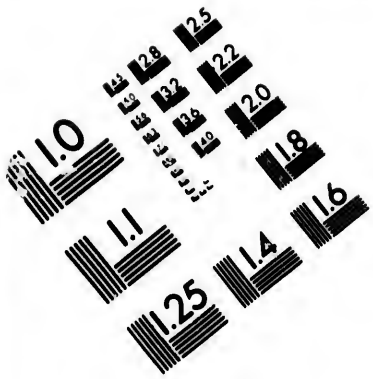

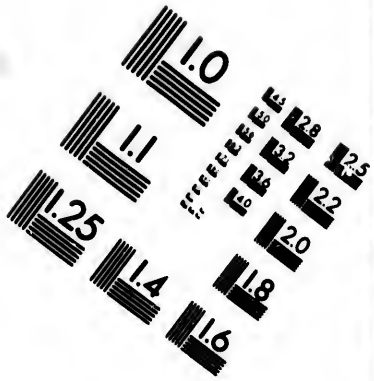

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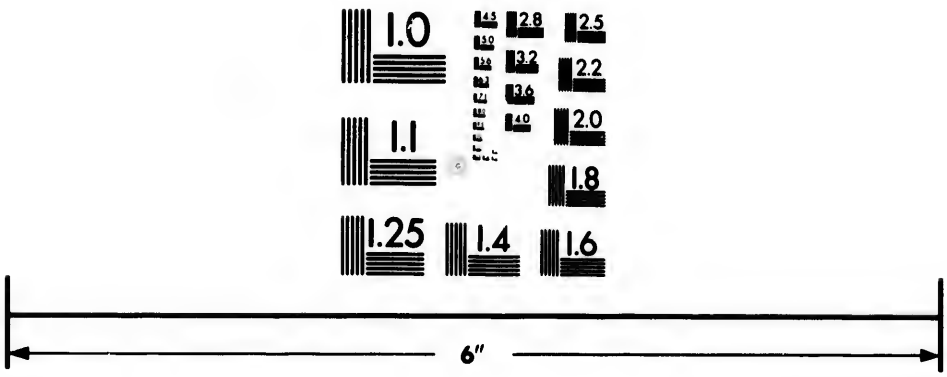

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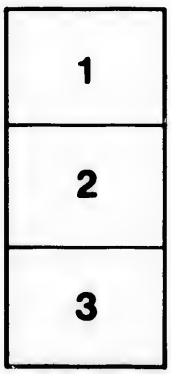

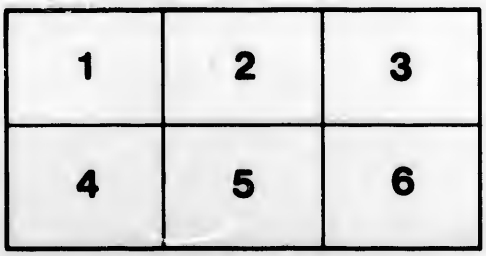

CHARLIE ASHFORD;

OR,

FOUR YEARS IN THE CANADIAN DOMINION.

By J. W. MARGETTS.

LONDON:
ALEXANDER & SHEPHEARD,
21, FURNIVAL STREET, HOLBORN, E.C.

1888.

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PREFACE.

THE Author claims the indulgence of the public for the subjoined narrative, which is put forward as the record of the experiences and opinions of a young man brought up in an out-of-the-world agricultural district, and compelled, like hundreds of others, to seek his living abroad.

CHARLIE ASHFORD;

OR,

FOUR YEARS IN THE CANADIAN DOMINION.

CHAPTER I.

CHARLIE ASHFORD AND HIS RELATIONS—WHY HE DETERMINED TO GO ABROAD.

OUR hero, Charlie Ashford, was the second son of a country clergyman, who held a living in Blanshire, one of the eastern counties of England. In addition to having an elder brother he had four sisters, of whom two were older and two younger than himself. The income of his father, in consequence of the agricultural depression, had been steadily on the decrease.

The Rev. Eustace Ashford never made agriculture a study, and was contented for some years to receive half-yearly the rents paid punctually by the two tenant farmers who rented his glebe land. Certain deductions the rev. gentleman put up with without a murmur; but when at last one of his tenants died, and the other became a bankrupt, and the farms were thrown on his hands, and it became a serious

question as to whether there would be an income to be received, Mr. Ashford began to wish he had not spent so much of his time with his favourite Greek authors.

His spare hours had, for some time, been devoted to the preparation of a revised edition of Liddell and Scott's Dictionary, and it was particularly annoying to him to be called from this occupation for the purpose of getting his farms again tenanted. The farms which his late tenants had occupied were found to be in a dreadfully foul state. Tenants were advertised for, but few replies were received, and those who came to look at the farms required so much preliminary expenditure on the part of the owner, that the poor clergyman was almost driven to desperation.

His son Charlie, who was then seventeen years of age, heroically offered to manage one of the farms; and, as he had an enforced holiday of a year in consequence of the necessary funds not being forthcoming to pay his school fees, the boy had been spending most of his time with old Bott, one of the tenants. He consequently knew the difference between turnips and mangold wurzel, could ride well, and even take a hand at ploughing. He looked upon himself already as an accomplished farmer.

The unlimited confidence which Charlie possessed in his own powers was not, however, shared by Mr. Ashford, nor by the two elder sisters, Constantia and Gertrude, who ridiculed Charlie's pretensions with merciless severity. It was true, Mrs. Ashford and the two younger daughters invariably took Charlie's part with more or less well-assumed sincerity—Charlie being with them a great favourite—but Mrs. Ashford was not a woman of a strong will, and her younger daughters had not arrived at the age when their opinion on important matters was considered worth consulting.

At this juncture of affairs the elder son, Herbert, came home from Oxford, and immediately became the most important person of the household. He was a fine, tall young fellow of twenty-three, and possessed all Charlie's amount of self-esteem, with six years' additional experience. Poor Charlie found himself falling into the position of a kind of humble attendant to his superior brother—a position which he inwardly resented, but from which he saw no immediate means of escape.

Herbert possessed a considerable amount of energy of character, and when he found the sad plight into which the family were drifting, he immediately set to work to find some remedy.

The expenses of his education at Oxford, though they had been considerable, had not, as with many other young men, been increased by extravagant expenditure. He had left the University without a single debt, had studied hard and taken a high degree in honours.

His first idea was to consult the best local surveyor in the neighbourhood. He rode over to Renton, the nearest town, for that purpose, and ultimately arrived at a conclusion which he at once proceeded to put into practice.

The surveyor he consulted, Mr. Lewers, was a man of substance, and entered into Herbert's plans with interest, and in a short time half of one of the farms was measured out into allotments, and let off to neighbouring villagers at a much higher price per acre than the farm could have fetched as a whole. The fifty acres of pasture land belonging to the farm let out in allotments was added to the other farm, and this Herbert decided, with his father's permission, to occupy himself until such time as a satisfactory tenant could be found. Through Mr. Lewers he obtained a loan from the local bank, which was sufficient to start him in a comfortable position.

In the meantime Charlie, whose services had been utilised in various capacities, as a kind of

groom, errand-boy, and general scout for his elder brother, began to chafe more and more, and at last broke out into rebellion. He had, during the spare moments his brother allowed him, surreptitiously obtained various pamphlets and books, giving information to emigrants to America and Australia. Such, however, was the dislike of the whole family to any scheme for going abroad that he, for a long time, nourished his ideas in secret. Even from his mother, who ordinarily sympathised with him in everything, did he get no favourable hearing.

But Charlie had determined on his line of action, and one evening, after supper, whilst Mr. Ashford was having his usual smoke and glass of grog, Charlie astonished his father by asking him whether it was his intention to allow him to remain all his life in the position of his brother's slave.

Mr. Ashford for the moment could hardly speak. At last he said: "Charlie, I consider you a most ungrateful boy to talk in that way. Are you not having an opportunity of making yourself acquainted with agriculture in all its details? Why, when I was a boy, I would have given anything for such a chance. I was brought up in a town, and have never been able, even now, to get rid of my town habits."

Here Constantia broke in: "Really, Pa, you should take no notice of Charlie. What do you think the silly boy wants to do? He talks of going to Canada, where he would be of no use whatever."

"They don't want anybody like you, Charlie, in Canada," said Gertrude. "They only want labourers, and you are not a labourer."

"Oh!" said poor Mrs. Ashford, putting a pocket-handkerchief to her eyes, "to think of you going away, Charlie, and being starved to death in a foreign country!"

"I should not be starved to death, mother," said Charlie. "I can do lots of things. I often used to help old Bott."

Here the conversation was interrupted by the entrance of Herbert with a pile of documents and farm accounts, respecting which he wanted to consult his father by himself.

In order to get Charlie out of the room Herbert asked him to get ready the guns for next day's shooting, and to do this Charlie had to oil them in the scullery, as he usually did when required.

Before Herbert could open the discussion of the farm accounts, Mr. Ashford commenced on the subject which occupied his mind. "Herbert," said Mr. Ashford, "I have come to a conclusion

with reference to Charlie. He must go abroad. I had no idea he was so discontented."

Just at this juncture Ellen, the housemaid, came in and fetched the coal-scuttle.

"Oh! Pa," said Constantia, after Ellen had disappeared, "how imprudent of you to talk before servants! You know very well that what you say will be repeated all over Mewby; besides, Ellen's young man comes from Renton, and we do not want our family affairs made the common talk of the Renton people. You know, yourself, what a vulgar set you think these Renton people."

Mr. Ashford took this rebuke in his usual quiet manner, but would have justified himself, only the re-appearance of Ellen with the coal-scuttle and a hearth-broom checked his reply, and also had the same disastrous effect on some important words of wisdom which were about to issue from the mouth of Herbert.

"What are you doing there, Ellen?" irritably asked Herbert. "We don't want the hearth done up just as we are going to bed."

Ellen, however, showed no signs of hurrying. She had heard part of the conversation about Master Charlie going abroad, and her young man was also talking of going abroad, so the subject had a kind of personal interest to her.

It occurred to her that Master Charlie and her young man might be going to just the same place, and that she might, by and by, go abroad, too, and join her young man, and become a lady instead of remaining a housemaid in England. All this passed though Ellen's mind, whilst she was sweeping the hearth, in much less time than it takes to describe.

"Don't you know, Mr. 'Urbert," said she, "as the sweeps is coming to-morrow at four o'clock, and they're going to do this chimbley fust? Missus says as I was to see the ashes took away before going to bed, as we wants all the soot as comes down to put on the sparrowgrass bed."

"Oh," said Herbert, "if that is the case we had better clear out. What a beastly nuisance this is! Why could there not have been a fire in the study? I have got a lot of writing to do before I go to bed."

"Please, Mr. 'Urbert," said Ellen, pointing to the coal-scuttle, "these be all the coals we 'ave. If we 'ad a fire in the study we shouldn't 'ave no breakfast to-morrow morning, as the coals don't come from Renton till twelve o'clock to-morrow."

Mr. Herbert, it may here be remarked, was no great favourite with the servants. He ordered them about in a most peremptory manner, and

never gave them any tips. Strictly conscientious and scrupulous himself, he expected from his inferiors an equally high standard of conduct.

"I suppose," said he to Ellen, "you can borrow a coal-scuttle full from the 'Three Crowns' to go on with?"

"I don't see as it's my place to go traping about with a coal-scuttle to common public-houses at ten o'clock at night. I always did like to keep respectable and always will." Having delivered this parting shot Ellen disappeared.

