

AFTER MANY YEARS.

They stood by the stile 'neath the shade of the trees,
That nodded in time to the rhythmic breeze,
And all of a sudden he dropped on his knees—
His aged, neuralgic, and rheumatic knees—
Plunged into the clover before her.
And little cared he for the dew so damp,
Or the bothering pain of a nasty cramp,
As he vowed that she was his guiding lamp—
A sterling, electrical stamp of a lamp—
And he always would adore her!

"Now will you, Susanna, good woman, be mine?"
"Yes, Jacob, good man, I will gladly be thine!"
And she smiled on him with a smile benign—
With a broad, fat grin on her face benign—
As he crawled to his feet before her.
Then in silence they stood there, that aged pair,
And they thought that all nature had grown more fair,
And he fancied above her silvery hair—
Her scanty bob of scraggy hair—
That a halo was hovering o'er her.

They had met and loved in the golden time
When the young heart beats with a strain sublime,
And the rugged world seems set in rhyme—
A musical, mystical, merry rhyme—
And well he did adore her;
But, alas, one unfortunate Sunday night
They'd a most unfortunate lovers' fight,
And she went and married another for spite—
She actually married Tom Smith for spite—
While he wedded Sarah Storer.

Ah 'tis ever thus in this world of ours,
We dash in the dust our dearest flowers,
Then bemoan their fate through the weary hours—
Yes, in sackcloth grieve through the weary hours—
While our hearts grow sadder, sorer,
Poor Jacob's Sarah proved fierce and grim,
Her tongue was stout, though her form was slim,
And the way that she used to go for him—
Used to worry the life right out of him—
Didn't lead him to adore her.

And many a time did Susanna regret
That she'd parted from Jacob in such a pet,
And continually did she fume and fret—
For her former lover did fume and fret—
As she thought how he used to adore her,
For her husband Smith was a gruff old weed,
Whose manners and morals had gone to seed,
And who'd swear when drunk that he wished indeed—
Instead of Susanna he wished indeed,
That he'd married Sarah Storer.

Susanna and Jacob both, I ween,
Looked often back at the "might have been,"
And vowed to themselves that they'd both been green—
A couple of simpletons mightily green—
While their hearts waxed sadder, sorer,
But it happened Susanna's husband fell,
And broke his neck in a neighbour's well,
And sad in sooth am I to tell—
Poor Jacob's sorrow I cannot tell!
That soon died Sarah Storer.

Thus Susanna and Jacob were free once more,
Though not the same as they were before,
For he'd children six, and she had four—
All his six were boys, and all girls her four—
And each of the ten was a roarer.
Though Susanna and Jacob were older, I ween,
And she more fat, and he more lean,
Their hearts felt just as young as they'd been—
They were not so green as they then had been—
When first he bent before her.

And now, as I started at first to say,
He knelt at her feet on a summer's day,
And she gave her loving heart away—
Gave her sixty-four-year-old heart away—
To the man who knelt before her.
Then he took her home with her children four,
To live with him for evermore,
Or at least till their loving lives were o'er—
Till their happy and peaceful lives were o'er—
And more did he adore her.

Right happily did the days go by,
Till Susanna made Jacob's youngest cry
By planting the broomstick over his eye—
She blackened the little robin's eye—
When Jacob swore he'd floor her.
But she pulled out his forelock and called him a loon,
And ended in earnest the honeymoon,
That had started sweet but ended soon—
It was coming long, but it ended soon—
And now he don't adore her.

Stayer, Ont.

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PROSE AND POETRY.

A STORY OF CANADIAN LIFE IN FIVE CHAPTERS.

By the author of "Lazy Dick."

CHAPTER III.

A NEW RELATION.

Millie won golden opinions at her aunt's. She was such a dear, gentle, obliging, little thing everybody said. "Just her nether all over again," Aunt Mildred would remark, fondly stroking the bright brown hair. There was a universal outcry whenever she spoke of returning, so she remained the rest of the summer in Newfoundland, and then went to Halifax, where her aunt insisted upon keeping her till the end of October. Then her father wrote to say that he could not do without her any longer, everything was going to rack and ruin; Sylvia was so careless; it was time for her to come back and look after things again. So home Millie went, not by water this time though she fought hard to keep her promise, but all her objections were over-ruled.

"It is too late in the year, you will catch your death of cold," her aunt said.

In vain Millie pleaded that as she lived by the sea she could not see much difference in returning on it. The truth was when her Aunt did get an idea into her head it was no good attempting to convince her that she was in error.

