

THE CANADIAN FAMILY HERALD.

FIVE SHILLINGS PER ANNUM.]

There is True Happiness.

[SINGLY, THREE HALF PENCE.

VOL. I.

TORONTO, SATURDAY, JULY 24, 1852.

No. 53.

Poetry.

THE HOUSEHOLD CLOCK.

The household clock with dial dim
Still marks the flight of time;
Speaks with its silvery voice each hour,
And rings its merry chime.
More than a hundred years have passed
Since first its race began,
Yet still it moves with measured step,
A monitor to man.

How many forms that sleep in dust
Have viewed with thoughtless gaze
Those circling hands in their swift course
That measured out their days!
The bright-eyed boy, the aged sire,
The maid, the matron gray
Alike have looked upon its face,
And then have passed away.

A thousand memories thrill my soul,
As on my raptur'd ear
Rings the gay chime. In early years
I loved so much to hear
A father, mother, sisters dear,
And brooms brothers too,
Smiled round me in those happy days,
When life and hopes were new.

But they have passed away from earth;
Their voices greet no more;
No more their smiles and fond embrace
Shall welcome me of yore;
Yet there, unchanged by fleeting time,
Unmoved by grief or joy,
Still ticks the clock as soberly
As when I was a boy.

And still its circling hands shall move,
The passing hours shall sound,
When those, who daily view it now
Are slumbering in the ground.
For other eyes, for other ears,
'Twill note the flight of time;
'Midst scenes of gladness and of tears,
It merrily shall chime.

Swift as a mighty river's tide
Our days and years sweep by,
And time for us will soon be lost
In vast eternity.

Oh! that we then might hear again
The voices of the hours!
Improve to-day, while yet it lasts,
To-morrow is not ours.

Literature.

FLOATING SENTINELS.

FROM HOUSEHOLD WORDS.

What finger-posts, warning-boards, mile-stones, sign-posts, watchmen, watch-dogs, lanterns, and long poles with wisps of straw at the top, are to the wayfarer by land—a certain fleet of wooden and iron sentinels, bobbing about among the waves, are to the wayfarers round our most dangerous coast. They are of various shapes, and sizes, and colours, and each has its special duty. We hear that a fleet of these sentinels has just come ashore for a holiday, and accordingly we betake ourselves to their house and premises which we find to belong to the Honourable Corporation of the Trinity Board, at Blackwall. We are received by the worthy and hospitable godfather of these Buoys, Captain Poulter, Superintendent under the Elder Brethren, who kindly offers to introduce us to the Buoys at their abode in the great storeroom of the Trinity Wharf, where they are now taking their ease, and some "refreshments" after their long absence at sea.

We proceed along the Wharf, and arrive at a huge building of the simplest order of architecture, viz., the order of the "barn," being a great one-roomed house. We enter by a door of considerable dimensions, suited to the convenience of the nautical Patagonians; and without any intermeddled ceremonies, we find ourselves at once in the presence of the burly crowd of British Coast-buoys.

Imagine yourself in the midst of an assemblage of three or four hundred peg-tops and humming-tops of eight and ten feet in height, some humorously standing on their heads with their pegs uppermost, others lying on their great round stomachs asleep, or in meditation; a few youngsters are only of six feet in height at present, but here and there are some of seventeen feet and upwards, being grown to full maturity. Some of these very jolly buoys are all white, others all black; some all red; others of black and white in stripes—horizontal or vertical stripes—or black and white in chequers. Some are all green, with an ominous work in great white letters upon them—"WRACK."

But though the general form of these Patagonian Peg-tops is pear-shaped or conical, their appearance is greatly diversified by sundry insignia they bear, struck on the top of their pegs on their upper side—whichever side is intended to be uppermost—these insignia being squares, circles, bird-cages, rattaps, diamonds or lozenges, upraised fingers, funnels, stars, and other crosses and orders, which denote the rank of the buoy in question, and which by a mutual telegraphic understanding between it and the captains of vessels, serve to designate the position and point of duty it is placed to occupy and fulfil at sea.

The Buoys have all been at sea for six months; and they are now ashore for six months; at the end of which period they will all go to sea again.

We are presented, in due form, by Captain Poulter to most of the head buoys of this great maritime establishment. This robust figure in the white pea-jacket, with a thin neck and a small round head, is Master Knowle; and the fellow to him, here, is Master South-East Whiting! This figure in the black jacket, with a large cross through his head, is Master Long Sand Head; this tall, gourd-shaped youngster, in a long coat, encircled with broad horizontal stripes, is Master South-West Ship-wash; this large red-coated youth, with a red funnel-head, is no less a person than Master North-East Goodwin (of Goodwin Sands, Ramsgate), and his companion, here—though they are much further apart when out at sea—in the long black pilot-coat, with a black round bird-cage head, is Master South-East Goodwin! Master North Cross Sand, in his redochre jacket, Master South Scoby, in black, and Master Morte Stone, of Bristol Channel, who in his severe simplicity of outline, presents the figure of an acorn, or filbert, are all excellent persons, whose acquaintance we are delighted to make. We also make a low bow to Master South Galliper, not so much on account of his broad black-and-white

stripes, as out of reverence for the mysterious, inverted bushel-basket sort of crown he wears upon his head! Another figure now claims a marked attention. Master Eiboy, of Broadstairs! He is painted in black-and-white Scotch Tweed chequers, lies upon his stomach when on duty, and is surmounted by an iron rod with a "stay" or support of another iron rod placed at an acute angle abaft, on the united points of which at the top there is placed a small circle of iron. *Sat verbum*—see the chat of the Channel. The very diversified appearance of these Buoys excites our admiration; but let no one, for an instant, suppose that there is any mere notion of "ornamental art" in these varieties. Each has its special use; so that if you took Master Long Sand Head this morning, and made him change places with Master South-East Goodwin, before tomorrow morning there would be a score of wrecks and no end of confusion in ships' reckonings—in fact, any exchange suddenly made would produce extraordinary disaster. But who is this? Master Abborough Knopes! This ingenious young person presents the appearance of an enormous kitchen candlestick, the foot and entire pedestal of which remain under water when he is on duty, by which means he is ballasted and kept in an upright position. His peculiar faculty, and the cause and consequence of his singular shape, is that of being able to dive under a ship's bottom, and instantly bob up again on the other side, as if nothing had happened. As he is in a position which renders him very liable to be run over at night, and even by day, he finds this peculiar faculty very convenient. This White Buoy, supposed to be of Irish origin, which lies in the same horizontal attitude when at sea, and displays a similar insignia upon his iron rod above, is Master South Margate; and this prodigious black Humming Top, who stands bolt upright, with a small iron circle exhibited on the top of a structure of iron bars fixed into his flat head, is Master East Margate! We beg that our presentation to the rest of these floating sentinels may be postponed to another visit, as we have now many other things to see. The Buoys, in reply, quote Dr. Johnson, as we are informed, and say, "They can wait!"

We have mentioned our friend Captain Poulter, as the godfather of all these big buoys; but he stands in a yet nearer and dearer relation to many of them, the invention and design of which are attributable to him, under the advice of the Board, and their fabrication having taken place under his immediate eye. Not only does he give each of them a new coat (of many colours), and a new breeching, too, every six months, but he has instituted a change in the structure of those made of wood, which tends to preserve the coat in its original purity for a much longer period than before its adoption. Formerly the wooden buoys used to be bound with iron hoops, and notwithstanding the paint, they soon corroded sufficiently to emit streaming streams of rust, so that a white buoy shortly became a mottled buoy, and eventually almost a Red Indian. The