"If this is not enough to make anyone sick," said Herbert, "I do not know what is. Here am I bothered out of my life with all these worries, and I cannot even get a place to sit down in. I have a good mind to throw the whole thing up. I say, Constantia, why don't you get that impertinent girl out of the house?"

"You know, Herbert, Ma does not listen to me, or else Ellen would have gone long ago. She has been here a great deal too long. They all get impudent after a time. Ma is a great deal too easy with them, and lets them do just as they like. I would not put up with it if I were Ma."

Mrs. Ashford, who had been out of the room during this discussion, here re-entered, and mollified Herbert by informing him that a

special table could be wheeled into the kitchen, close to the fire, where he could finish his writing after the servants had gone to bed.

Notwithstanding the temporary dearth of coals, which affected the dining-room and study departments, it was discovered that the kitchen fire had been as large and roaring as usual, and there was then enough fire in the kitchen grate to roast a moderately sized ox.

The servants then being packed off to bed, Herbert, with his papers, sat himself down in the kitchen to examine the various accounts and bills, and Mr. Ashford sat on one side of the fireplace, endeavouring to recollect forgotten details. It was by the side of this fire that Charlie's future was discussed and settled.

Mr. Ashford, although, as a rule, immersed in the study of the Greek particle, was quick enough to see that sooner or later there would be a split between the two brothers, and ultimately succeeded in convincing Herbert it would be better for the family's interests as well as for Charlie's that the latter should go abroad. "Your own career in life," he pointed out to Herbert, "after the high degree you have taken at the University, will not be bounded by the only horizon Mewby affords—that of being a tenant farmer. No doubt before

long we shall find a man who will take off the land at a good price, and you will then be free to enter for the Bar. Then," said he, "what is to become of Charlie when you leave?" Such were the arguments Mr. Ashford employed, and Herbert could not help seeing that there was great weight in them; and, as he wanted someone about the farm, it was agreed that old Bott's son should be taken on to assist, instead of Charlie.

"It seems rather a pity," said Herbert, "as we shall have to pay old Bott's son, and Charlie is beginning to be useful. However, I suppose it cannot be helped."

One of the greatest difficulties Mr. Ashford had to contend with was in gaining over Mrs. Ashford to agree to a separation from her son, which might, as she said, be "for ever."

This lady had lavished her principal affection on her younger son; and, though she was proud of the cultivated abilities of her eldest born, she could not help feeling that the one of all her children nearest to her heart was Charlie, who had hardly been away from home since his babyhood except to attend the Renton Grammar School twice a day, where he obtained his due amount of floggings, and also the feeble and scanty store of learning he possessed. The

separation from his mother was, in truth, the only source of regret which Charlie experienced. For his father he had but a limited share of affection, for his elder brother and his two elder sisters still less, though for his two younger sisters he entertained feelings of extreme pity, because he could not imagine how they would be able to live during his absence. He promised them both that he would send them money back from Canada for them to join him in a grand new house, which he was going to build out of the accumulated proceeds of the fifty pounds he was about to take with him. With this they were consoled, and pictured to themselves the fun they would have, skating and riding about in the new country.

Speaking on the subject of the fifty pounds, this was a small sum which had been put into a savings-bank by an old aunt for Charlie's benefit. It was extremely doubtful whether Mr. Ashford's financial position at that time—he having already become a security for one large loan—was such as to command fifty pounds in ready money; so the recollection of this cash in the savings-bank, for which he was trustee, was a great source of solace to the old gentleman.

Under these circumstances Charlie was allowed to buy his own outfit. This he did at

Renton, and he selected, certainly, things of a serviceable nature. He had some suits of cords made expressly for emigration, similar to those ordered by young Hoskins, who had gone to Canada two years since, and was the great authority with the Renton people on all matters pertaining to emigration. This young man had, from his own account, managed to get on well, and wrote over peculiarly glowing descriptions of the state of affluence to which he had attained. As young Hoskins had succeeded so well, and had taken with him these cord suits, Charlie naturally thought he could not do better than follow so good an example.

He had no difficulty in finding out the different shops in Renton where young Hoskins had bought his outfit. The tradespeople were all very communicative on the point. They told him that Mr. Hoskins took this and Mr. Hoskins took that, till at last Charlie's £50 was seriously diminished, and yet he found he had not succeeded in buying half the items of outfit which young Hoskins must have taken with him, according to the *dicta* of the Renton tradespeople.

Amongst these matters most essential in an outfit were, of course, boots. The largest boot store in Renton was in the middle of the town.

It had a double frontage towards High Street and Main Street. At the far end of the Main Street frontage was what was called the country department, and it was here that most of the country bumpkins for miles round bought their boots. This branch of the establishment had quite as large a plate-glass front as the other much more genteel portion had, but being round the corner, which corner led to the unaristocratic portion of Renton, only labourers and the lower class of artisans favoured it with their presence. Charlie, however, having an indistinct presentiment that he was about to embark on a voyage, at the end of which he would feel that the world was on a different footing to that to which he had been accustomed, turned this corner, in order to endeavour to judge for himself what he would have to meet with on the other side. "It is no use," thought he, "to stick myself up as a gentleman when I get over there. I had better just sink these absurd distinctions that we have on this side at once."

With these highly praiseworthy sentiments in his breast he turned to the unaristocratic corner of Messrs. Jolly's boot store. There he beheld boots of various degrees of heaviness, with large, round nails shining from their soles. "Ah! Is it these boots that I shall be condemned to wear

over there, over there?" Just at this moment who should he see amidst a crowd of agriculturals, wearing the unostentatious smock-frock, but old Billy Tubbs.

Now Billy Tubbs was one of his father's allotment holders. Billy Tubbs had taken no less than two allotments of an acre each, and he had furthermore accumulated no less than seven tons of manure, situated at a convenient distance from his own back door. Such a man as this, although he wore a smock-frock, had to be stroked in a proper manner—at least, he must not exactly be jumped upon. The man himself would, no doubt, have put his head on the ground, and would have let Charlie put his foot upon it, but Charlie instinctively felt that this man was more his father's creditor than debtor; and, with that high-bred feeling of the true English gentleman, shrank from exacting a subservience to which he felt himself not entitled. He therefore went back to the front entrance of the shop in the High Street to avoid Mr. Tubbs.

Now Renton, being an old-fashioned place, and the villages round being also old-fashioned, most of the labourers, and, indeed, others besides, had continued the use of the old smock-frock, a garment which much resembled that which

Moses and Aaron used at the time the Israelites were so naughty and would not do what they were told. But we read that Aaron's frock had jewels on the breastplate. The smock-frocks of the people round Renton had a square or oblong place, representing a breastplate, but they were minus the jewels, so in that particular differed from the frock worn by Aaron, though similar in other respects. Aaron's frock seems to have lasted him all his life; so did also the smocks of the inhabitants round Renton last them all their lives, until came the age of unlimited competition. The smocks worn by their grandfathers used to be left as heirlooms. But the age of commercial competition has changed all this: the Renton people, like many others, having to put up with an inferior article, were compelled in a great measure to abandon the customs of their ancestors.

Be that as it may, Charlie decided to enter at the aristocratic entrance of Messrs. Jolly's store, where he encountered young Mr. Jolly himself. No haughty duke, habited in mediæval armour, with coronet and everything complete, could have been received by his retainers in a more obsequious manner than was Charlie by young Mr. Jolly. Charlie was well known as the son

of the Rector of Mewby, and the Rector of Mewby was well known by the tradespeople at Renton as a man who paid all his bills without the slightest question, whether small overcharges had accidentally crept into them or not. The Rectorial income, together with sundry legacies the Rector had received, had been spent mostly at Renton.

But the Rector had other titles to the respect and admiration of the Renton people. His living was his own. He presented himself to it, and he could present any one in orders he chose to it, however unpopular that person might be. Although the Rector's sermons were mostly on one subject, still Mewby Church was situated a very convenient distance from Renton, and was the best walk the townspeople had. On the east side were hills of a considerable height, and on the west was a lovely grove of trees reaching nearly to the church. Notwithstanding that the Rector's sermons discoursed on one subject —namely, the numerous Greek and Hebrew mistranslations in Holy Writ—the church was generally filled in the evenings by bevies of young men and maidens from Renton, who in after life would no doubt recollect the circumstance of this walk better than the subject of the Rector's sermon.

No sooner did Mr. Jolly, jun., see Charlie at the door of the shop than he literally jumped at him. Charlie in a trice found himself drawn in and seated in a chair with one boot off, and his bootless foot the object of intense admiration on the part of Mr. Jolly, jun. "I suppose, sir," said he to Charlie, "you will be going to the University soon, and you will want some proper boots to take there. I hear your brother is not going to take the living, and so——"

"Look here," said Charlie, interrupting him, "I want some boots the same as Mr. Hoskins bought here; that is what I have come for."

"Oh, yes," said Mr. Jolly, "I recollect. Dancing pumps, the latest new fashion."

"No, not dancing pumps, thick boots."

Young Mr. Jolly stood for a moment puzzled. At last he said he would refer to his ledger; and, on finding the account, he saw some letters and figures amongst a long list of boots supplied to Mr. Hoskins. These were Z 12½.

"Oh, do you mean Z 12½'s?"

"Yes," said Charlie at a venture, "I think those are the ones."

The search for these took Mr. Jolly to the country store end, where two assistants were fitting the yokels. "Get me a pair of Z 12½'s," said Mr. Jolly to one of the assistants. The

assistant looked about in vain, and at last told his master there were none in stock. Mr. Jolly suddenly spied old Billy Tubbs, and an idea struck him. "Tubbs, old boy, what boots have you got on? Tuck up your leg and let me see. Why, blame me, if they ain't Z 12½'s."

"Oh," said the assistant, "if you mean them, what we did not sell are down below."

"Fetch 'em up, and look sharp," said Mr. Jolly.

In due time, some few pairs of these boots were brought and set down before Charlie.

"You don't mean to say that these are the boots Hoskins took out with him? Why they weigh four pounds a piece."

"Yes," said Mr. Jolly, drawing the long bow, "these are the kind of boots he took with him, and he liked them so much he has sent over for some more."

In truth, these were the boots the labourers about Mewby generally wore. A pair of boots with them cost them the price of about a fortnight's labour. Not only did it cost them that, but in addition it cost them a lifelong peculiarity of gait—it cost them the calves of their legs. The labourers' understandings were of quite a peculiar character, nearly straight all the way from the knee. Where the calf should be there

was a slight depression instead of an elevation. The labourers round Renton moved about and swung themselves from the thigh, rarely bending the knee, if, indeed, the knee could be bent. From long disuse it must have been a difficult feat to perform.

Well, Charlie came out of the shop the possessor of three pairs of such boots, which were duly packed in a special box and sent to his paternal abode.

The time arrived when Charlie was to start on his travels. His £50 had been further diminished by the purchase of a gun and cartridges, and, on counting up the balance remaining due, he found he had only just enough to pay his passage.

Mr. Ashford had written him a letter of introduction to Colonel Enders, an old college friend of his, who was stationed with his regiment at Halifax. Colonel Enders had relatives in the Province of Ontario, and it was to them that Mr. Ashford asked his friend to send his son. This letter, with others, Charlie took with him.

We will pass over the farewell scene between himself and relatives, which was one of a very affecting character. His mother had recently

been suffering from bronchitis, and wanted much to see him off, but was unable to leave the house. The Rector and Herbert had unfortunately an appointment with the family solicitor, and the girls could not go to the station on account of the weather. So all the leave-taking took place in the familiar hall of the Rectory.

