

Fitzgibbon placed his little force in ambush on both sides of the road. The Americans were received by a volley from the woods. Imagining themselves in the presence of a much superior force, they surrendered. By the capitulation 542 men, two field pieces and the colors of the 14th U. S. regiment were delivered over to the Canadians.—*From Bourinot's notes to "Canada's Intellectual Strength and Weakness."*

[The author of this stirring ballad is a sister of Miss F. E. Murray, of St. John, a lady who has been a frequent contributor to the REVIEW in the past. Dr. Bourinot writes her: "The ballad is full of spirit, and ought to be very effective when recited. * * * Of all the poems on this well known incident your sister's verses seem to me in every respect conceived with the most thorough comprehension of the heroism of the brave woman and of the perils of the journey."]

LAURA SECORD'S JOURNEY.

A BALLAD OF THE WAR OF 1812.

"Wake, Laura! wake, arise;"
Close shuts the darkness round the bed;
She starts, she struggles with her dream,
"What moved?" she thinks, "What spoke? Who said?"
The pitch black night is on the wane,
A faint grey shows the window pane,
There is a deed that must be done,
There is achievement to be won,
A path to thread, a word to say,
Ere night again shall capture day.

Oh! woman's heart, the brave, the true,
Well used to keeping watch and ward,
Unceasing, be it grief or pain,
The loved with loyal faith to guard,
Even in sleep, feels danger near,
Even in sleep, holds close and dear
Home, duty, country, all in one;
As she who wakes e'er dawn's begun
To face the danger, bear the strain,
To dare, to suffer, to attain.

Slip softly out. A whispered word
Hushes the watchdog's sudden bark,
Unlatch the gate, steal past the wall,
Was that a whisper in the dark?
With close shut lips and quiet face,
With courage of the British race,
With steady step that will not swerve,
With deep long breath, and dauntless nerve,
Across the meadow, down the hill,
Laura Secord is hastening still.

Fair dawns the light in opal skies,
The radiant Canadian morn
With all its matchless, sparkling hues,
And spruce scents on the fresh winds borne,
The silver daisies' multitude
Upon her hurrying feet intrude,
And all the blue bells sway and swing
Their tiny bells in welcoming:
While from the elm tree's topmost spray,
A robin pours his roundelay.

Turn from the highway, turn aside!
The road's besieged, the foe is near,
The signal call, the rifle's ring,
The trampling of the steed is there.
Turn to the wilderness aside,
Let the great sun be trusty guide,
Climb fallen tree, o'er green morass,
Swift let the sinking footsteps pass.
Glided a snake athwart the moss?
Howled a wild beast the mere across?
Whizzed there a bullet through the air?
Steadfast she goes to do and dare.

In this one woman's hand is held
The fate of hundreds, strong and true,
Betrayed, outnumbered, shall they fall
Unwarned, before the foeman's crew?
And shall the glorious, honored cross,
Go down in strange dismay and loss,
Banner for which our heroes died,
For centuries our nation's pride,
Go down in shamed defeat, a prey
To the striped flag of yesterday?

Glistens a river, far awest,
The bridge lies, rifle guarded well,
How deep the sullen water runs,
How steep the bank,—she cannot tell.
Step in, brave feet. Not men alone
With lives unwritten, names unknown,
Can face grim death at duty's call,
Can win a laurel for their pail.
Can die unthanked, unpraised, unseen;
Women have learnt this art, I ween.

Knee high, waist high, the water came,
It touched her shoulder, kissed her lip,
Stand steady on the oozy slime,
Heart must not fail, nor footsteps slip.
The bank is gained with westerling sun,
Haste, Laura, haste, 'tis almost won!
With bleeding feet, lips parched and dry
She sees the pink flushed sunset sky,
And drags her weary steps, at last,
Into the road, the peril passed.

Ho, for the Red Cross! There it floats
In Canada's own loyal breeze
The scarlet lines wind in and out
Under the shade of mighty trees.
The drum roll that encircles all
The round earth with its evening call,
Greet her, as fainting, panting, weak
The warning words she strives to speak.
To action swift the hearers sprang,
And terse and clear the orders rang.

And so to-morrow saw the ranks,
Canadian, English, Indian close
And snatch a victory from defeat
To humble Britain's haughty foes.
And long, and long, and long again,
O'er fair Canadian hill and plain,
O'er mighty river, silver lake,
May countless dawns in beauty break;
And still the great Cross banner see
Guarded with loving loyalty.

Sleep, Laura Secord, resting well
Serenely pillowed 'neath the grass,
Tender and reverent be the steps
That by thy green grave pause and pass.
The while across the ages long,
Oh faint, Oh far, sweeps down a song,
From graves of heroes of our race,
From many an honored resting place;
"Numbered with us, on glory's roll,
Be this Canadian dauntless soul."

—ELLEN MURRAY.

Remember that good use of language comes,—

1. From much practice.
2. From knowing what one wishes to say or write.
3. From a desire to say it well.
4. From having an object in saying it.
5. From noting how good talkers say things.
6. From keeping the eye open.
7. From keeping the mouth shut when there is nothing to say.—*Connecticut School Journal.*