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BENEATH THE WAVE.

This interesting story is now proceeding in large instalments through our columns, and the interest of the plot deepens with every number. It should be remembered that we have gone to the expense of purchasing the sole copyright of this fine work for Canada, and we trust that our readers will show their appreciation of this fact by renewing their subscriptions and urging their friends to open subscriptions with the NEWS.

CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.

Montreal, Saturday, Dec. 14, 1878.

CHRISTMAS GREETING.

As our readers will at once perceive, we have devoted this whole number of the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS to the pictorial and literary illustration of scenes and episodes connected with the happy Christmas tide. Indeed to such an extent has the material crowded upon us that we have barely space left to fulfil the necessary and agreeable duty of wishing our readers and friends the compliments of the season. Having been in regular communication with one another during the year, and, in most cases, during a succession of years, there has grown a bond of union between readers and writers, and when the happy season comes around in due course, it is with a sentiment of real pleasure that the managers of the journal seize the opportunity afforded them by their columns to wish their patrons the full enjoyment of the holiday season. While circumstances, as none know better than ourselves, have not always allowed us to do all that we intended, or to come up to our ideal in every instance, we have still the consciousness of having done our best to please, and we may confidently announce that, with the beginning of a new year, no efforts will be spared to make the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS more and more worthy of public acceptance. We call upon all our friends to aid us in this, both by continuing their favours and inducing others to lend us a helping hand.

THE PRINCESS ALICE.

As all loyal Canadians take an almost personal interest in the Royal Family, it is no exaggeration to say that the demise of Princess ALICE of Hesse will cast a gloom over our Christmas festivities. An additional cause for regret, in our case, is that the melancholy circumstance so intimately affects the fair lady whom we, only a few days ago, were welcoming with patriotic outbursts to her new home in Canada. It is sad to have to remember hereafter that the arrival of the Princess LOUISE among us was overshadowed by the great grief which she must experience at the death of a beloved sister. To her, in especial, and to the Queen and whole Royal Family, we, as a mouthpiece of public opinion, beg to offer the sincerest condolence. The loss is a heavy one in many respects. It is the first break in the large circle of the Royal Children—Her Majesty having enjoyed the rare privilege of seeing her large offspring of nine sons and daughters grown up around her to manhood and womanhood. Furthermore, Princess ALICE was endeared to the Royal household, as having been the favourite of her father, whom she nursed on his death bed, and the companion of her mother, during the first dismal years of her widowhood. Another painful circumstance is that, by an exceptional coincidence, she died on the

same day of the week and the same day of the month—Saturday, December 14—as the lamented Prince CONSORT, so that this anniversary will henceforth be doubly mournful in the Royal household.

Princess ALICE Maud MARY was the second daughter and third child of Her Majesty, and was born on the 25th of April, 1843. In July, 1862, she was married to Prince LOUIS of Hesse-Darmstadt. Seven children were born of this union—two sons and five daughters, but of these one died in 1873, and another, MARIE, only four years of age, preceded her mother by a few weeks. In fifteen years of her married life, Princess ALICE resided a great deal in England, as it was only on the 13th of June, 1877, that her husband succeeded his uncle, Ludwig the Third, in the government of the Grand Duchy.

We should have liked to accompany this brief memoir by a portrait of Her Royal Highness, but neither in this city nor in Ottawa could we find a likeness that did not date back several years. Rather than present an unfaithful picture, we preferred to wait a few weeks, when reliable photographs will reach us from England.

HOME MANUFACTURE OF ORDNANCE.

It is not generally known that there has been, during the last four years in the United States, the greatest artillery competition on record. The object of this competition was to determine on the most suitable system of heavy rifled ordnance for the service of the United States. This competition trial was carried out under the superintendence of the officers of the United States Board of Ordnance. The great struggle appears to have been the competition between steel barrels as a lining for heavy guns and coiled wrought iron barrels. The latter have always been advocated by Sir William Palliser, who has ever maintained that two good coiled wrought iron barrels, one inside the other, when oiled and fitted in by hand into a cast iron casing, are certain to defeat steel barrel guns in a heavy competition, owing to the treacherous nature of steel. This law, laid down by Sir W. Palliser, has proved perfectly true in America. The steel barrel guns have broken down, and the fleet and forts of our cousins have been, so far, armed with Palliser guns. Now this fact is of deep interest to us, for although we might find a difficulty in manufacturing steel barrels, there can be none in making coiled wrought iron barrels, and the point raised by this at once suggests itself, why should our Government continue to send large sums of money out of Canada to purchase ordnance and stores which can be made at home? We have reason to believe that it is now in contemplation to secure a number of armour piercing guns for coast defense. The cost of these will be many thousands of pounds, and Canada can ill afford to send this money out of the country. It may be argued that, although the United States makes large Palliser rifled guns with perfect success, we could not do so. In the first place it should be remembered that the United States have no State gun factory. The rifled guns alluded to are made by a private firm, receiving the orders every year from the Board of Ordnance. It would be absurd to maintain that what a private firm can do in America, for the American Government, a private firm could not do in Canada for the Canadian Government. It is true that the manufacture in America is under a certain amount of inspection by officers of the Board of Ordnance, but, without the least disrespect for these scientific officers, we can safely assert that they do not surpass such officers, as Colonel T. Bland Strange, Royal Artillery, in scientific attainments and knowledge of gunnery. Coiled barrels for a 64 pounder rifle are now being forged in Montreal out of Canadian iron by order of Sir W. Palliser, who is anxious that the Canadians should follow the example of the Americans, and adopt his guns. We