Charlie will now proceed with his own narrative.

CHAPTER II.

ON MY OWN HOOK FOR THE FIRST TIME—JOURNEY TO LIVERPOOL AND INCIDENTS BY THE WAY—THE VOYAGE—SEA SICKNESS.

AFTER taking leave of my mother, father, brother, and sisters, I drove off to the Renton Station in a fly, feeling for the first time in my life that I was now master of my own fate, though I was not so gay as I imagined I should be now that the long-looked for time had come for my going out into the world.

Renton Station was one of the early railway constructions—inconvenient, draughty, and lop-sided. By the latter term I mean that there was no cover for unfortunate up-passengers, whereas the downs were favoured with a small waiting-room. It was one of those uncomfortable, drizzly days which we are often favoured with in the early part of March, the wind also

was truly March-like, being due east, bitter enough indeed, but not sufficiently energetic to clear away the damp misty fog. No wonder that my sensations and reflections were tinged with melancholy, tempered with a feeling of impatience to be off.

The train was late, as all the trains at Renton were. Glad enough was I when it did at last make its appearance, and I was ushered along to Selby, some seventeen miles, stopping at several small stations. At Selby I changed for Oxford, and leaving Oxford found myself at Leamington in about an hour. At Leamington I got out, and after booking my luggage at the station, proceeded to the Regent's Hotel. I there saw my cousin Henry, who had been to Oxford at the same time as my brother Herbert.

"Well, Charlie, my boy," said Harry, "how are you, and how are all at home? How is that beast of a brother of yours? I should like to kick that infernal conceited beggar, blame me, if I shouldn't."

"As to that," said I, "you have my full permission to do what you like in that respect; but I am so awfully hungry, I seem as if I had no strength to kill a mouse."

"All right, old boy; dinner is just about ready."

I may say in justice to my brother Herbert he had done nothing whatever to injure Harry; but the respective characters of the two were so diverse, they had never been able to get on cordially together. It was simply a case of mutual dislike.

Dinner came up presently, and during the whole of this meal I was entertained with Oxford stories of my brother's pomposity and meanness.

There was another fellow at dinner besides myself and Harry. He hailed from Brazenose, and he also slightly knew my brother, and he endeavoured to check Harry's very free remarks as well as he could, but with very little success.

After dinner, we three strolled along the Parade, and I found my spirits considerably raised, not by the elevating nature of Harry's conversation, but by the fact that the sun had come out, and that my active digestion had something to work upon.

The neat and clean town of Leamington was a great contrast to the muddy, neglected Renton, and, indeed, to me it was quite a treat, little as I had been accustomed to town life.

We went to the theatre in the evening and saw the "Colleen Bawn"—a play which I shall ever remember with pleasure.

The next morning Harry and his friend came to see me off. The Brazenose undergraduate kept so close to Harry, I had no opportunity of opening my mind to my cousin on a subject which had been uppermost in my thoughts during the whole of my visit, and that was on the to me important question of ways and means. No Chancellor of the Exchequer since the time of Pitt could have felt deeper anxiety on the subject of finance than did I on the memorable day of my first departure from my beloved, though, as I considered, somewhat ungrateful, country. I had a notion that if I could get £10 or £20 out of Harry by way of a loan, it would have been a good day's work, as I could so easily repay him such a small sum from my earnings in Canada during the first year.

Harry did not give me much opportunity to open the ball, and thus it turned out that I was already in the train before I had the chance of unbosoming myself. Noticing that the Brazenose man had turned his head to inspect a time-table, I said, "Harry, I am awfully short, the trip I am going to take is awfully long."

"Nonsense," said Harry. "I thought your governor made it all right."

"Ah, but Herbert would not let him. He said it was all humbug sending fellows out with

money, as they never did any work while their pockets were full."

"Well, I am sorry for you, old man. I am very hard up myself. I don't think I can do anything. Stop a minute, I think I can just do you a fiver, and that's all I have, only a few shillings to go on till Saturday. Ta, ta, old man; take care of yourself, and drop us a line when you get over."

"Bye, bye, ah," said Brazenose, looking round from the time-table. "Bye, ah, bye, ah."

The train was slowly moving out from the Leamington platform, and I had only just time to clutch Harry's fiver, and wave back my hand in answer to the departing salutations. My mind was considerably relieved as I put the crisp note into a side-pocket. "Here," thought I, "is material for ten weeks' board with economy over there." Of course it would go no way here; but over there, where everything is so cheap, it is a different matter.

On arriving at Crewe I began to get hungry again, so I made the best of my way to the refreshment room and regaled on sandwiches and beer, and thereupon changed the fiver I had received at Leamington. My idea was that the note would be useless in Canada, so I would take the opportunity of getting it changed into coin

whilst I had the chance; and the rest of my money was done up carefully in a belt which I had on.

On coming back to my railway carriage, I found an occupant. I had up till now the carriage to myself. Being in a communicative frame of mind, I treated the occupant, who was apparently about five or six years older than myself, with an elaborate account of my history from my earliest recollection up to the present time. The narrative was necessarily somewhat condensed, though I think I succeeded in conveying to the stranger's mind a clear understanding of the leading features of my hitherto not very momentous career.

The stranger interrupted me once during the narration by asking me whether I objected to smoking, and being informed that I did not, he proceeded to fill up with tobacco from a gutta-percha pouch a cheap wooden pipe, such a one as I had frequently seen at the tobacconist's at Renton, price twopence.

Having done this, the stranger listened quite complacently, with his legs on the opposite seat and his eyes partly shut.

"Is that so?" said he, when I had finished.

"Quite," answered I.

"Then I am going to Kingstown, Canada," said he, "and we shall be fellow-travellers."

Yes, it is awfully jolly to have a companion. We chatted together on various topics until we reached Liverpool. There we had the usual scene of shouting and running about. I managed to secure the services of a porter, who hunted up my belongings, consisting of a large box, portmanteau, and bundle of rugs. I then hailed a cab. Just as I was getting in, who should I see but an uncle who had come to meet me, hearing that I was on my way abroad.

Uncle and myself then both got into the same cab, and after giving my newly found friend the address of the hotel we were driving to, off we started, my newly found friend promising to turn up later on.

On arriving at the hotel, I had my luggage taken to a suitable room, and then went off to my uncle's residence, about thirteen miles from Liverpool. I was there introduced to my aunt, whom I had never seen before, and we soon sat down to a substantial repast, and after well fortifying the inner man, we went out to explore the beauties of the neighbourhood. My uncle's house was a compact little villa, with some ground attached to it of a very sandy nature. The neighbourhood was decidedly picturesque, and the combination of sea and land views obtained from his windows was particularly

charming; but a further acquaintance with the place revealed many buildings, constructed in the grand-anyhow style of architecture, and this marred the effect outside. Groups and terraces of more or less mouldy-looking houses seemed to have dropped from the clouds in disconnected clusters over a large expanse of landscape, like warts on the countenance of an otherwise beautiful woman.

Such was South Tawton when I visited it. "I suppose," said I to my uncle, "this free and easy style arises from the inhabitants here being in such constant communication with the land of freedom." (Most of them, it seems, were engaged in the American trade.)

My uncle did not appreciate this joke at the expense of his residential suburb, but, taking out his watch, directed my attention to the time of day, it being close on 7 p.m.

We thereupon hurried on to the station, after bidding adieu to my hospitable aunt, and were fortunate in catching the train back to Liverpool. We wended our way once more to the hotel, and on entering the smoking-room found my friend of the railway carriage.

"So you see I am true to my word," said my new friend; "truer than true, I may say. I have brought with me some fellow-travellers."

Here he introduced my uncle and myself to three other young men, all of very huge dimensions. The first was six feet one in height, the second six feet one and a half, and the third six feet two.

By the side of these young fellows my own five feet eleven did not appear to advantage, especially as they were broad in proportion; and I made an inward resolution to stretch out both ways, if possible, during the voyage.

I found them all very companionable, and my uncle being also an excellent yarn-spinner, we spent a very pleasant evening at the hotel, singing and detailing our experiences. We agreed to get berthed as near together as possible.

The next morning, being the 8th March, was the date on which the *Mentonian* was to start. We—that is, my four friends and myself—departed for the Allan Line Dock.

The dock from which these vessels start is some distance from the landing stage. Liverpool, as every one knows, is famed for having the longest line of docks in the world; and to me, who had never before seen such an immense display of shipping, the sight was quite overwhelming.

Looking at these square miles of docks filled with enormous vessels, the vast amount of cargo

being loaded and unloaded, the multitude of people of all nations gathered to this port for embarkation to foreign lands, and this going on day after day caused reflections in my mind to which it had before been a stranger. I had once in my life been to London, but was too young then to carry back with me anything but a confused recollection of everlasting chimney-pots of all sorts and sizes; so that, practically, I had not, in fact, made the acquaintance of any large city. I was not prepared to see such a surging mass of life, such utter indifference of one individual for another, such large hotels with such complete service, and last, but not least, such degradation amongst the very poor.

In Renton, I could not go down the streets of that antiquated and rusty-looking town without meeting people who knew me, knew my father and family—in fact, who knew as much about me as I knew about myself. And here was I in a place in which I was a total stranger, a place with enormous buildings, dissimilar to any place I recollected. Probably, not one in the entire place had ever heard of Renton. Here was I, accompanied by four other young men, all over six feet high, come from different parts of England, none of whom had ever heard anything

about the place at which I had lived all my life, and I, on my part, was equally unacquainted with their native quarters.

We had a sharp shower of rain which damped our top-coats and our spirits, and by the time we reached the *Mentonian* we were in a soaking condition. We had walked quite two miles along a straight road paved with flagstones, having the docks on our right, and on our left were numerous public-houses, more or less attractive, the resort, no doubt, of the sailors from the ships and *employés* from the docks.

At last we came to the dock in which lay the *Mentonian*. On the wharf opposite that steamer were a crowd of people surrounded by boxes, trunks, valises, pots, pans, cooking utensils, basins, bedding, and miscellaneous articles of all sorts.

These people were to be our future fellow-passengers and sufferers on the "herring-pond," and their luggage was being conveyed on board. They and their luggage looked more or less damp.

We waited about two hours, and then we got on board and secured our berths.

About twelve o'clock midday, the friends of the passengers departing across by the *Mentonian* were ordered ashore, so here I said good-bye

to my uncle, and soon found we were rapidly getting out of dock into the river and steaming towards the bar.

By about three o'clock we were well out in the Irish Sea, and my four strapping companions and myself had hitherto enjoyed the voyage, one of them remarking how well he felt.

Just at that moment I experienced a certain indescribable qualm, and this sensation gradually increased. I pulled myself together and tried to overcome the uncomfortable feeling, which I had been told was occasioned to a great extent by causes all more or less under one's own control, if one has only the courage to face them. I endeavoured to adjust my movements to the motion of the vessel, but all to no purpose. With one desperate rush, I fled down stairs amidst the laughter of my six-foot companions, whom, however, I was informed had no occasion to laugh about an hour later when the lurchings of the vessel increased.

