

## THE JUNIOR PICKWICKIANS ;

AND THEIR MEMORABLE TRIP TO NORTH AMERICA.

### CHAPTER XXXIV.

THERE could be but little doubt that Bramley was slowly but certainly succumbing to the charms of Miss Douglas ; when not engaged in what appeared to be most confidential conversation with that young lady, he would sit and gaze into her face in a manner so totally unlike himself that Yubbits whispered to Coddleby, "I hope Bramley is not one of those fellows who go crazy and suicidal when they get spoony. Just look at him ; there is a wild look in his eye that I don't like."

"That's nothing, Yubbits ; if you could have seen yourself when you were talking to Miss Fannie Dawson, in Ottawa, you wouldn't wonder at Bramley," replied Coddleby.

"By ged ! old fellow," Yubbits retorted, "and if ever I saw such a complete picture of an imbecile lovesick swain as you when piling on the agony with Fanny's sister, I'll be jiggered."

The sound of Mr. Douglas' violin ceasing at this moment, the "chaffing" conversation was dropped, and Toronto being now fully in view on their lee-bow, that gentleman caused Mr. Bramley to start and color suddenly by addressing him somewhat abruptly at the moment when he was uttering some beautiful sentiment in a low and impressive voice to the fairy under the spell of whose power he was rapidly becoming helpless.

"Bramley, my dear fellow," said Mr. Douglas, "now you have an excellent view of Toronto. There it lies, sir, spread out before us like a map. I should like to hear your opinion of the city, and what you think of her chances of future greatness and prosperity."

"Well, Mr. Douglas," replied Bramley, respectfully, for he already began to see in his host a possible future relative, "I am fairly charmed with your city, and I must say that Toronto is, in my opinion, *the* city, as far as I can judge, of the Dominion, though, of course, I have only seen Montreal and Ottawa as yet, of the latter I need say little, but Montreal reposing in her stately grandeur on the banks of the magnificent St. Lawrence, with her mountain back ground and her historical associations, as it were, a double page of the history of the two greatest nations, stands unsurpassed, for modernized antiquity has its charms. But Toronto, with her youthful energy, makes herself felt to the borders of Canada. Her hand is everywhere seen in art, literature, politics, commerce, thought. Her press is metropolitan, her sentiment is national, her spirit ambitious and progressive, so far as these things may be in a nation but yet half unborn. She is, and is destined to be, the brain and heart of Canada ; so far as I have yet observed, and judging from what I read about her, and from a merely material point of view her sovereignty over the lakes is unquestionably assured.

"Very finely expressed, indeed," said Mr. Douglas, as Bramley ceased speaking, and his daughter glanced admiringly towards him, "and I agree with you in every respect. I hope, gentlemen," he continued turning to Coddleby and Yubbits, "that you are as favorably impressed with our city as your friend."

"I think it's a very jolly place and that there are some very jolly people in it," replied Yubbits, enthusiastically, "If they're all like you, Mr. Douglas, they're—they're—regular bricks"—"Ha ! ha !" laughed the host, "an honest compliment, indeed, eh, Elsie ? No nonsense

about that speech. Thanks, Mr. Yubbits ; I'm glad you appreciate those jolly people—but I fancy your clothes are dry, and unless you care to be driven up to your hotel in those you have on, you had perhaps better get into them."

"Happy thought," exclaimed Yubbits, "I had quite forgotten I hadn't my own toggery on—and so I fancy has Bramley, eh, old fellow—you seem rather oblivious to ordinary matters this afternoon. What's the matter ?"

"Be quiet, Yubbits," interposed Coddleby, "If Bramley chooses to busy his mind with things which you cannot understand, you needn't interrupt his meditations with your common-place chatter."

"Thanks, old chap," responded Yubbits, gaily,—“But I'm going down to change. Come on Bramley, you look like a retired professional cricketer or a miller out of work in those flannels," and, laughing, he disappeared down the companion stairs, followed by the more sedate Bramley.

"Hoy ! ahoy ! ahoy ! Timbs !" lustily shouted Mr. Douglas as the yacht, under reduced canvas, neared the boat house, and came within hailing distance. "Timbs, I say, Timbs."

"Aye, aye, sir," came the shrill pipe of the redoubtable Timbs, as the boat shot out from behind the house and was propelled by him with an oar dexterously worked, by a process called in *sea* phrase "sculling," at the stern.

"Let go the anchor," cried Chambers, and in a trice the *Elsie* lay once more at rest and at home.

"Now Elsie, now gentlemen," said Mr. Douglas, as Yubbits and Bramley reappeared on deck, "into the boat you go ; hold her in close, Timbs ; there, that's right," and he stepped in, handing his daughter after him and followed by the rest of the party, and bidding Chambers and the crew "good evening."

"Have the hamper sent up in the morning, Chambers, and do what you please with what is in it—that is with the edibles and drinkables I mean !"

"Thanks, sir, we'll find some use to put them to," replied the master. Good evening, sir, good evening, Miss Douglas," and he took off his hat and bowed with great gallantry.

"Now, Timbs, get us ashore," cried Mr. Douglas ; "here, give me an oar," and in a few moments the entire party were being driven rapidly towards the Rossin House in Mr. Douglas' carriage, which was waiting at the boat house for their return.

"Now, gentlemen, I must insist on no evening costume," said Mr. Douglas, as they neared the hotel ; "come just as you are ; there'll be no one to dinner to-night but Mr. Burgoodle, an old politician ; we'll call at the Rossin and pick up your poetical friend and then proceed straight home."

"Just as you say, sir," returned Bramley ; "but here we are at the hotel ; Yubbits, kindly jump out and tell Crinkle we are waiting."

Yubbits accordingly alighted and entered the hotel, whence he presently emerged with the tidings that Crinkle had not returned since he set out in the morning.

"Dear me ; I hope nothing has happened to him," exclaimed Bramley.

"Oh ! I've no doubt he's so wrapt up in his composition that he takes no heed of the flight of time," suggested Coddleby.

"You have a telephone at your house, Mr. Douglas," said Coddleby, "have you not ?" We will send word down here when we get to your place, and if he has returned by that time, why we can—"