

JANUARY 2, 1775.

It hath been such a busy time that my writing to thee hath tarried. Methinks it was home-sickness that I felt when I was writing last, but my melancholy will ne'er be confided to thee; it was driven quite away by the cheery voices of our friends, Lieut. and Mistress Fraser, who had walked seventeen miles on snowshoes to spend the Christmas with us. We decked the house with greens and trailing vines until it had quite a festive appearance, but we missed the bright holly berries that are wont to make gay the rooms at home.

Christmas Day was bright and cold, with deep snow. In the morning Ralph had us all assemble in the great kitchen, and presented the Christmas gifts. Then he read prayers from the book as is his wont; sometimes I would that Hannah Fox, who thinketh there is no earnestness in these prayers could hear as I have heard the petition, "Give peace in our time, Oh Lord." Methinks she would find no lack of earnestness.

After a rich and plenteous dinner Lieut. Fraser took me for a walk on snowshoes. It was my first attempt, and when I stood up I could not move an inch; but by dint of dragging and persuading I got a few steps and then floundered down in the deep snow. The shoes had to be taken off before I could arise. I was in a sorry plight, but, after brushing and rubbing, started again. Lieut. Fraser thinketh I do well for a beginner.

Christmas evening we had much discussion concerning a name for the estate. It was at last accorded to Lieut. Fraser, who named it Selma Hall, from his favourite poem "Ossian."

Mistress Fraser and I have become fast friends; we have many mutual likings. She knoweth Capt. Cochrane and esteems him highly. She spoke many kind words of him. So as we sat in my room I poured out my tale of sorrow to her; all that I have written, and more mayhap. It was hard for her to believe, it was so against all she knows of him. She hath never heard of Louise Caron. Something she hath told me hath moved me much. Indeed I am ever too quick of speech, and oftentimes am punished sorely for my hastiness. It was concerning my rude answer, when he asked to present his friend Madame Dorion. She thinketh my answer was well calculated to hurt him, as he might think I had reference to his only sister, who married a Frenchman much against the wishes of her family. For a time all went happily; then a new face caught his fancy; then he treated his wife with great cruelty, and at last denied the legality of their marriage; and one bitter winter night turned her out of doors. It was then that Madame Dorion befriended her; at their home she died, before her brothers reached the town. Her husband had left ere the snow melted. It was a vain search for him, but before summer was over news came of his death in a drunken brawl. It was indeed a sad story, and I am sore disturbed.

Mistress Fraser, who goes to Halifax with her husband, will try to find out for me the way in which he regarded my unhappy speech. She carries no message for me. It would not be fitting, as it is more than possible that the tale I overheard of his engagement is true.

SELMA HALL, January 27, 1775.

It hath been a terribly trying time, and we are much put about. A week after Ralph left, there came a messenger to say that he was down with a grievous rheumatism, very ill. Caroline must needs be with him, but had a deep concern at leaving me here alone. I am at heart a coward, but assured her there was no cause for worry, with Gross and wife and the servants as protectors. I have many occupations, among others the arranging of my letters into a long journal for thee.

Caroline set out on horse back, accompanied by Urquhart, one of the men servants, who takes a sled and will bring back both horses. The messenger who came from Halifax brought me a letter from Mistress Fraser. She has not seen Captain Cochrane, he being up the Musquodoboit hunting.

FEBRUARY 1, 1775.

We have been much disturbed by the appearance of many Indians in the hollow, about half a mile from us. The Mic-mac chief, Paul, who is disposed to be friendly, is not with them. They are ill-disposed looking men. Several have been round the barns, and two comely squaws visited the house.

FEBRUARY 5, 1775.

The Indians have encamped in the hollow. Gross dreadeth their pilfering and a quarrel between them and our men. Urquhart, who has been behaving strangely since his return, seems much too friendly with them. This afternoon I espied him walking with one of the squaws. I acquainted Gross with the fact. He thinketh when Urquhart returned from Halifax, he brought with him a store of rum, which he hath hidden, and is using as barter with the Indians for furs. He sayeth Urquhart, who has always seemed so quiet and civil, is a perfect demon when drunk, and careth not for friend or savage.

FEBRUARY 6.

It hath snowed steadily for two days, and, methinks, if it continues another, we will be well buried in it. The men had great difficulty in making a path through the great drifts. Urquhart, who was out late last night, has been away all day. He took no breakfast. I have been concerned as to whether he might not be buried in one of these great drifts, but Gross thinketh he is carousing with the Indians.

