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No 6

Poetry.

I AM HAPPY.

I am happy! I confess it!
Though, perhaps, my muse should sing
Of some sorrow that doth shadow
All my soul with its dark wing.
But she'd rather sing of gladness,
Lather sing a cheery song,
So I grant her full permission,
As she bears my pen along.

Happy! happy! Hear the echoes
Giving back the words to me!
Every one is full of laughter
As a child's heart, full of glee.
Happy! happy! Birds repeat it,
Zephyrs and the glad refrain,
Flowers brightly smile to hear it,
Hill-tops tell it back again.

Happy! happy! Brooks murmur,
As they laughing dance along;
And the pebbles on the margins
Sing again the merry song.
And the lilies in their splendor,
Resting on the glassy pool,
Dream about the merry music
In the shadows dark and cool.

And the stubbons shine more brightly
Than they ever shone before;
How they seem to dance about me,
Falling through the open door;
How they dance upon the hoarstop,
Drip in showers from the eaves,
Kiss the waves beneath their gliding,
Flash like smiles across the leaves.

From the darkest depths of sorrow
He has brought me to the light,
And I know that if I trust Him,
He will guide my steps aright.
So I sing my song of gladness
In the sunshine, in the rain—
Earth and ocean, light and darkness,
Join me in the glad refrain!

Important Despatch from the Colonial Office.

The following despatch appears in the Ottawa papers:—
DOWNSIDE STREET, January, 1869.
Sir—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch, No. 3, of the 12th ult., transmitting copies of certain resolutions addressed by the House of Assembly to the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia, respecting the recent consideration of the North American Province, and of a statement on the same subject addressed to the Lieutenant Governor, by his Executive Council. The statement of the Executive Council was forwarded to the Secretary of State in Lord Monck's despatch No. 169, of 8th September, which was acknowledged by the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos, in a despatch No. 235, of 8th December.

The resolutions of the Assembly appear to have been before his Grace when that despatch was written, and they do not call for any lengthened observations from me.

I greatly regret that a majority of the House of Assembly should entertain and express the sentiments embodied in some of these resolutions, but I can hold no expectation, or that Parliament will entertain any measures for the repeal of the Act of 1867.—That act was passed at the desire of the three Provincial Legislatures. Its operation has not hitherto been unsuccess, and on the faith of it, important transactions are already in progress.

Further, I have reason to believe that the Government of the Dominion is disposed liberally to fulfil the expectation expressed in my predecessor's despatch No. 107, of the 10th of June last, that the Government and Parliament of Canada would modify any arrangement respecting Taxation, or respecting the Regulation of Trade and Finance, which might prejudice the interests of Nova Scotia and the maritime portion of the Dominion. I most earnestly hope, therefore, that even those inhabitants of Nova Scotia who are not convinced of the expediency of the Confederation, will see it to be their duty and their interest to abandon an agitation which is only calculated to perpetuate a discussion, to arrest the progress of settlement and commerce, and to divert the efforts of the Government and Legislature from those objects of general utility to which they ought to be steadily directed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) GRANVILLE.
To Governor General, the Right Honourable Sir John Young, Bart.

An old author quothly remarks: Avoid argument with the ladies. In spinning yarns among silks and satins, a man is sure to be worsted and twisted.

MISS SKEMPER'S BROTHER.

[Continued.]

Yes, was the answer, in a weary absent tone. Mr. Skemper was thinking of something else evidently, and his sister left him to his meditations.

They last of hours, and, in them, he reviewed his whole life from boyhood up to the present time, when he sat in his own home surrounded by comforts and luxuries, far removed from anxiety of mind or pain of body in the prime of life, every wish gratified, every taste studied; and in the room over him lay another human being suffering under an accumulation of troubles such as he had never endured singly. As he thought of her, her youth and delicacy, her unclouded childhood, her quiet, persistent efforts to make the most of her talents and assist her family, her anxiety of mind and physical suffering, and of the poverty staring her in the face, he began to realize his own selfishness and his deep ingratitude to the Providence that had preserved him from like trials. He began to understand, clearly, the meaning of the expression, "sins of omission."

Against those of commission he struggled successfully; but against the others, he felt that he had gained no victory. He and his sister were the children of parents of ample means. They had been reared in the midst of plenty, had never experienced real need of anything. They were two of a large family—the eldest and youngest. Miss Skemper was twenty when Robert was born, and her mother dying while he was still a baby, the care of him had devolved upon her. The affection between them resembled that of mother and child, rather than of brother and sister; and, as years went by, and the other married and sought homes of their own, she remained with her father, a loving, faithful daughter, a home maker and a keeper for him and Robert.