My feelings down below in my berth were too painful for description. I had never been on the sea before, and was totally unacquainted, even in theory, with the unpleasant effects of sea-sickness. "If ever I live to get over to Halifax," thought I, "which I do not believe I ever shall, no power on earth shall induce me to put my

foot again on a vessel." Why had no one ever informed me of this horrible, disgusting experience, sufficient to nauseate anyone with sea travelling? As to eating any food, I found it impossible, and the only thing I tasted for four days and a half was a little jelly and a few teaspoonfuls of brandy. This I was recommended by the doctor on board. One of the officers of the *Mentonian* having been to see me, and finding how very weak I was, gave the alarm to the captain, who sent the medical officer to have a look at me. By his advice, a few teaspoonfuls of brandy were administered. As I did not improve, he administered some medicine of his own, after which I felt better, and was assisted on deck by the second engineer and carpenter of the vessel.

Although it was very cold, I felt the fresh air of the deck a relief after the intense stuffiness of the cabin, and improved sufficiently to be able to have some tea and a newly laid egg. They had on board fowls and ducks, so we occasionally obtained newly laid eggs. Nevertheless, I continued more or less ill the whole time, and the medical man who attended me said mine was the worse case of sea sickness he had ever known, and he had travelled to and fro for eighteen years.

The *Mentonian* was not one of the quickest

boats of the Allan Line, so that it was fully ten and a half days before the port of Halifax was reached. This took place about 10 p.m. on Sunday, the 18th of March.

On that day I felt so much better that I broke out in verse on the subject of my late complaint, copies of which, as follows, I handed to my companions :—

ON SEA SICKNESS.

The land has sunk beneath the sea,
The waves begin to rise ;
A dizziness comes over me,
I gently close my eyes.

The last good meal that I have taken,
It quickly doth appear ;
My poor inside, how it is shaken—
Oh, dear ! Oh, dear ! Oh dear !

There are others sick around me,
Groans and grunts salute mine ear ;
We pay our tribute to the sea—
Oh, dear ! Oh, dear ! Oh, dear !

In stupor I lie in my berth,
And neither see nor hear,
A helpless mortal on the earth,
But worse at sea, I fear.

And thus for several days I lay,
Until at last I found,
With what great joy I need not say,
Myself a-getting round.

Open confession is thought good,
My appetite had fled ;
And now let it be understood
A horse's had instead.

CHAPTER III.

ARRIVAL IN HALIFAX—JOURNEY INLAND—MY RECEPTION—DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM IN NOVA SCOTIA AT WHICH I WAS RECEIVED.

AS I had to stay in Halifax, I collected my luggage and said good-bye to my companions, who proceeded on their way to take the cars for Toronto and Kingstown. I then hired a sleigh, and was driven to an hotel near the station depôt. In consequence of not having slept on shore for ten days, I was naturally rather glad to have the delights of a bed, and it was eleven o'clock the next morning before I turned out.

I found the regulations at hotels in America were somewhat different to those in England. In England you can get your meals when you like, but not so in America. Unless you choose to submit to the hotel rules, which prescribe a certain time for each meal, you must go without.

It was, therefore, with great consternation, with my present horse's appetite, that I learned the time for breakfast had passed by quite an hour, and that no duke, king, or emperor was allowed breakfast after the proper hour, and the only course to be pursued was to wait until the next meal in order to allay the pangs of hunger.

I looked disconsolately out of the hotel windows, and witnessed the snow piled up in large heaps in the centre of the street, so high, in fact, that the side walks in some cases formed deep ravines, and any one standing in the middle of the road could see very well into the bedroom windows of the houses on each side. The sight of this snow increased my desire for breakfast, and I sought the landlady, and appealed to her good nature, as being a stranger to the manners and customs of the country. This had the desired effect, and I was accommodated with a bountiful meal, consisting of fried steak, fried fish, coffee and tea, placed on a snowy white table cloth, reminding me of England.

I ate as a man only can eat after a ten days' voyage, during which time he has been in a state of semi-starvation. I had still the motion of the vessel permeating my system in some extraordinary way, and could hardly walk across

the hotel dining-room without lurching from side to side. Many times have I voyaged since, but this, my first experience of the rough Atlantic, I can remember yet, and ever shall.

My breakfast concluded, I decided to take a look round Halifax, and present my letters of introduction. The first letter I had was to the commanding officer of the 150th Regiment, stationed at Halifax. This letter was given to me by father to an old friend and college chum of his. From this letter I expected great things, as the gentleman in question had relations at Ottawa connected with the Government; so I expected to be passed on to that place with introductions. What was my horror and dismay to discover that the 150th Regiment had departed for Jamaica five days before.

I then turned to the other letter, feeling that my chance of going on to Ottawa had vanished, and with it, also, the chance of obtaining any Government post or lucrative employment in that city. The second letter was addressed to a business man in the city. After some little delay, I found his office. He received me very kindly, and asked me what was my object in coming over to Halifax. I told him that I had letters to the commanding officer in the regiment lately staying in Halifax, and that I expected

through his means to obtain employment at Ottawa. Now, however, I must give up hopes of that, and should feel much obliged if he, Mr. Enson, would recommend me to any kind of employment where I could obtain board and some remuneration, no matter how small.

He scanned me over, and asked what I could do; and after I had recapitulated the slender list of my acquirements, his countenance assumed a doubtful expression, which seemed to me not to forebode a successful *dénouement.*

At last he said, "Your best plan is to wait in some boarding-house in the town until I can write on your behalf, and get answers from any one in want of assistance on a farm." He then gave me the address of a boarding-house, and told me to come to see him from time to time.

I stayed in Halifax ten days, and had plenty of time to look around. The most noticeable feature of Halifax is its harbour, said to be the finest in the world, and capable of accommodating the existing navies of all the nations upon earth. The shipping trade of Halifax is very considerable, and besides which are manufactures of importance, particularly in tweeds and cloths; also sugar refineries, manufactories of skates, and local industries of every kind. I did not find any demand for my services

in the city. Trade was then slack, I was told. It always is to any one who wants anything to do by which he can earn a maintenance.

The streets in Halifax are narrow compared with other cities in America I have since seen, but there are some fine buildings, including the Opera House, Assembly Rooms, General Post Office, and many fine churches of various denominations.

On the tenth day after my arrival, I was informed by my friend that he had found me something to do on a farm, and he gave me letters to a farmer in the Vale of Annapolis, Nova Scotia, and I was told to proceed to my destination the next day. This I accordingly did, and I had my first ride on a Canadian railroad. The railroads in Canada are similar to those of the States, all on the broad-gauge system, seats on each side of the car, with a passage down the middle, and each car about sixty feet in length.

The scenery on each side of the railway was very picturesque. I had seen nothing like it in England, the part of England I had come from being mostly flat and uninteresting. Like many other Englishmen, I knew very little of my own country, never having visited the beautiful portions.

I beheld for the first time in my life scenery of the most charming description. Numerous small lakes dotted about the landscape, the slopes of the distant hills covered with spruce and pine woods, here and there in the valleys large solitary oaks, the neat villages with their Swiss-like wooden houses glistening in the radiant sunshine, made a picture which delighted me beyond measure, as I had primarily formed only gloomy impressions of the place I was bound for.

After a journey of about seventy-five miles, I arrived at my halting place, Kentville. This place is the capital of King's County, Nova Scotia. It consists of a large main street with three or four side streets, with town hall, bank, post office, many churches, good stores, and several handsome private residences, mostly built of wood.

I asked to be directed to Mr. Branscombe, and was informed he lived seven miles off, and my informant, having a buggy, offered to drive me over for two dollars. This offer I at once accepted, and jumped on the vehicle, and we started off at rather a brisk pace. We soon found our progress impeded by the state of the roads. The frost had broken up, and the snow had entirely disappeared, leaving behind a quantity of soft red clay, into which every here

and there the wheels of the car sank a foot or two. On each side of the road were pine woods, with alternate clearings of some hundreds of acres, in which were situated farm-houses and buildings.

Having arrived at Mr. Branscombe's house, and settled with the driver, I was cordially welcomed by Mrs. Branscombe and her son and daughter, Mr. Branscombe being away from home. Tea being about to be served, I was at once requested to make myself at home, which I was nothing loth to do. Of course I had previously presented my letters of introduction, but these remained unopened, as it appeared that Mr. Branscombe had received the morning before a letter from my friend, so that my presence was not altogether unexpected.

Mr. Branscombe, jun., was a young man about my own age, and he informed me in the course of conversation that he was going to a dance that evening. Would I like to go? Nothing, I considered, could please me better, and so I told him. So at 7 p.m. we performed our toilettes, and started to the scene of festivity, which was to take place at a farmhouse a quarter of a mile distant.

On our arrival, Mr. Abel Branscombe introduced me to Mr. Morson and his wife,

our host and hostess for the evening; and subsequently I made the acquaintance of the four daughters, whose ages, I should judge, ranged between fifteen and twenty-two. The eldest of the quartette took my fancy most. She was rather tall and fair, and would have been good looking but for the freckles which marred an otherwise fair complexion. I immediately asked her to dance the first dance with me, and was much disappointed to learn that she was engaged already for that dance to a fat young man who was sitting near the door, and whom she indicated to me by a peculiar jerk of her left thumb over her shoulder. I was rather consoled by being informed I could have the second dance with her, and her third sister here stepped forward, and I at once secured this fair maiden of sweet seventeen for my partner.

With her I danced two dances, the quadrilles and lancers, during the course of which she informed me that her eldest sister was engaged to be married to the fat young man she was dancing with. I immediately abandoned all intention of falling in love with the eldest, who was by far the best looking of the bunch; but I could not help thinking it lamentable that any woman of ordinary attractions could admire an animated

meal-tub, for that is what the fortunate lover most resembled.

All the dances being of the square and demure kind, I had no opportunity of displaying my brilliant valse and polka performances.

The piano was conspicuous by its absence, and its place was supplied by two fiddles, played very energetically by two farmers, who had volunteered for the occasion. It appeared that no English pianos were imported, and only Canadian pianos were used. These instruments fetched enormous prices, about three times as much as an English piano of the same quality could be purchased for in England, and conseqently these instruments were only found amongst the homes of the well-to-do. Five hundred dollars or more was a consideration, even to the richer class of farmers, and those not as well off were content with fiddles and flutes.

As I began to feel myself as much at home as if I had lived all my life in Nova Scotia, I went up to one of the fiddlers, and proposed relieving him of his fiddle, so that the said fiddler could join in the dancing. This proposition was declined with a profusion of thanks, though a suggestion of thirst was hinted at by the second fiddler.

I thereupon, acting on the hint thrown out, went to the far end of the room, at which was a table, containing bottles, jugs, and glasses. I filled a couple of tumblers with a liquid I thought was stout, and taking them to the fiddlers they drank both glasses dry. Coming back to the table I poured out a glass for myself. No sooner had I taken a good draught of the mixture than all my feelings of sea sickness returned. I had only just time to get outside the door into the open. Abel Branscombe, who saw my predicament, rushed out after me. The mixture which I had mistaken for English stout proved to have been a concoction of molasses and barley-water, such as is used amongst harvestmen who are teetotalers. It is wholesome and palatable enough for anyone on service in the fields; but my surprise at the taste, which was quite new to me, caused a temporary feeling of nausea which subsided as soon as I understood from Abel Branscombe what it was I had been tasting.

On coming in again, we thought it advisable to return home; and, thanking our host and hostess for the pleasant evening, in a short time we were back again at Mr. Branscombe's, in bed and asleep.

The next morning, Mr. Branscombe, sen., came home, and I was introduced to him. He was a man about the middle height, and probably about fifty years of age, with intelligent aspect and pleasant manners. Besides farming, he occupied himself extensively in literary pursuits, was a member of the Legislative Council, and president of various local associations.

