

At Four-Score.

She sits in the gathering shadows,
By the porch where the roses blow,
And her thoughts are back in the summers
That vanished long ago;
She forgets the grave on the hillside,
She forgets that she is old,
And remembers only the gladness
God gave her heart to hold.

As she sits there, under the roses,
She turns her dim old eyes
To the road that leads up the hillside,
To the glory of sunset skies;
"They are late," she says, and listens
With her knitting on her knee;
"It is time for the children's coming;
Where can the little ones be?"

She fancies she hears them coming;
"Ah, here at last!" she cries,
And the light of a mother's welcome
Shines in her faded eyes.
"You've been gone a long time, children,
Were the berries thick? my dears,"
She asks, as gathered about her,
Each child of old appears.

She hears the merry voices
Of the dear ones that are dead;
She smooths out the shining tangles
That crown each little head;
She kisses the faces lifted
To hers, as in days of old,
And the heart of the dreaming mother
Is full of peace untold.

She listens to eager stories
Of what they saw and heard—
Of a nest in the blackberry bushes,
And a frightened mother bird;
How Johnnie fell and his berries
Were lost in weeds and moss,
And Mary was 'fraid and dreaded
The brook they had to cross.

So while the nights come downward,
She sits with her children there,
Forgetting the years that took them,
And the snowflakes in her hair.
The love that will last forever
Brings back the dear, the dead,
And then the faithful heart of the mother
With her dreams is comforted.

Ere long she will go to the country
Where her dear ones watch and wait
For her, and I think of the meeting
There at the jasper gate.
She will feel their welcoming kisses,
And the children's father will say,
As the household is gathered in heaven,
"We're all at home to-day!"

The Bore of Minas Basin.

BY J. MACDONALD OXLEY.

UPON the side of one of the rounded hills that rise up gently from the wonderful sea of verdure which Longfellow, without ever looking upon it for himself, immortalized in his "Evangeline," Acacia Villa nestled cosily in the midst of many trees. Long lines of poplars stood sentinel-like up and down the house front, and marked out the garden boundaries, furnishing abundant supplies of "peppers" for the boys in springtime; and, better still, a whole regiment of apple and pear trees marshalled itself at the back, filling the hearth—and mouths—of both young and old with delight in the autumn, when the boughs bent so temptingly beneath their burden of fruitage.

There could hardly be a more attractive location for a boarding-school, and, seeing what comfortable quarters Mr. Thomson provided, and how very thoroughly he understood the business of teaching, it was no wonder that boys came not only from all parts of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, but even from the United States, to be grounded in

classics, mathematics, and literature, under his direction.

The last boarder left Acacia Villa long ago, but twenty years back its dormitories were filled to their utmost capacity with lads of all ages and sizes, and the whole neighbourhood felt the stirring influence of two-score lively, hearty, noisy boys in its midst. For nearly ten months out of the year the school was like a hive of bees in honey time—the term beginning in September and finishing in June. It was coming on toward midsummer now, and excitement ran high throughout the school, for while the droues were looking forward longingly to the holidays, which would release them from all lesson-learning for a couple of months, the workers were even more eagerly expecting the final examinations, when books, bats, balls, knives, and other things dear to the school-boy's heart, were offered by wise Mr. Thomson to the boys who came out ahead in the different branches of study.

The two boys strolling down toward the river this fine summer afternoon were good representatives of the two classes, Frank Hamilton being one of the brightest and most ambitious, as Tom Peters—or "Buntie," in the saucy slang of his school-mates—was one of the dullest and least aspiring in the school. Yet, somehow or other, they had been great chums ever since they came by the same coach to the Villa, two years before. One could easily understand that lazy, good-natured "Buntie" should find much to admire and love in handsome, manly, clever Frank, who was indeed a born leader; but just what Frank found in Tom to make him so fond of him puzzled everybody, from Mr. Thomson down. In whatever lay the secret, the fact was clear that the boys loved each other like brothers; and the master, who delighted in classical allusions, used to greet them as "Damon and Pythias" when he encountered them together.

"Yankee" was the nick-name given to one of the American boys at the school. He had been thus distinguished because both in face and figure he bore some resemblance to the typical "Uncle Sam," being longer, leaner, and sallow than any of his companions. He was of a quiet, reserved disposition, and had few friends.