After the father's death the two returned to the quiet home and pursued their easy, tranquil ways as formerly. Once, indeed, she anticipated a serious change. Robert fell in love, and seemed willing to bring a wife into the family; but the young lady jilted him for a richer lover, and he sank back into his old habits, and became more old bachelor-like every year—so much so, in fact, that he was known as Miss Skemper's brother, and generally considered ten years older than he really was. His disappointment hurt his life, and he died in a few days. His wife, who had been a devoted and faithful wife, died in a few days. His wife, who had been a devoted and faithful wife, died in a few days.

So he became, in the eyes of all his relatives, a settled, old bachelor; and was looked upon something like the rich uncle in the old comedies. He stood gallantly in numerous nuptials and nieces, performed his duty in the matter of silver cups, forks, and spoons, and took his seat at the table on all festive occasions with a cheerful, lively quite becoming to a man of sixty, but excessively ludicrous in one of thirty five. An easy chair and a book on a scientific subject were his great comforts, and they were provided for him by all his brothers and sisters, who resigned him to them with perfect equanimity and satisfaction.

His action, therefore, in regard to Miss Maxwell somewhat surprised his sister, although, having done less, he could hardly have done less. Still she felt the change in his manner, and on the following morning, when he expressed his determination to remain at home until Dr. Elliott and Mrs. Maxwell arrived, her astonishment was amusingly witnessed.

Never mind me, Bessie. I can read somewhere in the paper, and you can imagine me down at the office, and so his sister went to attend as usual to the house affairs, having already visited Miss Maxwell's room and found its occupant in a deep sleep.

When Mrs. Maxwell and Jessie arrived soon afterward, they found Dora awake and in better spirits. Dr. Elliott having pronounced her hand and wrist much improved, and encouraged her to expect a rapid recovery. His advice to Mr. Skemper, however, was different.

That arm will be weak for months, and I would not have her removed at present, were she under my control. She is nervous and impatient; the best thing will throw her back, and in her own home, where the surroundings must constantly remind her of her helplessness, her anxiety will not be set at rest.

Site can remain here as long as she will, Mr. Skemper replied. I shall see that your advice is followed.

He was as good as his word. Overcoming Mrs. Maxwell's scruples and making a strong friend of Jessie at the same time, the former took her place in the house quite naturally, and the latter sang and danced from morning until night, perfectly delighted with her re-

lease from the double duties of school and home. The season of her sister's convalescence was to her a joyful holiday—if anything too brief in duration.

The invalids room in the evening was quite pleasant to contemplate. Dora lying back in an easy-chair her small foot resting on a hassock, her little hands in her lap, her eyes and cheeks bright with returning strength and peace, listening eagerly to, and sometimes taking part in the conversation going on between the two ladies and Mr. Skemper and Jessie.

For nearly two weeks the comedy was enacted nightly, and then Miss Maxwell, being able to walk and move her fingers without much pain, asked to go home, telling Miss Skemper, with flushed cheeks and tearful eyes that she had intruded long enough on Mr. Skemper's generous hospitality.

Nonetheless, she replied that lady. It is no intrusion whatever, and if you want to leave us so soon, why you must tell Robert so yourself. I shall not.

That evening, when Mr. Skemper opened the parlor door, he distinguished a small figure leaning against the mantle shelf, its shadow thrown on the opposite wall by the flickering firelight. He started slightly on recognizing it, then came forward.

So you are down stairs at last. Let me congratulate you. But why are you in the dark? Where is your mother? It seems strange to find you alone.

I suppose so; still I am accustomed to it. I am alone the greater part of my time, when I am busy; and about the light, I enjoy its absence more than I can express. One of my greatest pleasures is to sit in a room lit by an open fire, and think. It is one, too, that I seldom enjoy. Mother is packing up my various possessions; and now I believe all your questions are answered. She spoke in a tone half playful, half serious. Mr. Skemper do not think her stealing down her cheeks, although her face was in shadow, kept there purposefully.

Packing! he exclaimed. What do you mean?

What I say, Dr. Elliott thinks me quite well enough to return home, and surely it is time. I can teach now, and in a short time I shall be able to paint again.

Then you are not comfortable here, Mr. Skemper said, drawing forward a chair, and motioning her to be seated.

Not comfortable! what an idea. On the contrary, the comfort is so intense that I fear to enjoy it any longer. The contrast, with what I had, and I don't wish to grow dissatisfied with my life. I was contented with it a month ago; this rest, this freedom from care, will not lead me to make me return to it with the same feeling; so the sooner it is over the better.

Mr. Skemper looked down at the face radiating with light, and he had a momentary glimpse of the old man's face, and he had a momentary glimpse of the old man's face, and he had a momentary glimpse of the old man's face.

