

at the parsonage. Trouble is the true test of real love—the refining fire, that proves whether or not it is the genuine ore. A prescience that the cloud on Mr. Austwicke's brow, and the perplexed look on Dr. Griesbach's calm, grave face, had betokened something painful to Gertrude, had made Rupert's heart full to overflowing with earnest solicitude for the fair girl, whom he had as yet known only in the golden light of unclouded prosperity, and who was dear beyond words then. But now, if that light was to be overshadowed, if—though it seemed an impossible thing—sorrow was approaching her, how he longed to be her shield and defender! Hitherto he had been only suppliant to her; but now, if he might be something more than that,—how the bare thought kindled all his energies, and made him exchange all his wonted gravity for a perfect fever of nervous irritation! He had pretended to read during the journey, yet not a word of the journal before his eyes was revealed to his sense; and when, on reaching the village, he and the Doctor heard of the fatal event of the past night, now on every lip, and Rupert Griesbach, in obedience to his father's wish and his own sense of decorum, had gone to the parsonage to wait for further information before venturing to the Hall, he knew not how to control the agitation of his spirit.

Meanwhile long and serious was the consultation in the library at the Hall. The letters and papers of Miss Austwicke were examined again; and Mr. Austwicke said, "Of course, we could legally make a good fight for our position, and might upset this Scotch marriage. Or, given that poor dear Gertrude is the girl, the boy may be dead." For it was hard, both to heart and circumstances, to give up hope, both as to the child and the estate; and Mr. Austwicke, as a lawyer, had been used to litigation. Dr. Griesbach heard him with sympathy, but yet, as he had scanned all the papers, was fully convinced that neither Gertrude nor the land belonged to his friend. Like his son Rupert, the good Doctor thought most of the innocent girl, who had ever been so great a favourite with him, when, all at once, as his eyes fell musingly on a paper, he started as if receiving a shock. Mr. Austwicke noticed the movement, and exclaimed, "What is it, Doctor? Has anything struck you? Do you recognise any flaw?"

CHAPTER LXII. KINDRED CLAIMS.

"If faith, and hope, and kindness pass'd
As coin 'twixt heart and heart,
How, thro' the eye's tear-blindness,
Should the sudden soul upstart!
The dreary and the desolate
Should wear a sunny bloom,
And Love should spring from buried Hate,
Like flowers o'er Winter's tomb.
The world is full of beauty, as other worlds above,
And if we did our duty, it might be full of love."

The sudden agitation of Dr. Griesbach which Mr. Austwicke had observed, had been caused by seeing a name, "Norman." The doctor had laid down a letter, and was glancing over a birth register, when he saw the word.

"Norman!" he exclaimed—"Norman! Why, I know a sort of *folius fortunæ* of that name—at least, he gave me that name. Let me see."

He paused thoughtfully, and both Mr. Austwicke and Allan gazed expectantly at him, as, with his finger on his brow, he seemed recalling and arranging particulars.

"Age suits, stature—aye, and looks. Yes; and though the contrast in size is as opposite as in sex, he has eyes so like little True, that I was struck with something, I know not what, familiar to me in them. Ah, sure as fate, my Don Loftus is the man."

"What are you talking about?" said Mr. Austwicke, peevishly, as if unable, just then, to bear with his friend's eccentricities.

"Well—well—I'm only thinking; I may be wrong—quite wrong—that the twin brother of our little True is not dead. But it's not of him, or of this painful matter, my good old friend," addressing Mr. Austwicke, "that I came to speak. My time is short; and I came to say this, as one father to another—let that dear girl belong by birth to whom she may, I want her, and my Rupert wants her, to belong to us. There, that's plain English. As to the Aust-

wicke acres, if she has any claim, we can afford to forego it."

"My sister?" said Allan, then pausing ruefully and correcting himself, he continued "I know enough of her—of dear True, to know she will not be married out of compassion."

"Compassion, forsooth! you young Boreas, who talks of it?—say out of honour and reverence; for something far higher than money or rank—for her truth and nobleness we come to woo her. Yes I'll say we—Rupert and I are agreed fully in that. She's True, and that's dowry enough."

Mr. Austwicke grasped his friend's hand and said, huskily—

"The child must answer. She has no mother to consult."

"Oh, as to that, I've not come without being pretty sure of the ground: the young people seem to have settled the matter, though I own Rupert complains of coldness recently; and talked so gloomily, that it, and the desire to be of use to you, if possible, decided me to run down at once."

"Pardon me, Doctor," said Allan, who had been for a few minutes in deep thought, "from your manner, just now, I thought you knew this—this Norman."

There was a tap at the door, and a servant entered with a message—"Mr. Hope, Mr. Nugent, Mr. Rupert Griesbach, and another gentleman," requested an audience on important business.

"See them for me, Doctor," said Mr. Austwicke gloomily; "it's something about the inquest."

"Nay; excuse me, my friend, do you see them at once, while your son, and I, your old friend, are with you. I don't know why they come so thick, and fourfold;—my Rupert's coming must be mere impatience; but you will have to face your difficulties, and its the best way to go forward and meet them."

