



I thought the sparrow's note from heaven,  
Singing at dawn on the alder bough;  
I brought him home, in his nest at even.  
He sings the song, but it cheers not now.  
For I did not bring home the river and sky;  
He sang to my ear—they sang to my eye.  
—Emerson.

### Ingle Nook Chats.

My dear Guests,—

Our nineteenth contest, an original poem on "A Day in June," has come to a close, and I append the result. While the number of contributors was not large, the work was all fairly good, several papers showing evidences of real talent. Many poems containing beautiful ideas were spoiled by defective metre; others by carelessness in repeating a word too often, an unpardonable fault in either prose or poetry. Some of the contributors digressed from the original subject (that is what happened yours, "Marie," but I must say the result was amusing and the composition very good; your rhythm reminds me of that of "The Khan"), and thus debarred themselves from the contest.

I have awarded the prizes as follows:—Class I., to Miss A. L. McDiarmid, Ormond, Ont., also special prize to Mrs. J. H. Taylor (address mislaid; kindly forward to "Advocate" office, London); Class II., to Miss Jennie Crosby, Brazil Lake, Yarmouth, N. S.; Class III., to Miss Cornelia Freeborn, Denfield, Ont.

Those deserving special mention are: Alice McDavitt, Mrs. F. Hunter, N. A. McEachern, "Nancie," "Marie," "Mountain Daisy," Verne Rowell (where have you been so long, lazy boy?), and Charlotte Hunter. Other contributors were Maie V. McKenzie, Alex. McColl, Isabella McKenzie, Ernest C. Sutherland, Percy McDavitt, Anna Arthur, Bella Snow, and M. Ethyl Nixon.

Cecilia Cromar, Lillian Carswell and Teresa McCrea, winners in the drawing contest, have acknowledged receipt of prizes therefor and expressed their appreciation of the same.

I am glad you tried "to please father," otherwise I should have missed a pleasure, while you have the double reward of pleasing him and winning a prize. I trust you will find some of our other contests sufficiently interesting to tempt you to the Nook again.

"Annie Laurie," a young girl, living on a farm in a rather isolated district, would like to correspond with some of the young folks of the Nook. I shall be happy to forward her the address of any one desirous of entering a correspondence with her. I know from personal experience that friendships both pleasant and lasting have begun in this way.

Naughty "Baby," you precocious infant, to suppose I should laugh at your "June-bug," although I have often, as you say, "laughed till I ached," literally, not figuratively. I thank fortune for giving me a vein of humor; I can see the ludicrous side pretty clearly—the great trouble is it sometimes upsets my gravity just when I should be looking prim. I hope to receive some very interesting papers on "The Wild Flowers of Our Province"—each Province for itself. Which will win?

THE HOSTESS.

Ingle Nook Chats, Parkenham, Ont.

### PRIZE POEM—CLASS I.

By Miss A. L. McDiarmid, Ormond, Ont.

#### A Day in June.

Flutter of leaves at the window,  
Stirred by a passing breeze;  
Murmuring voices of children,  
And drowsy hum of bees.  
Bobolinks trilling and cooing,  
Through the long sunlit hours;  
Honey-bees humming and hovering  
Over a sea of flowers.  
Meadows adrift with daisies,  
Butterflies all aglow,  
Magical play of light and shade,  
And balmy winds that blow.  
While fair as a sweet young maiden,  
Fresh as this first June day,  
A white rose sways upon its stalk  
Adown the garden way.

### PRIZE POEM—CLASS I.

By Mrs. J. H. Taylor.

#### A Day in June.

##### DAWN.

O'erhead the pale blue sky shades into pink;  
The east is fair with crimson barred with gold.  
A faint breeze fans and stirs the rustling leaves,  
And perfume wafts from flowers as they unfold.

A myriad dewdrops gem the verdant fields;  
The earth is starred with flowers; and rippling rills  
Are mingling fairy music with the birds  
Which greet the sunbeams as they tip the hills.

##### NOON.

White clouds float slowly o'er the deep blue sky,  
A drowsy hum of insects fills the air,  
The birds have ceased their music for awhile,  
So busy are they with their children's care.

