

A CAMPING-OUT REMINISCENCE OF THE RIVER ST. LAWRENCE.

At last the holidays are here,
And for a time the tasks so drear
Are laid aside and out of sight,
Much to the joyance and delight
Of the young scholar, whose tired brain
Is aching, through the nervous strain
Of algebraic rules abstruse,
Which would much older heads confuse:
Besides those studies, those who rule
Have foisted on the modern school,
Leaving no rest unto his mind—
For oft the studious youth we find
Till far beyond the midnight hour
In silence o'er his lessons pore,
When he, exhausted, doth retire
With fevered pulse and brain afire:
And, judging from the past, to borrow
A dread of harder tasks to-morrow,
Till Nature, wearied by the strain,
Succumbs at last to inward pain.
And often, in the land of dreams,
His restless spirit starts and screams
With sore affright, for there a ghost
Proclaims that all his labor's lost,
And that his papers failed to pass
E'en order of the second class.

What wonder, then, that now at last,
The dread examination past,
He swift should hasten to enjoy
Those pastimes loved by every boy?
What wonder that his mind should flout
All joys but those of camping out,
When free from all restraint undue,
He may his shattered health renew;
And in the charms of Nature bask
Awhile, to fit him for the task
He knows that he must face once more
When summer holidays are o'er.
And learn through studious care and strife
The sterner tasks of after life!

But why should schoolboys moralize,
Or at their age seem wondrous wise?
Avaunt, dull care! the oar we'll ply,
And to our destination hie,
Where, sailing midst the sylvan isles,
We'll woo fair Nature's sweetest smiles.

Within a charming wooded glade,
Beneath the sugar maples' shade,
We pitched our tent, nor Sol's fierce rays
Could penetrate our leafy haze,
Which formed a glorious canopy
'Neath which a potentate might lie
And speculate upon that fate
Which scared his mind with cares of state,
But which to us proved safe retreat
And shelter from the noonday heat.

Our couch of cedar boughs was formed—
Aught else our youthful fancy scorned—
Our days were spent with line and gun,
And oft ere Phœbus had begun
At early morn to climb the steep,
Our barque was launched upon the deep,
And skimmed across the sparkling tide:
O'er which she gallantly doth glide:
Or, plunging 'neath the cooling flood,
Disporting in a joyous mood,
The thought would in our breasts arise—
What mortal could such joys despise,
And still believe that constant strife
For gold was chiefest aim of life?
To us no thought such pang can give:
Our only care is how to live,
And cultivate the passing hours
As seemeth best in Nature's bowers:
Nor let our troubles, once so rife,
Defeat the aim of present life.

But see! the sun is in the sky,
'Tis time to cease the oar to ply;
For now a monitor within
Proclaims 'tis time we should begin
To satisfy, as best we can,
The cravings of the inner man.

Then row, boys—row into the shore,
And broach the good things there in store,
And quell with all our boyish might
The stern demands of appetite.

Quick, bring the pine knots, light the fire,
And, as the smoke and flames mount higher,
Put on the pot for boiling water,
And fetch the fishes forth for slaughter;
Put on the pan and fry the snipe,
Bring forth the buns and berries ripe,
The pie, the butter, and the bread,
And show how camping boys are fed.
Let new potatoes from the field
Their due share of enjoyment yield,
And from the shallow, reedy brake,
Bring luscious joints of bullfrog steak;
And place the plates as fast as able
Upon the rough-board rustic table;
Nor let a linen spread deface
The beauty of our feasting place.

Now all is ready—eat, boys! eat,
For shame 'twould be to Nature cheat;
And as the good things disappear,
With repartee the moments cheer;
For nought, the doctors say, gives zest
To appetite like well timed jest;
Nor aught can equal hearty laugh,
As nature's sparkling ale we quaff.

But breakfast past, clear up the dishes,
And gather up the loaves and fishes.

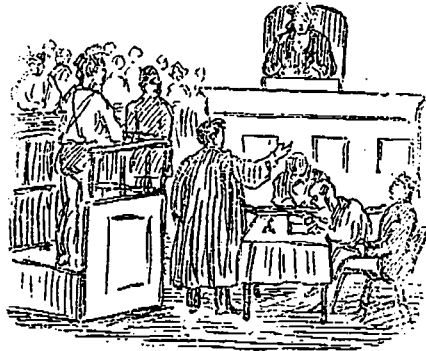
Ah! there's so little really left—
The patient dog is nigh bereft
Of his just share, and yet we will
Scrape up some crumbs his bark to still.

