

The Family Circle.

A MILKING SONG.

I.
Along the path, beside the eglantine,
And at his heels old Rover,
Robin merrily moves where browse the kine
Amid the sweet white clover.
At the dim wood-edge strawberries shine
Set in many a tangle,
From the swamp ring the chime of the milking
time—

The veery's chingle changle
Hie there, Cherry
Brindle, trudge along
Bell, in echo, answer
Back the veery's song.

II.
Across the rippling, lush green oats
The meadow-larks are calling,
A thin cloud over the new moon floats,
The early dews are falling,
Yet Robin stays not to count the stars
That lightly gild the heaven,
For see, he's letting down the bars,
And home the cows are driven.
There no longer linger
Roan or the white face;
Daisy dear, remember
The old milking place.

III.
Who is tripping in twilight down the lane
Mint 'round her kirtle clinging,
Lilting Love's most witching strain,
'Tis Marion lightly singing
With fingers deft she flingeth the gate
Wide open to the herd,
And Robin is paid by the milking maid
With a smile and a kind, kind word.
Gentle there, good Brindle,
Yield your milk to me
So, so Cherry, spare your best
To serve for Robin's tea!
—Robert Elliott, in *The Week*
"Tamlaghtmore" Plover Mills.

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MARJORIE'S CANADIAN WINTER.

BY AGNES MAULE MACHAR.

CHAPTER IX.—CONTINUED

The first scene looked like a view of the Arctic regions. A deep blue sky threw into bold relief a landscape of snow and ice. A bold, rocky, snow-clad bluff rose abruptly to the left, while in the distance ranges of snowy hills loomed as a background behind gloomy forests of pine. A winding white riband of ice showed a river channel in which lay three small antique-looking barks, with masts, spars and cordage sheeted with ice and fringed with icicles. Out of great snow-drifts that half-concealed the barks, rose the top of a rude fortification of palisades on the shore; and from the por-holes in the ice-encrusted hulls of the ships, came gleams of yellow light, the only token of human presence in all that frozen wilderness. It was a picture of Nature's desolation, yet relieved by the signs of human courage and energy and endurance, giving it a new and pathetic interest.

"Now, who can tell what this scene is?" inquired Professor Duncan.

"I know," exclaimed Millie eagerly. "It's Jacques Cartier's ships at Quebec."

"Right," said the professor. "This picture is intended to give you an idea of the first Christmas Eve ever spent by Europeans in Canada; unless, indeed, the Norsemen came here when they were in America in the tenth century, but that point is doubtful. But, as I hope you all know, Jacques Cartier reached Quebec on his second voyage up the St. Lawrence, on September, 1535, and after visiting Hochelaga, the Indian village here, he made his winter quarters on the St. Charles at Quebec, close to the village of Stadacona. Well, most of you know what a miserable winter the poor fellows spent there, shut up in their ice-bound ships, and exposed to cold such as they had hardly dreamed of before. And then, you know, to add to their troubles, they were tortured by that horrible disease, the scurvy, which swelled their limbs till they became useless, and their throats and mouths till they nearly choked, and their teeth dropped out. During that dreary December it began, and made such havoc that twenty-six died before April, and only three or four healthy men were left to attend to the sick and bury the dead in the snow-drifts, the only way in which they could bury them at all.

During that December, too, even the Indians who had been so friendly, ceased to visit them, and they were left in dread lest their friendship should have turned to hostility. We can fancy, then, how sadly the thoughts of home and Christmas gatherings must have haunted their minds and their homesick hearts. No doubt they made such sorry attempts at Christmas-keeping as they could, and toasted King Francis and "*La Belle France*." After a while, however, things brightened a little. Cartier learned from an Indian that a certain kind of spruce contained a cure for scurvy, and by the time that spring came back to loosen the ice-bound streams and gladden the weary hearts, the survivors began to feel health and hope returning to their own veins. One thing only I am sorry for when I think of those brave men and their hard winter: that such a gallant leader as Cartier should have clouded his fair fame by treacherously carrying off with him the kind chief Donnacona and some of his braves, as trophies to France. That was the darkness that mingles with the light of his heroism, and it led the way to subsequent failure and disaster.

"And now for the second Christmas. This is Christmas, 1598."

