Men do not like to be seen to weep, and I be-
trayed no curiosity. It was sufficient for me
that he folded me fondly in his arms and kissed
me passionately.

And now as I finish my story he comes across
the lawn from the house, looking, I think,
younger than when he set out on that fearful
journey; but, for all that, young man though he
is, his dark hair slightly streaked with silver.
He says it is the result of the severe spasms he
always experiences on going into his sanatorium
for the first time after my weekly dusting and
clearing up there, and the mental anguish he
suffers in his efforts to rearrange his papers and
books.

I tell him, however, that it is far more likely
to be the effect of the alarm he felt lest I should
have found another husband before he got back
again. For all his silver streaks, however, he
looks the very picture of happiness.

He is standing just now by a cluster of theod-
dendrons, endeavouring to impress upon a certain
chubby little sinner of my acquaintance that,
although he may, if he likes, consider himself
heir to the little estate here, he must not pre-
sume upon his prospects by appropriating to his
own personal use and enjoyment the heads of
all the flowers in the garden; and as I know I
shall be called upon to endorse all that is now
being said upon the subject, I may as well wind
up my story.

G. F. M.

ROUND THE WORLD.

The insurrection in Barbadoes has subsided.

The French Atlantic cable is broken 200
miles from Brest.

OFFICIAL information states that all is quiet
again in Barbadoes.

HEREAFTER wife-beaters in California will be
punished by a public whipping.

The Egyptian troops have begun their home-
ward movement from Abyssinia.

The London *Gazette* of the 28th ult., con-
tains the proclamation of the new title "Empress of
India."

EGYPT has accepted the scheme of the French
Syndicate for the modification of its bonded and floating
debt.

COEN VON ARNIM has been sentenced to
formal dismissal from the service, and compelled to pay
the costs of proceedings.

The double turret ship *Inflexible*, launched at
Portsmouth last week, is said to be the most tremendous
instrument of warfare yet erected.

The agitation in favor of amnesty is creating
so much feeling in Paris that the Government contem-
plates repressive measures.

The establishment of the Episcopate of the
Christian Catholic Church of Switzerland has been ap-
proved by the Federal Council of that country.

MONTENEGRO has not openly declared war
against Turkey, but will permit all her subjects to join
the insurgents, which is about the same thing.

At Hillah and Bagdad, the aggregate num-
ber of persons attacked by the plague from the 1st of
April to the 9th was 733, and the number of deaths 255.

THE Theatre des Arts, at Rouen, was burned
on the night of the 26th ult.; 25 persons were in the
building when the fire broke out, and eight corpses have
been recovered so far.

A CONFERENCE recently took place in Rome
between seven Cardinals and the representatives of some
of the Great Powers, with the view of settling the differ-
ences between various States and the Church, but the
desired end does not seem to have been attained, the
prelates declaring peace to be an impossibility without
the acknowledgment of the spiritual independence of the
Church.

The *Canadian Illustrated News* of last week contains
four very nice views of Oakville harbor and ice banks,
together with an extract taken from *The Argus*, contain-
ing an account of the severe storm which occurred here
in February last. The *Canadian Illustrated* is now one
of the leading journals of America, and the only illus-
trated journal in Canada, and it should be liberally
patronized, and we would advise all our friends and
readers to subscribe at once. We can assure them that
they will receive full value for their money.—Oakville
Argus.