

ranks, legion upon legion, dashed and dazzling with the heavy dew. The bright green leaves they stood so deep in seemed the glittering livery of a white or rosy face. Now and then at the edge of little bridges the sweet-brier's trailing sprays hung over the chasm, like a fair girl's loosened hair when she throws back her head and her laughing face is turned upwards for a kiss. The pale pink flowers glowed like stars against the vivid green of the small sharp-scented leaves. The sweet-brier was queen; but there were hosts of others, common flowers that people call weeds. Many would grudge them the name of flower, but they had fulfilled their Sovereign's behest to redeem a part of her realm from hatefulness and bear her morning proclamation of refreshing and sweet rest to at least one weary soul.

## II.

## A SECOND DAY.

The express-train is crowded and whirling along through the afternoon. It is the same scene that the Dreamer's eyes look out upon; but with a difference. That was cool morning; this is the hottest time of the midsummer day. The wild roses, the troops of the clover, the dandelions have all vanished, but the new change is into something even richer than they. The flowers in our city gardens have withered in the heat; but here, even in this wildest domain of the Queen-mother, her children and subjects are strong and lusty. The bushes stand higher, richer in colour, and more rank. Stretches of low plants with brown polished leaves ever succeed patches of buttercups holding lightly up on slender branching stems their myriad basins of thin smooth gold. But the buttercups could not catch as much of the largesse of August sunshine as the unordered fleeing crowds of golden-rod. They press everywhere; along the levels, and up the slope of the banks; they reach the top only to hurry down the opposite incline and, in their pride of life and strength, jostle one another close to the whirling deathful wheels. But how royally you live! with both hands you fling your golden bounty on the air, wherever you come the land is ablaze with your glowing faces and shining hair. This heat that makes the weak hang their heads only gives you a sturdier grace and an intenser bloom. And Someone knows the proper home of your kindred; where they flaunt and riot all over a granite island, one of a thousand; and across the waveless river in the dazzling sun-light a skiff is gliding to the shore.

## III.

## THE RED BRIDGE.

It was the centre one of those three memorable days after the course of the year was changed. Spring had come at last. The river had risen suddenly in the night, and carried the ice in huge masses over the dam; then, after grinding it against the stone piers of the bridges, had borne it all down to the lake. The river was free. Ah! the delight of being free; free as the river after the long cold, the killing frost that went into the blood, and into the brain, and into the heart; stiffened the joints and chilled the marrow in the bones. Free! from the bondage of four hateful walls, the rows of books, the same pictures in the same places, and the sickly lamp-light over it all. Free! free! after the long compelled Puritanism of the winter; free to bathe in the soft voluptuous light and warmth, standing on the old red bridge by the hour, and watching the brown water as it swirls round the mighty stone abutments. Free! to rejoice in the infinite changes of toppling cloud, drifting across the friendly blue. And the warm south wind from over the leafless hills caresses like a girl's soft hand upon the cheek. No wonder the sailor lad loved you so, South Wind. But even the glories of the sky cannot hold the eye long away from the rushing water. Carelessly the moments slip by and the Dreamer's gaze is never lifted from the moving flood, and his ears hear nothing but its rejoicing volume of heavy sound. People pass and re-pass behind him, but with arms folded on the parapet he sees and hears nothing but the river rushing down. And the spell grows upon him till the blunt pier under his feet seems the stem of some stout vessel ploughing her steady way against a mid-stream current. But the river did more. The brown water rose and laved every joint and limb, washed through every vein within, and searched its way to

every crevice of brain and heart. Then it sank again and flowed calmly away in its rejoicing progress to the distant lake. It was like a bath of roses or anointing with a grateful oil. Then the dreamer turned lightly homewards. Something had slipped from him in that strange bath in the flowing of the river which was borne down to the lake, and which the lake delivered to the sea.

## IV.

## OVER-AGAINST.

The sand is warm on the top of this high bank that slopes steeply down to the narrow beach. The waters of Ontario are glistening in the sun-light, blue, calm, limitless: no ocean can be more beautiful. Not a sail is in sight, not a cloud, not a wave: only at intervals a drowsy plashing on the pebbles on the shore rises from below. From this solitary pedestal there is nothing to be seen but the two ever-welcome comrades, water and the sky: this ledge of cliff projects itself between them merely as a resting-place for the Dreamer. All earth has melted away except this piece of land floating with its human burden between that double mirror of the eternal, heaven and the sea. But close beside his head, introducing themselves across the blue field of the vision, are haulms of grass, slender stalks, fine and feathery, jointed and tufted, and swaying slowly in the pleasant breeze. And what a mite the Dreamer seems among them: they tower above his head into curious tropic trees of unimagined height. How many they are and how diverse! What tangled thickets and leagues of jungle! And yet it is only the grass waving its green spears and tassels idly through the afternoon, over-against the great calm depths of sky. Tears rise unbidden: in the field to-day, to-morrow it is cut down and withereth.

BOHÉMIEN.

## BY PROXY.

While you are in Ireland,  
Sweet Kitty, my dear,  
Amid all the disturbance,  
You've nothing to fear;  
For the sight of your pretty  
Blue eyes, I declare,  
Would make the "Moonlighters"  
Your slaves while you're there.

'Tis what you have long  
Made of me, I know well,  
Though I've not had the courage  
My secret to tell;  
For I haven't a tongue  
That smooth speeches can say,  
And whenever I try  
Something comes in the way.

Kiss the stone on the Castle  
Of Blarney, my sweet,  
And—am I too bold?  
Give me—one—when we meet!  
For the Spirit that dwells  
In the Castle, I swear,  
Will give double measure  
When he sees who is there.

The touch of your lips,  
By that sweet spell enchanted,  
Will give me the thing  
Which so long I have wanted:  
The power to plead my own  
Cause without fear,  
In words that will move you,  
Sweet Kitty, my dear.

F. B. H.