The second scene represented a moonlight night; the sky flecked with wintry clouds, through which the silver radiance of the moon showed a long, low, sandy island sprinkled with snow. On its flat and treeless shores rolled the long, foaming surge of the Atlantic. In the foreground was a gleam of frozen lake and a group of rounded sand-hills in the shelter of which stood an uncouth, clumsy cabin, built of strangely assorted timbers, and banked up with bastions of snow-covered turf. There was no cheerful gleam of fire or lamplight in this picture, but a few strange and shaggy figures, with long beards and furry garments, making them look very much like bears erect, were scattered about the foreground; some watching the distance from a sand-hill, others strolling listless by the shore of the lake. It was a weird picture, oppressive in its wildness.

"This is Sable Island in the Gulf of St. Lawrence," said the professor, "and these were, so far as we know, its first human inhabitants, certainly the first European ones. The second Viceroy of Canada, and the third including Cartier, who tried to colonize it, brought out, for this purpose, a shipload of convicts; and as a precautionary measure, he thought, as he passed this Sable Island, that he would land there his 'Forty Thieves,' and come back for them when he had established himself safely on the mainland. The forty convicts were by no means sorry, at first, to be left for a time where they were, monarchs of all they surveyed, and could do just as they pleased. There were cattle on the island, left there by a French baron years before, and there were seals and walrus and otter besides, so that there was no lack of food. There were plenty of blueberries, too, and acres of cranberries in the grassy valley that surrounded the shallow lake in the centre. So, for a time, they enjoyed their freedom, and were very well content.

"But the months passed away one by one, and no gleam of a distant sail met their watching eyes. They did not know why, and began to think they were basely deserted. But the truth was, that when De la Roche, having chosen a site in Acadia—that is Nova Scotia—was on his way back to pick up his 'Forty Thieves,' a great storm blew him across the Atlantic to France instead, and there a duke, who was his enemy and a rebel against his king, shut him up in prison, and kept him in it for five years. So winter came on with its heavy gales and bitter cold, and the men had to provide themselves with the best shelter they could. They built a cabin out of the timbers of the wrecks on it, for this island is called 'the graveyard of the sea.' But soon they had no wood to light fires with, and they had to eat raw flesh, and after a time learned to like it. They replaced their worn-out clothing with the skins of the creatures they killed, and collected a great store of furs, which might be valuable some day. But there was no law and order among them, and every man did what was right in his own

eyes. So quarrels arose and murders followed, and by-and-by there were only twelve left out of the forty; men clothed in fox and seal-skins, with beards grown to their waists, and hair that hung in a matted tangle down their backs.

"At last De la Roche found means to let King Henry know of their desertion, and the king sent a ship to seek them. When they saw it outside their shoals, they shouted and danced like madmen or wild animals. They were taken back to France with their store of furs, which the greedy sailors at first seized as plunder. But when they were brought before Henry, in their strange grotesque garb, he found out this robbery, and made the plunderers restore their treasures. Some of them eventually went back to their island to spend the rest of their lives as trappers in the wilderness. There is no heroism to speak of in this story; but there is a lesson in it, and that is, that men, to be truly free, must be free from bondage to their own passions.

"And now, the third scene is on the coast of—well, it is so close to the boundary between New Brunswick and Maine, that it is difficult to tell which to call it, but then it was Acadia. This takes us to a new century. It is Christmas, 1604."

(To be continued.)

TWO HISTORY-MAKERS.

Almost any sunny afternoon there may be seen in the fine woods surrounding an ancient estate, near the little German town of Friedrichsruhe, a slightly stooped but still massive figure, slowly pacing back and forth with a firm martial tread, though nearly eighty years have elapsed since that figure was first cradled among the hills of Magdeburg. A huge boar-hound is his sole attendant, and from time to time the animal, as if wishing to keep his presence in mind, pushes his powerful head, not insinuatingly, but forcefully against the rugged hand of his master, and is invariably rewarded with an approving word in German, spoken in a deep bass—the voice of a man accustomed to be obeyed without question. The dog's insistence causes the stroller at last to turn partly around, and as the sunlight falls full on the features we see what a remarkable face it is! Thick, overhanging eyebrows, bushy, straight across the nose, whilst a heavy cropped moustache fails to altogether hide the firm lines of the mouth, and the chin is squareness itself. No milk-and-water character this, evidently, and those "deep-set, large, clear-blue, German eyes never looked into other eyes that did not droop before their steady gaze. "A big man with an eye like a tiger," as Moncure Conway described his appearance. Each great wrinkle of parchment-like skin on that countenance seems to have a history, and yet the main impression we carry away is not of age but of strength—grim, earnest purpose. His uniform is buttoned up tightly to the throat, though the sun is warm, and to the respectful salutations of chance peasants he returns a correct military salute, whilst the hard lines on his strong face relax somewhat. We notice the few passers-by look back at the gigantic figure, and well they may, for that stout frame is Otto Edward Leopold, Prince von Bismarck, the re-founder of a great Empire, the man of blood and iron, the one master-spirit of our times, if doughty deeds are tests of real greatness, as indeed what other can there be.

