

Our Illustrations.

(Written for the Canadian Illustrated News.)

THE LORE OF THE CALENDAR.

NO. VI.—MAY-DAY.

"We were not meant to plod along the earth,
Strange to ourselves, and to our fellows strange;
We were not meant to struggle from our birth,
To skulk, and creep, and in one pathway range;
Aot with stern truth, large faith, and loving will!
Up and be doing! God is with us still."

From the earliest period of the world man has kept some peculiar days of festivity, and on these days, if he preserved his innocence, all was well. During the seventeenth century these festivals were kept with great hilarity, giving much offence to the Puritans, and those severe censors, who condemned all innocent recreations, and who, if they had had control over the world, would have struck out May-day and the Spring and abolished youth and laughter; the former from the calendar, the latter from human life. These festivals are part of our national habits, manners and customs, and some have contended that from their union has arisen our national spirit, our love of justice, of independence, and of our country, and that he who would destroy them would make a change in our manners and habits, the extent of which we cannot see, and for the consequences of which no good man would choose to answer.

"A bow always bent will grow feeble and lose its force" is a very old saying; so, people incessantly occupied at their labours all the year round, without these festivals, would lose their vigour and hilarity. Man must have time for relaxation and reflection, and also for fun and frolic; as Solomon says "there is a time for everything." Holidays are necessary to ease and relieve those who are oppressed by being too much employed, and to unbend the thoughts of those who are too much stretched by their cares. Without these festivals and holidays a man's blood would become a very "Snow-broth," and he would be soon likened to

"One who never feels
The wanton stings and motions of the sense;
But doth rebate and blunt his natural edge"

with perpetual work and everlasting toil. With the country folk in England May-day has long been, and is still, observed as a holiday—the juveniles of both sexes rise very early in the morning and walk to some neighbouring wood, accompanied with music and the blowing of horns, where they break down branches from the trees and adorn them with *no-se-gays* and crowns of flowers, with which they return and make the doors and windows of their homes triumph in the flowery spoil.

Daffodils, that come before the swallow dars;
Violets dim, sweeter than the lips of Juno's eyes;
Pale Primroses that die unmarried.

These, mixed with the Hawthorn blossoms, the dazzling white Daisies and the glittering Buttercups were all symbolic of that happiness and joy which seems at this season to spread the face of nature, and also of man's grateful sense of the Divine Goodness which makes the promise of seasons so stable and sure.

Not content with garlanding the doors and windows of their houses, the merry people had on the village green a May-pole, on the top of which they suspended wreaths of flowers, and round which they danced in rings until they were tired.

The custom may be the relic of an ancient one among the heathens, who observed the four last days of April and the first of May in honour of the goddess Flora, who was imagined to be the deity presiding over the flowers.

In the old calendar of the Roman Church there is the following observation on the 30th of April:

"*Mai Arborea Pueri exquiruntur.*"
The boys go out and seek May-trees.

Stow tells us, in his survey of London, that on May-day in the morning every man, except impediment, would walk into the sweet meadows and green woods, there to rejoice their spirits with the beauty and savour of sweet flowers, and with the harmony of the birds praising God in their kind.

What a practical commentary on the canticle *Benedicite, Omnia Opera*:

"O all ye Green Things upon the earth, O all ye Fowls of the Air, O ye holy and humble Men of heart, bless ye the Lord, praise Him and magnify Him for ever."

Stow quotes from Hall an account of Henry the Eighth's riding a maying from Greenwich to the high ground of Shooter's Hill, with Queen Catherine his wife, accompanied with many lords and ladies.

He further tells us: "I find that in the month of May the citizens of London (of all estates) lightly in every parish, or sometimes two or three parishes joining together, had their several *Mayings*, and did fetch in *May-poles* with divers warlike shows, with good archers, morrice daucers, and other devices for pastime all the day long; and towards the evening they had stage-pieces and bonfires in the streets."