further understand that should our Government adopt his system, he will not accept any pecuniary reward or commission. Such generosity is seldom met with, and as he will guarantee the guns, we really think Government should seriously consider this most important question. We have reason to believe that Sir Edward Selby Smyth, K.C.M.G., is greatly in favour of Canada setting to work in earnest to arm herself. He has never ceased to advocate this most important point. We think it can be best attained by setting to work to make the armaments ourselves. A small sum voted every year, which surely finds its way back into the pockets of the people, is better than sending over \$100,000 at a time to Woolwich, not a penny of which ever returns to us.

We have now a good many Palliser 64 pounder rifled guns, purchased from Woolwich. There can be no reason why we should not make more of these and even 120 pounders. We show a section of a Palliser 120 pounder 7 inch gun, with its two coiled wrought iron barrels, and also a section of the Woolwich 7 inch gun. The first gun is made on the new principle of great length of bore to consume a large charge of mild powder. By following these rules Sir W. Armstrong has attained extraordinary results lately with very small pressure on the bore of the gun. The Woolwich gun is the old fashioned dumpey gun still in vogue which gives a low velocity owing to its length being too short to consume the whole of the powder charge; it is moreover more expensive than the Palliser gun.

LA GAZZA LADRA.

AN OPERATIC REMINISCENCE.

One of the most charming of French writers, and a musical critic of renown, M. A. de Pontmartin, has just published a work entitled *Souvenirs d'un Vieux Mélomane*, in which he relates an amusing incident connected with the representation at Paris of *La Gazza Ladra*, one of the most melodious of Rossini's lesser operas. As I have had frequent occasion in these columns to publish remarkable episodes relating to that favourite art which is a main beautifier and solace of life, I trust that the following will be found sufficiently pleasant to bear reproduction.

About thirty years ago, young de Pontmartin was engaged on the staff of *L'Opinion Publique*, one of the Legitimist journals of the day. His companions were a half dozen of youths who later made names for themselves in the literary world, and a few "volunteers" who daily lounged in the editorial rooms to read the papers and furnish the gossip of the boulevards for the "city items," or *faits divers*. Chief among these was a former Government official Madiere-Montjau. He was of gigantic size—six feet at least—lean as a skeleton, pale as a sepulchre, but his eyes glared with fire and his gesticulation was always animated unto exaggeration. His speciality was to express, in and out of season, his repentance for the part he had taken in the Revolution of July, damn the Republic, and bring in daily bulletins of the health of the pious Queen of the Belgians, daughter of Louis Philippe and wife of King Leopold. This strange character was a great favourite among the young scribes of *L'Opinion Publique*, and he often accepted an invitation to their modest repast at the restaurant of *la mère Morel*. On such occasions he would toss off his glass of Bordeaux, and rising, as about to propose a toast, exclaim in a stentorian voice: "I beg pardon of God and men for having contributed to the Revolution of July." Then, he would add with emotion; "fortunately we have the best news of the pious Queen of the Belgians." He cared little who overheard him among the guests of the restaurant, as he was fearless and had no human respect. It was this queer individual who distinguished himself one night at the Italiens.

La Gazza Ladra had been announced during several days for the first appearance of Sophie V— in the character of Ninetta. Ronconi, the incomparable baritone, at that time manager of the theatre, had assumed the rôle of Fernando, and the great Lablache was booked as the Podesta. With such a cast, it was no wonder that the opera drew crowds. On the opening night, de Pontmartin and his companions were early at their posts, with Madiere-Montjau among them. They had all dined exceptionally well and were in a proper mood of appreciation. The orchestra attacked the delicious overture, a military march which culminates in an irresistible *crescendo* established on the dominant. The introduction, the pretty couplets of Pippo, the entrance of the imperious farm-wife and the Goodman Fabrizio had nicely disposed the public, when came the charming ritornel announcing Ninetta, and the famous cavatina: *Di piacer mi balza il cuore*. Sophie V— sang this to perfection and was rewarded by three salvos of applause. That initial triumph was enhanced