Walking with a rapid, almost impatient step, that was characteristic of him, Emory Haynes passed the two friends, all three directing their course toward the Gaspareaux River, which cuts a wide, red gash through the Grand Pré before adding its turbulent torrent to the tossing waters of Minas Basin.

Here a lovely picture awaited them. From their feet the red banks of clay and sand stretched hundreds of yards away—for the tide was out—until they were lapped by the river, now shrunk into a narrow, sluggish stream. To right and left and beyond the river the wide, level, marsh lands—redeemed from the water by the patient toil of the Acadians—were waist deep in verdure, that swayed in long lines of light and shadow before the summer breeze. Not far off began the great dykes that sweep clear round the outer edge of the Grand Pré, the only elevation on all that vast plain, and now waving to their summits with "dusty-blossomed grass." Behind them the hills rose gently in fold upon fold, their broad shoulders flecked with frequent patches of golden grain or the dark foliage of the orchards, while over all rose a glorious summer sun, that seemed to thrill the whole landscape with life and warmth and glory.

But the boys had no eyes for all this beauty. They were far more concerned about the tide, and felt inclined to resent very warmly the fact that it should be out just when they wanted to have a swim.

"What a fraud!" exclaimed Frank. "Pon my word I believe the old tide is twice as much out as it is in. Now isn't it, Buntie?"

"It is, sure's you're born," assented Tom. "I suppose there's nothing for it but to wait," and so saying he threw himself down in the long grass, his friend immediately following his example.

Two yards away Emory Haynes was already seated, with his face turned riverward, apparently lost in deep thought.

"Oh, I say, Frank!" exclaimed Tom, "suppose, instead of waiting here, we go down to meet the bore, and have a race back with it?"

Frank hesitated a moment before answering, for what Tom proposed was a very rash thing to do. What is known as the "bore" is the big wave produced by the onrush of water in a place where the tides rise forty, fifty, or even sixty feet, according to the time of year. The Bay of Fundy—of which Minas Basin is a branch—is famous for these wonderful tides, and the movements of the water make a sight well worth watching. The two boys had often looked on with lively interest as the returning flood rushed eagerly up the channel and over the flats, until, in an incredibly short time, what had been a waste of red mud was transformed into a broad expanse of turbid water.

"Rather a risky business, Tom, but I don't mind trying it. I'm in the humour for almost anything to-day, so come along."

And, without more ado, the boys doffed their boots and stockings, rolled up their trousers, and set out for the water's edge. Emory Haynes watched them in silence until they had gone about fifty yards. Then, as if divining their foolish design, he called after them:

"Frank—Tom—where are you going to?"

"Going to meet the bore. Don't you want to come?" Frank shouted back. "Come along, Yankee, if you're not afraid," he added, in a half scornful tone.

Not the words, but the tone in which they were uttered, brought an angry flush out on Emory's sallow cheeks, and, without stopping to think of the folly of the thing, he too flung off his boots and started after the others.

"Blessed if Yankee isn't coming after all," said Tom, under his breath, to Frank. "The chap's got plenty of grit in him."

Side by side, but in silence—for, somehow or other, they felt ill at ease—the three boys picked their way carefully over the slippery mud and soft sand, keeping a sharp lookout for the sink-holes or quicksands in which they might easily sink to their waists, or even deeper, at one plunge. Hardly had they reached the edge of the channel when Frank, who had been gazing down intently toward the Basin, called out:

"There it comes, fellows. Doesn't it look grand?"

A good way off still, but drawing nearer with astonishing speed—a wall of dark foam-topped water came rushing up the channel and over the thirsty flats. It was several feet in height, and behind it followed the whole vast volume of the tide.

The three lads had never been so close to the bore before, and they stood still and silent, watching the grand sight, until a shout from Emory broke the spell.

"Now then, boys, let's run for it."

As fast as their feet could carry them they sped over the treacherous, greasy flats, leaping the gaping gullies, turning aside from the suspicious spots, and steering straight for the place where they had left their shoes. Frank and Tom were both famous runners, and soon outstripped Emory. In fact, they were more than half-way to the bank