

store, privileged character as she was, going behind counter, behind desk, peering into the show cases to learn what was newest and prettiest on her weekly visits, commenting volubly on what she saw, now in French, now in English.

"Paresseux!" she cried, when the boss at last came in, "dat's long taime I'll wait. I mos' go'n on Park's store all de taime you get you brekfus'. Pourquoi ne vous dejeuner pas à six heures comme nous autres? Depechez donc," and she ordered her boy to fetch in the treasures of dairy and poultry yard, when began the inevitable chaffering for pullets, cheese, eggs, straw hats, knitted stockings on her side; tea, soda, molasses, kerosene oil, turkey red cotton, linen thread and cash on the other. For the good old dame usually managed to have a balance in her favor, for which she insisted cash should be paid her.

A quaint character had come to settle in the adjoining townships, attracted there by dear knows what considerations from Lower Canada—this was before confederation of the provinces. A small, alert, russet-faced *habitant* he was, Basil Goulet by name, possessing a good deal of quick-witted craftiness and being in his modes of acting and talking what is now-a-days called a hustler. In addition to grain-growing and stock-raising, like his neighbors he cultivated tobacco—which in those days was shipped in hogsheads to Montreal to be made into "twist" for the French Canadian market—and he also boiled potash. I remember with what an air of imperious proprietorship he used to come to "our store" and treat for the produce of his farm. He wore shoe-packs, and sometimes, like his compatriots of old time, a red sash, and out of regard for his odd but impressive dignity, we always saluted him respectfully:

"Good morning, Mr. Goulet; how is the sleighing this morning?"

"Well, I come on de turnpike, she's slip pretty good dere; I fin' pretty mighty poor pullin' on de town, do. Dat's ver' heavy load on dem pony. Sapre! she's make de leetle feller dam hot." After a proper interval, devoted to strategically beating round the bush with the peculiar snappish form of talk that was part affability and part bluster, he would broach the subject of the load his ponies had brought.

"Look yer, Mist' M—, what news you got on de market dis taime? Some better prices, ain't it?"

The proprietor would reply, citing the last account sales from Gillespie & Moffat or Dyde & Major for potash and pearlash respectively. Looking wise, and shaking his head, Basil would question the price and "hint a doubt and hesitate dislike" of the Montreal houses named, declaring that "dem people don' never give right price on such potash like I kin make. I know de bes' way to make dat potash. I learn dat on Bas Canada. Ain't nobody kin make some better I kin make," finishing with a "Sacre nom d'un pipe!" or sometimes with a stronger English expletive.

A round-faced, full-bodied Scotchman, who lived about ten miles away and cultivated a hundred-acre farm with a success that enabled him to accumulate some ten thousand dollars in less than twenty years, was one of our most regular customers. He wanted the best prices for everything he raised, and was correspondingly resolved to buy everything at the lowest notch. His theoretical knowledge of political economy might have been small, but his practical habit of buying in the cheapest market and selling in the dearest was as pronounced as if he had studied under the profoundest of economists. Frugality was a feature of his household, and it is safe to say that no candle was ever wasted in giving light to the family prayers. His wife was an helpmeet after his own heart; while he looked after the outside duties of the farm, she could be depended on to so manage the affairs of her domicile that nothing should be wasted. One custom of Mr. G. I recall. He would invariably, when in town of a Saturday, change a nickel or a five-cent silver piece into coppers, in order that each of his children might put one on the plate on the Sabbath day. Some of the gossips insisted that this indicated parsimony on his part, and that a five-cent piece from each of the children and a quarter dollar from himself, given to the Lord, would have been in better proportion to his means. But he explained once that he took the course with a view to inculcate systematic giving.

There were some odd characters among the old soldiers, pensioners of the British Government, who lived "on the common" as the military reserve around the dismantled fort was called. Some were devil-may-cares, fond of whiskey—which was cheap in those days and made on the spot—experts in profanity, proper comrades or descendants of that army which swore so terribly in Flanders. Paddy Dawson comes first to mind of this lot, a good-looking figure, too, what Kipling calls "a fine upstanding man," but he would get uproariously drunk, and then, ye gods, how he would talk. If we succeeded in getting him out of the store without violence, he would stand in the middle of the street and "sweer at lairge," like the inconsequent swearer Dean Ramsay tells of. Or else he would go through the manual and platoon exercise in the open street, to any audience or to none, shouting the words

of command: "Tintion! showlder harms; order harms," and in the same moment obeying them, with the abrupt precision of a half-drunken drill sergeant.

