

## VILLANELLE.

Sprung from a sword-sheath fit for Mars,  
Sharp and straight, of a gay, glad green,  
My jonquil lifts its yellow stars.

Barter would I for the dross of the czars  
These golden flowers and buds fifteen  
Sprung from a sword-sheath fit for Mars?

Barter, would you, these scimitars,  
Among which lit by their light so keen  
My jonquil lifts its yellow stars?

No! For the breast may break its bars,  
The heart its shell at sight of the sheen  
Sprung from a sword-sheath fit for Mars.

Miles away from the mad earth's jars,  
Beneath its leafy and shining screen  
My jonquil lifts its yellow stars.

And I, self-scathed with mortal scars,  
I weep when I see in its radiant mien,  
Sprung from a sword-sheath fit for Mars,  
My jonquil lifts its yellow stars.

The Week.

SERANUS.

Two gentlemen were speaking of Canadian literature.

"Have you seen the last two Villanelles of Seranus," said one, "both pitched in Lower Canada?"

"Pshaw! don't mention Seranus. She's too knowing."

"You mean?"

"She is too clever by half."

The words were bitter, but the smile of the speaker showed that he meant appreciation. The example given above will still further enhance his good opinion of a lively pen.

## A MISSISQUOI HOLIDAY.

BY JOHN TALON-LESPERANCE.

## III.

Towering high above the village, and approached by winding paths, rustic stairways and bulwarks of igneous rock, is a park of surpassing grandeur and beauty, the view from which, over Missisquoi Bay, and afar over Lake Champlain, is unsurpassed in Lower Canada. The highest point is crowned by a large blockhouse, which is a fine sample of that kind of rude fort or citadel, so well known in the history of Canada, and so often linked with the most brilliant deeds of border daring. The Philipsburg blockhouse is of the type of that of St. Helen's Island, but of larger size. Unfortunately, it is in no better state of repair, a fact which I beg to lay before the proper militia authorities, both Local and Federal.

This was the scene of our excursion. When the day came, waggons and vans were at hand to carry the ladies and the elder people to the foot of the hill, when they had perforce to walk up the stony road leading to the top. These vehicles were loaded with provisions, and the horses had quite enough to do drawing them forth. When the summit was reached at length, and fitting quarters were chosen inside and around the blockhouse, the festivities of the day began. There was no formality about it. Everybody seemed to do as he or she was minded. The young ones spread themselves all around for their several games and sports; the boys cleared off the ground for tennis, where the ladies joined, and for golf, which they selfishly reserved for themselves. The old people gathered in knots, under the shade of the trees, chatting in groups, knitting and sewing, reading novels, and some were never tired sweeping the magnificent land and water scapes with their field glasses.

I thought it singular that Sharpe should be suddenly taken with a scientific turn, purposing to go deeper into the wood, searching for rare plants, insects and minerals. My wonder waxed the stronger when, glancing at the two young ladies, I saw in their eyes that they too were agreeable. So we all started and—a further ground for marvel—there was no stir among the others at our going, as if it were a matter of course. We walked along for awhile on a stretch

of table land, our way being hindered by stumps, roots, broken boughs and trunks of fallen trees. A moment later we were in a little valley that opened under our feet like a cup, lined with grass and fringed with a variety of wild flowers. There we tarried for awhile, Sharpe and myself bringing in hands full of yellow, purple and white blossoms, with tufts of the greenest ferns and streamers of maidenhair. Ellen took these, with their rank, heavy autumnal smells, and garish hues, upon her lap, and assorted them, giving learned names and making sly allusions, addressed to each of the party in turn; while Annie wrought small bunches for each of us, and a number of huge ones for the table, near the blockhouse, at our picnic dinner. While this botanical diversion was going on, I had occasion to enter more deeply into acquaintance with the young ladies—or rather girls, to speak more plainly—inasmuch as they were both in that stage of undefined transition that lies betwixt the sixteenth and seventeenth year. At first I had to distribute my favours with strict impartiality, my comrade moving about, with snatches of old songs on his lips, and picking up loads of superfluous flowers. But after a while he was bidden to stop.

"We have weeds enough," said Annie.

"The more weeds there are, the fairer the flowers," replied Thomas, with a bow.

Whereupon she pinned a bouquet on his button-hole, and Ellen, turning toward me, said, with a deep blush:

"Will you allow me, Mr. Hooker?"

I do not know why it is, but I chose to look upon this as a point-blank thrust, and a gentle thrill went through me that prevented my doing more than just murmuring my thanks. At a glance I saw the flushed cheek, the drooped eyes, and the trembling fingers, as they fastened the red and white flowers to my lappel. It was all over in a moment. She recovered at once, and looked as innocent as if nothing had happened, while I fancied that I had summarily controlled a momentary feeling of weakness.

