

Canada, our Own Fair Land.*

BY W. J. TOPLBY.

"NEATH western skies—two seas between—
A beauteous land far-reaching lies;
Whose sons are bound to Britain's Queen
By fast-linked fetters, loving ties.
'Tis Canada, our own fair land,
The home of freemen strong and brave,
Each wins his fame with mind and hand,
A lord by birthright—ne'er a slave.

With honest pride aloft we fling
Our virgin banner to the breeze;
In lands where wooing zephyrs sing
Or borne by winds of northern seas.
Nor dread we what the future brings;
A goodly heritage is ours;
In Nature's bosom hidden springs
Hold needful blessings, veiled with flowers.

Through hopeful hearts there ebbs and flows
The gift of sires beyond the sea.
Here blends the thistle with the rose,
The shamrock and the fleur-de-lis.
A loyal race, a noble Queen
Whose feet are guided from above;
Her life—in light or shadow seen—
Reveals the heart her people love.

O then whose wisdom never errs!
Whose goodness sometimes seems unkind;
Forgive our thought, that ill inferences—
Create in us a constant mind.
Give strength to honest hearts and true
Who strive to wisely shape our laws;
Give strength to daily toilers, too,
Whose hands help on our country's cause.

Sustain and guard our gracious Queen,
Bless thou the old lands o'er the sea;
Thy brooding love, the bond between
Their hearts and ours, our hearts and thee.
Guide him whose hand our sceptre sways,
His Consort keep, nor ill betide;
Grant them thy grace through happy days,
To love and serve thee side by side.

Eternal God!—in faith we pray—
Breathe thy blest spirit o'er our land,
Throughout our nation's bright'ning way
Let peace and love lead hand in hand.
Still may thy truths in hearts sincere
Our country's bulwark ever prove;
Our children will thy name revere,
Till "rolling years shall cease to move."
Ottawa, 1882.

THE SLAVE CHASE.

BY SYDNEY WATSON.

Author of "Wops the Waif," "Run Down," etc.

CHAPTER VII.

NELLIE HARCOURT'S NEW EXPERIENCE.

We left Nellie Harcourt, with tearful face and sorrowful heart, in the great city of London, with its lights and shadows, its joys and sorrows, its business rush and whirl of pleasure.

For some days she felt the parting from her lover very keenly; then, as her mind became absorbed in new invitations, new fashions, new acquaintances, and all the sides of what is known as fashionable life, she became reconciled to the separation, and was soon as happy as a bird in her way, though always eagerly looking for the letters which the mail brought.

But somehow, after a time, a great dissatisfaction came into her heart. She got tired of balls and dinners, and croquet and garden parties wearied her. She took to going to church oftener, tried to read good books, but got more and more dissatisfied. She got into a low depressed state; her health suffered, and she was ordered to the Continent.

About this time, the maid who had been with her since she was a child left her to get married, and she advertised for a new one. She had numerous applicants. They tried her patience very much in the various personal interviews that followed, and she almost despaired of getting one to suit her,

when she received a letter written in a beautiful, clear hand, and with a simple freshness of style about it that roused her to new interest. An interview was arranged, which was destined to mean so much more to this weary, heart-sick girl, than ever she could have dreamt.

The new applicant was rather tall for a woman, with a sweet, refined face, a good figure, and a certain indescribable restfulness about her. Her face had in it a light not often seen; her voice, clear and distinct, with a rich Irish brogue so quaint and beautiful, had a strange soothing power with it—a gift given to those who live in much communion with God.

Her references were unexceptional. Nellie Harcourt was pleased with a pleasure she could not exactly have defined; and was conscious that something about this girl, Nora Hutton, rested her, instead of irritating, as many of the others had done.

Very soon a real heart friendship was formed between mistress and maid; and the fashionable Miss Harcourt felt that she had more pleasure in her maid's society than in all the world of pleasure she had so long indulged in.

We need hardly say that Nora Hutton was a real hearty Christian. She was the daughter of an Irish gentleman farmer, who, dying suddenly, and leaving his affairs involved, his children had been scattered, each seeking his or her fortune as doors were opened. They had each received a good education, and among Nora's special gifts was one for music. She could never bear the tedium of practice by note, but she had a correct, quick ear, and that delicacy of touch that over charms while it astonishes the listener.