And, again, he says: "In the reign of Henry the Sixth, the aldermen and sheriffs of London being, on *May-day*, at the Bishop of London's wood, and having there a worshipful dinner for themselves and other comers, Lydgate, the monk of Bury, sent them, by a pursuivant, a joyful commendation of that season, beginning thus:

"Mighty Flora, goddess of fresh flow'rs,
Which clothed hath the soil in lusty green,
Made buds to spring with her sweet show'rs
By influence of the sun sheene,
To do pleasure of intent full cleane,
Unto the states which now sit here
Hath *Ye* sent down her own daughter dear."

How rich in thought and expression is the poetry of the Tudor and Stuart reigns. Herrick could never have overlooked a custom so full of poetry. "Come, my Corinna," says he,

"Come, and coming mark
How each field turns a street, and each street a park,
Made green and trimmed with trees: see how
Devotion gives each house a bough
Or branch; each porch, each door, ere this
An ark, a tabernacle is
Made up of white-thorn leatly interwove.
A deal of youth ere this is come
Back, and with white-thorn laden home.
Some have dispatched their cakes and cream
Before that we have left to dream."

Mr. Borlase, in the curious account of the manners of Cornwall, tells us that "An ancient custom still retained by the Cornish, is that of decking their doors and porches on the first of May with green sycamore and hawthorn boughs, and of planting trees, or, rather, stumps of trees before their houses; and on May-eve they, from town, make excursion

into the country and, having cut down a small elm, brought it into town, fitted a straight and taper pole to the end of it, and painted the same, erect it in the most public place, and on holidays and festivals adorn it with flower garlands, or ensigns and streamers." He adds: "This usage is nothing more than a gratulation of the spring season, and every house exhibited a proper signal of its approach to testify their universal joy at the revival of vegetation."

We gather from the author of the pamphlet entitled, "The Way to Things by Words and to Words by Things," in a specimen of his Etymological Vocabulary, that our ancestors held an anniversary assembly on *May-day*; the column of May (whence our May-pole) was the great standard of justice in the *Ey-commons* or *fields of May*. Here it was, if the people saw fit cause, deposed or punished their governors, their barons, their kings. The judge's bough or wand and the staff or rod of authority, in the civil and in the military, are both derived from hence. For it was a *mace* of civil power and the truncheon of the field officers. A mayor received his name from this *May*, in the sense of lawful power. The *crown*, a mark of dignity and symbol of power, like the *mace* and *ceptre* was also taken from the *May*, being representative of the garland or crown, which, when hung on the top of the *May* or pole, was the great signal for convening the people. The arches, which spring from the circle and meet together at the mound or round ball, being necessarily so formed as to suspend it at the top of the pole.

The word *May-pole*, he observes, is a pleonasm; in French it is called singly the *Mai*.

This is, he further tells us, one of the ancientist customs, which, from the remotest ages, has been, by repetition from year to year, perpetuated down to our days, not being at this instant totally exploded, especially in the lower class of life. It was considered as the boundary day that divides the confines of winter and summer, allusively to which there was instituted a sportive war between two parties; the one in defence of the continuance of winter, the other for bringing in the summer. The youth were divided into troops; the one in winter livery, the other in the gay habit of spring. The mock battle was always fought *booby*, the spring was sure to obtain the victory, which they celebrated by carrying triumphantly green branches with *May-flowers*, proclaiming and singing the song of joy, of which the burden was in these terms:

"We have brought the Summer home."

Miscellaneous.

At a recent visit of Kaiser William to a needle factory a workman, whose duty it was to bore out the eyes of needles, asked for a hair from the emperor's head. It was given, and placed at once under the boring machine, a hole turned in it with the greatest care, a thread inserted, and then the hairy needle handed back to royalty.

HINT TO WHIST PLAYERS.—In a small work on whist, the following rules seem peculiarly good:—

"Mind well the rules for trumps—worth often need them;
When you hold five, 'tis always right to lead them.
Watch also for your partner's trump-request,
To which, with less than four, lead out your best.
When you discard, weak suits you ought to choose—
For strong ones are too valuable to lose."

A mysterious attempt to murder has occurred in England. A pawnbroker at Oldham received a few days ago a key, and a day or two after a small box, which was locked, but had no key. The pawnbroker found that the key fitted the lock of the box, and he opened it. The result was startling. A pistol had been placed in the box, and was so arranged as to discharge its contents into any person who might open the lid from the front. Fortunately for the pawnbroker, he had turned the box round in order to pull up the lid, and the bullet from the concealed weapon passed through the window of the room.

