



"There is no frigate like a Book
To take us leagues away;
Nor any coursers like a page
Of prancing Poetry."

"God Save Our King."

The whole British nation stands, as it were, in dumb bewilderment these days. Instead of the joy-bells which were to have "made the welkin ring," there is a silence, and instead of the rejoicing shouts of the gathered multitude from all the ends of the earth, there goes up the cry which, whether in joy or sorrow, is, and ever has been, a prayer, "God Save our King!"

"What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter"—and with that assurance we must strive to still the aching of our anxious hearts, for without grasping the meaning of these, to us, inexplicable dealings, we do know that behind them lies some mighty purpose which needed this trial of faith, this suffering of a King, this sorrow and suspense of a loyal people, to bring it to a perfect fulfilment.

One of the uses of suffering is the sympathy it brings. Not only are the hearts of the King's loyal subjects stirred to their very depths, but from other lands and from other peoples, kindly expressions come to us, telling that as they rejoiced with us over the glad advent of peace, so now they sorrow with us in our time of stress and anxiety. In a Boston paper, issued on what was to have been Coronation day, the writer says: "The world deeply sympathizes with England's stricken King. It has been his lot to fill the gap left by his lamented father. He has had to be the throne's representative in unnumbered functions, grave and gay. Imprisoned in the vise of princely propriety, he has been obliged to subject his health to the inevitable dangers that must come of innumerable exposures. The result is that he neared the throne broken down in health, but as striking a sacrifice for his country's honor as though he had died in the field of battle."

"Only the most thoughtless will ascribe the King's long round of strained living to natural choice. He offers an example of vicarious sacrifice for the glory of England, and is an object of true sympathy for all the world."

"No man in his senses can but feel deep sympathy for the King. It is certainly a case where a peasant might pity a potentate."

And then it adds what must surely be most true: "But perhaps the women of the world will most pity Queen Alexandra, whose beautiful face has so often adorned the public prints of late. She will suffer affliction more keenly than all the rest."

"There will not be a wife or a mother in the whole Dominion of Canada whose heart to-day will not be beating in unison with that Royal wife, and whose prayers will not go up with hers, that the life so dear to her and to her children, and so essential to the British nation, may yet be spared for years to come."

H. A. B.

Agreeable Conversation.

The essentials of agreeable conversation are an alert mind, a well-filled memory, kindly sympathy and a joyful heart. If one does not possess these qualifications, they can be cultivated. It is just as easy to ask, with friendly feeling, after a neighbor's welfare, as it is to grumble about the weather or complain of poor health, and after a little practice, it will seem just as natural.

It is just as easy, as we go through the day's duties, to notice with awakened mind the freshness of a morning scene, the perfume of a flower, the pleasant tone of a voice, a bit of a song, the gold of an evening sky, or the kindness of a human heart, as it is to pass on, stupidly inattentive to all this goodness and beauty which follow us every hour. These impressions of pleasant things, if they be pure and fine, add to the riches of a man's memory and give him something to talk about. It is also these little everyday happenings which go to make up our happiness; and to possess happiness, to be full of good-cheer, is always to be charming in conversation.

Conversation is an exchange of ideas; let us give the best we have. When you meet a friend for a moment, don't hasten to tell him all the bad news in the neighborhood, but if you happen to know of anything that is honest, just, pure, lovely, or of good report, if you know anything that is virtuous or to be praised,

speak of those things. By so doing you will reveal your own loveliness and strength of character. "His talk impressed me," said an observant man on meeting a stranger, "as being the revelation of an honest, straightforward, true-hearted man."

A few simple rules worth following are these:

Don't talk too much.

Don't talk too fast.

Don't pitch your voice high and shrill.

The man who would prevail with his words must modulate his voice with gentleness and courtesy.

Talk health, cheer, happiness. The world does not like melancholy confidences.

Never bring the excruciating details of disease into your conversation, or, worse still, drag in the filth of scandal, unless you wish your friends to avoid you as they would a plague.

In good society, there is a tacit understanding that conversation shall be an entertainment, bringing in the refreshments, the delight, the joy of life to the soul of man—that it shall be in every sense a recreation.

A young girl, on being asked what was her idea of agreeable conversation, replied after a moment's thought: "To say things to other people, you like to have them say to you." Does it give you a thrill of pleasure to hear a kindly greeting, a word of praise, a piece of great good news—these same things will be sure to please other people, for everybody is very much like everybody else.—Frances Bennett Callaway.

The Red River Settlement.

SOME REMINISCENCES OF FIFTY YEARS AGO.

How those yellow old papers bring back the memory of old familiar faces—most of them never to be seen again on earth, but whose lives have, more or less, left fruitful records behind them. Amongst the foremost comes the kindly, earnest, benevolent face of the first Bishop of Rupert's Land, Dr. Anderson, whose diocese might be said to have had no bounds, for it certainly could have claimed the whole northerly part of the continent of British North America, from the confines of the United States, covering at least two million square miles, some of it within the arctic zone. I remember thinking of Bishop Anderson as a kind of Robinson Crusoe amongst bishops, not only on account of his isolation, but because he seemed to be equally endowed with the faculty of making the best of things as they were and as they were not. He had such a handful of clergy, too, to help him, the exceptional few only, going forth into the wilds to carry their message. But how could they go unless they were sent, and how could their chief pastor send them forth without some practical plan for a provision for themselves and their flock? It was but pioneer work, but without pioneer work such as fell to the lot of those early settlers, both clerical and lay, the development of the Northwest Provinces, and the dioceses and missions of the big Northwest, would assuredly have been much longer delayed. Bishop Anderson was primarily a Christian pastor, then a scholar, and believing in education as a most needed factor in all progress, he at once set to work to obtain for the young people of the settlement, for the sons and daughters of his clergy, and those of the officers of the Hudson's Bay Co., some larger measure of scholastic training than had ever been possible before. In this he, too, builded upon others' foundation—a fact he recognized and was very grateful for. Some day, an old pupil of those earlier days still, may tell the story of the first school established, I believe, by Mr. Macallum, as far back as the forties.