Now, since our royal feast is done,
Pronounced by all as "number one,"
An hour or so within our tent
We pass in pleasant merriment,
Before our guns again we take
To hunt the wild duck in the brake,
Or with the crafty hook and line
Invite the fish with us to dine.

'Tis thus we spend the joyful day
Along the shore, or on the bay;
And when the summer eve at last
Its shadows o'er the forest cast,
Unto our tents we then repair,
Our couch of cedar to prepare,
And light our lamps, and jest or read,
Till tender Somnus gently pleads
With soothing accents in his voice,
And lulls to rest her wearied boys.
Whilst the great river rushing by,
The ear charms with its melody.
And on the night air, calm and still,
Float the weird notes of the whip-poor-will,
The solitary whip-poor-will,
The lonely, plaintive whip-poor-will.
But all unconscious of the sound
The wearied boys, in sleep profound,
Are wandering on that mystic beach
Which sordid souls can never reach,
Where every scene with joy is fraught,
Nor cares of life have ruin wrought,
But beautiful and grand it seems,
Ouvralling a poet's dreams.

Ah! may those happy youths ne'er know
The source whence bitter tear-drops flow;
But may their life path, like their bower,
Be beautified by leaf and flower;
And when that wisdom born of age,
No longer young, but wise and sage,
May they remember early joys,
Nor curb the instincts of their boys.

—McTear.



BORN IN THE PURPLE.

A POLICE COURT EPISODE.

"Oh! blame not the bard, sir,"
Said Shamus O'Neil,
"I think it is hard, sir,
To say that I'd steal,
Or any man's pockets I'd ever go through,
I'm a lineal descendant of Brian Boru,"
Said the beak, "In Green Castle
Are several wings,
And one is reserved for
The old Irish kings,
You will rest there a month free from Moses Oates'
rains,
And reflect on your ancestors thrashing the Danes."

"Be jabers!" cried Shamus, "It's kind that ye are,
But my big brother Dinny is here at the bar:
I trust that your worship will not take affright,
I'll not blow ye up, but perhaps Dinny might."

Mr. Forster says that "every man can leave
the world better than he finds it." True, but
in some cases only by leaving it.—Punch.



SHE WAS DEEPLY INTERESTED.

"A three cent stamp, please," said a soft-spoken little man as he stood before the stamp counter in a certain post office in a certain vast city, and deposited a five cent piece thereon.
"A three cent stamp, please."

"Just at this moment," read the maiden fair behind the counter, from the yellow covered book she held in her hand, "'Rupert dashed to the rescue: seizing the villain by his ears he hurled him over the precipice with the words, Die, tr-r-r-rait-or-r-r; Ruperrrt de Bworboolong'" (so the maiden fair pronounced it) "neverry forgives an injury: and now I must have—"

"A three cent stamp if you please," again pleaded the meek voice.

The maiden fair glanced up from the pages of her novel, and taking out a one cent bill stamp, shoved it towards the humble little man, deposited the five cent piece in the till and resumed her reading, in a semi-audible voice, "'The haughty Baron Von Spuyten Teufel, quaffing a gobler of Johannisberg—' what's Johnnysbug, Louisa?" she asked maiden fair No. 2, behind the counter, who was engaged in a low toned (not as opposed to 'high toned') murmurous conversation with a youth clad in fashionable, rusty-looking corduroy:— calf measurement $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches—

"D'no 'm shaw" replied No. 2, "p'raps its—"

"A three cent stamp, please, and my change," once more came those soft, gentle, unobtrusive tones from the little man.

"Oh! drat the man; I gave you your stamp ages ago," she replied.

"You gave me this, miss," said the little fellow, pointing to the one cent bill stamp.

"Couldn't 'a done: we don't keep 'em' reported the maiden fair, No. 1.

"At least oblige me with my change then?" urged the mannikin.

"You didn't give me nothing" snapped the fair one, flopping down and again becoming oblivious to her surroundings in the pages of her book, where she followed the fortunes of the haughty Baron Von Spuyten Teufel and Rupert de Bworboolong, until roused by a deep sigh from the little man as he departed to purchase a stamp elsewhere.

"M'riar," said maiden fair No. 2, in an excited tone to Louisa, "M'riar, I do believe that little feller's a newspaper reporter."

"My!" exclaimed the other, "he ain't really, is he?"

But he was, and the above is what he wrote, and it is the truth.

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