The instrument she always played was a small, but valuable, exquisite-toned harp, a gift of her father in brighter days; and on her acceptance of place as maid to Miss Harcourt, she had stipulated to be allowed to bring her favourite with her.

She had not been long in her new sphere before she saw how unhappy and unsettled her young mistress was, and, seeking guidance from God, she watched for fitting opportunities to show Jesus to her as her salvation.

After a long and earnest conversation one afternoon with Nellie Harcourt, she had retired to her own room, and taking her harp played and sang to herself, as she often did for refreshment of soul, as well as for ordinary recreation. She had left her mistress in deep thought over the truth that had been the subject of conversation between them for well nigh an hour. Almost directly after Nora had left her, Nellie grew restless, could not settle to anything, so finally determined to seek her maid in her own room, and try and get this great matter of her soul's salvation settled.

As she drew near to Nora's room she heard the music of her harp, as with almost fantastic finger, she was running chord into chord, in a sort of weird accompaniment. Then presently, with bold, firm touch, there came ringing out the stirring notes of a tune all unfamiliar, accompanied by Nora's voice as she sang with deep feeling,—

"Begone, vain world! thou hast no charms for me,
My captive soul has long been held by thee;
I listened long to thy vain song,
And thought thy music sweet,
And thus my soul lay grovelling at thy feet."

The last three lines were repeated with even more feeling and emphasis, and tune and words arrested Nellie Harcourt, and determined her to seek her maid at once—so, tapping sharply at the door and turning the handle lightly, she cried, "Can I come in, Nora?"

In a moment Nora sprang to the door, surprised, yet pleased, at the visit, as she said, "Did you want me, Miss Harcourt?"

"Yes,—and no,—Nora. The fact is, I feel restless. I want this matter of my soul settled, and I came to ask you to help me when I heard you singing; and those words you repeated are just my experience:—

"I listened long to thy vain song,
And thought thy music sweet,
And thus my soul lay grovelling at thy feet."

"And, oh, Nora, I feel I was never made to be a slave to fashion or the world. How can I be free?"

"Ah, miss," responded Nora, "whom the Son makes free is free indeed."

"What are the other words of that beautiful hymn you were singing? Will they touch my case? Will you sing them to me? Sing as if I were not here: sing as you sang the first verse."

With an inward prayer for blessing on it, Nora drew her harp toward her, as she sang, with a power and pathos drawn out by the circumstances:—

"My soul, through grace, on wings of faith shall rise
Towards that dear place where my possession lies:
That sacred land at God's right hand,
My dear Redeemer's throne,
Where Jesus pleads, and makes my cause his own.

"Amazing grace! does Jesus plead for me?
Then sure I am the captive must be free;
For while he does for sinners plead,
He's anxious to prevail,
And I believe his blood can never fail."

Then, taking her mistress's hand, as she saw the tears falling rapidly from her eyes, she said, "Oh, Miss Harcourt, cannot you trust what God says about his Son? Cannot you just come and rest on Jesus and his work for you?"

But, overcome with emotion, Nellie Harcourt just laid her head on the lap of her maid, and sobbed as if her heart would break. Nora, bending over her, and in her excitement relapsing into her native speech, said tenderly, "Whist, darlint Miss Harcourt, and just rest ye in Jesus' word as ye are resting in my lap. He says himself to ye, 'Come unto me, and I will give you rest.'"

For a few moments nothing was heard but sobs, till presently there came faintly from the young mistress, "Precious Saviour: Thou wast wounded for my transgressions; by thy stripes I am healed; I do trust thee." And truly, as she looked up in the face of her maid, who was now weeping herself for joy, she showed she had caught the Master's smile, and that the light of his countenance rested upon her.

With the vivacity of her race, Nora, conscious of a reaction, cried gleefully, "Now, then, for one more verse, mistress! the devil will be very ready at you, so let us have this verse to help us." And with ringing voice and skilful finger, she struck off:—

"He signed the deed with his atoning blood,
And ever lives to make the payment good;
Should hell, and sin, and law come in
To urge a second claim,
They all retire at mention of his name."

