

(For the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.)

A PARTY.

BY CLARE.

My gloves are on, and one has slit in spite of every care I've fixed with due solemnity the flowers in my hair; My escort meets me at the door, we both proceed below. And bowing to our hostess, join the quiet seated row.

With tiny slipping pencil in tightly gloved hand, The partners note in writing all the dances they demand; And soon in busy chatting squares the parlours quickly fill. And the sombre-faced musicians strike up a gay quadrille.

And so the dancing once begun keeps up with ceaseless whirl, The lancers' graceful mazes, the gallop's rapid twirl; The queen of dances, with its dreamy, sense-entrancing swing. Or its parody, the Boston glide, to strains of "Gentle Spring."

I see Miss Smith—an heiress, but of uncertain age, Propped up with skilful artifice, she still keeps quite the rage; Pearl-powder and goldine combine to lend their artful aid, And make a "gaslight beauty" of that much-sought wealthy maid.

And there's Mr. de Tomkinson, who apes the heavy swell, He scans with would-be critic air each promenading belle; His long and well-trained whiskers à la Dundreary hang, And he seeks to spice his rapid talk with fashionable slang.

But many a maiden fair is here with brightly glancing eye, And hair that nature dyed herself with that you cannot buy; And there are men whose actions do not make you sadly think Of Darwin's hunting theory and the mysterious link.

Flirtatious couples, wearied soon of Terpsichore's art, In various nooks and corners sit, from listeners apart; Tradition says that marriages are made in heaven all, And that may be, but for such work commend me to a ball.

But when the hours are glided the faster are they fled, The guests thin out by twos and threes—gay au revoirs are said, And in the crowded dressing-rooms, as hurriedly they dress, The party is pronounced by all to be a great success.

[For the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS.]

THE MESMERIST'S BATTLE.

By the Author of "The Week of Death."

IV.

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, Than are dreamt of in your philosophy. SHAKESPEARE.

From that day, Elvie seemed to have lost all that nervous tension of mind that had retarded her recovery. But she shewed an obvious dislike to me. Everything I did for her seemed only to make her hate me more. I took this calmly, as I had long taken all my troubles, but it seemed to cast a sunless cloud all day long over every day of my life.

I easily made arrangements for her sister at Sabrevois to take her in to board. I arranged for her receiving private lessons in Mathematics for which, like most superior women, she showed a rare aptitude. I insisted on her taking walking exercise two hours a day, and at last managed to get her interested in visiting her poorer neighbours, by whom, I found, she was soon looked upon as an angel of light. But her bearing towards me was marked by an evident dislike. Her mind was not petty enough to hate deeply, but all the hate she could feel she evidently felt towards me.

On the morning of Christmas Eve, I rode over to Sabrevois. Elvie was gone! She had disappeared suddenly during the previous night. No one knew whether or why! My ever-burning remembrance of Gomo's words telling her to meet him at Bedford put me on the right track.

I found that by some mysterious instinct she had gone in the straightest line possible for Bedford. It had been a mild open winter and the ground was bare. She had taken a bee line, only she had avoided every pond and brook by the shortest way round. This seems strange. But to me it would have seemed much more strange, may incomprehensible, if she had gone astray. In fact, she seemed, for the nonce, indued with that unerring instinct that leads a dog or (though an undignified animal to mention) a sucking pig, on an air-line home.

It was too late in the day to overtake her, and indeed she was evidently, from the inquiries I made of those whose houses she had passed, going faster over the rough ground than I could do. So I rode rapidly back to St. Johns, and took the evening train to Stanbridge Station, and thence by stage to Bedford.

Entering the well-known hotel by the back door, I found out from the landlord that Elvie was there. She had evidently come a long distance and her gown was torn, but she did not seem very tired. Her mesmerised state—for Gomo had mono-mesmerised her, if I may use the expression, during his midnight visit—doubtless prevented any nervous exhaustion. And in all cases of fatigue it is wisely ordered that the will gives way long before the muscles, or else we should work our poor bodies to pieces. Elvie had sought and obtained her old room, and I secured mine, the one next to hers. She had had her meals taken up to her and had somehow secured money some time before to pay for her

wants. Getting the landlord to call her away on some pretence, I removed the screws from the hinges of the doors that joined our two rooms. She and Gomo might now lock the door and welcome, without effect.

Some time after, I saw her sitting quietly at the open window of her room in the frosty air, gazing steadily in the direction of the United States, apparently without feeling any sensation of cold.