Dr. Anderson filled almost every office, from principal to usher, in the St. John's College of that day, and his sister, who was the guardian angel of the Bishop himself, of his own three bright sons, and by looking after their creature comforts and smoothing over a thousand and one little difficulties, the guardian angel also of the pupils, the boys of St. John's and the girls of the sister school, St. Cross, a field's distance off. The writer can see clearly with her mind's eye—but probably less clearly from having seen her from time to time since—Miss Anderson crossing that field to the large outside storeroom built on the river's bank, followed by John Omond, the Bishop's farmer and factotum, or by his wife, who acted as cook and housekeeper for the boys; and she can see those naughty lads peeping through the chinks to find out what they were going to have for dinner, and passing on the bits of information to their comrades outside. Once it was, when an evil spirit of mischief possessed them, that they set up a derisive cry, the ringleader darting into the willows, hoping not to be caught: "Oh yes, give Mr. Thomas the shoulder, and give the boys the shanks and the neck!" They had never stopped to learn that the two latter were to make them some good wholesome soup, and that the "shoulder" was to be placed before Mr. Thomas to carve for them. I wonder if amongst the older folks of the Winnipeg of to-day there are any who were amongst that mischievous crowd? One thought brings back another as my pen runs over the page, and this little episode recalls the great

difficulty it must always have been, especially in the spring of the year, to provide meat of any kind for those hungry young folks, both of St. John's and St. Cross. If it is the early bird which catches the worm, it certainly was those earliest at the gate of the settler who happened to have a calf to spare who got that calf, and often it was but such a little, little calf! Still, worth having for the replenishment of a nearly empty winter storeroom. I have a mental vision of our own more especial storeroom now, as I write. Out of doors, of course, just opposite the old clay oven where our bread was baked and which had for its picturesque background a grove of thickly-grown trees. Directly Jack Frost began to reign, that big storeroom had to be packed and lined with food, which must last until spring. A whole poultry-yard had given up of its kind as its contribution to the winter's supply, and birds lean and birds fat, birds tender and birds tough, hung suspended from the rafters, pigs stood in rows like a regiment slain by one fell blow—each with its horrible long gaping wound, which it was always a comfort to know was given after instead of before it uttered its last despairing grunt; and where there were no pigs, there were sheep—long, scraggy, and seldom of a weight to win a prize at any cattle show (had Red River ever known of such a thing), for what farmer would care to fatten any "critter" for which there was no direct market, and which, anyway, would just have to be killed when winter came round, as it would not pay for its keep? In the center of the floor was a big square flap, which could be lifted by a large iron ring. This led to the under cellar, upon the piled blocks of ice of which reposed, in the repose which knows no waking, hundreds of frozen fish and other smaller four-legged and two-legged creatures, which before the six or seven months were over would have vanished as if they had never been. The ice was put into the "hold" of our storeroom because it would be a boon indeed during the intermediate season, not because those poor dead things required anything to freeze them more stiff and stark than they were when the laden "sleds" brought them into their last long home in our storeroom. Beef was the only meat which was, so to speak, "drawn and quartered," I suppose because the whole animal could not have been persuaded to enter the door and behave itself decorously by standing upon even two or three of its legs, as the other beasties did.

I could laugh now, in spite of my sixty-odd years, at the comical attitudes which those dead animals assumed as they stiffened into the position from which nought could move them, until after hours of gradual thawing in a somewhat higher temperature, and finally of repose behind the kitchen stove, they gave up the struggle, and by swift blows of the hatchet, followed by the masterful stroke of a sharp-bladed knife, they ceased to be either pig or sheep, but became pork or mutton for the students' table. There was one sheep which one winter had a curious fascination for me whenever I went, half awe-struck, half inquisitively, into that, to us, forbidden storeroom. It looked so comically like the man who once had owned it. Its right front foot was raised, with much the same stern air of rebuke which made the youngsters run from its still living master; it looked as if it would have shaken its reproachful head, as he so often did; but, alas! it would never shake it more; in fact, it looked as if it had died having the last word, anyway. One crisp winter's day, a wave of resistless fun swept over me, though I knew its penalty if caught. The owner of that sheep was expected. We had no such thing as door-bells in those days, and I knew that she who was on the watch to respond to the first thump upon the storm door was sure to be prompt in answering the summons. I caught that lean, lank, reproachful-looking sheep in my arms, dragged it over the snow to that door, propped it up against the panels and hid around the corner to watch it fall prone into the arms of the disgusted handmaiden. I will let the curtain drop upon the tableau; but, indeed, in a place where nothing ever happened, even that "game" was worth the candle.

My readers, please forgive all this digression. I began with a bishop, and have ended with a dead sheep. Moreover, if I am to continue my little records from time to time, you will have to make the best of me and my memories. I cannot promise to be less erratic in the next issue than I have been in this, for a remembered face suggests a remembered incident, and out of an incident grow many remembered faces, and so it may be that to those who only know the Winnipeg of to-day, with its electric cars and its telephone wires, with its parks and its markets, and its public buildings, with its many churches, its opera houses, and its hotels, these old-time trivialities will be but dull reading. But there may be some old friend or comrade still living—left, as I am, with little but the old memories of the long ago we spent together—who may take the "Farmer's Advocate," and for old sake's sake may read with interest and share in the retrospects scribbled from time to time in its pages by—

H. A. B.