

A Use for His Majesty's Mails.

A few years ago it was my good fortune to spend a few weeks at a large, old-fashioned farmhouse upon the Quantocks, one of three ranges of hills surrounding the lovely Vale of Taunton Dean, in Somersetshire—all historic ground, and the scene of troublous events during the time of the Monmouth rebellion.

In the hush and calm of the rural life of the present, it was very difficult to realize the terrible happenings of over two centuries ago, even although, every here and there, an inscription over an old gateway, a monument in a churchyard, or a sundial upon a gray old tower, recorded some deed of valor or the untimely end of the ancestors of some peer or peasant who had taken part in the civil war which had once desolated that fair land.

Amongst my frequent pleasures, I reckoned a visit to the village school, where a kindly welcome always awaited me after I had first introduced myself as a visitor from Canada. "Canada! Why, I have been there," said the master, "and I sometimes tell the children about that grand country, which is making such giant strides nowadays, and growing by leaps and bounds." And then followed the invitation which I was so pleased to accept, to drop in now and then to answer questions about the trees and the flowers, and the birds, beasts and fishes of the land of my adoption. "Tell us more, tell us more," was always the cry, and as far as I could I would always do so, with the result that one day, when I somewhat recklessly asked for a show of hands as to "who would like to go to Canada?" up went every hand, from that of the biggest boy to the tiny child from the kindergarten benches, or from what would have been the kindergarten benches had that pretty village schoolhouse, tucked cosily into its own lovely little cranny of the Quantocks, only been in this big Canada of ours, where Froebel's pleasant methods of turning play into lessons and lessons into play are so well understood and so generally practiced.

About a year ago, some time after my return home, it was my privilege to have a little talk with the pupils of a senior class in one of our Forest City schools, and, after telling them of my pleasant experiences amongst the village children of rural England, suggested an interchange of ideas by correspondence. I want to give you some extracts from an extremely interesting letter from a child of only ten years old, which, I think you will agree with me, compares very favorably with those which appear from time to time in our own Home Magazine, written by children of the same age. From what I saw of the methods which prevailed at Bagborough, I noted that, whilst the curriculum laid down was much more simple than that in vogue in Canada, great stress was laid upon observation, upon the thorough digestion of a fact before the next presented itself, and the ability to give expression by voice or pen carefully cultivated. Spelling was taught less by the learning by heart of long columns of words than by tackling each word, as it appeared to be a cause of stumbling to the little reader or writer. Thus, I was not surprised to find in this letter, covering four sides of foolscap paper, not only hardly one word mis-spelt, and very good writing, but no blots, and an evident enjoyment of the pleasant task allotted to its writer of replying to one of "the beautiful letters from your school. We think you must be a clever lot of children to write such clever ones." "Our school is very small," writes Beatrice, "only 63 children altogether. The building is a little, old-fashioned place, but the old windows have been taken out, and new ones put in. We have some beautiful new playgrounds; but although our school and village are old-fashioned, the natural sights are grand and delightful. Our teacher says

that, although he has travelled hundreds of miles in America, he never saw any natural scenery to beat our old Bagborough. Mrs. B. will tell you that. We have hills, valleys, channels, parks, woods, streams and gardens all around us. Mr. Wale is so pleased with Canada and all our Colonies. He tells us it is grand to think that you are a part of our King and Country; that you love the same Saviour, read the same Bible, speak the same language, and sing the same hymns that we do. It is so nice, he says, for Canada and England to trade with each other. All these things would make me feel quite at home with you whenever, I

a lot of fowls. Do the cocks in Canada crow in English or Canadian fashion? Mr. Wale is so glad that you keep Empire Day in Canada. This, too, makes us feel as if you and I were united, although we are so many miles apart. We were all so fond of Queen Victoria, for she was the best Queen that ever lived. Her son, King Edward, is now thought more of than ever. Our teacher says he ought to go to Canada to see those who like him so well there, too, and we think the people of Canada would be glad to welcome him. We call him King Edward the Peacemaker. Our hearts did go out in love and thankfulness

bind together as one family the hearts of the sons and daughters of the Empire, whether they claim as their actual birthplace the mother country itself or one of her daughters over the seas; and to what better use, I venture to ask you, could be put His Majesty's Mails?

H. A. B.

Current Events.

Besides eleven schooners, wrecked at Belle Isle by recent storms, seven others were driven ashore on the Labrador coast, where 250 castaways were obliged to await the arrival of a Government steamer to convey them home. The disaster was the worst since 1886.

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Hostilities in Cuba have come to an end, pending further settlement.

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It has been ascertained that about 7,000 lives were lost, chiefly by drowning, in the typhoon which recently swept over Hong Kong, China.

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In Russia, an unsuccessful attempt was made recently to assassinate ex-Premier Witte. The enormity of the massacre at Siedlice has, it is said, stirred the Government into taking some preliminary steps towards granting broader privileges to the Jews.

