



## NEW BRUNSWICK'S NEW BUSINESS MANAGER.

OLD N.B.—WELL, MR. ELDER, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE PROSPECT?  
ELDER.—BOOKS PRETTY BADLY MIXED, SIR, AND SOME NASTY LOOKING AC-  
COUNTS. BUT I THINK I CAN PROMISE YOU FROM \$20,000 TO \$30,000 OF A SURPLUS IN  
1884.

## MY TRAVELLING COMPANION.

When I was a young man of about twenty-three or four, I was called upon to make a journey to a certain town in France. My knowledge of French had been acquired at school, and went only as far as reading, and though I could translate the language into English as to thoroughly understand what I was reading about, I could never carry on a conversation with a Frenchman without many ignominious pauses and stops on my part, and numerous guesses at what he might be saying. French, when spoken by a Frenchman, does not seem a bit like the same language as when printed on the page of a book: and in conversing with the natives of the country in which I was travelling, I had to trust to hearing some occasional word whose meaning I knew, which served as a clue to enlighten me as to the drift of what they were saying. They speak so confidently fast, those Frenchmen, but on the whole I got on, I may say, fairly.

The greater part of my journey was performed by diligence, the vehicle being at times pretty well filled, whilst at others I was the sole occupant, I had been journeying for an hour or two in solitude one day, when, after a stoppage for change of horses, another passenger entered the vehicle. I saw the fellow was a Frenchman at a glance, and his cool, easy "Pardon, Monsieur," as he stumbled over my foot on entering, confirmed the fact, and I was disgusted. Solitude would have been endurable, but to be shut up in compulsory companionship with a man whose language you cannot speak, and who cannot speak yours, is dreadful. I was determined, however, just to let the fellow see that I could speak French if I chose, to say something, and so, with a nonchalant air I remarked, "Il pleut." As it was raining at the time and heavily, no objection could be taken to my remark on the score of its veracity, whatever might have been as to its originality. I encountered his eyes as I spoke, and a quiet smile, as he muttered, "Mauvais temps," demolished me. I felt

that I had been guilty of some unhappy blunder, and we both looked out of the window at the rain, I to conceal my confusion, he, of course, to hide a sneer, with all the distressing politeness of his countrymen.

The situation was embarrassing, to be boxed up with an apparently intelligent companion, and to sit, hour after hour, without opening our lips, was horrible. He felt this, I am sure, as much as I did, and when I made a bold break and launched out into quite a lengthy sentence, he listened earnestly, as if anxious to make out what I was driving at, without troubling me to repeat, and then replied in few words, as if unwilling to exhibit any colloquial superiority. I must say this for a Frenchman: he will do his best to understand you, and will not laugh, or rather he will not let you see him laugh, at your blunders. I began to like the fellow at last, he seemed so anxious to make me understand, and so good-naturedly and laboriously repeated what he had said when I failed to catch his meaning.

And so we journeyed on, hour after hour, till at length the coach stopped at a wayside inn, and here we alighted for dinner.

I was rather shy of French cookery, having, at that time, an idea that frogs, snails, and rats were the staple articles of a Frenchman's diet, and I suspected the presence of these things in every dish, so I helped myself to 'ros bit,' and formed a high opinion of my Frenchman when I saw him doing the same.

We were not very talkative at the beginning of the meal, as I felt diffident about expressing myself before a large and mixed company, for there were several people at the table d'hôte, but as I warmed up after a few glasses of wine and some excellent cognac and coffee, my tongue began to wag freely, and my travelling companion talked loudly and much. It struck me that the waiters and other guests were excessively impudent; not that they said anything—they never do on such occasions, but they looked at each other and at us, and then bit their lips to repress a smile. As for the hostess, who had been staring at us in a very

impolite manner, she covered her face with her handkerchief and precipitately left the room. Both the Frenchman and I were annoyed, but he said nothing, however, and as we were about to resume our journey, he called for more brandy for both of us. I thought, by the way, that he would have taken his alcohol neat, for I had heard his countrymen express disgust at our insular mode of drinking it with hot water and sugar; but no, he was a trump, and with his native politeness, out of compliment to me, doubtless, drank it in a steaming jorum.

On resuming our seats in the diligence, what with the dinner, wine, and brandy and water, all the barriers of reserve were overthrown, and we went at it with a will, and I talked away as if a Frenchman born, only a good deal astray in the grammar, idiom, and meaning of words. My companion was equally communicative, and although he took great pains with my ignorance, but little more intelligible. And so we kept hammering away at one another during a great part of the night. After a series of unrefreshing naps towards morning, the coach stopped at my destination; and the time had arrived for me to bid my friend, for as such I regarded him now, foreigner though he was, goodbye, and it was with real emotion that I did so.

I could not help thinking what a pleasant time we had passed, and how much more enjoyable it might have been, and what a permanent friendship we might have formed, had we only understood one another's language well enough to converse freely.

I thought no more of my p's and q's in French speaking, but wringing him by the hand, bade him adieu in my own language.

"Goodbye," said I, "goodbye, old fellow, God bless you." "What!" he exclaimed in the same tongue, "are you an Englishman?" "To be sure! and you? oh! ———"

Fill up the dashes as you please; nothing is strong enough to do justice to my feelings as the diligence whirled away, bearing with it my newly-found foreign friend, who had left his card in my hand, on which was inscribed,

"James Johnston,  
12 Suffolk-street,  
Pall Mall."



Mr. Thompson offers a superb attraction to the patrons of the Pavilion this week in the re-appearance of Collier & Rice's Company in "Iolanthe." This organization, which was decidedly good when here before, has been strengthened by the addition of several first-class singers.

On the 15th and 16th insts. Dr. Damrosch's celebrated Orchestra revisits Toronto to give a Wagner concert and an evening of miscellaneous music. Mlle. Martinez, soprano, returns with the orchestra, and, in addition, the finest contralto of the day, Madame Scaldi, is to appear on both occasions. We feel assured Mr. Thompson's great enterprise will be fittingly acknowledged by crowded houses.

Imagine Sir John's state of mind when, having responded to the gracious summons from his son Hugh to attend the latter's wedding at Toronto, he was afterwards confronted with a ruthless summons from Hewson.—Brantford *Expositor*.