

highest dignity, but all the same a good laugh serves a nobler purpose in nature than dignity when standing alone. In the line of this high and refined art it is open for any bold reformer to invite a party of friends together with the understanding that each member of the company will be expected to relate one or more good stories; and such a party would serve the double purpose of general entertainment, and of cultivating the art of telling a good thing well. Why would not such a party be as acceptable and refined as one where any other art is mentioned as the stated means of entertainment? I have read of one highly accomplished lady who gave receptions to her friends, and marked the card of invitation with the word "conversation." She was a mistress of the art, and her receptions were exceedingly popular, as many found them a stimulant to excellence, and many useful hints in attaining it.

TOMONTO, ONT.

HOW "TRUTH" IS RECEIVED IN THE HOME.

"Hello! Here's Johnnie from the post-office already, and the stage hardly down. Wonder if he brought me a letter. I hope so. Strange, isn't it, we girls always want letters, and although we get enough of them to make some folks jealous, we're like unsatisfied leeches, still inwardly, if not audibly saying, 'Give, give!'"

While this conversation was going on Johnnie reached the house, but, boy-like, danced around, avoiding the extended hands of his sisters to reach for "the mail." When the anxiety of the girls had found vent in expressions of their feelings for a brother who would tease them so, and had resumed their work, then did Johnnie bring out his treasures. Letters; yes, for mother from the "old country." One for Jess and a paper for Mary. The weekly newspapers, including TRUTH, Johnnie's own paper. With a schoolboy's ardor he had urged the question of subscribing for the paper, and, as usual with spoiled, wayward, fun-loving, guileless school-boys, Johnnie had his way and TRUTH was sent for.

It was No. 14 Competition, and the young man's plans were often laid by himself. What he was to do with his prize, and how much he was going to enjoy it. He had read TRUTH earnestly, hoping to find all its good points that he might be permitted to renew his subscription on its expiration.

He was fast gaining a reputation as a medical adviser (in his own family) from his reading in TRUTH's columns. He was well versed in the pros and cons of vaccination. He was well-read on the matters of the day by reading the Editor's notes. His sisters were forcibly convinced that TRUTH knew the fashions and could get out of just the nicest dresses. In his way he was learning to like poetry, too. The bump poetry—never very large—must have grown in size as he read, determined to like TRUTH's poetry, and Mr. Imrie was one of the characters Johnnie professed to admire profoundly. He had been reading aloud to mother all the good things to see if his power of persuasion could not make her think that TRUTH took the right side in everything.

The girls on this particular evening were called from the pages before them, and on which their eyes had been intently gazing, by a shout of triumph, which, in the days of forests and Red Indians in our fair Ontario, might have made a white man's whole frame shiver. It was Johnnie—not so unusual for him to shout aloud—but surely there's something extraordinary to-night. TRUTH is on

the floor, and Johnnie is dancing a war-dance corresponding to the whoop, shouting, "I got it! I got it!"

The girls take in the situation, and are earnestly hunting among the list of names to see the prize Johnnie has won. Mother comes to the door.

"Got what! Johnnie! Are you mad! What's up now?" Father appears on the scene with, "What now, found your knife? What's up with the youngster?"

The girls have found it. Johnnie's going to have a watch. Hurrah for TRUTH. Johnnie survived the shock.

THE BATTLE OF LACOLLE MILL.

AN INCIDENT OF 1814—HOW CANADIAN VALOR OVERCAME THE ENEMY—PUTTING TO FLIGHT A VASTLY SUPERIOR FORCE OF YANKEES.

BY E. L. POET HOPE.

The battle of Lacolle Mill is an old story, now, so old, that almost its only record is history, and in that is merely noted the fact that such a battle was fought and won by the British. No account is given there of the unflinching devotion, and heroic bravery of the noble few, who for long hours, though greatly outnumbered, kept the enemy at bay, and added one more to the many disasters which attended the American arms.

The following account of the battle was given, in substance, by an old lady, who was an eye-witness of many incidents here spoken of. She is yet an honoured resident of the township of Darlington in this county (Durham) and such may she long remain.

"Yes, I was quite young then, and though year has been added to year, rapidly, it seems to me, and though I have long passed the allotted three score years and ten, memory, at times, brings all so vividly present, that I seem to live and see over again the scenes and incidents to me so fearful at that time.

"The events of which I speak are well nigh forgotten now. If thought of or spoken of at all, it is merely as an episode unimportant in itself, not as a test of that loyalty to the Mother Country, practically shown at that and many other places along the border, in that unjust and unnatural war in which the Americans strove so determinedly the conquest of Canada.

"My earliest recollections are intimately connected with the township of Hemmingford in the County of Huntingdon, Province of Quebec, where I was born. My grandfather, an old U. E. Loyalist of the Revolutionary War, when forced to leave the United States with some others, settled in the above County near what is now the town of Hemmingford—a stirring little town now I am told—but then it consisted of little more than a name.

"In 1811, our family, which then consisted of father, mother, and six children, moved to Lacolle, a distance of about sixteen miles from Hemmingford, and settled on a farm which was situated about a mile from the celebrated Lacolle Mill.

"In 1812 the United States declared war against England, and as that part of Canada and United States territory joined, it was subject to many invasions or raids of armed men. Well, I remember the fear and consternation on all sides when it would be reported that the enemy were coming. On these occasions the Americans would usually plunder the settlers, burn some houses, then away again. So you can see we had ample reason to feel uneasy. At length this became so frequent and so terribly annoying that a company was formed called the "Watchguards," to repel these invaders.