You will not think us ungrateful, she said, wondering at the piercing glance fixed upon her. It is not that indeed; it is Dora. We have no claim on your kindness, and yet you have done more for us than any one we have met since our troubles came. We tried to be independent, and we can only be so by returning to our old home and taking up our work where we broke it off.

That is very true, but can you take it up at once? Elliott says not.

I know, she answered, her face changing. Still I can do a little.

Will that little be sufficient to support you until your land is perfectly strong?

She thought a moment.

Come, be honest and candid with me, Mr. Skemper said, touching her hand as if afraid hurting it.

Hardly, if I must tell you the truth. There is money due me, but I can not call it at present although I feel sure it is safe.

Will you make a little memorandum of it, and let me advance you the amount now?—You can repay me when you receive it at another time.

You are very kind; that would enable me to live without incurring much debt until I am quite strong.

Then you will do at once?

Yes, willingly, was the reply.

Thank you, said Mr. Skemper, relapsing into silence, as his sister entered the dining room.

The following day Mrs. M. took her daughters home, greatly against the wishes of Miss Skemper, who enjoyed their Society to an extent surprising to herself. But it happened that her conversation and their ideas suited her a circumstance very unusual indeed, and their presence brightened everybody in the house most wonderfully. However, they were firm in carrying out what they had de-

termined upon, and so Miss Bessie saw them off. Robert accompanying them in the carriage and then returned to the deserted parlor, puzzling her mind over what the result of this strange adventure might be.

Dr. Elliott dropping in during the evening was rather annoyed at finding his interesting patient gone; for although Miss Maxwell had acquainted him with her design, he had put it aside as improbable and absurd. Besides, he feared that she would resume her employment too soon, and possibly injure herself. However, she had promised to send him word in case she felt worse, and not hearing any report as the days went by, he concluded that no news was good news. Mr. Skemper, too, brought favorable tidings whenever he paid them a visit, which he did occasionally, seldom seeing any one but Mrs. Maxwell, as Dora, finding it impossible to work at home, had taken more out door pap is, their instruction not necessitating much use of her hand.

One afternoon, however, he found her seated at her little table, looking dejected and thoughtful as if mind and body were overworked to an alarming degree. She appeared delighted to see him, and made an effort to speak cheerfully and look bright. Mr. Skemper, however, was not deceived.

You are wearing yourself out, he said. This will never do. How long do you expect to last—and fit?—Dr. Elliott was sitting about you last night, and I determined to come over here to-day and take the chance of seeing you.

It is not so much work, as anxiety. Teaching does not pay as well as coloring—it is not so sure; pupils change about so much. Then I have been disappointed in other matters.—It is two months since you lent me that money and I see no sign yet of being able to return it. If anything, prospects look darker.

Miss Maxwell, said Robert Skemper, rising hastily, and striding back and forth while he talked, there is only one way to end all this trouble, and I came over to-day to propose it. You will think me practical, business like, and unromantic, but if you comprehend my feelings you would believe me as true and sincere as if I had taken the usual manner of addressing you.

I do not understand, said Miss Maxwell, looking up bewildered, and noticing the eager expression of the face bending over hers.

No, I did not think you would. I am not in the least lover-like, although I have you as devotedly and fondly as I can. My plan is quickly told. Be my wife, and all these anxieties of this hard brain work will cease. Your mother and sister are welcome to live in my house. I will take care of them as long as I am spared.

He took her hands in his, but she freed them suddenly and drew away from him.—You hurt me, she murmured. You think me capable of selling myself for wealth.

No, I do not, I did not mean that. I think you are a noble, true hearted girl. I only ask you to let me win your love in time. Surely the condition is an easy one.

Yes, but quite an unnecessary one, Dora said, blushing as she put her hand in his, her eyes beaming with an expression not to be mistaken. He understood her, and his manner changed at once, becoming as tender and loving as even he could wish to have it.

All Robert Skemper needed was appreciation, and his best qualities developed themselves, making him peculiarly attractive and likeable. Under the influence of Dora's sweet smile and unaffected love, he became a totally different man in speech and bearing, growing easy and communicative where he had been reserved and blunt spoken. Sitting, holding her hand in his strong clasp, he described to her the hopes and fears, the successes and disappointments of his whole life, conscious that in her he had a listener at once sympathetic and interested.

He left her, feeling perfectly happy, while she sat under the influence of some fiery power, which in the short space of half an hour had transformed grief into joys, trials into blessings, despair into intense peace. The silver lining was indeed showing itself at last the suffering that was so hard to bear had led to happiness beyond all possible anticipation. Some weeks afterward, a large wedding party assembled in the church that the Maxwells attended to Robert fastened on having all his family present to witness his marriage, so strangely brought about, and, as the gossip remarked, "so very sudden."