FEBRUARY 7.

I shudder when I think of what I have to write to thee. It is terrible, terrible; a scene I pray to forget, but 'tis ever before my eyes. I tarried late, thinking mayhap Urquhart would return. It was near twelve, and I had turned, candle in hand, to go up stairs, but was arrested by fierce whoops and a great uproar outside. The door was burst in and Urquhart fell at my feet, close followed by three savages. They knocked the candle from my hand, and me against the wall, but in the dull light of the fire I saw the flash of their knives, as they struck poor Urquhart many times. By this time the screams and noise had brought our men. The savages started away, and one of them, as he passed, seized me by the hair, and cut off a great handful. It was all over in a few moments. Poor Urquhart was quite dead, his body cut and hacked in many places. It was all terror and confusion. We were much afraid of a second attack, and securely barricaded the house.

FEBRUARY 8.

To-day the Indians have left the encampment. We are still securely barricaded, fearing treachery on their part. I have been long upstairs with the children; they are much terrified, and even the boys would have me sit with them and little Florence held me fast. The children had just dropped asleep when I heard a loud knocking, and in an instant Gross was at my door, saying someone desired to speak with me. I went down, and just inside the door stood Edward Cochrane, with a great gladness shining in his eyes and hands outstretched to meet me.

FEBRUARY 9.

Edward and Gross have walked down to the hollow, and in their absence I will write to thee; 'tis a glorious winter's day, and I feel so glad and happy that, if it were not for poor Urquhart lying in his coffin downstairs, I would be singing for very joy.

Edward met Mistress Fraser in Halifax on Monday. She told him of her converse with me, and he started at once for Cobequid, travelling on snow-shoes; he liked to have perished in the great snowstorm; it makes me tremble to even think of anything so dreadful. Last night we sat long by the fire holding sweet converse with each other. It was a sad misunderstanding that came near clouding both our lives, and all through the jealousy and machinations of Sophia Gore. She confessed it all to Mistress Fraser. It was she I overheard at the ball; 'twas purposely done so that I could hear, and as I look at Edward's noble, truthful face, I hate myself for being so easily made her dupe. She took great pains to spread a report of my engagement to Major Ferrers, which his being so continually with us did much to confirm. Sophia Gore hath lately come into a fortune of many thousands of pounds; yet I would not give one hour of this day's sweet happiness for all her gold. To-night we expect Lieut. and Mistress Fraser, who tarry with us until Ralph and Caroline return.

HALIFAX, June 28, 1775.

It is but little more than a year since I came hither, a year of great events to me. God hath been very gracious in all ways to us. To-morrow Edward and I are to be married in St. Paul's Church. In the afternoon we sail for Boston. Methinks we would be perfectly happy were it not for this terrible war with our brethren. Major Ferrers and Sophia Gore were married last month. She tried to do me great harm, but good came out of evil. Edward sends kind regards to the cousin he has yet to meet, and, with love to thee and all our friends,

I sign myself for the last time,

Thy loving cousin,

DOROTHY HERIOT.

Ronald Fraser, who taketh this, also beareth a package for thee containing some Indian work, moccasins and snow-shoes, also a goodly number of barks of maple sugar; 'tis delicious.

## THE RAMBLER.

ON the train the other day I perceived a young man—something between a loafer and a labourer—very much exercised over a couple of books that the enterprising agent had chucked into his lap. I had wearied of the barren Canadian winter landscape. I had just finished Kipling's latest, "The Light that Failed," and consequently looked around for some diversion. It came in shape of the curious but not unnatural antics of the man in question. He, you could see, would probably have described himself as "not much of a reader," for he waited some moments before he even picked the top book up. When he did, he turned it all over, yawning; clearly literature was not his line. Then he looked at the title-page, and knit his brows. Then he dipped into the contents, and came out no wiser, apparently, for he put the book down with a monstrous yawn, and took up the other. This one again puzzled him, I imagined, by its title, for he knitted his brows as before, but upon looking through the pages seemed to be impressed at last, since he began at the first chapter, and soon appeared to be interested. Had I not been in an idle, yet observant, mood, I might not have looked at him again, but in a few minutes I noticed him giving the most peculiar glances around, down and across the car. I can hardly describe them.