Towards midnight, I heard a ladder carefully put against the window of the passage from which our bed-rooms opened right and left. Gomo, whose practise as a conjurer had enabled him to take in every detail about the house at his last visit, quietly and without hesitation lifted the window and went rapidly and quite noiselessly to his wife's room, and locked both the doors.

Listening intently, I divined that Gomo had mesmerised his wife. "Come with me, old woman," he said, "I have a team waiting outside. I can't draw a house without your pretty looks." Directly she was mesmerised, she locked her lithe arm round the bed-post.

"No, George," said she, with the unshaken firmness of a gentle woman whose mind is made up. "You'll make me murdering my next little one, every hour and minute, night and day, till it's born dead, as the last was."

"Fashionable women do it," he said, "all the time who go to church, tight-laced."

"I won't." He seized her wrists, stared her in the face, and tried to mesmerise her. She closed her eyes. Pushing the door open on the side of the useless hinges, I stepped into the room.

Knowing I might as well try to hold a Thug or an eel as a conjurer, I said quietly:

"Cox, I'll give you a hundred dollars if you will let me speak to you for five minutes. Let's sit down." I threw him some bills which he thrust greedily in his pocket.

"Cox," said I, "Miss Bracy is no more married to you than I am."

Elvie let go the bed-post, and stood behind me as if I were her natural protector. By sympathy I felt a flush of hope running through her every noble limb.

"You mesmerised her, to make her accept you, and Kennedy, the ventriloquist, performed a mock service in the lonely Wesleyan Church, near Roxbourne."

"It's a confounded lie," he growled out.

"I have Kennedy's confession, under oath, witnessed by a magistrate," I replied.

He folded his arms and thought for a while.

"What will you give me to clear out? I can do nothing without her and I shall starve."

I had intended to pension him off, but knowing he would break every bargain and mesmerise her away from me at any time I wished to frighten him first.

"Cox," I said, "I have a warrant to arrest you for wife-desertion."

"She is only my mistress!" he replied with a grin.

"I've another to arrest you for hiring that wagon, when you were last here, and not paying for it."

"Do your worst!" he said with a laugh of triumph.

He had, the while, looked over my chain, caught Elvie's gaze, fixed it and completely mesmerised her.

With that dreamy look, I shuddered to see again, she left my side, and at the unspoken bidding of his will, went to him and put her arm round his neck.

"Kiss me, mistress," he said.

She did so.

I had secretly devoted the last six months to studying and practising mesmerism. I had strengthened my nerves by early hours, exercise, cold baths, and plain food. I was stimulated for the first and only time with a strong preparation of iron and phosphate, and Elvie's instinctive rush to my side had doubled my assurance of triumph. It was her maiden hand placed coyly on my shoulder that was to make me conquer if I was to conquer.

I seized his wrists. He raised his eyes to mine without fear. It is hard to mesmerise a feeble unresisting mind. But to mesmerise a resisting will is almost beyond the power of man. We stared at each other in the dim light of the oil lamp till our eyes seemed to merge in each other. His glance met mine like that of some devil-haunted beast of prey. A girl whose mother had been frightened by a snake was known to fix the gaze of a deadly cobra and make it glide from her lover. A man once fixed the gaze of a wolf which had entered a lonely hut that held himself and his only child, and made it slouch back into the woods.

So, I gazed at Gomo. I could feel his hot breath playing against my cheek. All else I forgot and was unconscious of, till I seemed to propel my whole being into his, and to cease to be myself. The crisis had come. It could not last much longer. I felt on the rim of a precipice; one foot was over it. I must soar or be lost. Suddenly, I was conscious that her hand was on his hated neck. Jealousy, the strongest of passions, nerved me, and—Gomo was mesmerised.

We were thence forward as quiet as two men of business. "Unmesmerise her," I said quietly and, as a matter of course, he did so.

"Go to the States," I commanded, "and never cross the line into Canada again."

"If we meet on the other side," he said as he prepared to go, "it will be the worse for one of us."

And so it was.

V.

D. T.

"Yet might I tell of meetings, of farewells
Of that which came between, more sweet than each." TENNYSON.

I could have made Elvie show me any and every mark of affection, but there was no need. She made me promise never again to use the power she had learned to hate. She asked for time to study and fit herself to be my wife by acquiring similar tastes to mine. I consented on condition that I should be her teacher. She was an apt scholar and we had a long and happy courtship, the prelude to the deeper and more sacred joys of married life. Her enjoyment of walking made a rare bond of union between us, as there is nothing binds hearts to hearts more than sympathy in natural healthy pleasures and in common pains. At length we were married.

