



## The Countryman and the Paper.

BY BERNARD GILBERT,

A bit of satire on the press shows the bewilderment of a Lincolnshire farmer—such as Tennyson so wonderfully depicted in the "Northern Farmer"—over the endless recurrence of the newspapers. It appears in a volume called "Back to the Land" (Blackwell):

From year to year the harvests come,  
'Tis in the way of Nature so,  
But what I hardly understand  
Is 'ow them papers keeps a-go;  
For week by week they carry on,  
An' like the weeds, they've never done.

Yes! 'ivery blessed week they're full  
Of news and tales and sich like trash,  
Wi' talk o' things across the sea  
An' 'ow to make a bit o' cash;  
You'd think they'd run it dry—but, Lor',  
Next week there's allus summat more!

Tho I'm a dab at diggin' drains,  
It makes me sweat to hold a pen.  
I spec them fellers milks their brains,  
Their soil must be like Blankney Fen!  
'Tis wondrous 'ow they till their rood;  
I 'ope the pay is half as good!

Their fingers must be crooked all  
An' p'r'aps 'tis ink they sweat o' nights;  
I hear as 'ow they soon go bald,  
And blind as bats, and 'orrid sights!  
Thank God I niver write mysen:  
We needs noa ink down Blankney Fen.

## A Holiday Jaunt in Switzerland—II.

THE fashionable promenade in Loèche-Bains is the *Promenade des Anglais*, which starts from the Public Square as a broad, level pathway with a fringe of seats along the sides. After continuing in this proper and open-faced manner for some time it suddenly shrinks to half its size, changes its names and darts into the dim depths of the pine forest where it seems to lose itself and become an irresponsible, capricious mountain path full of romantic possibilities. After meandering in this uncertain way a long distance it emerges into the bright sunlight, changes its name again (like an American widow) and becomes a path with a purpose—The Way of the Ladders. Now it is rocky, full of twists and turns, and so narrow that pedestrians must go Indian file. It ends abruptly at the base of a high precipice to which are attached eight rickety old ladders, the rungs far apart and many of them missing. If one wishes to reach the village at the top of the precipice he must climb these ladders.

Could anything be more primitive? Very few visitors are cool-headed and sure-footed enough to attempt it, but the peasants go up and down them constantly, using them as a short-cut to Loèche, carrying on their backs all sorts of heavy loads and even live stock.

We climbed the first two ladders to a little cave from which one gets a fine view, but even at that height it was unpleasant to reflect on what might happen if one should get dizzy or make a misstep, as the slope of the mountain at that point is very steep and the river is down below.

There are charming walks and climbs around Loèche. Every day we went Columboing about making new discoveries.

One day, we chanced on the Magic Spring. We had noticed from afar off that a certain spot in the valley seemed to be a rallying point for numbers of people every day; especially in the late afternoon.

Cleopatra said she thought it was a Bolshevik hatchery. I leaned to the opinion it was preaching of some sort. As there seemed to be as many women as men interested we decided to investigate. And what do you think we found?

What do you think those people were doing?

You never would guess, so I'll tell you: They were just simply bathing their feet in a stream.

But why that particular stream? Why not one of the others? The whole valley is tinkling with torrents.

Reason—The Magic Stream is a Pain-Chaser. It is very hot; it is mineral, and it has a marvellous effect on foot ailments of all kinds. Also, and this is a very important point, it is the only thing that I know of in Loèche, except Alpine air, that one does not have to pay for.

tramps stop there, peel off their shoes and stockings and plunge their tired feet into the healing water.

It is a most amusing sight, and the leggiest landscape I ever viewed. It would make a side-splitting farce for a movie show.

Here, for instance, is a florid, fat woman sitting on a jutting rock, with her skirts pulled up to her knees and her feet in a cascade. She is placidly kitting a pair of socks, quite regardless of her near neighbor—a tall, lean man with a patriarchal beard, who is just removing his shoes.

Here at a bend in the stream is a gay, giggly group of short-skirted young girls busily engaged in drying their feet with towels. (I may whisper right here that towels are not considered absolutely necessary for Magic Stream bathers—

water go their feet. And there they sit for half an hour, chatting, and smoking cigarettes. Tired up and away.