"There, there, don't say anything more about it, I'm sure I'm right my dear, and I want to send you back looking so well and pretty and give them a lesson to take better care of you in future. Of course it's more sensible to travel by railway; why we've had a frost for the last four nights."

"But we've had such a fine open fall, aunt," persisted Millie.

"Yes, but who knows how long it will continue? Remember the hurricane last week; you might have a week of weather like that and I should be in an agony till I heard of your safe arrival. No, no, my child, unless you wish to thoroughly vex me, you will return by railway."

After this there was nothing for it but to accede to her aunt's wishes. But she was dreadfully sorry in her heart, eh? Come, come, my good friend, no importunate questions if you please. At least you needn't expect me to answer them. I am not quite so base as to betray the dear little thing's confidence. "Well and pretty," indeed she looked as she stepped from the carriage into her father's arms; and I can tell you he was glad enough to have her again, though he did not value her half as much as he ought. Even Sylvia seemed pleased, and the two sat up till late that night talking over Millie's visit.

"Do you think she will ask me next time?" said Sylvia, anxiously.

"I hope she will. I talked a great deal about you Syl, dear," replied Millie, kissing her sister affectionately. The generous little thing had quite forgotten and forgiven old quarrels, and was thinking how nice it was to be at home again, and how very beautiful her sister was.

"Let me do your hair for you to-night," she said; and taking the brush from Sylvia's hand, she stood by her smoothing out her long, silky, yellow tresses as she talked.

"How is my dear Mr. St. James and Mrs. St. James too?"

"Oh, pretty well, and asking after you every day of their lives."

"Mr. Graem has gone home, I suppose?"

"No, he hasn't. He's not going to return to college till after the Christmas vacation."

"Are you and he as good friends as ever?"

"Oh yes, we can't afford to quarrel or we should each be reduced to our own sweet society and 'nothing but it.'" Here Sylvia looked at her fair reflection in the glass and smiled.

"I hope you won't flirt too much with him unless you care for him, Syl; because of the rector especially. I should die of shame if you did any harm to anybody belonging to my Mr. St. James."

Sylvia laughed. "Harm," she cried, "we both know what we're about, you young simpleton. If they thought there was any danger for their precious innocent they'd take him out of my dangerous way, though," she added, a little bitterly, "they'd be glad enough to get you for him. Perhaps you won't object; you think there's no one like him I daresay?"

"Indeed I don't," was Millie's quick retort, "he can't hold a candle to my Captain Morton."

The rector was in his study writing his sermon the next morning when the door opened and Millie walked in.

"Mrs. St. James told me I should find you here and that I shouldn't disturb you," she said, sitting down on her old seat, a foot-stool, by his chair, and looking up with eyes of reverent affection. He looked unfeignedly glad to see her and smiled like an angel upon her.

"Now the room seems itself again with my little Millie here," he said. He laid his hand upon her curly head and was silent a moment. I believe the pure, tender soul was blessing her. There are some people who live in such an atmosphere of holiness that their whole lives are nothing more than one long prayer.

"I've had such a lovely visit," Millie said, presently.

"So I perceive, you look quite young again," he returned, playfully.

"No you're teasing me so I shan't tell you anything about it, though I know you're dying to know," retorted this naughty, small maiden; but you may be sure she didn't keep her promise. At least Mrs. St. James when she came in an hour afterwards said she found the girl as long-winded as a Member of Parliament in the middle of a speech.

The days were very short now but still remarkably fine, though it was the middle of November, for it was a late fall that year.

"Navigation closes to-morrow," said the Lieutenant, coming in one night to the cosy sitting-room where a fire was blazing, and Millie was putting a few finishing touches to the pretty tea-table.

"We must expect winter now," said Tom Graem, who was going to spend the evening with them, and was standing with his back to the fire winding wools for Sylvia, who held the skeins on her pretty white hands, preferring to be idle as usual.

"Oh, we may have three weeks more weather like this," replied the Lieutenant. "I remember one year when there was green grass on the ground on the fifth of December. Green grass, mind you," he repeated, with emphasis.

"Look here at my leaves, papa," said Millie, who was arranging a gorgeous bouquet of maple leaves, ferns, scarlet geraniums, and Virginia creeper in a tall glass; "I picked them all this afternoon, fancy—" She stopped suddenly, turning to the door which the servant opened at that moment saying: "Some one to see the Lieutenant."

Apparently the visitor did not wait for further announcement for he followed close upon the footsteps of the maid. The color flashed into Millie's face when a tall fellow in blue serge strode across the room to her father.