### SUNSET.

Again the sky in crimson glory glows,  
As if the gates of Heaven were held ajar;  
In her full splendor now the moon appears,  
And waits the coming of the evening star.

Again the robin's throat pours forth its song,  
The oriole's liquid note, the snipe's shrill call,  
Now each in its own perfect way proclaims  
The praise of Him who ruleth over all.

A star or two appears, and Nature's voice  
Seems louder as the busy world grows still,  
And from the deepening shadows of the grove  
Day's knell is sounded by the whip-poor-will.

### PRIZE POEM—CLASS II.

By Miss Jennie Crosby, Brazil Lake, N. S.

#### A Day in June.

A day in June—what happy scenes  
Those four short words suggest;  
Would that the poet's pen were mine,  
That they might be expressed.

A clear, blue sky, where fleecy clouds  
Glide slowly here and there;  
The murmuring of busy bees  
Floats on the balmy air.

A whispering foliage of leaves,  
A choir of sweet-voiced birds;  
Still waters by the pastures green,  
With peaceful flocks and herds.

Sweet month of roses! peerless queen  
Of all the summer hours;  
Dance Nature's favorite art thou,  
With thy rich wealth of flowers.

Fain would we keep thee ever here,  
And stern old Time defy;  
But even as we speak the wish,  
The night is drawing nigh.

The bright warm sun, with golden rays,  
Is sinking in the west;  
It seems to smile a last good-night  
Upon the earth, at rest.

Ere long the twinkling stars enhance  
The radiance of the moon,  
And then reluctantly we say—  
One less fair day in June.

### PRIZE POEM—CLASS III.

By Miss Cornelia Freeborn (aged 14), Denfield, Ont.

#### A Day in June.

O June! delicious month of June!  
When winds and birds all sing in tune;  
When in the meadows swarm the bees,  
And hum their drowsy melodies,  
While visiting the buttercup,  
To take the golden honey up.

O June! the month of bluest skies,  
Dear to the wandering butterflies,  
Who seem gay-colored leaves astray,  
Blown down the tides of summer day.

O June! the month of merry song,  
Of shadow brief, of sunshine long;  
All things on earth love you the best;  
The small bird singing near his nest;  
The wind that comes and, passing, blows  
The sweetest perfume of the rose;  
The bee, that sounds his muffled horn  
To celebrate the dewy morn.

O June! such music haunts your name;  
With you the summer's chorus came.

### From Some Old-time Records of the Northwest of Long Ago.

#### ACROSS THE PRAIRIES IN 1856.

[Continued.]

"Our progress was constantly impeded by logs, swamps and innumerable creeks, but our average rate of travelling was about thirty or thirty-four miles a day. The heat of the sun was almost insupportable, and the flies, consisting of mosquitoes, sand flies, and the large bulldog fly which particularly attacked the animals, tormented us dreadfully. We would always start before sunrise, remaining for two hours twice a day to take our breakfast and dinner, to give the poor horses 'a spell,' which, poor things, they sadly needed, and we then camped before sunset for the night. Our brigade had three tents when alone, but when we caught up to other parties which had started long before us, as we frequently did, our camping ground was a picture to remember. Several tents would be pitched here and there, each with its camp fire blazing brightly upwards, and of the carts there would be sometimes two or three hundred together at one time. The horses ('hobbed' by their owners or drivers), poor weary beasts, would wander a little way off, gladly cropping the rich pasture of the swampy soil, neighing confidences or remonstrances to one another until, their hunger satisfied, they, too, sought forgetfulness in sleep. We were so fortunate as often to have moonlight nights, which enabled us to see all around us—sometimes one vast expanse of plain as far as the eye could reach. Sometimes we could hear, near by, the gurgling waters of a river, with its small rapids, or behind us would be a magnificent American forest, rearing its stupendous branches above us, making us gaze around with delight and almost awe, until weariness closed our eyes, and Ameri-

