

independent of Mr. Lav, or of any enterprise in which he may please to engage. They wish to state therefore that they never contemplated any junction with a Canadian Family Magazine as stated on the cover of the June Snow Drop. Agencies will speedily be established throughout the province, and as the Editors have been unable to procure from the late publisher the necessary lists; they respectfully request all subscribers to forward their names and address to Mr. Armour with the least possible delay. They rely with confidence on a continuance of the generous patronage which has hitherto encouraged them in their labours. We fondly trust they will realize their most sanguine anticipations, for of all the irksome tasks this life affords, that of plodding on in mental labour day by day, without material reward, is the most insupportable. Each number will contain as heretofore 32 pages, and the price will be one dollar per annum in advance. The publisher's address is No 9 Great St. James Street Montreal, and as A. H. Armour and Co. will cheerfully transact any matters connected with the magazine, our citizens who desire to encourage the work have only to make a call at King St. with their commissions.

THE UNFORTUNATE PIGS.

Not long ago, I asked you to look down, in imagination, upon the clear winding Devon, as it meanders in dreamy grandeur through the holm, which skirts the southern slopes of the Ochils. From the spot on which in fancy's creation we stood, might be seen the identical bridge which the musician crossed that morning before his perilous adventure. At the precise time, however, to which I now refer, this bridge was little better than a man trap. It consisted of two long girders, which crossed the stream, about three feet apart, and these were at first covered with thin fir planks, about 8 or 10 inches broad. But one after another of these boards had disappeared, until little else remained than the two girders and as many crosspieces as kept them from collapsing. I have passed it frequently when from 6 to 8 feet at a stretch would have been clear, and you had either to help yourself over by the side rail, or walk a couple of miles round by another way. The side rail dodge did very well when one was setting out on an excursion with all his faculties fresh; but it was not so suitable at all times for returning, and this I will proceed to illustrate by a circumstance which came under my cognizance. Andrew Wilson, a middle aged, and canny going shoemaker, lived in the village at a little distance. He was both master and mistress of his ale house, and as an outlet to any affection he might have, beyond what was duly devoted to himself, he kept a couple of pigs, with which to beguile a weary hour, for besides being a kind of animal companionship, Andrew had discovered, that when they had ceased to snuff the storm, they kept a rough larder. A part of his spare time was regularly spent in his kail yard, which supplied him with all the vegetables necessary for culinary purposes, and also with a few gooseberries and apples in their season. This was about the daily round of Andrew's extra duties: but now and again a wide gap in the larder recalled to his mind the necessity of keeping up an unbroken line of succession to his porkers, and on such occasions he pitted himself in his skill in making a selection from a good family. Such was the state of affairs at the moment to which I allude, and Andrew, having wiped the coom from his face, put on a

clean dickie, and his favourite red silk neckerchief, he then brought from the chest his blue swallow-tailed coat, with its massive yellow buttons, which was only used on great occasions, and having beight himself as trim as may be, set out to purchase two new tenants to his pig-sty. He crossed the little bridge, or rather in justice to him, I should say, he crossed the river about half-past six o'clock on a quiet night, about the end of July, and wandered on, upwards of a couple of miles, to the spot where the forthcoming tenants of his premises had been sealed. No temperance society had as yet made an invasion on "the good old customs of Scotland," and McNeill's "Waes o' War" was more than counterbalanced by "Willie brewed a Peck o' Mall," so that Andrew, having concluded the bargain, sat down to get a dram and a "bit o' chess and bread," as was his wont on such occasions.

I am not very clear whether there was any other attraction at farmer Ramage's fireside, for Andrew, though he locked the door and put the key in his pocket when he went out, often thought that if he could sa' in wi' a decent lass that would attend to his pigs and look after the calabages and onions, he might be tempted to offer her the situation. At present, however, there was no attractive feature at home. There was not even the dread on his mind of a 'fite from Janet' for staying late, so that when he sat down and enjoyed himself, the time passed more speedily than he calculated upon.