"My dear uncle, after infinite labor I've found you at last. I don't expect to be remembered, considering you never saw me before, and you won't be glad to see me, perhaps, when you know

me better; nevertheless, a forlorn wretch like myself is glad enough to find a real, live relation."

The old, brave, kindly voice; the old, bright, winning face; to Millie's eyes the speaker was unchanged.

"Who the dickens are you?" cried the astonished Lieutenant.

"Your nephew, sir. At least you're my great uncle. Let me explain. Do you remember your sister Emily writing you a letter some thirty years ago in which she informed you that her eldest son Henry had just emigrated to Australia?"

"Well, now you remind me of it, I do," said the Lieutenant, slowly.

"I am his son," said the stranger, "his only child. My father died when I was sixteen, my mother, the year following."

"And what have you done since?"

"Roughed it," said the Captain, quietly. "I've been knocked about here and there and everywhere, but I'm tough you see. Through the interest of a friend of my father's in Australia I got the command of a ship, having passed the necessary examinations. I'd always been fond of the sea and even when quite a small chap spent half my time among the shipping at Sydney; and—here I am."

All this time he had never looked at Millie though he was intensely conscious of her presence, but in his manner might be traced the self-respect of a man who was bent upon proving the truth of his assertion, and after that of having his relationship willingly recognized, or not recognized at all. But the Lieutenant did not keep him in doubt for he put out his great, broad hand and spoke in his heartiest manner.

"Welcome, my boy, welcome; you must make a long stay with us now you have found us. Your name?"

"Marcus."

"Here, girls," and he turned to his daughters, "come here and be introduced to your cousin Marcus. You've heard me speak of your Aunt Emily many a time; well here's her grandson."

Then Morton turned to them at once. Sylvia held out her hand and welcomed him in her sweetest voice, sweet indeed to him for she said: "To think Millie that your Captain Morton should be our cousin after all." He regarded her for a moment with honest admiration, which was by no means lost upon that young and innocent creature; then he passed her with a proud glad face to Mildred.

"Well," he enquired, with a happy laugh, "are you willing to have me for a cousin?"

"I don't know yet," said that cautious young woman, but there was that in her manner which satisfied him.

"How did you find us out?" asked the Lieutenant, as they sat down at the tea-table, and the Captain replied:

"After my father's death our English correspondence soon dropped; naturally when the correspondents were unknown to each other and my grand-parents were both dead. Besides I was never in the same place many days together. I knew, however, when I came to this country that I had a great uncle somewhere. Then this summer when I met Miss—Leslie—" he hesitated looking at Mildred.

The Lieutenant burst into his huge laugh, "Come, come," he cried; "no ceremony. Christian names among cousins, you know, besides that title belongs to Sylvia."

The wicked fellow availed himself of the privilege with the utmost alacrity.

"When I met Millie then, we happened to speak upon the subject. Soon after I wrote to England making some inquiries, and after some delay received a letter furnishing the necessary information."

"Your meeting with Millie was a singular coincidence," remarked Sylvia.

"It was a very lucky one at any rate," said the Captain; and Sylvia blushed and took the words as a compliment to herself. All the evening she was particularly gracious to this new-found relative and snubbed poor Tom Graem most unmercifully who, by the way, we have quite forgotten, and who would have fared badly that night had it not been for gentle little Millie. She took pity upon him and for the sake of her beloved rector exerted herself considerably for his entertainment. The consequence of this innocent proceeding was that the two young men having been introduced were merely distantly civil and parted later on each furiously jealous of the other, the Captain scenting a rival afar, and Tom, vice versa. For Tom had some time ago arrived at the conclusion that Sylvia was "not good for much," but Millie "was the dearest little soul in the world."

CHAPTER IV.

MISUNDERSTANDINGS.

Millie in her own home was very different from Millie on board the *Saracen*; that the Captain soon found. More gentle and unselfish than even he had imagined, but grave and pre-occupied as one bearing the weight of a good deal of responsibility; lacking too, as a rule, that innocent girlish playfulness that had been so charming in his eyes. She had gone back into her old way of keeping her eyes down when speaking or otherwise; a habit the Captain thoroughly detested. A thin wall of reserve was rising between them, which he strove manfully but vainly to break away. His three weeks of hardly-earned holidays were slipping away and he had made no headway at all he said to himself with a sore heart. Was it all Millie's

fault though? Hardly, I think; for, of course, if he was never absent from Sylvia's side how was she to know what was in his mind? For Sylvia was always beautiful, always gracious, and so kind. It was she who showed him all the beauties of the place, took him here and there and was never, never tired. Did he like poetry? Oh how nice! She doted on it herself. Perhaps some day, with a pretty show of modesty, she would let him see some of her poor attempts if he would promise not to laugh at them. A promise the poor fellow rashly gave. And what a beautiful life a sailor's must be, she was sure.