Her daily visits to the poor she loved so well gave her daily experiences to compare with mine, so that she had always something new to tell me, which I did not know before.

At last, our union was crowned with a babe, dreamy representation of its mother. She brought it up wisely, self-forgetfully and well. "Trust me," she said, when I asked if a little fairy like her could pretend to manage a baby, "I've made up my mind to *slap it*."

I never let Elvie cross the lines into the States. But I, once, yielded to the entreaties of an old-hospital-chum, who had been appointed Physician to the Asylum at Syracuse, and I went to stay a few days with him. He was showing me over his wards, one lovely summer evening. His patients had gone to bed, though it was only eight o'clock, and broad daylight, for early hours tend to cure, as late hours tend to bring on insanity. I saw a confused pyramid of bed-clothes on one bed. It was a man sitting up in bed, his head buried between his knees, and his hands clasping his shins and all crouched under sheet, blanket and counterpane in the sweltering heat.

"That's Got George," said my friend.

He went up to him. "What do you see George?" said he kindly.

"Two large, pythons," said the hidden head slowly and fiercely "trying to mesmerise me. One is over to the right where that man is getting out of bed, and one in front rolling on, coil over coil. When I throw off the bed-clothes I see three. I've seen them night and day for three years."

"Lift up your head and try," said the physician.

He spoke as if accustomed to be obeyed.

It was Cox,—alias Signor di Gomo.

He saw and recognised me and leapt towards me, his open teeth aiming at my throat as though he would suck my very life-blood. I drew my clenched fist to my shoulder prepared for a knock-down blow.

"They've gripped me at last!" he shrieked, and fell on the floor in convulsions, writhing, rolling and contorted as if in the embraces of two very constrictors, indeed.

"A warning to moderate drinkers!" said my friend, as he left him in the care of a keeper.

SIX MONTHS IN THE WILDS OF THE NORTH-WEST.

BY OUR SPECIAL ARTIST AND CORRESPONDENT X.

THE SOUTH SASKATCHEWAN—ROLLING COUNTRY—DEATH OF HORSES—SWEET GRASS HILLS.

On the 5th September, we came to a Couleé or Run where we found little water and still less feed for the horses. We were leaving Cypress Hills for Bow River which our guide told us was only sixty miles off in a straight line. On the next day we unexpectedly struck a river which proved to be the South Saskatchewan, broad, rapid and clear. There we camped for the night, having killed some more buffalo. There was no grass for the horses, however, and they were, in consequence, much pulled down. On the 7th we moved on some seventy miles, but could not get to the river on account of the steep banks. Something similar happened on the following day. Our horses still suffered very much. The weather was rainy and cold, and we found no wood, but plenty of "buffalo chips." In the night of the 9th, four of our horses died and three were left in a dying state. Several on being led down to the Couleé could not get up.

On the 10th, we passed the Forks of the Saskatchewan, after having had them previously reconnoitred, as their safety was suspected. Passing on thence, we took a northerly direction to the banks of Billy River. Seven men, including two officers, were sent forward to find a suitable ford, taking two days' rations along with them. Another party of hunters was sent out for buffaloes, as our provisions were getting rather low.

On the 13th, some men returned with buffalo meat. They had a very cold night of it. Walker returned from up the river, finding no signs of Hooper-up trail. He went about thirty miles in a southerly direction. We broke up camp in the afternoon and returned to the old camp of the 9th. We found innumerable skunks about the place and a few badgers. In the evening Leveillé and Dinney arrived from the upper part of Bow River, about ten miles. They found no water and no grass. Walsh, appointed to the command of B. Troop, crossed the river on the way to Fort Edmonton, and was ordered to follow us to Sweet Grass Hills, moving south east.

On the following day, we advanced over a somewhat rolling country, dry and sandy. The horses and cattle continued to suffer very much. Sweet Grass Buttes showed blue in the distance. The 17th was spent on the same track with nothing to relieve its monotony, except a buffalo hunt which, however, was unsuccessful. The Buttes were not visible owing to the mist. The next night was very cold, but the morning dawned cleared and the Buttes were plainly visible covered with snow. The prairies assumed a rolling surface as we came to the gradual elevation of the Buttes. Moving towards the middle one, we crossed a wide running stream and halted on its banks. We supposed it was Milk River. In the vicinity we discovered the remains of an Indian camp, in which were clothes and two plates. There is a thick coal seam on the bank of the Couleé here, which burns well, having little sulphur in it. We used it for forging purposes. We thought the Boundary Commissioner's depot was at the western end of the west Butte, and the next day, McLeod found the trail to it, about six miles south of us. On reaching the depot, however, he found that it had been broken up and there were no signs of recent occupation.