CHAPTER VIII.

HOME AGAIN.

Once more we must return to Ralph Vincent, who, with his new-found joy, was thinking how Nellie Harcourt would receive the news, and how he would explain it all. The boat had been duly picked up, with its extra inmate, the freed black, and the vessel was now lying in Seychelles.

It was about half-past four in the afternoon when the French mail-boat was discerned just coming round the rocky point that had hidden her from view till well upon them.

Everyone was on the tiptoe of expectation, and, after due time, the one magic word was shouted all over the ship, "Letters! Letters!" while the ship's corporal, taking a prominent stand forward, commenced to call out the names, the men crowding round full of eagerness for news from home. Our old friend, Jenkins, full of fun as usual, brought a small washtub to put his "Billy-duxes," as he called them, in. Presently the last letter had been handed out. There is disappointment on some faces, joy on others, sorrow on others, where the black-edged envelope has told a tale even before the seal has been broken,

and soon all are busy with their own concerns.

Who can describe the joy and delight of Lieutenant Vincent as he reads sheet after sheet of a closely written letter from his "Darling Nellie," describing all that she had passed through, and urging him to come to that Saviour who is now her joy, and who waits to be his Saviour too! How he lingered over it as he read to the close, and saw it signed,

"Yours dear Ralph for ever, if you will be his,

"NELLIE HARCOURT."

Nearly two years elapsed, and then a crowd of happy fellows went steaming away in the London train from Plymouth. Ralph Vincent travelled first class, Joe Richards and Sam Harper travelled third, but each knew they were bound to the same heaven, through the same Saviour.

Bermunday, that evening, behold a very happy group, as Joe, the centre of that admiring home circle, holding his mother's hand in his, talked till past midnight, then insisted on all going off to bed, considering he had six weeks' leave to tell them all the news.

And, as Ralph Vincent held his loved one's hand, in that Belgravian mansion, and together, for the first time, knelt in prayer, they blessed God for liberty in Christ. Now no longer the world's poor slaves, they realized that "whom the Son makes free are free indeed!"

THE END.

THOROUGHNESS.

A YOUNG New Englander, whose knowledge was more showy than deep, went, many years ago, to teach a district school in Virginia.

Among his pupils was a small, insignificant looking boy, who annoyed him by his questions. No matter what the subject under discussion, this lad apparently could not get near enough to the bottom of it to be content.

One very warm August morning, the teacher, with no little vanity in a knowledge not universal in those days, began to lecture to the boys on the habits and characteristics of a fish which one of them had caught during recess. He finished and was about to dismiss the school, when his inquisitive pupil asked some question about the gills and their use.

The question answered, others followed, concerning the scales, skin, flesh. The poor teacher struggled to reply with all the information at his command. But that was small and the day grew warmer, and the Saturday afternoon's holiday was rapidly slipping away.

"The school will now be dismissed," he said, at last.

"But the bones? You have told us nothing about the bones," said the anxious boy.

Mr. Dash smothered his annoyance, and gave all the information he could command on the shape, structure, and use of the bones.

"And now the school"—he began.

"What is inside of the bones?" stolidly came from the corner where the quiet boy was sitting.

Mr. Dash never remembered what answer he gave, but the question and his despair fixed themselves in his memory. Thirty-five years after he visited Washington, and entered the room where the Justices of the Supreme Court were sitting.

The Chief Justice, the most learned jurist of his day, was a man like St. Paul, whose bodily presence was contemptible.

The stranger regarded him with awe, then with amazement.

"It is the boy who went inside of the fish's bones," he exclaimed.

If he had not tried to go inside of every "fish's bone," he would never have reached the lofty position which he held.

It is the boy who penetrates to the heart of the matter who is the successful scholar, and afterward lawyer, physician, philosopher or statesman. It is the man whose axe is laid at the root, not the outer branches, whose religion is a solid foundation for his life here and beyond.

* Copies of these verses were sent the Marquis of Lorne and Princess Louise, who forwarded a copy to the Queen. Her Majesty kindly sent word that she was much pleased with them.