He frankly informed me that the best class of farmers in Nova Scotia only employed experienced men on their farms, and did not take apprentices, unless they paid for their board and washing expenses for about two years, at the end of which time their services were considered worth payment. "You might," said he, "get a place on a small farm, where the owner worked it alone mostly, and perhaps he would take you for the work he could get from you; but I do not recommend this course. It would be more to your advantage to be under a good instructor, where all branches of farming are practised in a proper manner. You cannot do our work until you have had instruction and practice. What little you may have learned on your father's property in England may be useful; but we have our own system of farming here, which is quite different from what you are

accustomed to in England, if I may judge from other young men I have come across from that country."

These remarks rather damped my ardour. I had been informed in England that any one having a pair of hands would find immediate employment at good wages in any part of America, and I was totally unprepared to be looked upon as a surplus commodity.

"Well," said I, after a pause, "I suppose I can do something to earn a living?"

"Oh, certainly," answered he. "All our leading men have been workers in their youth, without exception. In fact, we think nothing of a man who cannot and does not work. At the same time, I must candidly tell you that you stand at a disadvantage in this province, as compared with other young men of your age, in being a stranger. Those born in the province know by intuition its ways and habits, and you have all this to learn, and you may not be able to fit yourself to what you are unaccustomed to. Still, you may do so, and I will give you every help. As my son Abel is about your age, I do not want both of you on this farm, but you are welcome to stay on a few weeks if you think proper, until I can look about and make inquiries on your behalf."

I thanked him very much for his offer, and went out to Abel, who took me round the farm, and it was not long before I got some carpentry work to try my hand on.

I found Abel, my companion, to be very well educated, and capable of doing anything in the way of carpentry, and well acquainted with machinery and its uses. I derived several useful hints from him as to the proper use of the different machines I saw about the farm.

After the lapse of three weeks, Mr. Branscombe, in accordance with his promise, obtained employment for me on a farm, distant about twelve miles, and to this farm he accordingly drove me over.

The owner, Mr. Stella, was at home, and received me most kindly. He agreed for me to remain on his farm to learn the whole details of farming, and I was to give my services in exchange for my board. I then said good-bye to Mr. Branscombe, promising to write and let him know how I got on. He gave me a cordial invitation to come over and see him any time I could.

I was next introduced to Mrs. Stella and her two daughters, one eighteen and the other ten years of age. They were all three very good-looking, with light brown hair and blue

eyes, rather tall and of a type of beauty peculiar to Nova Scotia, which province is rather famed for the beauty of its women.

The farm house was a frame one, each separate frame-piece being match-boarded into its neighbour, the whole being thickly painted a light grey colour, giving the house the appearance of being built of stone. To each window were green Venetian shutters. Joined on to the house was a large carpenter's shop and timber-house, also of frame.

The Nova Scotia timber is of a very durable and tough nature, forming an excellent material for houses, and, when match-boarded, and lined is quite impervious to damp and very warm.

In front of the house was a verandah painted green. This looked on to the orchard, which encompassed the house on two sides.

The house contained a spacious hall with drawing, dining, and morning rooms, and domestic offices on the ground floor; and upstairs were five bedrooms and a dressing-room. There were also some other rooms over the carpenter's shop. The place was very comfortably and luxuriously furnished, and gave one that impression of well-to-doism which English people so much appreciate.

The country in which this farm was situated was one of the most celebrated in Nova Scotia for its fruit growing. The orchard in front of the house was twelve acres in extent, and was planted with an infinite variety of apples, pears, and plums.

The Nova Scotia fruit has long been known in Europe, but it has had the disadvantage of not having been imported into Europe in its own name, but as American. In fact, the fruit-growers in Nova Scotia did not have the credit of their productions until the opening of the Colonial Exhibition at South Kensington, London, when the magnificent show of fruit from Nova Scotia opened the eyes of the world to the fruit-producing powers of that province, while the size of the apples and pears was something remarkable. As to the flavour, it was unequalled, and this may be due, not only to the talent and industry of the growers, but also to the semi-insular position of the province.

To resume. The stables, barns, and pig-sties were in the rear of the house. There was accommodation for sixty head of cattle in the cattle stable, and in the horse stable room for six horses. Further on were the sheep-pens, pig-sties and implement sheds, also open sheds

for wagons; and past the gate leading into the stable yard, on the far side from the house, was the cottage of the hired man, where he lived with his wife and two children.

It was not long after my arrival before I started on work, and my first business was to go down into the cellar and sort apples. Mr. Stella was a large exporter of this fruit. Thousands of barrels used to go yearly from this district to Europe, and the demand was constantly on the increase. I carefully separated the apples into three heaps, the last being for those which were partially rotten, and such were reserved for consumption by the pigs. After finishing this I was shown what I should have to do next day, and as it was already late, I retired to my room, which I found as comfortable and as well fitted up as a room in any respectable household in England.

The next morning the eldest son came back home. He had been on what is called a "building bee"—helping a neighbour to put up a barn.

This practice is common throughout the Canadian Dominion. When a farmer requires building erections he calls a bee, which means an assemblage of all the farmers in the neighbourhood. Each one agrees to give so much time and labour, either by himself or by deputy, to effect the desired object. The labour

thus given is considered a debt against the farmer requiring it, and the farmer indebted in this way returns the obligation when opportunity occurs.

As soon as young Stella came back, my first initiation into farming in Nova Scotia commenced. The fences had to be renovated. So Mr. Stella and his son, myself and the hired man, went down to the flats to start the fencing.

The poles for fencing were all obtained from neighbouring bushland, and were sliced into proper lengths by a sawing machine. We had a kind of drill for making the holes for the posts. We continued three days at this work, and it was surprising the amount of progress we made. Still more surprising was the appetite I found myself with every-day as soon as twelve o'clock came, which was our dinner-hour.

At six o'clock we left off, and Stella, jun., and myself then attended to the horses, cleaning them down and strewing fresh straw for them to lie upon. After this performance I would frequently write letters to people at home, as this was the only time I had to myself.

On Sunday I had nothing to do but go to church. The hired man on that day always attended to the horses and cattle. The church was situated three miles off. Abel and myself,

having harnessed the horses to the double-seated democrat wagon, Mr. Stella, with his wife and daughters, took their seats in front, and we two then jumped up behind. We proceeded at a brisk trot to the church.

I was agreeably surprised with the church, finding it a good-sized construction, built of wood, and with pews and everything on a similar principle to what I had been accustomed to at home. The interior of the church was considerably larger than our church at Mewby. Outside the church were sheds to accommodate horses and vehicles coming in from a distance.

The service was conducted by an Englishman; but certain circumstances prevented me from giving as much attention to the service as I otherwise should. The eldest daughter of Mr. Stella met her cousin, a young lady of eighteen, at the church, and these two sat in the same pew that I did.

Whilst I was attentively listening to the sermon, I felt an unpleasant probing sensation, first in the calf of my leg, then in my thigh, but was unable to discover the cause of it, though several times I turned round. At last I detected it. The young lady's cousin was taking a lesson in natural history at my expense. She had a parasol at the end of which was a pin, and this

pin she directed to tender parts of my leg and thigh whilst I was trying to listen to the discourse. I shifted about in my seat much to the astonishment of the clergyman, whom I saw looking at me from time to time with a horrified expression of countenance.

After church I was introduced to several of the neighbours from surrounding farms and the neighbouring town.

As Mr. Stella and Abel required to stay behind to take the opportunity of speaking to some friends who had come from a distance, it was arranged that I should drive the ladies home first, so that they could attend to their domestic matters. I was then to drive back and meet Mr. Stella and Abel.

I noticed some young gentlemen from the school hanging round the shed, and they were extremely attentive and polite in bringing out the democrat wagon and fixing the harness. I thought how very different would be the conduct of the boys at Mewby, England, towards a stranger similarly situated as I was. I was much touched with their consideration and thanked them most heartily.

The horse evidently knew its way home, and went off much faster than I had intended him to go; and the more I pulled the faster seemed to

be his pace, until he bumped us over some very rutty ground which I had wanted to avoid, but somehow could not. I had noticed that the reins seemed unusually short, and, stooping forward, saw that they had been carried through the rings of the harness and fastened to the shafts. This was the trick my polite young friends had played me; so at the risk of tumbling over I had to let myself out at the back of the wagon, run with all my might to the front of the horse, stop him, and re-adjust the harness. This incident created great laughter that day at dinner, and I got considerably chaffed over it.

CHAPTER IV.

LIFE ON A FARM IN NOVA SCOTIA (CONTINUED MY CRICKETING TOUR—FALLING IN LOVE, AND SOME CONSEQUENCES ARISING THEREFROM.

ONE of the principal crops of this part of Nova Scotia is the potato, and the next day we had to load the wagons with potatoes for cropping. The cellars underneath the house and stables were of an enormous size, capable of holding immense stores of all kinds. From these cellars we brought up the potatoes in bushel baskets. As soon as we had filled the wagons we took the potatoes to the fields where the planting was to take place. I did my share of the ploughing, and managed the plough so well that I was praised by Mr. Stella. I ploughed with horses, but Abel had oxen.

The harrowing which came afterwards was performed in a similar manner to that on an

English farm, but the planting and tending potatoes was done in a much quicker and more methodical manner than what I had been accustomed to see in the old country. A furrow is ploughed the length of the field, and a man having a basket strapped on his shoulder, containing seed, walks behind, dropping the seed a foot and a half apart. The furrow in which they were planted then became covered by ploughing the next furrow. We planted about twenty-six acres in this way.

Later on, when the potatoes were coming up, we worked the cultivator in between each row of potatoes. The cultivator is an instrument, with three or four long teeth, drawn by one horse, and worked in between each row of potatoes to clean it of weeds; then came the banker, an instrument for scraping the earth to each side of the row, thus banking up the plants. After this was done, the hoeing in between each plant is accomplished. This is performed by hand labour, or, more properly, arm labour. How my arms did ache over this monotonous occupation; but I soon got used to it, and would have many a race with Abel and George, the hired man, to see which would get to the end of the line first; sometimes one would get a start, and sometimes another, only to lose it

the next minute; and thus would pass away our day until evening came, when we had the milking to do and the fixing up the horses and cattle for the night. We would rise in the morning at 5.30, and I would groom the horses and fix the stables before breakfast. George generally did the milking. Sometimes this fell to my lot, if anything transpired to call George off.

The first day I did milking, being quite a novice, I made but slow progress. Abel and the hired man milked two cows, and were each starting on their third, before I had accomplished one. Fortunately the cow stood still, but I was not destined to succeed. The barn floor rose up and hit the cow, the cow switched her tail in my face, half blinding me, and kicked over the pail. Here was a laugh, and I saw my companion Abel had been teasing the cow with a straw, which made her suddenly move and tread on a loose board. These little incidents became less frequent as I got accustomed to the work, and I never felt in better health or better spirits in my life than during that period of my existence.

One Sunday afternoon Miss Stella was entertaining some friends in the drawing-room. I happened to be sitting in the verandah, and I could hear giggling going forward to a great

extent. I was curious to know its cause. The French windows were open, and I looked in. There I beheld a pair of the boots I had bought at Renton being exhibited and passed round as great curiosities, and as specimens of what English people wore on their feet. One of the young ladies suggested that the shining things on the soles were half-cent pieces, which were glued to the soles, because the English had no pockets to put them in. I never had been able to wear these Renton boots. No person in the Canadian Dominion wears such. They would be considered too ridiculous. The consequence is, you see the agricultural population in Nova Scotia with calves to their legs, and walking about like ordinary human beings.