when, immediately after, Ronconi stepped upon the scene. This great artist was not always sure of his intonation during the first measures, but, in his good days, he always rose to the sublime. His rich voice, his tragical expression, his terrible gesture, the incredible art with which he coloured his phrases and made them pass through a thousand gradations of energy, tenderness, wrath and sweetness—all these qualities electrified his audience. The duet with Ninetta was executed in an inimitable style. Encouraged by her wonderful partner, Sophie V— surpassed herself, and the *strette* was covered with bravos. But silence! Here comes Lablache. He had but one fault in the character of the Bailiff. He was too handsome, too grandiose, too Olympian. An eagle in place of an osprey. Never was the celebrated air, *Il mio piano è preparato* delivered with such an admirable blending of senile fatuity, clandestine libertinism and magisterial authority. That guttural tocsin, softened by science, or rather by genius, accommodated itself without an effort to all the *fortissimo* which abound in this piece. To convert success into ovation, and enthusiasm into delirium, only a spark was needed, and that spark flashed from the immortal trio, *O Nunc Benefico*. In the magnificent adagio, the fresh voice of the prima donna responded like a melodious echo to the singing basses, which rivalled with each other in expression, flexibility and power. A handkerchief might have been heard to drop in the vast theatre. The drama was progressing grandly. The Podesta, fancying himself alone with Ninetta, had just unmasked his odious designs. At that moment, Fernando, forgetting his own peril through solicitude for his daughter, advanced upon him, superb in his thrilling indignation, and hurled at him the cry of paternal wrath, *Un maturo! un magistrato!* These words were uttered with such tragic fury that the audience was completely cowed and quite unable to applaud. There was a supreme moment of dramatic and musical ecstasy, when all at once a gigantic figure was seen rising to its full height from one of the orchestra seats, and lifting two long arms to the chandelier above. This fantastic, spectral figure had a large mouth, and from the large mouth came these words, uttered in a voice that drowned the sound of the instruments:

"I beg pardon of God and men for having taken part in the Revolution of July. Happily, the news from Her Majesty the Queen of the Belgians is better."

Fancy the result! The house reechoed with cries of rage, mingled with shouts of laughter. On the stage, Lablache and Ronconi, artists of the heroic age, did not even wince, but poor Sophie V— went off in a swoon, falling into the arms of the Podesta, who was much astonished at his good luck. Down went the curtain, but not fast enough to hide the sight of a big cat, which passed majestically in front of the prompter's box, as if to enhance the catastrophe. Ten minutes later, the curtain rose again, and the manager came forward to announce that the prima donna, having recovered from her terror, would continue her part, but entreated all the indulgence of the audience. And she sadly needed it. The rest of the opera went off very poorly indeed.

In justice to our eccentric enthusiast, it must be added that he was desperate, and tore out the few grey hairs that were left him, as he repeated: "Poor Ninetta! If I were rich, I would give her everything to compensate for this misfortune. But I beg pardon of God and men for having taken part in the Revolution of July!"

JNO. LESPERANCE.

HUMOROUS.

EVERY editor has his shear ally.

THE individual who was accidentally injured by the discharge of his duty is still very low.

A MAN'S good fortune often turns his head; his bad fortune as often averts the heads of his friends.

THE man who goes to church simply because he has nothing else to do, may not be a heathen, but he is certainly an idle worshipper.

"WE'VE got to economize, or the country is ruined," was the soliloquy of a husband as he kindled the fire with his wife's bustle.

THE small boy who bade good-bye to Sunday-school just after the picnic is now making a desperate effort to regain his standing in time for the coming Christmas tree.

THE natives of Lord Howe's Island, in the South Pacific, petitioned for four schoolmasters and some iron pots. The gentle aborigines evidently contemplate giving a party.

A WESTERN poet who had expressed a wish to die "amidst the grand solitude of the eternal mountain-tops," was killed by the explosion of a pint of cheap kerosene.

"SARE," said a Frenchman, wishing to display his knowledge of the English language, "did it rain to-morrow?" "Yes, sare," was the equally bombastic reply—"yes, sare, it vas."

A schoolmaster thus describes a money-lender: "He serves you in the present tense, he lends in the conditional mood, keeps you in the objective, and ruins you in the future!"

A PREACHER who arrived at the kirk wet through asked an old Scotchwoman what he should do, to which she replied, "Gang into the pulpit as sune as ye can. Ye'll be dry enough there."

THE other day a Detroitter, who has a good record of army service, took down his revolver to shoot a cat which had been hanging about the house. After looking at him while he fired six shots, the cat walked away. While he was loading up for more destruction the shooter's small boy inquired: "Father, did you ever kill any one while you were in the army?" "I suppose so, my son." After a long pause the boy continued: "Then you must have got near enough to hit 'em with an axe, didn't you?" It was then discovered to be about school time.