



(CONTINUED FROM NO. 78.)

Charlie greeted me in his old hearty way, but I soon noticed a change in him. He seemed harassed and ill-at-ease, and avoided any reference to his affairs. As time passed, I saw enough to convince me he was deeply in debt, and consequently was having a miserable time, as he was of too honourable a disposition to live in such a way and not feel it keenly. At last, one evening he came in and I saw from his face that he had come determined to tell me about his troubles.

Drawing a bundle of papers from his pocket he held them up to view.

"These," he said, "are a few of the many bills I owe. So much for housekeeping! And all the pleasure I anticipated from keeping house I have only partly experienced, owing to the troubles and worries I have had from almost the beginning. If I had had the slightest idea of the expenses pertaining to housekeeping I should never have ventured on the experiment. I don't wonder so many young married people have to give up housekeeping and go back to their parents; and what with taxes, rent and servants' wages, one would need a fortune to keep a house. And the bills! How they do accumulate. Why, I had no idea that such things as bread and milk would amount to so much. Just see this bill of the milkman's," selecting one from the bundle and reading a startling amount aloud.

"How long has it run?"

"Oh, about six months."

"Six months! Do you mean to say you have kept the man waiting for his money for six months?"

"Well, perhaps, it was a little long. I did give Helen money to pay him several times, but the sales were going on about that time and it was used up. However, don't you think that even for six months it is rather exorbitant?"

"Rather. You must have used a great quantity? Who attends to the accounts?"

"The maids I believe have attended to the house accounts. Helen commenced to keep them, but got hopelessly puzzled, and so made them over to the maids. To tell you the truth, grandma, I am afraid Helen and I are not adapted for housekeeping, for there must be a way of managing better than we have done. For instance, there is my friend Tom. See how he has got on with exactly the same salary as I have, yet he has managed to buy that charming house he lives in. Heighho! farewell to all my dreams of housekeeping. The only thing left me to do is sell off everything and get my debts paid, and not till I do that will I feel like a free man again. Don't you think that is the best thing I can do?"

"Certainly it is. But, Charlie, do you remember the conversation we had when you first mentioned your intention of going into housekeeping?"

"Ah! don't I, and how sure I was I could keep out of debt."

"Well, no, not exactly because you wanted to go into debt at the first by furnishing your house on credit. That you see was your first mistake, and another grave one was not telling Helen more about your money affairs. You have never really talked seriously about such things to her. Yes, I know what you will say about not wanting to bother her. But it would be a far greater kindness to do so than to go on the way you are. Helen is a little thoughtless; but if she once knew your real position she would make every effort to help you. You should have told Helen from the first moment you went into housekeeping exactly what your salary was, and then have given her an allowance with the understanding it was on no account to be exceeded. You ought to have made up your mind to do without things you could not afford to pay for, and to have been brave enough to have commenced your first trial at housekeeping according to the state of your finances and not inclinations. And you will find very often that those who return to the old homes have begun their housekeeping the way you have."

MORDUE.

WINDOW GARDENING.

WATERING.—Rain water, if it can be conveniently procured, is better than hard water. If hard water is used, it may be greatly improved by adding a drop or two of ammonia, or a little soda—a small nugget about the size of a pea to every gallon of water. Soot water is also highly recommended. It is claimed that when made sufficiently strong and used in a clear state there is no other fertilizer, either solid or liquid, that is so well suited for amateurs' use as soot water, as it is gentle in its action and sustaining in its nature. This is not the case with the majority of concentrated manures, for if they are used slightly in excess, serious consequences are often the result. When a regular supply of soot water is required there should be two barrels, says the writer who so strongly recommends it, or other receptacles, in which to make it. A cask holding about thirty gallons is suitable. In one of these place one peck of soot, and then fill up with water, and keep it stirred twice a day for a week. In ten days it should be ready for use, but it is necessary that it should be quite clear before using it or there will be a settlement of the solid matter on the soil. A better plan is to put the soot

into a coarse hessian bag and place it in the water. Tie a strong piece of string to the mouth of the bag, and have one end of it fixed on to the edge of the barrel; the bag can be moved about in the water, for the purpose of mixing it with the greatest ease. As soon as one lot is ready another should be in course of preparation, so that with a little forethought a regular supply may be obtained. Even such delicate-rooted plants as Erica and Epacris have been kept in splendid health in the same pots for seven or eight years by the aid of soot water, and such plants as callas, camellias, azaleas and roses, may have regular supplies the whole year round. Such subjects as fuchsias, pelargoniums, cyclamens, primulas and ferns are gently benefitted by it while they are in active growth. Morning is the best time to give water, and evening next. Never water house plants when the sun is shining brightly upon them. The supply of water must be regulated according to the demands of the plants. The condition of plant and soil is the best guide. Never give water when the soil is moist to the touch. Nearly all plants require more water when in bloom than at any other time, more in a warm temperature than in a cold, and more when in a state of active growth than when at rest. Plants in open rooms usually require water once a day and some demand it twice.

