

had not visited. The one, however, to which we devoted most of our attention at the period of which I am speaking, and where we held nearly all our parties, was the elbow of a ravine and sloped off in two directions, north and east. The eastern side was fairly gradual and was therefore patronized by all beginners and by those who gave themselves up to entertaining the ladies; while the north side, a savage and abrupt descent, was given over to those few adventurers who pursued glory rather than pleasure. Even these, however, usually warned themselves to the sport upon the 'Woman's Hill' (as they sneeringly called the latter slope), and so it was always late before anyone had the courage to break the solitude of the perilous 'Sudden Death,' for so we nicknamed the north slope.

"Accordingly, when it was observed that it was but seldom that those who started from the top of the 'Sudden Death' arrived at the bottom without an upset, it was not long before somebody discovered that these catastrophes always occurred in the neighbourhood of twelve o'clock, and of course the natural or rather supernatural explanation of this was by a reference to ghosts. When one unfortunate sportsman confided to me his belief that his upset had been caused by spiritual intervention, and related that his losing control of his toboggan was due to his eyes having been dazzled by an uncanny light, I was heartless enough to say that perhaps spirits *had* something to do with it. The tone in which I made this remark caused him to look at me for a minute and then to retort that he believed I was afraid to go down the 'Sudden Death' myself. I was engaged to your Aunt Sally at that time, and as I had cared far more for enjoying her society than for sustaining my old sporting reputation, I had stuck most religiously to the 'Woman's Hill,' and had never gone near the 'Sudden Death.' This taunt, however, could not be overlooked, and so I pledged myself to make the descent on the very next night. I would be on hand at twelve precisely, I further promised, in order that I might meet any ghosts that might inhabit that part of the world.

"I was working very hard in the warehouse then, for I was expecting the rise in my salary which was to enable me to get married, and so I did not get home to dinner till very late on the evening appointed for my venture, and it was not till after ten that I joined the party at the hills, feeling perfectly tired out.

"It was a lovely bright night, the trees casting black shadows across the pure gleaming snow, while a heavy bank of clouds in the north-west, looking white and innocent in the moonlight, seemed to be a continuation of the hills themselves.

"By about half-past eleven, however, those innocent-looking clouds had spread over the whole sky and were scudding across the moon, while the wind, but lately risen, came shrieking down the valley, making the poor old pines shiver and howl as though with fright.

"Most of the party were then for going home and tried to persuade me, for that night at least, to abandon the feat, for as such the recent turn of events had caused my proposed descent to be regarded. But I was in a state of almost feverish excitement, brought on I suppose by the thoroughly exhausted state of my nerves, and I said if no one would wait to see me through with it, I would stay alone. Aunt Sally, like the brave girl she was, said that she for one intended to stay, and that she would go down with me, if I would only take her. At first I refused, but she begged so hard that I gave in, and I confess it was a great comfort to me to know that I was to have her inspiring company. She had, I think, noticed with anxiety my utter fatigue, which had caused me to act rather strangely, and had nobly resolved to do her best to help me through.

"When the time for starting came I had almost recovered my old composure.

"'Lean back well, and don't be afraid,' I whispered to Sally,—to Aunt Sally I mean,—as I braced myself on the toboggan.

"She laughed back that she wasn't in the least frightened, for she didn't believe that any ghost would dare to upset the best steerer in town. As we shoved off, the moon shone forth for a moment from its veil of cloud, while the wind ceased suddenly as if in expectant quiet. Smoothly we went at first, then swift, swifter, past the first great

bump with its tremendous leap through the air, and I had begun to think we were already safe, when suddenly we stopped short, I saw a form wrapped in robes of misty white glide swiftly by, a hideous shriek of laughter rang in my ears, and our toboggan rolled over and over.

"For the next week I lay in a delirium, passing through the strangest adventures. Now I was tobogganing with Aunt Sally on an iceberg, calmly wondering whether the waters of the sea into which we were inevitably rushing would cool my burning skin, when I would suddenly discover that it was not Aunt Sally who was before me, but a polar bear, an unexpected companion whose presence caused me such fright that I rolled off the toboggan, and bumped and tumbled till I passed to other dreams.

"Another time I remember finding myself sliding down one of the pyramids of Egypt, and although I was going with tremendous rapidity, I still managed to decipher the inscriptions on the surface, for I had somehow learned to understand hieroglyphics perfectly.

"When at last I came to myself, I found Aunt Sally sitting by my bed-side. I wanted immediately to learn all about our upset, but she would not let me speak at all; I had been very ill, she said, and the doctor had forbidden any excitement.

"In the course of a few days, however, I learned that we had executed a wild somersault on the hill. Aunt Sally had not been hurt, but me they found raving like a lunatic. They were dreadfully afraid that I had gone quite out of my mind, but the doctor had said it was brain fever brought on by overwork and excitement, and that a rest would set me right again; which sure enough it did. I could never induce Aunt Sally to confess that she saw the ghost. In fact," he concluded with a smile, "this is the only subject on which we disagree. She says I saw the ghost because I had brain fever. I say that I had brain fever because I saw the ghost."

Jim, who had listened attentively throughout, raised himself on his elbows and gazed up with a puzzled expression at his old uncle's inscrutable face, as he mused: "Well, I thought old people never believed in ghosts. I wonder if Uncle Tom really does believe in this one. Anyway I'm mighty glad I stayed at home and heard the story. Won't I just tell it to all the boys. Besides," and here his face relaxed into a smile of perfect joy, "besides, I've got the fifty cents from Aunt Sally."

HENRI.

WILLIAM LYON MACKENZIE.

Strong hero-soul! that, for thy country's weal,
Recked not of danger nor pale-visaged fear;
That, clear above the tumult, still didst her
Her voice sustain thee, and could'st only feel
Her wrongs and Freedom's, not thine own; we seal—
Here in the land thou gavest to Freedom; here,
Where never more shall fall the sorrowing tear
Of Liberty despoiled—peal on peal
The while applauding, thine undying fame.
Inspire us, patriot-heart! and thou as well,
Unfettered goddess, teach us love for thee
And Canada. Oh, let us love her name,
That, discord past, the wandering winds may swell
Her seven-stringed harp in purest harmony.

Univ. Coll., Tor.

D. M.

"LETTER PROBATE."

TORONTO, March 14th, 188—.

MY DEAR H.,—I just read THE VARSITY of March 9th; in it I found a "Letter Legacy" descanting on the dearth of literature, poetry and poets in Canada. The Legacy is dated June 12th, 188—, so I presume the writer is not long departed. I wonder if the Stars and Stripes wave over his grave; he surely did not hope for less, although he had "neither the genius to inspire nor the independence to execute, etc." He must have been a Liberal who foresaw he would not be