Thornton and Morreau having gone out hunting together, got separated somehow and Thornton had a hard time of it. His horse broke down, and after remaining with it for two days he was forced to leave it behind and travel on foot. When he reached camp at last, he had been out five days, was completely exhausted, coatless, and nearly starved with cold.

We lost nineteen horses from the 9th September, making 48 since we left Toronto.

On the 21st, after riding along smartly, we camped at the base of the middle Butte. The Sweet Grass Hills consist of three elevations, known to the half-breeds as "Les Trois Buttes." They are in a line, with about four miles of intervening space, measuring from one extremity to the other about twenty-three miles. They are a notable landmark, being on the boundary line between Canada and the United States, the western Butte on the line being on British, the others on American soil.

VARIETIES.

CUT flowers can be kept for a week by placing them in camphor water.

ONE of the provisions of the French code forbids a doctor to inherit property left him by a deceased patient.

The piece of fat in the middle of a leg of mutton is called the Pope's eye, because one of the Popes was so fond of that particular *bonne bouche* that he used to have a whole sheep killed every day for the sake of it.

It is stated that the distinguished painter of the "Roll Call" has asked and obtained permission to attend the opening of the new Catholic Church, Burgate street, Canterbury, with a view to transferring to canvas the most striking portions of the ceremony.

To cure ingrowing toe-nails, put a small piece of tallow in a spoon, heat it until it becomes very hot, and pour on the granulations. The effect is magical. Pain and tenderness are relieved at once, and in a few days the granulations are all gone, the diseased parts dry and destitute of all feeling, and the edge of the nail exposed so as to admit of being pared away without any inconvenience.

At the terminal dinners at Clement's Inn, after the banquet of that learned society, members and guests rise on the removal of the white cloth, and witness the following thanksgiving in pantomime. Before the president of the second table the butler puts a mass of bread, consisting of four loaves adhering to each other by their kissing crusts. Taking this mass of bread in his hand, the said president of the second table slowly raises it above his head to the full reach of his arm, and after a few moments' pause brings it down with a thundering whack on the oaken table. A second time the bread is elevated and struck upon the resounding board. Yet a third time the same feat is performed; and then, before strangers have had time to recover from their astonishment, the grace-actor has thrown the bread so that it slides and spins down to the bottom of the long table, where it is caught up by the butler, who instantly runs out of the dining-hall with it in his outstretched hands. The whole grace is typical. The four loaves represent the Four Gospels; the three elevations are in reverence of the three Persons of the Sacred Trinity; the manner in which the bread is cast down the table indicates the liberality with which the Bread of Life was given to mankind; and the alacrity with which the butler runs out of the hall exemplifies the alacrity with which zealous servants hasten to distribute the bread of spiritual knowledge to those who hunger for it.

HUMOUROUS.

WHY is the capital of Turkey like a whimsical patient? Because it's constant to no pill.

A NEVADA woman recently knocked down seven burglars, one after another. Her husband watched her from the top of the stairs, and felt so brimful of battle that he couldn't cool off until he had jerked his eight-year-old boy out of bed and "wailed" him soundly for not getting up and helping his mother.

EYE-RONICAL.—Waiter—Beg pard'n, sir! Languid Swell—We-ell, what is it, James? Waiter—Beg pard'n, I'm sure, sir; but d'you know, sir, is there a gentleman here with one eye named Walker? Languid Swell—Don't know, m'sure. Say what's the name of the other eye?

THIS spelling school *furor* has been of great help to at least one Detroit. He has been courting a girl for three years past and hadn't the courage to speak his mind. As they were seated on the sofa the other night she referred to the spelling school excitement and added:

"Matrimony is an awful long word to spell, isn't it?" He leaned over, grasped her hand, and the next morning he had arrangements made to be married on the Fourth of July.

"I HAVE come," said a Scotch farmer to a neighbour laird who was just dying. "I have come to settle about that bit of land." "Settle!" cried the old wrangler; "how will you settle? Your father couldn't settle, and your grandfather couldn't settle, and the 'fifteen' couldn't settle, and how will you settle?" "Oh," said the rival claimant, "I'll let you have it altogether." "But I'll not tak' it," cried the stout old litigant, and turned his face resolutely to the wall.