SYRINGING.—Cleanliness is essential. The leaves of plants should be kept free from dust, hence frequent washings are absolutely necessary, although when watering, never wet the flowers of a plant, nor allow drops of water to stand on the leaves in the sunshine. Never allow water to stand in the saucers of the pots unless the plants are semi aquatic. Watering supplies plant food or elements of fertility contained in itself and converts the plant food, or nourishment of the soil into a liquid form, so that it may be absorbed by the roots. The roots of a plant should be kept moist, not wet. Where the drainage is the most perfect, plants will generally be the healthiest and will need watering the oftenest. Give house plants as much light as possible during the day, and darkness with a lower temperature at night. A uniform temperature of 60 or 70 degrees in the daytime, and 40 to 45 degrees at night, will give the best results. Turning the plants toward the light should not be done, unless done regularly. Besides light, house plants require a good supply of fresh air. Ventilation is absolutely necessary.

THE HON. JOHN NEILSON.

In our brief sketch of the Publishing and Bookselling Industry in Canada, reference was made to the Quebec *Gazette*. That newspaper, founded in 1764, was long associated with the Neilson family. The Hon. John Neilson, who died on the 1st of February, 1848, was a nephew of one of its founders, and had the direction of it for a good part of half a century. In looking over that pleasant little volume, "Waifs in Verse," which, apart from its poetical charm, is interesting from its abundant reminiscences of the past, we came on a tribute to Mr. Neilson's virtues, composed at the close of the year in which he died, and published in his own paper on New Year's Day, 1849. Here it is:

THE EPITAPH.

An honest man lies here—not falsely bland,
But kind in every deed and true in heart,
With unbought zeal who served our native land,
And not for office played the patriot's part.

Wielding with easy power his trusty pen,
Keen with-out gall, without unkindness free;
His aim to raise and serve his fellowmen,
He tempered censure aye with courtesy.

Our country weeps in him our sagest friend,
The press, its ancient ornament and pride;
In us all mournful thoughts and feelings blend,
Guide, friend and master lost when Neilson died.

In a note Mr. Wicksteed, after referring to Mr. Neilson's services to journalism, adds the following comments on his public career and estimable character: "He enjoyed the perfect confidence of the French-Canadians, and represented the County of Quebec in the Legislative Assembly until he opposed the 92 Resolutions and the violent measures then resorted to, and lost his election; but he was again restored to favour elected to the Parliament of United Canada in 1841, a sobered man as to some of his former opinions, but a true patriot and a firm supporter of free institutions. He was ever my good friend. I have put into the mouths of others what I myself felt on losing him, but I know that they felt as I did."

The "Epitaph" that we have reproduced occurs in "A Carrier's Carol," written for the Quebec *Gazette* at the beginning of 1849.

That journal, which lived long enough to celebrate its hundredth anniversary, was founded by Messrs. Brown and Gilmore. A fac-simile of the first number is in our possession. It is printed in French and English. The first page and half of the second are devoted to the address of "The Printers to the Publick." They undertake to make it a "newspaper properly conducted, and written with accuracy, freedom and impartiality." From the American colonies and the West Indies extensive correspondence is promised. The rigour of winter is urged as an excuse for delay in the arrival of European news during that season. What old-world intelligence is given at mid-summer (June 21, 1764) is dated from March 8 to April 4, which would hardly be considered very recent now-a-days. Philadelphia news is as late as May 7. There is half a page of advertisements—three in English and two in French. One of them is a warning from the Collector of Customs against any attempt at defrauding the revenue. Another is

a notice of a newly formed Masonic Lodge. John Baird, whose place of business is "in the Upper Part of Mr. Henry Morin's House at the Entry to the Cul de Sac," monopolizes the advertising enterprise of the mercantile class. The following is the imprint of the paper:—"Quebec: Printed by Brown and Gilmore, at the Printing Office, in St. Lewis's street, in the Upper Town, two doors above the Secretary's Office; where subscriptions for this paper are taken in. Advertisements of a Moderate Length (in one language) inserted for Five Shillings the First Week and One Shilling each Week after; if in both Languages, Eight Shillings the First Week and Two Shillings each Week after; and all Kinds of Printing done in the neatest manner, with care and expedition." Such were the modest beginnings of the newspaper press in the Province of Quebec.