can forests, gurgling rivers, expansive lake and camp fires would gradually fade away, and we ourselves be far lost in the land of dreams! Yes, it was sleepy, hungry work, too, this primitive travelling, both for man and beast. No wonder the large flocks of little pigeons would take flight when they heard the distant creaking of our cart wheels. Connecting them with hungry people, instinct taught them that their best safety was to retreat, for pop, pop, would go the guns, and the stragglers amongst the poor wee things were sure to be sacrificed to the voracious appetites of the travellers. The Red Lake River was the largest and broadest of any we had to cross. Finding it impossible to ford it, our guides gladly availed themselves of the aid of some Indians, who, expecting the inland carts to pass about that time, were awaiting their arrival with large canoes. In these all baggage was carried across, as well as the ladies and children of the party. The carts were tied together, three at a time, and pulled over, whilst the horses, with a large number of oxen, as well as a cow and a little calf belonging to the party we had overtaken, bound for a new settlement on the Otter Tail Lake, were expected to breast the current and swim peaceably to the other side. But to this little arrangement they made decided objection. Influenced by the bad example of a sturdy-looking and very determined ox, and by the writer's own especial steed—one which should have known better, and which had for the whole trip scornfully refused to associate with the wild prairie horses which were being driven over in our company, and occasionally ridden by us in turn—none of the creatures would take to the water at all. The scene was ludicrous. The shouting and yelling of the men, their frantic dodging amongst their rebellious cattle, and the fruitlessness of their efforts, might have been fun for us, but it certainly was exasperatingly serious for those whom it more immediately concerned. Finally persevering effort, aided by stratagem, met with its reward, for at last, two or three being forced into the stream, the rest followed, and the whole band swam nobly over, the little calf by the side of its mother being as rapid in its movements as the rest. Nearly at the end of our journey we met one English officer and two American gentlemen who were bending their steps towards Red River, hoping to be in time to join the buffalo hunt. They were encamped close by a large swampy bog which they had just passed, and which we had to get through also. Their difficulties had been such as to cause them much alarm; so much so, that they showed decided symptoms of giving up the trip altogether. Their little camp looked very pretty on the outskirts of a large wood. They tried to tempt us to pitch our tents with them, but our guides were anxious to get through the mire before nightfall, which we did, our new acquaintances looking on meanwhile, after which we encamped for the night on the banks of the Crow Wing River. Whilst we supped two handsome-looking Indians came up to us, offering to sell our guides some fish, which were gladly bought. They remained near our fire the whole night, and we parted from them in the morning. Shortly afterwards we met an old Indian who was in pursuit of these two men, as they had just murdered three of his sons! Perhaps we should hardly have felt quite so secure the night before had we been aware of the doubtful company we had been keeping, although, their quarrel not being with us, we had no cause for fear.

"When the announcement was made that we had passed the last swamp, we were indeed rejoiced, and the first house we saw was greeted with rapture. The roads then became much better, the cultivated ground, and the neat though humble houses of the settlers showing us that we were getting nearer to the civilized world. We were delighted with the American garrison, Fort Ripley, though we only saw it across the river. The soldiers made our surroundings novel and cheerful; the laborers going about their work reminded us strongly, though still in a foreign land, of old times. We did not leave our carts until we arrived at Saw Rapids, where we had to encamp for two or three days, waiting for the steamer, 'Governor Ramsey,' which was to take us down to St. Anthony's Falls. The steamboat accommodation certainly was miserable, but the scenery of the Mississippi, the knowledge that each stroke of the wheel was taking us nearer home, and the amusement we could not help feeling at the evident contempt our shabby travelling habiliments and sunburnt faces excited among the gaily-dressed American ladies (for to our unaccustomed eyes they appeared as if attired in gorgeous array), helped to make us forget past disasters and to awaken the keenest interest in all that awaited us, before we planted our feet once more upon the shores of dear old England. We had experienced great kindness from many strangers, and mingled in scenes which make a retrospect very pleasant, whilst pleasurable recollections will always be connected in our minds with Canada and the United States; and Red River itself will have many a kindly thought and many a hearty wish when, in imagination, we again take a trip across the prairies of North-western America."

H. A. B.