And here are two jolly girl climbers from the Gemmi resting their tired feet in a foaming cascade.

Of course, Cleopatra and I caught the contagion for foot-bathing, and having tried it once and found it most agreeable and refreshing, became regular habitués.

The first day we went there Cleopatra, who is somewhat of a swell and sometimes more stylish than sensible, wore a tan-colored woollen skirt and a rose-silk sweater. Having selected what she considered a nice, dry spot on which to sit during the operation, she elevated her parasol. Why did she put up her parasol? Well, she was a bit modest, and thought to conceal herself as much as possible while removing her dainty foot-gear. But parasols are unreliable protectors, and this one was displaced by a whiff of wind and whirled off down the field where it was rescued by one small boy and brought back by six. (I may state here in parenthesis, that the second day Cleopatra considered a parasol as quite an unnecessary accompaniment to the rite).

This episode and the publicity attending it made Cleopatra a bit nervous, and she hurriedly plunged her feet into the water—and immediately withdrew them with a howl of pain, "Mercy!" she gasped, "it's boiling hot."

It was only after ten minutes of preliminary dabbling that she was able to hide her cinderallas under the water. Then, when she had become accustomed to the heat, she opened her book and was soon lost to everything around her.

I selected a rock-seat farther down the stream, but found it most unsatisfactory, and finally abandoned it entirely and, following the example of many others, grabbed my skirts in each hand and stood up in mid-stream. In half an hour I reshod myself and called to Cleopatra that it was time to go. She looked up from her book in a dazed sort of way but came to life fast enough when she stood up and saw her skirt. She had been sitting on a spongy bank of grass-covered mud all the time and never knew it. Being an exorable person, her distress of mind when she saw the dark smudge on her new skirt was pitiable to behold.

She wondered how I could laugh. She never could go back to the hotel like that. Never! What could she do? she demanded. A kind-hearted peasant woman with no sense of humor offered to lend her the blue and white checked apron she was wearing, but this Cleopatra refused kindly but firmly.

The affair was finally arranged by transferring Cleopatra's rose sweater from her shoulders to her waist, tying it around by the sleeves and letting it dangle down carelessly over the mud-stain.

In this way we proceeded to the hotel and happily for Cleopatra's peace of mind, reached there without meeting any one she knew.

HELEN A. RUSSELL.

## During the Last Days.

THE last days at the Rural Leadership Conference at Guelph were marked by final addresses from President Reynolds and Dr. Eric Clarke, a third lecture on stock judging, and an address by Mr. Morrison of the U. F. O.

President Reynolds' address—"The Problem of Housework"—will be held over so that it can be given in toto next week.

## Classes for Defectives.

Dr. Clarke's last talk was about the special classes (of not more than 15 children each) that are now being established in the towns and cities, for



The Source of the Magic Stream.

The source of the Magic Stream is insignificant. It just bubbles boiling hot out of the mud and forms a pool around which visitors have improvised rough seats. Here at almost any hour of the day you may see people sitting, their legs bared to the knees, and their feet in the water.

From this pool flows a merry little brook which sings its way through the green meadows, now foaming in gay cascades, now swirling in little pools, now hurrying noisily down the hill and ending its heated career by merging into an icy stream from the glacier.

People frequent the Magic Stream at all hours, but the most popular time is the late afternoon. Then the banks are dotted with foot-bathers—people of all sorts and conditions—rich and poor, young and old, hotel guests and peasants. Pedestrians returning from mountain

they are a trouble to carry, and chance bathers do not have them—so sun and air take their place.)

Here is a Happy Family—father, mother and three small children, the youngest not able to stand alone. The two elder children are wading in and out of the stream, the father and mother are sitting side by side, feet immersed, and the baby is dangled frequently over the stream and delightedly dabbles its toes in the water.

Here come a group of fashionable hotel guests, two young men and two young women. They select a spot and proceed to make their preparations quite unabashed by the publicity and the non-bathing audience along the banks.

Here are four Alpinists from the Gemmi. Hot and dusty. Off come their bulky ruck-sacks. Off come their heavy hob-nailed shoes. Off come their thick, woollen stockings, and into the



Two Girl Climbers from the Gemmi Taking a Foot-bath in the Magic Stream.