"The war had now been in progress two years, and attempt after attempt had been made by the Americans to invade Canada, with very indifferent success. At length another invasion was determined upon by way of Lake Champlain and the Richelieu river. The chief object of this invasion was to take Montreal. Along this route, previous to this, there had been stationed small bodies of British troops and Militia and it was necessary for the Americans to drive away or capture these several detachments as they advanced.

"Among the strongest and most important of these stations was Lacolle Mill, situated near the mouth of a small stream which empties into the north end of the lake. It was important, because, situated at the foot of the lake, near the boundary, and on the principal road, it hence commanded all the approaches north. So you can see why the Americans wished to obtain possession of it. Having done so they would no doubt have held it as a base of operations in their contemplated attack on Montreal.

"The old mill—I can see it yet in my memory—the massive walls and heavy timbers; was a large stone building intended for a grist mill, but now turned into a fortress. Many of the windows had been removed and replaced with stout oak plank loopholed for muskets. Altogether it was a place of considerable strength.

"For many days rumors of the intended invasion, on a larger scale than usual, had reached us—an invasion that was to drive us from our homes or else force from us the power of resistance.

"At length, early in the morning of the 30th of March, the alarm was given that the enemy was approaching. Father and Mr. Gillfillan—grandfather of Mr. Gillfillan, teacher, of Bowmanville,—were at breakfast together. They immediately arose from the table, took their guns quite unconcerned, and went out. You can imagine the state of feelings mother and her little ones must have been in when thus left alone, father with the other men having to hurry to different points to make a stand and oppose the further advance of the enemy. Our fears were not in the least allayed when a British officer, a Captain Blake—I shall never forget his name, I assure you—with a number of Regulars came up and ordered us to leave the house, and go into the mill. Mother represented to him how impossible this was, that the snow was very deep, and by that time the enemy were likely between them and the mill and of the greater safety of remaining in the house. He rudely ordered us out, telling us to go into the woods, that he wished to use the house as a fort to make a stand against the enemy. Whether or not this was true I cannot say, for very soon after we left, a detachment of the enemy appeared in sight and they, seeing the house occupied with red coats, extended their flanks right and left, in order to surround the house, and if possible capture those within. The British soldiers did not wait for this, however, for seeing that they were greatly outnumbered left the house and ran for the woods.

"Mother, with the rest of us, by this time had got quite a distance away, but, hampered as she was with her little ones, carrying the two youngest in her arms, the rest clinging to her, and weeping, and the snow being very deep we could move only with great difficulty. The redcoats soon overtook and passed us, and I am forced to say not one offered to assist us in any way. Finding this and falling in the snow we tried to keep up with the soldiers, but they soon

disappeared from our sight, having reached a dense grove of young hemlock, where trees had been felled to retard the passage of the enemy. Falling over logs and brush we at last became completely bewildered, and could go no farther. It was at this instant that mother caught sight of the enemy, with their guns raised, just in the act of firing at us. She screamed for us to lie close to the ground, but before we could comprehend and comply with her wishes, they fired, the heavy discharge seeming to raise me off my feet. I felt a sharp, burning pain in my side, and fell on my face. At the same time my poor brother was thrown beside me moaning with pain. He had been shot in the neck and foot. It is yet a matter of wonderment to me how any of us escaped, for the Americans, a large number of them, were quite near us, but none with the exception of my brother and myself were hit. Our garments were pierced in many places with bullets. It must have been a kind Providence who watched over us, for has He not said that a sparrow cannot fall without His notice?

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

FLOWERS THAT BLOSSOM.

BY ANNIE L. JACK.

In mid-winter there is often a dearth of blossoms among geraniums and roses, and the ordinary plants that are taken into the house. To provide against this there are no plants more satisfactory than Chinese Primroses and Stenla that keep up a constant blossoming from November till March, after which these plants are ready to accept the added sunshine and put forth flowers.

The Chinese Primroses can be propagated from seed; raised in a hot-bed the young plants may be potted early in autumn, and will give a limited flowering during the first winter indoors. Planted out in spring where they are not noticed, in a damp shaded place, they will grow into large clumps that will live and bloom freely for two or three successive seasons, and can then be divided into two or three and go on growing. Some of the shades of pink, purple, and the finely notched and quilled edges are very beautiful. They are, however, quite impatient of cold water, and resent its being poured over the leaves. Warm water should always be used, and poured directly upon the earth which should be composed of loam and rotted leaf-mold. Too much water causes decay at the roots, and rots the leaves. The double varieties are very beautiful and for continuance of bloom the primrose is unrivalled.

It is very useful as a table plant, a single pot in bloom being a much admired ornament, and the flowers being all around the plant renders it the more desirable. The Stenla is a green leafed plant not unlike a magnolia in its style of growing, with a sweetly perfumed flower, like a white cluster of stars. It grows easily from cuttings in spring, and can be left all summer with very little attention. Before Christmas blossoming commences, and continues all winter. In these articles on the flowers that bloom, I am only giving from actual experience the plants that have succeeded best for blossoming in our Canadian climate. For winter flowers we are so much dependent on sunshine, and have so little of it during the early winter months, that it is impossible for roses, and many other plants to bloom until the lengthened days give the food they require, and so, as in many other things, it is well to learn to cultivate such flowers as blossom cheerfully in the dull, dark days; to

"Take the good, when you lose the best,
And school yourself till it seems as well."

CHATEAUQUAY, QUE.