"Pretty hard work," he told her with a laugh. "Ah! but so poetical; just fancy—"

"All the sunsets, and moonsets, and the stormlets," broke in Millie with biting scorn. The conversation had been altogether between the other two hitherto; somehow Sylvia always contrived that it should be so; she had a delicate way of ignoring your existence which might be polite, but was to say the least of it, exasperating. At Millie's speech she lifted up her beautiful face to Morton with a deprecating gesture.

"Ah, Millie! she always spoils a beautiful ideal," she exclaimed.

"With her dreadful, dreadful common-sense." He answered Sylvia, but turned to Mildred. She was looking down as usual so he did not see her fun-beaming eyes. They grew very grave in an instant, however, with the expression he used to call discontented, but which was in reality only sad.

"There!" cried Sylvia, triumphantly. "You see you really should try not to be so prosaic, Millie, my dear; even Marcus notices that. Why, where are you going?"

"To see about dinner," replied Millie walking off. Morton was just going to follow when Sylvia stopped him with the question,

"Oh, do you think I have offended her? I'm so afraid I have," and she looked sweetly distressed.

"Then you'd better go and beg her pardon," he said, bluntly.

"Oh, I daren't," she exclaimed; "you don't know Millie's temper;" here she sighed.

Marcus felt angry and wretched, he hardly knew why. He was too loyal a lover to listen to a whisper that was injurious to Millie, but at the same time he did not want to quarrel with Sylvia. He liked her very much and admired her too. Why shouldn't he? The simple-hearted fellow would have said; for he was not half so shrewd as Tom Graem, and no match at all for a clever woman like Sylvia. He thought besides that to have her for his friend might aid his cause with regard to Mildred. After Sylvia's last amiable speech, therefore, he walked up and down uneasily, watched by her bright eyes.

"Sisters should never quarrel," at last he said, gravely.

"Much you know about it," thought Sylvia in disdain, but she said: "That's just like you; always so considerate; I declare, Marcus, that's why we've all fallen in love with you;" and she gave him a little admiring glance. As ill-luck would have it, Millie passed the door just then, saw him blush and heard the words,

"I wish that were true, Sylvia."

Certainly, to all appearances, the Captain seemed devoted to Sylvia. All that afternoon she kept him by her side, reading out of a closely written book, pages and pages of verse, and forbids us to say poetry. Millie went out for a walk, met Tom Graem on her return, and they both came in at sunset bright and glowing with rapid motion and laden with shells and sea-mosses.

"Still at it?" said the naughty small maiden, as she saw Sylvia with her book at the window held up to the waning light. "How you must have enjoyed yourself!" she continued with calm sarcasm, turning to Marcus; and then, in spite of his seeming bad treatment of her, the little generous heart relented; he looked so unlike his happy self.

"There, Syl!" she cried, "you'd better stop now I'm in the room. Come, Captain Morton, and help me to arrange these."

He came with alacrity, and in pity for his afternoon penance, she came out of herself and gave a vivid description of her afternoon ramble, now and then replying to his sallies as she used to do on board the *Saracen*, and laughing her pretty, rare laugh. Morton was almost beside himself with delight at the unexpected change, and worked harder than Dr. Watt's little bee at improving the shining hour.

"I haven't collected shells enough to finish my grotto," said Millie, as she put on the last piece of sea-weed. "How pretty that sea-urchin looks there, Captain Morton."

It was one he had just been laying by her sea-weed. Her little hand lay close to his own and he longed to touch it. A moment later he yielded to the temptation.

"Millie," he said, softly, "don't call me 'Captain Morton,' it hurts me so. Why won't you look at me?"

She raised her lovely eyes to his face and saw a real sadness there.

"I can't call you anything else," she faltered.

"You can call me Marcus. Sylvia does, and I'm your cousin as well as hers."

"You don't mind my calling you Captain?" Millie still objected shyly.

"Yes, I do. I mind it more than anything else in the world," he said, savagely.

Just a gleam of mischief was lurking round her quiet little mouth. "Well, I'll call you cousin, if you won't look so cross," she said presently.

"Marcus," he urged, gaily, "and you won't