We rose from the hollow and proceeded to walk over the whole brow of the promontory, where we enjoyed a number of views of the bay, the lake, and the vast uplands, ribbed with volcanic rock and crowned with evergreens. We moved in pairs—Sharpe in front with Annie, and Hooker lagging somewhat behind with Ellen. A couple of hours were spent in this close communion, with only an occasional pause in the walk, as a cloud, a bird, an insect, or a flower caught the eye of my companion, who knew the names of all she saw and quoted fitting verses thereupon. We were at a distance from the blockhouse, and far away from the rest of the party, when we heard the harsh sounds of a great gong among the trees and rocks. It was the call to dinner.

"How glad I am of that," said Ellen, with an eager face. "I am as hungry as a fox."

"But we have still far to go."

"All the better. That will prepare us still more for the picnic."

And she started on the run, I following. Annie and Thomas Sharpe set up a shout and came trooping behind us. Then the two girls took the lead, ever tripping, with sun-bonnets fallen back on their necks, and great bunches of field-flowers waving in their hands. We had some trouble keeping up with them, but when we reached the grounds at last, were received in triumph by the gathered friends, a number of whom escorted us to our table.

Talk of feasting. I have been at camp-meetings and barbecues in the South, where oxen were roasted whole, and served with all the accompaniments of negro kitchens—the best in the world—and garnished with all the green yield of tropical gardens, but I never sat to a board where I so thoroughly enjoyed the function of eating as I did to-day. The blue sky above me; the glimpses of wood and water in front; the shadow of the old blockhouse, where many a famished soldier pined in the dark days of 1837-38; the bright company all around me, with their talk, their laughter, the clatter of their knives and the clinking of their glasses, gave zest to the multitudinous dishes that passed before me. And Ellen was at my side.

Such a girl for a feast, that was a feast in herself for knowing eyes. My appetite was not a circumstance to hers, and she gloried in it, laughed, talked and twitted me with dulness of tooth. The father and mother both frowned, and looked as if they held me responsible for her appetite. Several friends about us joined in the banter, Sharpe, abetted by Annie, being specially facetious. The meal lasted the better part of the afternoon, and might have lasted longer, but for dark clouds gathering in the west, and the breezes of the hill falling suddenly into oppressive dulness.

"It looks like a storm," I said to our little party, as we moved away from the table together.

"I'd rather fancy it," said Ellen, "it would crown our picnic nicely."

"Ellen is romantic to-day, somehow," remarked Sharpe, looking at me.

"Well, Thomas," she retorted, with a quiet tone, and a sharp look at the trees and skies above her, "you may call it what you like, but I have felt queerly eager and forward to-day. There is a current somewhere in the ground, or in the sky, and it has been using me as a battery."

At this I looked hard at her, and her eye met mine. It drooped like a flash. I felt a word of sarcasm on my lip, but it died away, as she stepped forward and jauntily asked me to continue our walk. What passed during the ensuing couple of hours it is not the purpose to tell here or now, but the sun went down upon her enchanting talk—that is the word, reader, good old Saxon talk—and we were far from the trysting place. The gong sounded, voices shouted, and there was distant flitting to and fro in token of departure. We hurried forward, when a terrific peal burst over our head. I was thoroughly amazed and stopped short. Ellen shot at me a look of flame, and actually grasped my left hand and drew me forward. The storm grew general; the sky was filled with it; the woods were black, and threatening with their shadows; there was no gleam on the paths, and the blast, roaring, swept resistless over the hill. The moan of the writhing boughs was like that of souls in pain, and now and again a fearful crash betokened the toppling of the hemlocks. The thunder rumbled continuously; the forked lightning kept cutting the curtain of evening with its zig-zags, and big drops of rain fell like ink on the fallen leaves.

I felt no fear, because there was no danger, but hand in hand we hurried to the top of the hill, beneath the blockhouse. A voice from below—it was Sharpe's—came up ringing, but with no misgiving in its tone.

"Hello, there! Coming?"

"Coming. All right!" I shouted back, while Ellen looked at me and laughed.

We began the descent in pitch darkness, but she said she knew the road. All went well till we came to a turn—a "bend" they call it in the country—when, all of a sudden, I felt a wrench in my left hand, to which my companion still clung, and was dragged a little off my balance.

"What is the matter, Miss Greene—Ellen?" I muttered, thoroughly alarmed.

She made no reply.

By a supreme effort I pulled myself together, caught hold of a young sapling with my right arm, dragged Ellen clear into the road beside me, circled her waist with my left arm, and kept standing thus till she was steadied, and was able to say that she could go on.

"That was the precipice," she said in a hoarse whisper, while her head fell one moment on my shoulder.

I took no thought nor time to ask questions, but pushed down the hill and struck the main road of the village, having her arm linked in mine. The lightning lit our path, and, but for a few heavy drops, the rain held aloof, and we reached Mr. Greene's dwelling without further delay. The father was in the open door; the mother, a little behind. Ellen enquired at once about Annie. She had got home safely and in due time.

"And you, my dear?" said Mrs. Greene.

"Safe too, thanks to Mr. Hooker," and she held out her hand in true, business-like frankness and heartiness.