"Shew them in," said Mr. Austwicke, gloomily; and the party entered, Mr. Nugent first, with an open letter in his hand; he was followed by Mr. Hope, who leaned on the arms of Rupert and Norman. The blinds of the windows were down, but through the opening at the side of one, a sunbeam poured its ray so strongly that it made a bar of gold athwart the shaded room, and fell on the face of the last person of the group, lighting up his dark eyes, as he raised them steadily, with a melancholy lustre. Mr. Austwicke, glancing past the three faces he knew, fixed his eyes on Norman, and said—

"You are the young man who so bravely risked your life in the attempt to save my poor sister. I forgot, in the confusion and horror of the scene, to thank you. I do so now. You are come, I presume, gentlemen, about the inquest?"

"We are come on other business, and nearly, we fear, as painful business to you, sir," said Mr. Hope. "We would—that is, Mr. Nugent, myself, and this youth"—pointing to Norman—"see you alone, or you and your son."

"You can have nothing, Mr. Hope, to say to me that I should wish to conceal from my friends, Dr. Griesbach and his son; they know all my family affairs, including some I did not know myself till recently, and do not yet understand."

"All?" again, inquired Mr. Hope.

(To be Continued.)

THE BIRDS OF CANADA. *

MR. President,—my young friends: I shall to night briefly direct your attention to a study, which no doubt to the majority here present has proved ever since their boyhood an unfailling source of pleasure, and which I have

* The substance of this paper was delivered as a lecture, before the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, on the 25th April, 1866, by J. M. Lemoine, Esq., Vice President, for the benefit of the pupils of the High School and other public institutions and for the avowed object of making known the contents of the Museum. The lecturer, well known by his French work "*Les Oiseaux du Canada*," also furnished several specimens from his own extensive museum at Spencer Grange.—(Ed. S. R.)

no hesitation in saying will afford increased gratification the more it is followed. No season of the year appeared to me more propitious for bringing under your notice the feathered race than the period of the spring migration—than those lovely April mornings, when the gardens, the fields and the forest resound with the soft melody of hundreds of winged choristers. Natural History in all its branches has ever been reckoned a most attractive subject: it is, however, a study so comprehensive that I find myself to-night under the necessity to take up one department only: let it then be the most interesting.

Let us spend a social hour, and hold confab with the friends of your youth and of mine—the *Birds*. You will credit me when I tell you that it is not in the spirit of exact science, nor with the pedantry of a professor, but rather with the freedom of an old acquaintance that I shall to-night introduce to you some of the denizens of the woods and minstrels of the grove—so correctly styled, "the accredited and authenticated poets of nature." Do not then expect a set discourse on ornithology. Stray jottings—rambles amongst birds and books—that is all I can promise you at present.

That branch of zoology which treats of birds is denominated ornithology, from two Greek words—*ornithos*, a bird, and *logos* a discourse—a discourse on birds—the history of birds. It is beyond a doubt, that the animal kingdom attracted the attention of mankind in the remotest ages: several birds, as you are aware, are indicated by name, and their peculiarities alluded to in Holy Writ. Mention is frequently made in the earliest and best of books, the Bible, of the soaring eagle, the dismal raven, the tiny sparrow, the grave looking owl, the migratory stork. The care taken of the prophet Elijah by our sabbie and far seeing friend the raven, you all remember. The dove and the raven were both honoured with important missions by that distinguished and most successful navigator Noah. You know how much the ibis was petted, nay honoured in Egypt: the white ibis was in special veneration in Thebes—had the run of the city. The stork was sung by Herodotus, the swan by Homer and a host of other Greek poets: Aristophanes some twenty-three hundred years ago celebrated, not only the croaking of frogs, but also the melody of birds.

It was, however, reserved to one of the loftiest minds of antiquity, Aristotle of Stagira, to furnish the world with the earliest methodical information on zoology. This great man was the first to observe and attempt to explain the organization of animals. His treatise, *περί ζώων ιστορίας*, will ever be regarded as one of the masterpieces of antiquity. The generation of animals, their habits, their organs, the mechanism of their functions, their resemblances and differences are therein discussed with astonishing clearness and sagacity. Aristotle may be reckoned as having established a solid basis for Natural History; and his principal divisions of the animal kingdom are so well founded, that almost all of them are still substantially admitted. In arranging facts, he goes back to causes from general results.

We next come to the Roman, Pliny the Elder, born A. D. 23, who died as you may have read in the year 79 of our era, from the noxious fumes of Vesuvius during the eruption which, it is said, destroyed Herculaneum. He had then charge of a Roman fleet, and had, in attempting to succour some of the unfortunate inhabitants, ventured too near to the scene of the calamity: he died during the following night. I presume some of you have perused the very interesting letter recording the event, written by Pliny the Younger, the nephew and adopted son of the Roman Naturalist.

As a laborious, but not always reliable compiler you have heard of Aldrovandus, born about 1535. To illustrate this later point, I shall now quote from the 1st vol. Canadian Naturalist, an extract purporting to describe one of our most beautiful winter visitors, the Bohemian Chatterer: a fine specimen is in the museum of the L. and H. Society. I was fortunate enough to snare three very fine birds of this species in