The *Panama Star and Herald* of February 16 contains an account of a marine animal, resembling in many respects the celebrated "sea-serpent" of the Northern Atlantic, which was seen from the deck of the steamer "Guayaquil" a few days before, when off the Pearl Islands, in the Bay of Panama. Its head was like that of a sea-horse (*Hippocampus*), and its length, estimated from the undulations of its body as they appeared above the water, was about twenty-five feet. A large sting-ray fish was seen in its company. The "Guayaquil" is a vessel belonging to the Pacific Steam Navigation Company, plying between Guayaquil and Panama.

A good idea has been put into form in an invention patented by a Mr. Peattie, of Edinburgh. It is simply the substitution, with several little improvements, of coloured and ground glass instead of wood in the ordinary Venetian long and short blinds for windows. The glass is bound round with brass to preserve it; and heavy blinds are simply wound up and down with something like a clock key. The play of colours, it is easy to see, may thus be managed so as to give beautiful effects. Outside at night, and inside by day, windows will look as if they were illuminated; and a city seen from the streets of an evening, under such circumstances, would have quite a gay and novel effect.

The German Emperor, while visiting a village in his land, was welcomed by the school children of the place. After their speaker had made a speech for them he thanked the them. Then taking an orange from a plate, he asked: "To what kingdom does this belong?" "The vegetable kingdom, sire," replied the little girl. The Emperor took a gold coin from his pocket, and holding it up, asked: "And to what kingdom does this belong?" "To the mineral kingdom, sire," replied the little girl. "And to what kingdom do I belong, then?" asked the Emperor. The little girl coloured deeply, for she did not like to say "the animal kingdom," as he thought she would, lest His Majesty should be offended, when a bright thought came, and she said with radiant eyes, "To God's kingdom, sire." The Emperor was deeply moved. A tear stood in his eye. He placed his hand on the child's head and said, most devoutly, "God grant that I may be accounted worthy of that kingdom."

THE GREATEST OF WATERFALLS.—Mr. Brown, in the last of his adventurous series of journeys to the sources of the great rivers of British Guiana, has discovered, from a spot near the head waters of the Massaruni, what at thirty miles' distance appeared to be an immense river descending bodily from the north-western face of the great precipice of Raratama mountain, "the attic story of the world." This extraordinary cliff is known to be 2,000 feet in height, and appears inaccessible on all sides yet surveyed. The summit is flat, and of great extent. The fall is believed, on Indian authority, to belong to the Carant River, a tributary of the Orinoco; and will be, therefore, in the territory of Venezuela. After tumbling sheer down that astonishing wall, the water rushes down a glacier of (perhaps) 3,000 feet more, at an angle which cannot be less steep than 45 degrees. The difficulties of approaching Raratama on this side must be very great; but it is a satisfaction to think that there is some good running ground still left for the energies of young England of the future, and a first-class shower-bath.

The biography of

THE HON. THEODORE ROBITAILLE,

will be found on the previous page.

THE SPRING FLOOD.

The year 1873 will be remembered for some time to come in Montreal as one of the flood years, in which the river, previous to the breaking up of the ice, rises far beyond its ordinary limit and inundates the low-lying portion of the city and of the surrounding country. Strange to say these great floods have hitherto occurred pretty regularly at intervals of four years. Thus the memorable flood of 1861 was followed by that of 1865, less extensive than the first. In 1865 another inundation took place, more serious in its effects than the previous one. This year the flood has been repeated, but fortunately on a smaller scale than those of the three years mentioned. The flood of 1861 was of all by far the most serious. Mr. Alfred Sandham, in his admirable work on "Montreal, Past and Present," describes as follows the experiences of that spring:—