The old adage does not hold true in their case; the future for repentance had not yet come to them. Miss Bessie looks even happier than she did before his wife came home, in spite of the noise of several little nephews and nieces, and tells to any one who will listen about the stormy night on which she was called to her father's bedside, and his wonderful recovery.

A country girl, coming from the field, being told by her poor cousin that she looked as fresh as a lily kissed with dew said, "Well, that wasn't any fellow by that name, but it was Steve Jones that kissed me. I told him every one in town would find it out."

For the Standard. To the Tax Payers.

Gentlemen.—I beg to call your attention to the County Accounts for 1867-8, published in the Standard of the 27th January, from which you can judge how the taxes wrong from the pockets of the people are expended. You will feel that the country is yearly growing poorer, that business is so dull, that there is very little work carried on, particularly in this section of the County, and that a poor man can with difficulty earn an honest livelihood.—Many have had hard work to earn enough to support their families on the humblest fare; and yet you will have to leave it.—County Officers salaries have been increased; for a corroboration of this, I refer you to the County Accounts passed April Session 1868. I am but a poor man still I pay my taxes cheerfully, out of my scanty earnings, but I do not like "taxation without representation" which is the case now as the Sessions are an irresponsible body, can pass, reject, allow or disallow any account laid before them, and at times as I shall show, they incur accounts which have not been laid before the Grand Jury. This is not all, that they ought to be held to any assessment they please in the various Parishes, and do many things which had much better be left undone.

The tax payers intend remedying this state of things by adopting "Municipal Corporations" by so doing they will have a voice in the management of County affairs, by electing their own Councillors in each Parish, annually, who will be directly responsible to their constituents; the people will then have some say in County matters, which they have not at present.

Looking at the Co. Account it will be seen that the Grand Jury's salary is \$420 with house rent and fuel tax. Is the Grand Jury well and abundantly fed? There is a large amount charged by the Grand Jury for Tea and Coffee for 1868, \$765.41 for one year, in addition to which there is the Bakers bill for bread \$135.00—this latter sum would purchase fifteen barrels of flour at \$7.50 per barrel; enough to bread a family of twelve for one year, with bread. In addition these sums there is charged wood, coal, and cutting wood \$137.56.—The total cost of the Grand Jury for twelve months amounting to the large sum of \$769.27 a much larger figure than it cost under Capt. Law, whose salary was smaller, and had a large number of prisoners under his charge when business was brisk. The traders bills are increasing.

Another fact I mention is that private accounts are passed at September Sessions, while the law expressly states that all County Accounts must be submitted to the Grand Jury at the April Session, and until, prior to their being ordered for payment by the Sessions; the County Officers being the only exception.—Why the Sheriff, and Co. Treasurer's salaries have been increased, it is hard to say, but why was that most obliging, attentive and competent official, the Clerk of the Peace's salary left at the old rate; perhaps that gentleman had no friend at the Board to canvass for an increase. The Co. Treasurer has been charged \$5 for stationery and postage, is this because he has an addition of \$20 to his salary. There are other charges and matters connected with County and Parish affairs, I may touch upon in my next letter—among which are few who have paid Assessment tax, the recent purchase of a second Hand Fire Engine at St. John, while the assessment already collected, was ordered for a Steam Fire Engine. Every place of any note in the Province is discarding the old "guits," and purchasing "steamers."

Feb. 3, 1869. Tax Payer.

What a Climate.

Dan Marble was once strolling along the wharves in Boston, when he met a tall, gaunt-looking figure, a "digger" from California, and got into conversation with him.

"Healthy climate, I suppose?"

"Healthy! it isn't else. Why, stranger, there you can choose any climate you like, hot or cold, and too without traveling more than fifteen minutes. I at think of that the next cold morning when you get out of bed. There's a mountain there, the Navy Navy they call it, one hot and one cold. Well, get on the top of that mountain with a double barrel gun, and you can, without movin', kill either summer or winter just as you wish."

"What I have you tried it?"

"What I shan't, and should have done well, but for one thing."

"Well, what was that?"

"I want a dog that would stand better than the last dog I had from his little white pig on the summer side. He didn't get any good in the winter side, you see, so you see."

CONGRUUMS.

What is which every one likes to be, and gets rid of as soon as possible? A good appetite.

What is the difference between a barbers and a mother? One has razors to shave, the other slaves to rule.

ENGLAND SETTLEMENT IN
HAMMONTON TRACT OF
AND IN NEW JERSEY

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