Round the agricultural districts of England, to which I had been accustomed, and in which Mewby and Renton were situated, you see, on the contrary, the labourers slouching, along and dragging their lower extremities after them by painful movements from their thighs. Few labourers at Mewby, England, had any calves to their legs. An amputated leg from a Mewby labourer, together with its booted foot, would much resemble one of the big mallets of the railway navvies, straight all the way down, with a shapeless lump at the end to represent a foot.

I mentioned going down to the flats. These flats are termed "intervale" land, and represent land which has been rescued from the sea. In many portions of the coast of Nova Scotia the sea has been receding; but the farmers hasten its retrocession by forming dykes and mud walls. Thousands of acres have been reclaimed in this way, and the land so reclaimed has surprising fertility, and is probably some of the richest in the world. Mr. Stella owned a considerable stretch of this valuable intervale land. Most of this was set apart for hay. This particular land had been reclaimed from the Minas basin many years before. What astonished me was the immense crop of hay obtained from it—as much as three and four tons to the acre—which was more than double the average yield of the farms belonging to my father.

It was great amusement getting the hay stored into the barns. We had a hay fork which, when set into the hay on the wagon and worked with a horse and long rope, would lift the entire load off the wagon in about five forks full. We got all the hay in without any mishap, and then started on cutting the oats and shearing sheep.

We took the sheep down to the Minas basin about half-mile distant from the house, in wagons, fifteen sheep being in each wagon, and proceeded

to wash them. I soon learned the art of holding the sheep up by the head and squeezing the wool to clean it. When cleaned the sheep were all put into a very clean barn, and the shearing commenced the next day.

Shearing being a more elaborate process than washing, I did the catching, leaving the science to be performed by the son; but the last one I was left to do myself, and I scraped it and hacked it in great style, poor sheep! but I suppose it was converted into mutton in due course, notwithstanding.

I had by this time become quite used to life on this farm in Nova Scotia. For the information of my readers I will just detail how our time was employed.

In September, we did ditching and draining, and improving rough land, clearing off brush land, and also some ploughing of land that had been in grain. October was our month for harvesting potatoes and turnips and roots of all kinds. Then we gathered all the fruit, and all this was accomplished by the 1st of November. As soon as ever the roots were up, we did as much ploughing as we could where the roots had been, and also of greensward for next season. The ground generally freezes up in the latter end of November; but the weather continued favourable for hauling produce to

market until Christmas. Soon after the 1st of November the cattle had to be fed and stabled in the barns, as the nights were then cold. Just before Christmas the snow fell deep. We were then able to use sleds for teaming, and sleighs for riding. This was very enjoyable, as we could go much longer distances in a shorter time. In January we went to the bush for our fuel and fencing. We used sleds, and could easily bring along immense loads of timber, wood, and fuel, material for fencing, and lumber generally. The whole of February and March were occupied in much the same manner, varied by occasional drives out and sleighing.

The winter broke up on the 31st March, and April is the most unpleasant month in the whole year, the roads being in a bad state. Still, if possible, towards the latter end of that month farmers plant and sow. That was the time we always began, though others did not begin until the 1st of May.

Taking the climate of Nova Scotia all through, I found it remarkably healthy and decidedly milder than the mainland.

The many favourable features of the country would have decided me to have spent the whole of my life there had not circumstances occurred which altered my intention.

Although working hard, we were not without our amusements. We had musical evenings at the farm, and others at the neighbours' houses, and occasional dances, where I made the acquaintance of several pretty girls. The skating rink at Wolfville was a great source of recreation, and we would have skating quadrilles. The young ladies were all good skaters. Then Abel and I used to get plenty of good shooting. Lawn tennis had not made its way into this part of Nova Scotia; but cricket was highly popular.

Now, I had been captain of our local club at Mewby, and was considered a good bowler and a fair bat. It was not long before this accomplishment became known, as I took good care not to keep my candle under a bushel, and this led to my being asked to join an eleven. I had unfortunately met with a slight accident. One part of my daily duties was to collect the eggs, and the fowls having made their nests over the barn floor in the straw, in treading over the poles which supported the straw I fell between the poles on to a fanning mill, an apparatus used for fanning and cleaning grain after it has been threshed. I struck my side so heavily that I rebounded like a ball, and fell to the ground. On trying to get up, I found that I had hurt my leg and side, and could hardly breathe.

After the lapse of a minute or two, the shock to my system subsided, and I was enabled to drag myself to the house, where Mrs. Stella allowed me a sofa in the morning-room to lie down upon. The next morning I could not get up; but after applications of spirits of hartshorn and other remedies, which brought out the bruises, I found I could get down stairs. For a few days I was confined to the house.

It was during this interval of enforced leisure that I met some cricketers of the neighbourhood, and received an invitation to play in a match on behalf of the Wolfville Cricket Club. I found my leg considerably better, so I accepted. Yet I still suffered somewhat from the results of my accident, and I only made "ducks' eggs" in this my first effort at cricket in Nova Scotia. Nevertheless they could see I knew how to play, and I subsequently took part in various other matches with the same club, and, being then in much better form, did considerably better. One match was against Canning, a return match against Kentville, and a match against Halifax. I next had an invitation from the Kentville Club to play cricket for them on a tour, and, after consulting Mr. Stella on the subject, I accepted.

I joined the club at Kentville on a Monday morning, and we left for Annapolis, a place

which derives its name from the lovely valley in which it is situated. This is the centre of a rich agricultural district well known for its fruit, and has a mild, delicious climate. We took the steamer from thence to Digby, where the match was to take place on the following day. We were met by several of the members of the club, and conducted to the leading hotel.

The next day we played the Digby Club, and beat them easily. This looked well as a beginning. On Wednesday, we again started on our journey, and arrived at Yarmouth that evening, where we were most hospitably received by the Yarmouth Club and townspeople. The Yarmouth Club had some good men in it, and the odds appeared considerably against us; but after a well-fought game, we eventually came off conquerors, thus winning three games in succession against different clubs.

We had a large number of well-dressed spectators to see us play this match, and several gentlemen came up after it was over and shook hands with us. Amongst those who did so was Col. Julius Adair, of the United States Army, who had come over to Yarmouth in his yacht from Boston, and was accompanied by a young lady, whom I afterwards discovered was his daughter.

The Colonel complimented me on the way in which I had delivered a certain ball, which had bowled out the captain of the Yarmouth Cricket Club. On finding out that I was an Englishman, he produced his card. "I have seen your countrymen play cricket at Lord's against our crack team, and shall be happy to have a chat with you on the subject of cricket. Come over to my hotel and see us, if you have nothing better to do this evening. I put up at the Lorne House." He then introduced me to his daughter, Miss Adair, who thereupon bowed and smiled after the manner of young ladies in general, and made some kind of general remark in a pleasant musical tone of voice. I was immensely struck by her grace of manner and ease of deportment, being totally unprepared to encounter the mirthful twinkle of two lovely hazel eyes shining from a countenance of more than ordinary beauty. Much to my disgust, I found myself blushing to the roots of my hair. I neither heard clearly what was said to me, nor did I frame any intelligible answer. I clasped tightly the Colonel's card, and in bidding them adieu vainly endeavoured to lift my cricketing cap from my head by the nob in its centre, so as to make an elaborate bow befitting the occasion. It would not do. Heated as I then was from the exercise

I had gone through, the cap stuck on my head with persistent determination, and in backing to complete my bow, I struck against the corner of the table which the tent contained. The Colonel's usually composed and somewhat stern features relaxed into a smile, while Miss Adair indulged in a little silvery laugh, and, gathering together the skirts of an elegantly fitting robe, sailed out of the tent on her father's arm.

"Don't you forget your appointment, Mr. Ashford," said she, as she smilingly turned her head half-way towards me as they went out.

I made a kind of unintelligible grunt, which might have meant anything, something between a squeak and a bark it must have sounded.

"Charlie," thought I to myself, "you are a stupid ass. Why don't you pull yourself together and not be such a fool?"

It was fortunate for me that the members of the Yarmouth Cricket Club and Kentville Cricket Club did not observe this little incident, or I might have been chaffed unmercifully.

Just as my newly-found acquaintances had departed, the captain of the Yarmouth Cricket Club came up to me, and, linking his arm with mine, told me the dinner was to take place at the Town Hall in our honour. This compliment was passed us by the townspeople, and thither

we went. Such a dinner! about twelve courses. The American hotel had lent their French cook for the occasion, and he turned out the most delicious game soup. I never tasted soup equal to it before or since.

I had my health drank specially, as the only born Englishman present, and the speech I made in answer was something worth listening to. It came forth quite on the spur of the moment; and I enlarged on the merits, not only of cricket, but of affairs in general, in such a strain of fervid eloquence, that the house was literally brought down.

Dinner being over, we had several songs, and one of our club sang an Indian song such as the primeval Indians of Nova Scotia used to sing. This was vociferously applauded. I was not a very good judge of Indian melodies, but I have no doubt the song in question was a very fine one, of an extremely sentimental character. I applauded along with the others, but my reason for doing so was because I was glad it had come to an end. It had thirteen verses, and sounded to me like this:—"Tumpty tum tum te, Tumpty tum tum, Tumpty tum tum te, Tumpty tum tum."

Nothing would do but they must make me sing; so I sang a comic variation of "Johnnie

comes marching home," with a mixed chorus of my own composition.

I then suddenly recollected my appointment, and made an excuse to depart. All my nervousness had fled. I felt like an experienced man of the world when I mounted the stairs of Lorne House. The Colonel's rooms, and those occupied by his daughter, were on the first and second floors, being the best apartments in the building. I was ushered into their presence by a negro waiter, the latest novelty of the "Lorne House." I stepped forward with the same gaiety of manner which had distinguished me during the dinner, and the Colonel and his daughter received me smilingly.

I had a vivid and painful remembrance of my last interview with them; and, thinking what a booby I must have appeared in their eyes, I did my best to efface the impression which I felt sure I must have created, by plunging into a variety of topics of conversation, including, of course, cricket.

I found the Colonel a man of great experience and information; and as to his daughter, she seemed to be able to converse on any subject. The Colonel was very much surprised to find that I had never visited London, and his daughter equally so. I found they had an im-

pression that every Englishman must be more or less of a Londoner.

"London," said Miss Adair, "is a delightful place to visit. We stayed at the Grand Hotel, and you really get everything there quite equal to our places in Boston and New York—in fact I do really think we have something yet to learn from your folks. Then, again, your opera house is nearly as good as the one in Paris, and you have one or two nice little theatres, quite equal to some of our New York theatres."

I found all our places of entertainment were contrasted with others in Paris, Vienna, Berlin, or other European cities, and, as frequently as not, to our disadvantage; and the Colonel gave me the benefit of such a fund of information about my own native land that I felt myself lapsing again into the booby state.

At last I said, "Did you stay at all at Leamington?"

"Yes," said the Colonel. "We put up at the Regent's Hotel, and we had a trap from there to Shakespeare's birthplace, at Stratford-on-Avon."

Now here was I, an Englishman, unacquainted with the fact that Shakespeare's birthplace was within a drive of Leamington; but I discreetly kept my ignorance to myself.

My next question was rather a poser to the Colonel. "Did you drive to Mewby?" said I, innocently.