They were, however, thoroughly furtive, for one thing, and a little bit shamefaced. In the seat opposite him sat a young lady, who presently reached across and took the book he had first looked into. At this his sense of guilt, or whatever it was, so increased, and was so visible in his bearing, that I involuntarily leaned forward to see if the nature of the novel he held in his hand could have anything to do with his redoubled fear and anxiety. I looked and beheld in his hand "Nana," the masterpiece of Zola, and in the hand of the young lady the notorious "Kreutzer Sonata." Apparently unlettered, yet full of good instincts, the man was clearly nonplussed, but he read on and on for some moments, only pausing to lift that furtive stare up to his companion's face and behind her. Soon the young lady tired. Tolstoi's directness did not even scare her into interest, and she put the green and black thing down on the seat whence she had picked it up. With a look of relief the man put down "Nana," and took up the other. His brow cleared, his face beamed, he looked forward to an intellectual treat at last, and soon he settled down to work. Little he knew what lay before him. Slowly, however, he perceived, and now a thrill of sympathy coursed through my appreciative system. I saw him lift frightened, confused eyes to the charming young lady who had only yawned over the "Kreutzer Sonata," and dropping book No. 2, the man buttoned his coat, seized his bag and made for—the smoking-car, I imagine, to think over in his own way that question so frequently propounded in the leading magazines and dailies of the age, "Whither are we Drifting?"

I have been eating the lotos in Hamilton. It tasted very well, at the Royal Hotel, commercial rates \$2.50 per day. Then there was the absolutely perfect hospitality displayed by the cultivated Hamilton people who know—none better—how to entertain and dispose of guests. Then there was the charm of having the market so nearly in the centre of the city—it makes of it something like a quaint English market town, only adorned by a much handsomer Town Hall than most English towns possess. Turkey were no cheaper on the market than they are in Toronto. Butter seems to be, but it is not quite so good. I bought one pound at twenty cents and put it into my bag along with "Rambler" notes and the time table, and much to the astonishment of the crone who served me, who, when I told her that the butter was going to Toronto, lifted her hands and said:

"Eh? but that's a long long way just to carry one pound of butter!" I apologized for not taking a crock in good set terms, which partly appeased and partly mystified my ancient friend of the cart. Then after a Railroad Breakfast, whatever that may be—and very good it was, howsoever differing from plain everyday breakfasts—the hollow rumble of the Hotel Bus was heard and I and the "Rambler" notes and the pound of butter and the time table were soon "all abo-o-oard for the East!"

Did I dare, in a recent issue to say a word, one word, one fraction, one split atom, one Lucretian particle of a word against the great Rudyard? Let me take it back. My friend Luke Sharp, of London, sends me the Xmas number of the *Detroit Free Press* with a very good story of his own in it, and such a story by Kipling! The name of it is—unusual as usual—"The Record of Badalia Herodsfoot," and its only fault is that it is too real, too graphic, too dreadful, too true.

Then here to hand comes "The Light that Failed" which shows its gifted creator in an entirely new light. Here we get thoroughly rid of Mrs. Hawksbee and her crew; we have instead pulsing artist life in London, with vivid correct glimpses of Paris and the Soudan. There was once a novelist called David Christie Murray; there was another called James Payn; there is a third called William Black. Behold the fourth arises who, chamber-like, is all three at once with the natural and incisive force of Hugo and Daudet as well. Poor Dick Helder! Perhaps he is as yet the most pathetic of all Mr. Kipling's figures. And now the train is slowing. I am sorry for the compositors who have to make up this copy, but the swinging and swaying of the G.T.R. is inevitable, I suppose. Good-bye to the great, staring, wide, frozen lake, to the dreary shore, to the sheds and fences and black pines that make of Canada such a desert in December, and welcome even the complete second wilderness of the Union Station.

It is known that pelagic animals—i. e., those living on the high seas—by day descend below the surface, rising at night. Groom and Loob think that this daily migration of these animals is due to heliotropism. In the daytime this is negative, the strong light driving them from the surface; while at night it exercises a positive action, causing them to seek the surface waters. Their observations show that light, and not heat, is the exciting cause.—*New York Independent*.

The French Government is proceeding actively with its policy of connecting various outlying colonies and possessions with the Mother Country by means of submarine cables. We recently made a note of the sailing of a telegraph steamer to lay cables between Martinique, Dutch Guiana, Cayenne, Brazil and Santiago de Cuba. This system, when completed, will give all the French West Indian possessions telegraphic communication with North and South America, and consequently with Europe.—*Electrical Review*.