Mr. W. Brown, one of the partners of the firm, was the brother of Isabel Brown, wife of William Neilson, the father of the Hon. John Neilson. The sixth child of his parents, he was born at Dornald, parish of Ballnaghie, Kircudbright (Church of St. Cuthbert), on the 17th of July, 1776. When fourteen years of age he came to Canada, where his elder brother, Mr. Samuel Neilson, was already settled, having lately succeeded his uncle as proprietor and editor of the Quebec *Gazette*.

When Mr. S. Neilson died in 1793, his younger brother was only nineteen years old. The editorial charge of the paper was, therefore, entrusted to his guardian, the Rev. Dr. Sparks, who conducted it until 1796, when the young editor entered on his functions. He was a journalist of good judgment, and exercised considerable personal influence even in his early years. In 1818, when he had passed his fortieth year, his fellow-citizens fixed upon him as one who would fitly represent them in the House of Assembly. The province had already become involved in that struggle for ascendancy on the one hand, for greater liberty on the other, which culminated in the Rebellion. Mr. Neilson found it difficult to do justice to his position as a public man and at the same time maintain that obsequious attitude towards the government which the supervision of a paper, looked upon as an organ of the administration, was deemed then to imply. In order to liberate himself from those inconvenient trammels, he placed the whole management of the *Gazette* in the hands of his son Samuel, who was soon after made King's Printer. For a short time also the paper was avowedly published "by authority," but the experience was not satisfactory, and it recovered its independence. In 1823 Mr. Neilson was the Quebec, as the late Hon. L. J. Papineau was the Montreal, delegate to England to remonstrate against the project of uniting the Upper and Lower Provinces. Again in 1828 he accompanied Messrs. Viger and Cuvillier to London on a mission of remonstrance against misgovernment, and gave testimony as to the conflict between the two Houses. In 1830 he was cordially thanked by the House of Assembly for his services on that occasion. In 1831 at a public dinner in his honour, he was presented with a costly silver vase, with suitable inscription.

But popular favour is a fragile thing to lean upon. As soon as Mr. Neilson ventured to express disapproval of some of the tactics of his party, his old friends turned against him, and in 1834 he found himself debarred from the Assembly by the electorate whose interests he had for so many years defended against powerful opponents. In 1835 he proceeded to England for the third time in the service of his country, but the appointment of the Gosford Commission anticipated the carrying out of the mission which, in company with Mr. Walker, advocate, of Montreal, he had then undertaken. In 1835, in his sixtieth year, he had the grief to see his son, whose health had been undermined by too close application to business, carried prematurely to the grave. But private sorrows were for a time driven from his mind by the political storm that was approaching. In the disastrous risings of 1837 and 1838 Mr. Neilson, though unvarying in his attachment to the French-Canadians, whom, all his life, he had constantly befriended, swerved not from the loyalty which he had never ceased to inculcate, while striving for needed reforms.

The union of the provinces did not, however, meet with his approbation. He was one of three members of the special council (to which in 1839 he had been appointed) who voted against the measure—the other two being Messrs. Quesnel and DeRochblave. He also took a prominent part in a meeting of the citizens of Quebec, which petitioned the Home Government not to pass it. On the union becoming an accomplished fact, he once more presented himself as a candidate for the representation of Quebec County, which showed its restored confidence in its old member by electing him by acclamation. In November, 1843, he was offered and declined the Speakership of the Council, but in the following year, after frequent refusals, he consented to serve as a member of that body. In the summer of 1846, Mr. Neilson, though he had completed the three score and ten, assigned by the ancient law-giver as the years of man's life, was still an active figure and force in the public affairs of his country, and but for the illness consequent on an untimely exposure to the bleak fall weather, he seemed to have many useful years still before him. In October, 1847, he participated in the reception of Lord Elgin on his visit to Quebec, and, having to wait for a considerable time in a chilling rain, he caught a cold, from which he never recovered. His physicians warned him against over-exertion, but he placed the discharge of duty above personal considerations, and died in harness on the 1st of February, 1848.