"Mewby!" said the Colonel. "How do you spell it? M—u—b—y?" taking out his note book.

"No. M—e—w—b—y."

"We did not go there," said the Colonel.

"Ah!" said I, "you missed a fine piece of Dutch scenery." It was now my turn. I drew such a picture of Mewby, its locality, and Renton and the life there, that I quite interested Miss Adair in the district.

"Oh, Papa, we must really go there next time we go to England," said she.

"If you do," said I, with a slightly important air, "you must go and see my father, who is Rector of Mewby. He would be very pleased to see you, if you only mention my name."

"Is that so?" said the Colonel. "Then we must go next year. It is too late to go this. By the way, what is a rector? I have heard the expression before, but I cannot call to mind its meaning. I know what a vicar is."

"A rector is a man who takes the great tithes," said I, rather hurriedly. I never anticipated having to explain the meaning of such a term as rector; a term which everyone in England knows

the meaning of. "A rector is, in fact, the holder of ecclesiastical property."

"A sort of perpetual Senator," suggested Miss Adair.

"Not exactly a Senator, as a rector is most often a clergyman."

"Who appoints him?" said the Colonel.

"Well, he appoints himself; that is, in some cases, but it depends on various circumstances. Sometimes it is the Bishop, and in others one of the Universities, or some private patron who has the presentation."

I here endeavoured to sketch our advowson system in the English Church.

"Ah, I see," said the Colonel, yawning; "one of your old feudal relics. There is no feudalism about me. Some of our Boston people are very great on grandfathers. I never had one, as far as I know. My father died when I was eight years of age, and my mother before then. I have a very dim recollection of both. The orphan school authorities were my real parents."

"Oh, Pa, you should not tell everybody that," said Miss Adair.

Here came in the same negro servant who had ushered me in, and he bore a large tray containing iced temperance drinks and various condiments. The Colonel was a strict teetotaler.

"Lena," said the Colonel to his daughter, "Mr. Ashford will, no doubt, oblige us with a song if you will play his accompaniment; or, perhaps," turning to me, "you like to sing without any accompaniment?"

I deprecated singing altogether, and entreated Miss Adair to sing, which she did without any trace of affectation, and her song was a selection from "Il Trovatore." Her notes were clear and thrilling, and for the moment I seemed to be carried completely out of myself. It was with the greatest difficulty I could prevent myself from shaking Miss Adair's hand as she rose from the instrument. I restrained myself, however, and being asked to sing, both by the Colonel and his daughter, I selected a song which I had been taught at Renton, and Miss Adair improvised an accompaniment. I don't think I ever sang better. I threw my whole being into the song, which was one of hopeless love, and I caught Miss Adair's penetrating glance as I touched upon one or two passages of more than unwonted fervour.

I do not think the Colonel paid much attention to the words of the song. He congratulated me warmly on the vigour and power of my voice, but it never entered into his mind that I had fallen in love with his pretty daughter, whom I

had only seen on two occasions. Such, however, was the case, incredible as it may appear, and quite as remarkable was the fact that Miss Adair understood that I was in love with her, my endeavours to conceal my infatuation from her having been in vain.

I bid them adieu, and Lena came with me to the outer door. I ventured, in parting, to slightly press the young lady's hand, but met with neither response nor encouragement.

I now felt afraid that I had been quite too premature in making advances to a young lady of wealth and refinement, who was to me an almost perfect stranger. I inwardly cursed my stupid blindness and precipitancy, and, moreover, felt humbled by the consideration that I really had no position and prospects to offer even should I be successful in my contemplated suit.

When Miss Adair bid me good-bye, she said nothing more about her father being glad to see me again, and it seemed to me almost as if our acquaintance had now terminated.

I turned into the main street of Yarmouth with feelings of the most tumultuous kind, and in my absence of mind walked past the place of my destination, the American House, and was close on the railroad depôt before I discovered

my mistake. Of course I had to retrace my steps, and I turned into a glove store which happened to be open, and bought a pair of white kid gloves, which cost me a dollar and a quarter. I could have got a similar pair for half-a-crown in England. Although Nova Scotia is a remarkably cheap place for living in generally, one has to pay heavily for *articles de luxe*, such as kid gloves, and you must put up with just the colour they choose to give you. White was the only colour they had. Having done this I entered the American House, and walked into the smoking room. There I saw all the boys assembled. There was a ball the next evening, and invitations to it had been sent to the Colonel and his daughter, together with all the principal people.

I found the Colonel to be well known in Yarmouth. He was in the lumber trade, and frequently visited Nova Scotia on business connected with that trade. He was reported to be a very rich man. On this occasion he had come across from Boston on a pleasure trip in his yacht. I did not venture to say a word about Lena, but one of the boys volunteered me the information that she was as proud as she was handsome. I said nothing in reply; I thought how many mistakes human

beings fall into in estimating each other's characters.

I was glad enough when the time arrived for retiring to rest, but yet I tossed about unable to close my eyes. I had about me that vague, uneasy sensation of foreboding evil.

The next day I spent a good deal of time in parading the main street in Yarmouth, thinking I might see my love. I did not consider it good form to call at Lorne House.

I was beginning to know by heart all the different stores when I perceived her approaching. She had with her a swarthy stranger of about the middle height, who looked as though he had come from some southern clime. She quickly espied me, and bringing on the American, for such he turned out to be, we met about midway between the Lorne and American House. She immediately introduced me to Mr. Freestone, this being his name, as one of the gentlemen who had played in the match, and who was also on the Ball Committee.

"Your committee might as well have sent me an invitation," said Mr. Freestone. "One wants something to do in this dull hole of a place."

"You can easily manage to get an invitation," said I. "If you step into the American House

and give your name and address, some of the committee are now there, and they will include your name in the invitations."

"Thanks," said he, "we will go and see." Turning to Miss Adair, "Would you mind waiting outside?"

He then went into the American House, leaving myself and the object of my affections standing outside.

It struck me Miss Adair was offended at the cool way she was asked to wait, so I suggested a stroll, and, Miss Adair having concurred, I neither knew nor cared what the American might think at finding us gone from the spot when he had finished his inquiries at the American House.

We went towards the railroad depôt together, and on arriving there found it deserted, as the time for the arrival and departure of the cars had passed.

I now had the opportunity I desired. After a little preliminary conversation, I said: "Miss Adair, though I have only known you so short a time, I have a question to put to you which I must crave pardon for asking you. My excuse is that it is a matter which concerns my future happiness—in short, Miss Adair, are you engaged to be married to Mr. Freestone?"

"Sir!" said she, "have you brought me here to question me on what concerns only myself? I must decline to answer this impertinent inquiry."

"Miss Adair," said I, "it is from no motive of impertinence that I put this question. I love you deeply and truly, as I can never again love any woman. Pardon me for this disclosure, but I am not master of myself. Unless I can obtain your love I am a lost being. Oh, Lena! spurn not my affection. Command me to kill myself and I will readily do it."

What more I may have said I do not recollect, but Lena Adair was visibly affected, and turned away her head.

"You are a comparative stranger to both my father and myself," said she; "and a declaration such as you have made is so sudden, and so premature, that I really hardly know how to reply. I will tell you this: although to all appearance engaged to Mr. Freestone, I have no intention of marrying him, nor have I any intention of marrying anyone. You are very young, and you will think better of this in the course of a few days. I will say nothing to anyone about your imprudence, and you will have the opportunity of recalling your words, which I have no doubt you will be very glad to do, after you have had sufficient time to reflect. Come,

let us change the subject, leave this depôt, and go back home."

These words acted like a cold douche on my excitable temperament, and I could only accompany Lena out of the depôt with a helpless obedience, hardly being able to control my voice owing to the propensity to weep which I suffered from.

"After all," thought I, "she is not engaged to that dark fellow. There is hope for me yet."

Then I reflected on my very poor prospects in life, and how ever I could face the Colonel with nothing to show by way of accomplishment—no position, no money, not much more than the clothes I stood up in. Was I insane? The Colonel would laugh at me. It is truly generous of Lena Adair to keep my secret. I with such a hopeless position, to aspire to her was too absurd.

In the meantime, Freestone, who had applied for an invitation for the ball at the American House, was kept waiting in the smoking-room until the clerk could get one from the committee, and he came back after considerable delay with a message that they could issue no more gentlemen's single invitations, but that the Ladies Committee, if they thought proper, could invite a lady and gentleman.

"Invitation or not," said Freestone, "I mean to go to this blessed ball. I could buy the whole of this blessed little place up, and make a cabbage garden of it. You get an invitation for me, and bring it round to me, that's what you've got to do, and here is a ten-dollar bill. I cannot wait here any longer. You bring it or send it round."

"All right, General," said the clerk, who became at once the pattern of politeness. "I will see to it. You can rely upon me."

It may here be mentioned that great rivalry existed between the Lorne and American Houses, each claiming to be the principal hotel in the place, and the clerk had been indignant at Colonel Adair's persistent patronage of the other establishment; but the ten-dollar bill evoked a sudden gush of sympathy for the liberal stranger-friend of Colonel Adair's who was capable of such lavish expenditure.

I left Lena at the door of the Lorne House, and seeing Freestone in the distance lounging along to the same point, I evaded him by turning into a store before he observed me.

"If I am to have a row with him, I may as well have it," thought I, "in some more convenient locality than the middle of a street."

Almost as soon as I had gone into this store, Colonel Adair came along, and was joined by Freestone.

"I say, Adair," I heard Freestone say, "who is the darned pup?"

"You don't mean young Ashford?" said the Colonel.

"Aye, I do, the fellow that has gone off with your daughter."

"Gone off!" said Colonel Adair with emphasis.

Freestone, it seemed, was considerably taken aback at finding Lena inside the Lorne House when he and the Colonel arrived there together.

"Why on earth could not you have waited?" said he to Lena.

"I expect the gentleman who takes me out to wait for me; I do not expect to be kept waiting in the street by that gentleman," said Lena in a haughty tone of voice.

"There, there," said the Colonel, "at it again, 'pon my life, you two. Do shut up, pray."

Freestone had been dawdling about after Lena for nearly a year, and it had come to be understood that the two were engaged. Freestone was enormously rich. He belonged to a certain ring on the New York Exchange who were enabled to dip their hands into other people's pockets in a legal manner. Money was practi-

cally no object to him; but there was an innate vulgarity about the man which repelled Lena on the closer acquaintance which had ensued from the fact of their almost recognised engagement. At first Lena had tolerated the man out of deference to her father; but Freestone had become so utterly repulsive to her that she felt she must do something to rid herself of his odious presence, whatever might be the detriment to her father's business relations.

Her father, although a good judge of character as a rule, had failed to take the measure of Freestone's intense selfishness and love of power. Freestone was usually on his guard before the Colonel, and, moreover, the Colonel was at the present time a necessary factor in his (Freestone's) business operations. Freestone used men as tools wherever he could do so, and discarded them mercilessly when done with, like so much shot rubbish.

After the events of the morning, I sat down and wrote a letter to Mr. Stella, explaining to him that circumstances had occurred which rendered it impossible to remain any longer on the farm. I should, in all probability, be able to come and bid him good-bye, and I thanked him for all the kindness I had experienced during my stay there.

As I wrote the letter, tears came into my eyes at the idea of leaving so many friends; but I felt there was no sufficient opening there for me to gain a position which would make me worthy of such a girl as Lena; and I reasoned within myself that, if the step was to be taken, it had better be taken at once.