"The inhabitants of the lower parts of the city were accustomed to floods, but they were not prepared for such an extensive inundation as that which visited them in the spring of this year. About 7 o'clock on Sunday evening, April 14th, the water rose so rapidly that the inhabitants were unable to remove articles of furniture to a place of safety, and the congregations of St. Stephen's Episcopal Chapel, on Dalhousie Street, and the Ottawa Street Wesleyan Chapel found their places of worship surrounded by from four to six feet of water, and no means at hand whereby they might reach their homes. The water rushed so violently down the streets that it was almost impossible to maintain a footing while endeavouring to wade through it. In order to obtain assistance for his congregation, Rev. Mr. Ellegood, of St. Stephen's Church, waded in the dark through about four feet of water until he reached St. Antoine Street. He then procured the assistance of some policemen, and a boat was obtained, by which, at about 1 o'clock A.M., the congregation were taken away from the church, with a few exceptions, who stayed all night. The trains from the west and from Lachine were unable to enter the city, and passengers had to find their way to the city by Sherbrooke Street. The principal loss to the inhabitants was in live stock. About 3 o'clock on Monday the potash inspection stores took fire from the heating of a quantity of lime. While endeavouring to quench the flames the firemen were standing or wading waist-deep in water. The efforts of the brigade were unavailing, and the building was entirely consumed. The extent of the inundation may be conceived from the fact that the river rose about twenty-four feet above its average level. The whole of St. Paul Street and up McGill Street to St. Maurice Street, and from thence to the limits of the city, was entirely submerged, and boats ascended McGill Street as far as St. Paul Street. To add to the sufferings of the people, the thermometer sank rapidly, and a violent and bitter snow storm set in on Tuesday, and continued to rage with great fury all night. Owing to the fact that in most cases the fuel was entirely under water, much extreme suffering was caused. Considering the rapidity with which the waters rose, it is strange that no more than three lives were lost. These were drowned by the upsetting of a boat, in which they were endeavouring to reach the city. The flood extended over one-fourth part of the city."

The flood of 1865 was, as the author already quoted says, "only second in extent and damage to the extraordinary inundation of 1861." The river commenced to rise on Friday, the 31st March, and on the following Tuesday reached its highest point—only one foot lower than that attained by the flood of 1861. Fortunately the river rose so gradually as to allow the inhabitants of the low-lying districts to remove their effects, and as the weather was mild, there was comparatively little suffering.

This year the flood and the break-up of the river occurred later than usual. The river began to rise on Thursday the 11th, when a slight shove of the ice took place. On Friday (being Good Friday, it was a public holiday) the wharves were lined with people waiting for the great shove. (Of the appearance of the river-side our artist gives a good idea on another page.) On Saturday the water fell a foot, and on the following day another shove took place which in two places—near the Jacques Cartier Square and at Windmill Point—piled the cakes of ice from 12 to 15 feet high on the street skirting the river. On Monday morning another shove took place, and the river began to rise rapidly. During Tuesday and the following day little change took place, but on Wednesday evening the water suddenly rose, and in less than half an hour had risen three feet. On Friday the much-dreaded flood came, submerging Griffintown and other of the lower parts of the city. On the street by the river the water was at one time half a foot in depth, and in St. Paul Street it reached the axles of the carts. During Friday night the river began to fall, fell gradually during Saturday and Sunday, and on Monday the flood of 1873 was over, and the inhabitants of the inundated district, some of whom had three feet of water in their kitchen, set to work to repair the damages caused by the water. (We make no comment on our illustrations, as they speak sufficiently for themselves.)

We are unable to furnish our readers with any biographical information respecting

MR. PATTULLO.

The portrait was inserted by request, his friends promising to furnish a sketch of his career, which, however, had not come to hand at the time of going to press.

THE BETROTHAL RING.

No information is needed on this subject. The story is too old to bear repetition, but the picture is reasonable.

"In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love."

Cabinet Government in Persia! Such is the burden of a firman published in the *Official Teheran Gazette*, and telegraphed from Constantinople. The Shah orders his Grand Vizier, who is henceforth to be the Prime Minister of Persia, to commence without delay the formation of a responsible Ministry, who, in the absence as yet of a Parliament, are to meet twice a week in Cabinet Council, and to discuss regularly-drawn-up orders of the day. The Ministry is to consist of nine members, the heads of departments being responsible to the Grand Vizier, and he to the Shah.