Now, turn to another scene on, say, the same sunny afternoon, but in a different land—the land of Old England. A broad, well-kept lawn, with a sod such as is only attained by years of clipping and cultivation, stretches away in front of a mansion with the delightfully cosy look of an English home. In front of this comfortable home is a little group seated on the grass around an easy chair, the occupant of which is an old man also. His eyes are shaded so that we cannot tell what manner of man he is by those ever-truthful indicators of the inner soul, but, as he turns from one to the other of the little group, and addresses them with the easy, natural gestures of a born orator, instinctively we turn and seem to hear that wonderful voice. No elocutionist can imitate it, no art can improve it, for it is William Ewart Gladstone who is talking, and these are his children and grandchildren grouped around him, and this is his ancestral home, Hawarden Castle. Very tenderly, almost adoringly,

they tuck his wraps about him, for the autumn wind is bleak, though the day is sunny, and this is not a life to be snuffed out before its time, for this man has played great parts in the world, many of them marvellously, most of them creditably, but alas! some of them—and those the very ones where real genius was sadly needed—very indifferently, if not badly. This man has led for years—and led successfully—a composite party through the intricate mazes of British politics—none more intricate—and compelled obedience through the sheer force of his own individuality. More difficult still, this man persuaded—nay, forced—an aggressive wing of eighty members to turn on their own great leader and rend him, on that leader who had first taught them how to be formidable. There is scarcely a great event, which has changed the map of Europe during the last half hundred years, that this old man in the easy chair has not been an actor in—and a prominent one at that. Yet it is measurably certain that the future Macaulay will not assign to him one of the highest niches in history. He will scarcely be bracketed with Caesar, and Pitt, and Bonaparte, and Bismarck. And why? Because he has been a magnificently brilliant apostle of the creed of talk—palaver, the native African calls it—as opposed to action. No man has surpassed him in word pyrotechnics, no leader has been lamer in action at critical times. If all governmental difficulties could be explained away by smooth, easy speech, then William Ewart Gladstone would indeed be the very apotheosis of a heaven-born statesman. But unfortunately it is not so. As Bismarck said in the phrase, which has stuck to him ever since, "many of the all-important questions of the day are not to be settled by speeches and votes, but by blood and iron."

It is not to be desired, however, that were the votes of the English-speaking people taken, at the present time, on the question, "Who is the greatest man living," that Gladstone would get a vast majority. Not alone in the British Isles, but in the whole British Empire and the United States, he counts his admirers not by thousands but by millions. Have we not seen lately, the absolutely unprecedented spectacle of a deputation, representing the better elements of American life, visiting an ex-Premier of Great Britain, and in the name of that nation, which loses no opportunity to manifest their hatred of everything monarchical, inviting the aged statesman to visit America before his death? Not long ago I asked an advanced class in a Canadian school to write down the name of the greatest man in the world, and when their answers were handed in, they all bore the same name, and that name was Gladstone. He has so managed to make his exit from the public stage in a blaze of admiration—an admiration which it is hard to find sufficient grounds for—nor can I bring myself to believe that this false glamour will be enduring. His most ardent admirer, I take it, will not lay claim that his career has added strength to his nation, or increased the respect of foreign nations for England. No true lover of our great Empire can look back, with any feelings but those of humiliation, to the time of the Franco-Prussian war, when Russia taking advantage of that great struggle, announced in a blunt note to Mr. Gladstone's Government, that she would be no longer bound by the Treaty of Paris—that treaty for which England's blood and money had been poured out on the shores of the Crimea. Nor is it pleasant reading even now to scan over the feeble despatches and protests of England at that time, and Russia's calmly contemptuous replies. Speaking of this incident and its handling by the Gladstone administration, Mr. Justin McCarthy—surely a friendly critic—says: "It did not tend to raise the credit or add to the popularity of the English Government. We do not know that there was anything better to do; we only say that the Government deserves commiseration, which at an important European crisis can do nothing better." If this was an exceptional case, one might be inclined to think that Mr. Gladstone was simply unfortunate in being leader at that time, but we find almost invariably that it was during the terms of his premiership that strong foreign nations took