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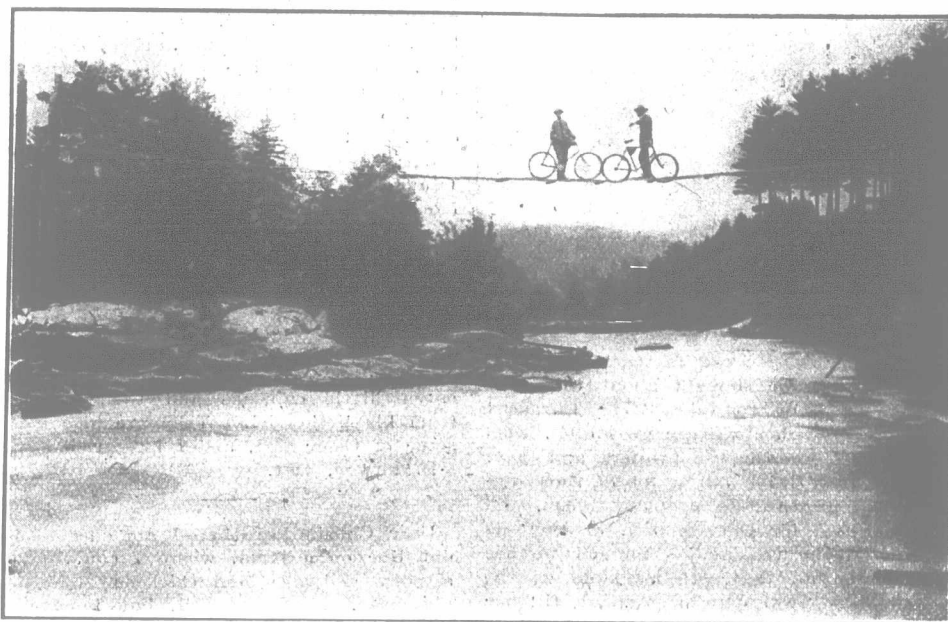
DEATH OF GENERAL TREPPOFF.

Possibly the most dreaded and most hated man in Russia passed away by the death, on September 15th, of Gen. Dmitri Treppoff. Gen. Treppoff for many years has seemed to bear a charmed life. Attempt after attempt was made upon his life, yet he always escaped, succumbing, however, at the last, to a complication of disease brought on by nerve-strain and the want of exercise. For nearly two years he had lived practically in a hidden room, issuing his orders by telephone, going out, when he had occasion to inspect his troops, in a Red-Cross ambulance. Treppoff's father was found as an infant on the door of a German house, and was given the name of Trepp-Hoff (German for doorstep). When he grew up, and entered the Russian secret police, he Russianized the name to Treppoff. The son followed his father's career in the police, but his rise was rapid. He became Governor-General of Moscow, and was long looked upon as one of the strongest and bravest, if most cruel-handed, men in Russia. When affairs came to a crisis he was sent for and made Governor-General of St. Petersburg, becoming thus, practically, dictator of Russia. To his influence over the Czar, it was said, was due the dissolution of the Douma. In Russia there is much joy over his death.

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PROGRESS IN CHINA.

Civilization in China is proceeding with a rapidity which, to Occidentals, is nothing short of astounding, and which gives good promise that within the course of the next decade or two the great empire, which has been sleeping so long, will be a force, commercially and politically, to be reckoned with. Last spring, it will be remembered, a commission from China visited Europe and the United States, with the object of examining into the different forms of government. This commission has presented a memorial to the Empress Dowager, praying for reforms, and as a result, the Emperor, behind whom stands the Dowager Empress, has issued an edict, proclaiming that the laws of the country have become antiquated, and showing forth the necessity for a new code of laws. The Government, it appears, must proceed gently, in order that the



3.—Wire Bridge, over Bonnechere River, near Renfrew, Ont. The only one of the kind in Canada.

should come there. I am only a girl now, but Mr. Wale often mentions boys in America and Australia now whom he used to teach in this school, so I may go, too, some day. I will then tell you all about our games and the kind of work we do in school, though I suppose your grammar, dictation, arithmetic, geography, drawing, sewing and drill are much the same as ours. I should like to take you over our farm and show you the pigs, chickens, sheep, horses, ducks, etc., and I would ask mother to give you a nice cup of tea, with some cream and eggs. We have such

to Canada when you sent your brave soldiers to help us against the Boers. Our village Club Day is fixed for the 15th. They march with brass band and streamers and rosettes. I wish you were here to see it. I would try to make you happy."

Of course, I know that Bagborough is not the only corner of old England into which every now and again letters from the pupils of our Canadian schools find their way, but would it not be well to promote this pleasant interchange of thought wherever possible, as a perpetuation of the loving tie which should ever



4.—Swinging Bridge, over chasm 300 ft. deep, Capilano Canyon, B. C.