Having amply slaked his thirst he set out on his homeward journey, with the two pigs in a bag slung over his back, and I suppose all went well enough till he came to the bridge. The moon was in its last quarter and had not yet appeared above the horizon when he reached the fatal spot, and whether he was in a state to see planks where there were none, or was deceived by the darkness of the night, I cannot say, but down he went, plunge into the river, through the bridge, with his load on his back. The distance to the water was perhaps not more than six feet, so that he was not much injured by the fall, although it is evident he must have been considerably stunned by the splash. He made a dexterous struggle, but gained the bank, and hurried along the road, as fast as his legs could possibly carry him. His clothes were wet, but that was nothing, as he had no sooner reached his little domicile than he disrobed, and quietly consigned himself to the guardianship of Morpheus. He got up in the morning about his usual time and felt rather thirsty, and considerably growry; but not until he had lifted his wet stockings and his drenched trousers from the chair on which he had laid them, did the faintest glimmer cross his mind as to the adventure of the previous night. He endeavoured to realize the facts of the case, but he was unable to comprehend his position. I have frequently thought how exactly similar his position was to that of John Tamson, when he fell asleep in his cart as he was going to the coalfield, and some way for a little sport took out the horse and left him lying saugly. When John awoke, he was in doubt as regards his identity, and reasoned in this way—"If I'm John Tamson I've lost a horse, an' if I'm no John Tamson I've found a cart," so the shoemaker imagined if he was Andrew Wilson he must have lost his pigs last night, but if he was not Andrew Wilson some malicious person had wet his trousers for him.

In order to satisfy himself, for as yet so one knew of the circumstance, Mr. Wilson posted off to the river, and there, jammed between two of the upright posts, he found his bag and its contents, but the pigs were quite dead. You may imagine, but I cannot describe, the miserable state of Andrew's mind when he ascertained the fact. He made two resolutions on the spot, both of which I think he kept,—the first was that he would never mair taste whiskey,—and second, that he would call upon his old friend James Colvin, and ha'e a crack wi' him about the propriety of getting home Mrs. Wilson. It strikes me that my friend Stalker got an order to furnish

up one one of the rooms tastefully for the reception of the bride, and ere the next new moon had waned Andrew and his young wife passed the scrutinizing gaze of the busy group that usually collected at the parish Kirk door, to speak about the events of the week, and beguile the time till the minister made his appearance; so, that in fact, the kiss of the pigs was the gaining of a wife, and all the concomitant endearments that crown a state of connubial bliss.

DR. NICHOL ON ASTRONOMY.

Dr. Nichol delivered the sixth and last of his course of lectures on Monday afternoon, when the audience was more numerous than at the delivery of the previous lectures. The subject of this lecture was, "The relation of astronomical with geological epochs—sketches of the evolution of the earth." Geology and astronomy touched each other at several points, and, perhaps, the best route by which we could enter on a geological investigation was suggested by some of the revelations of the telescope. Upon looking at the present condition of the earth, we soon found that instead of being the result of some bygone cause—a fixed reality,—it was no more than the present, or existing, phase in the operation of a power certainly only inferior, in respect of the magnitude and consequence of its mutations, to that of gravitation. We found abundant proofs that the land and water were continually changing places, and not only that land had been comparatively recently raised up from the bottom of the ocean, but that it had undergone successive oscillations. There was no portion of land, with the history of which we were acquainted, which did not unfold to us the fact that it had undergone many changes in this respect. In Sumatra was to be found the birth of a river as large as the Ganges, which had formerly drained a large continent which had now disappeared. The fact that the marble columns of the temple of Pestum had been bored into by marine insects, was a clear proof that, after the building of the temple, the land on which it stood must have been submerged beneath the ocean from which it has now risen. Both these changes in the elevation of the land must have been gradual, as the pillars were not injured; and it was probable that neither of them extended over a great portion of land. It was only since the beginning of the present century that a rational investigation had been begun, with a view of finding out the laws which governed and directed these phenomena of the elevation and depression of the land. Previous to that time it was supposed that they were all the result of one great cataclysm, which was usually referred to the recorded *deluge*. Now, however, when they were looked at more deeply, it was seen that a mighty law, extending over immense periods of time, had governed them all, and all confusion seemed to vanish from them. Having seen that not only was there evidence of a vast upheaving cause, but also that it was probable that the stupendous changes produced by it were evolved in accordance with some grand law, the question now was, could we ascertain the manner in which this vast upheaving cause had been acting? In recent times we had got some glimpses of this law. The rocks with which geology had to do were divided into two classes, the stratified and the unstratified or crystalline rocks. The crystalline rocks appeared to have been protruded from below by some upheaving cause, while the stratified rocks had been laid down by the action of the water, and were constituted entirely from the debris of the crystalline rocks or mountain masses. As these stratified rocks had been laid down by the action of the water, we might be sure that they would diagonally assume an horizontal position, a view which was confirmed by the fact that the line of the deposits of organization found in them always corresponded with the line of stratification, while it was evident that such organization would be deposited in horizontal lines. These rocks were not now, however, found in an horizontal position, but