A man of a different type was Bernard Finucane, the gentleman private, who seemed by some irony of fate to have drifted into the wrong plantation. He was a gentleman's son, and his uncle had sent him to Trinity College, Dublin. After two years' study for, I think, the medical profession, through some escapade he enlisted, married, went half round the world, was pensioned and for thirty odd years lived on his shilling a day, solacing his monotonous life, perhaps, with poetry and the classics, for he was known to be a Greek and Latin scholar. Then there was Sergeant Moloney, who was an enthusiastic fisherman. He suffered a long illness one winter, and recovered but slowly. Being afraid that he might become too infirm to fish any more, he is reported to have said, in a weak voice, with a longing look toward the river: "If I could only get another good season's fishing, I would not care a dom." It is consolatory to know that he did get better, and that he was "converted" from a profane Sunday fisherman into a faithful frequenter of a dissenting church.

Nor were the wives of these men without their oddities of disposition and demeanor. Mrs. Ryder, who is living unto this day, was and is a woman of uncompromising honesty and of equally uncompromising brusqueness. She wore—I wonder if she wears it yet?—an old cloak of Irish frieze, which "kep' out the cold in winter an' the hate in summer," and she always wore men's boots. A couple whose name I cannot give, who had no children, lived in their little shanty with the pigs and chickens, "quite convanient like." It was said of the wife that she never washed her face in twenty years. These and many more curious folk were among the customers of our country store, and I often wonder if such a quaint community is to be found in Western Canada now-a-days.

December 10th.

J. H.

#### COMMERCIAL TRAVELING IN PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

He was considerable of a fellow, was Jim Perceval, handsome and tall, and with a sort of swing to him that made the French customers of the house say that he had *la grande air*. He was a little stuck on himself, it is true, but he could work, when he had to. For all his lazy-looking, don't-care-a-cent style, Jim could work like a tiger. He worked me once, and I'm going to tell you about it.

We didn't leave Montreal together, but happened to meet on the steamer from Pictou for Charlottetown. Jim was in the same line of business as I was, and although younger in years, was the older man on the road, and as the event proved knew the ropes better than I did. On board the boat we were very good friends. He was free with his money and made acquaintances easily, because when he chose to smile and be agreeable most folks found it hard to resist him. He could take a hand in a little game, too, and hold up his end mighty well.

We got into Charlottetown at night. Nobody had been sea-sick, because there hadn't been any sea, and we were a hungry crowd as ever made for restaurant in a body. The woman who kept the restaurant was a cheery soul, and while she set before us bread and crackers to break the edge of our fast on, offered to cook us some oysters. The proposal suited the party, down to the ground, and pretty soon we had a bowl apiece of little Caraquettes or Malpeques, I don't know which—but the one oyster is about as delicious as the other—and other things enough to make a hearty meal. Then we took a saunter round the town, found accommodation at various boarding houses, there being no hotels in Charlottetown, and separated for the night.

About half-past eight next morning I sallied out to see about my work for the day. I had a leather trunk full of samples, and it weighed 80 or 90 pounds. To get a man to take this to The Square, where the shops mostly were, was my first care. But there were no cabs or cabmen in the place. I could not hire a dray or a cart, nor even get a man with a wheel-barrow to haul my stuff around. They were all busy down at the wharves, it seemed, or else they were at the stores, for this was market day in Charlottetown and The Square was particularly lively with country people. Disgusted at this aspect of affairs, and yet determined to get at the shopkeepers somehow, I shouldered my trunk and made my way down to The Square; and I remember well how inviting it looked to have a seat in the shade in the middle of it on that blazing July day. Hot and perspiring, I tackled the first storekeeper, across the way from the Province Building, who was too busy selling goods just then to bother about buying them. Then to the next, who was civil and did not refuse to look at my samples, but he wouldn't buy just then. As he advised me to try Mr. So-and-so, on the other side of The Square, I took his advice, packed my trunk, shouldered it and followed one of the walks that ran catecornering through The Square to the very door of the man I was directed to. Entering his little store, trunk on shoulder, I boldly dumped it on the counter, and was busy wiping my brow when the proprietor, shoving