In looking back on this my past experience, I often think I may have been wrong in leaving a locality where I had been so happy; but youth and matured experience look at matters through different spectacles. I had about nine months' wages to draw from Mr. Stella, and I considered that sum ample to support me until I could bring my vast ability to its proper market.

In due course, I presented myself at the door of the ball-room. I was accompanied by the captain of the Kentville Cricket Club, and three or four others. We all had our respective colours in our button-holes, and wore besides a badge of blue and gold on our breasts. I forgot the exact device, but it had the appearance of a handsome military order, and I flattered myself that our *tout ensemble* was quite distinguished. I looked round amongst the ladies to see if I could find Lena, but without success.

Freestone came later on by himself, and we found ourselves in the same set. Freestone was a very good dancer. Although in his ordinary costume he would have been deemed rather heavy and clumsy, a dress suit became him admirably. He had a broad, well-developed chest, which the large white front and its massive diamond in the centre showed off to perfection. His jet black hair, carefully curled from off his somewhat low forehead, with his aquiline nose, gave him the commanding appearance of a Cæsar. He was about thirty-two years of age, of the middle height, and had evidently had a considerable experience of life; but his manners were domineering and swaggering, and it was only with an effort that he could be ordinarily polite and conceal the contempt which he entertained for most people besides himself. Towards me there was no pretence of concealment. He sneered at my dancing powers, and held me up to ridicule as a hobbledehoy to those with whom he came in contact.

I am usually a good dancer; but it so happened, in consequence of being confused and put out by this man's hated presence, I made a mistake in one of the figures, and nearly stumbled to the ground over a lady's dress. This gave him the opportunity of describing me as a blossoming

young agriculturist whose knees had been injured by the early frost. No chance occurred for me to make any retort, and, shortly after, Lena arrived with her father. Freestone at once interposed his broad form in such a way that I could not at first get to my love to shake hands; but as everything arrives to him who waits, and Freestone was engaged for the next dance to a buxom widow, I obtained the opportunity I desired of sitting by her side. I had shaken hands with the Colonel, whom I thought regarded me rather coolly, and as he remained with his daughter, I had no opportunity of saying what was uppermost in my mind. I however, after a brief salutation, was enabled to put my name on Lena's card for a dance. She was already surrounded by some half-a-dozen young cavaliers, and her card was filled amidst a great deal of laughing and joking. She turned round to me and said, "Mr. Ashford, I see you have written your name over some one's; would you like the last dance better?"

I took the card, and saw, on inspection, I had inadvertently placed my name over Freestone's. I made the correction, and thought myself lucky to get the last dance, although it was Sir Roger de Coverley, and the waltz besides.

The waltz which I had with Lena was delight-

ful. She was an exquisite dancer, and I could see Freestone scowling as we occasionally passed. He at the time was dancing with the buxom widow, and I noticed that waltzing was not his *forte*, from the number of times he was compelled to stop.

The evening came to an end, and I had my last dance with Lena, and led her to the place of refreshment. It was then that I told her of my determination to leave Nova Scotia so as to improve my position.

Lena said she would be most pleased to hear from me at any time, and promised to write to me in return; but still gave me no encouragement that I might hope to win her eventually, though she promised to let me know should she be engaged to another, at the same time informing me she intended to remain single on account of her father.

On the Monday morning I went home with the club, and arrived back again at Kentville about six in the evening, where we were welcomed as conquerors. We found a public dinner awaiting us; and, in spite of my love-sickness, I found myself able to do justice to the excellent repast.

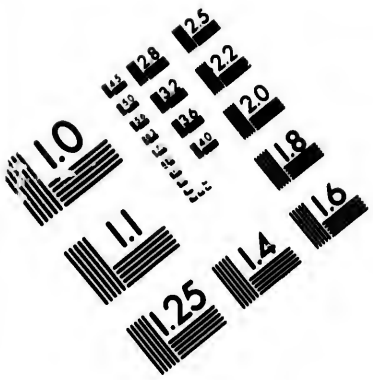
On Tuesday evening I did my packing, and my things were taken down to the depôt, and on Wednesday morning started for Halifax, *en route* for Ontario.

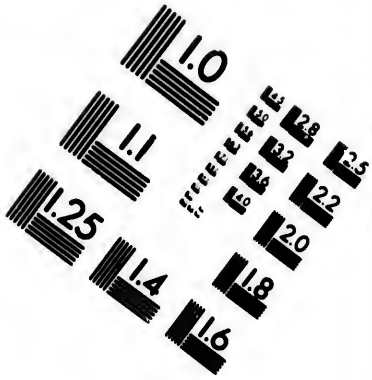
CHAPTER V.

ASKING PAPA—MY DEPARTURE FROM NOVA SCOTIA FOR ONTARIO—EXPERIENCES OF ONTARIO.

HAD heard that the Colonel's yacht was to put into Halifax Harbour on the Thursday, so I resolved to stay in that city until the evening of Friday, as I thought this would give me another opportunity of seeing Lena. I wished to ascertain clearly whether there was a chance for me or not, as I felt certain that I could never love any other woman but her.

I waited round the harbour all day Thursday, and towards six o'clock in the evening I discovered that the yacht had arrived. I made the best of my way to the landing-stage, where some men were engaged in taking off the luggage from the yacht, and stood about, thinking I should see the Colonel and his daughter come ashore. At last one of the men, who was engaged unloading packages, asked me if I wanted anything. "Only to see Colonel Adair," said I.





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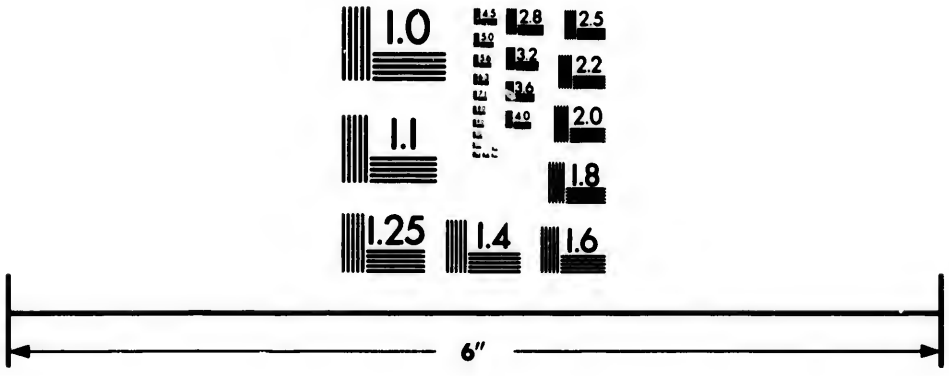

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"Oh, the Colonel and his daughter have gone to the Continental."

"Thanks." I immediately started off to the Continental, and saw the Colonel at the entrance of that hotel. He was then giving some instructions to the hotel clerk about his rooms.

"Ah, Charlie!" said he. "How do? Who would have thought of seeing you here? On another cricketing tour?"

"No, Colonel," said I. "I am not on a cricketing tour this time. I have come to see you on a matter of importance to us both, if you would kindly grant me a word."

"Certainly I will, a dozen if you like, though I cannot guess the subject."

"The subject," said I, "is one which I have had in my mind ever since I have seen your daughter. In fact, Colonel, I am in love with her, and I have simply come to you to ask your assistance in obtaining her consent to our engagement."

The Colonel was smoking a cigar at the time, and did not hurry himself to answer me. He took a puff or two, and evinced no symptoms of surprise.

At last he said, "Probably you may not be aware that my girl has already some fifteen lovers on her list; there can be no objection to

your name being entered as number sixteen, if being so low down would be any satisfaction to you. I have spared no expense in the education of my daughter. She has travelled through Europe, and is as well read and accomplished as your European princesses, without having their political prejudices. I say this though I am her father. Where would you find her equal? Not very easily, I reckon."

"True, Colonel," said I, "your daughter is highly educated and accomplished."

"Therefore," said he, "is worthy of a good match. Besides which," he continued, speaking more to himself than to me, "if this business of mine goes on as it does now, few of your European heiresses will be able to hold a candle to her. By the way," said he, turning round and looking hard at me, "did I understand you to say you are going to become a rector in your country?"

"Oh, no!" said I, "I am afraid I am not spiritually minded enough for such a profession."

"Well," continued he, "I presume your position either is, or will be, a good one, otherwise you would not have put these questions. You have not mentioned this matter to my daughter, I presume?"

"Yes, Colonel, I have."

"Really. That is remarkable. Lena has never said a word about it to me; and she generally lets me know when she has a fresh proposal, and sometimes we have a laugh over it. No doubt she wished to spare your feelings. She is a kind, good girl at heart. Some young fellows are so sensitive. I know I was at your age. As you have mentioned this matter to her, you have, doubtless, received your answer."

"No, Colonel; I have received no answer I could take as an answer."

"You see," said the Colonel, "I can do nothing for you, my dear friend. Had you been number one instead of number sixteen, all things being satisfactory, you would have stood a chance. I will listen to what Lena has to say. Lena is mistress of herself and her actions; but of course she would consult me on a subject of such importance as marriage; and I should expect this of her after the sacrifices I have made on her behalf. In the meantime, dear boy, good-bye. I am very busy. We start again early to-morrow. Pleased to have seen you." And, so saying, the Colonel shook me heartily by the hand, leaving me in a state of mind the reverse of satisfactory.

It was easy for me to understand, after the foregoing conversation, that the Colonel had no intention of allowing his daughter to marry such

a penniless individual as myself; and the more I reflected the more I felt surprised with myself for having broached the subject to him.

Had it not been for my blind admiration for his daughter, the Colonel might have been most useful to me in putting me in the way of obtaining some position for myself. Indeed, he had offered his services and interest to obtain me employment if I wanted . ; but in my infatuation I allowed him to suppose I did not require anything of the kind—in fact, that I was sufficiently well off to do without it. I again cursed my stupid folly, but as it was of no use crying over spilt milk, I enquired at the wharf when the Colonel's vessel was going to start, and being told that it would get out of harbour about five in the morning, so to catch the early tide, I determined to be up before its departure.

I turned out of bed about 4 a.m., washed and dressed quickly, with as much care as time would permit. I was just early enough to see the vessel go out. The Colonel, it appeared, finding that half-an-hour would make some difference in getting the full benefit of the tide, had arranged to start that much earlier; so I thus lost the benefit of the *tête-à-tête* with Lena which I had promised myself.

Both the Colonel and Lena could see me as plainly from the yacht as I could see them from the shore; and I could hear them speak without being able to distinguish a word.

The Colonel was evidently rather surprised to see me again at so early an hour. He gave vent to some ejaculations, which, had I distinctly heard them, I expect I should have considered the reverse of complimentary to myself.

Lena was dressed in seal skins and furs, and looked very beautiful as she smiled and waved her handkerchief to me. I took this as a token of encouragement. In return, I frantically flourished my deer-stalker aloft in the air, at the risk of catching cold in my head, the wind being pretty high, and coming from a cold quarter. The Colonel did not trouble himself to remove his seal skin cap, but contented himself with making, with the umbrella he carried, a few corkscrew motions upwards, intended as parting salutes.

The vessel soon hove out of sight, and I returned back to my hotel; the tinge of melancholy suffusing my existence being partly tempered by the recollection of Lena's last encouraging smile.

The same evening I went on board the train, having taken a through ticket to Hamilton. I had laid in a stock of provisions for the journey,

consisting of tinned meats, fish, &c., as I had determined to economise my resources as much as possible. The carriages were pretty full of passengers before we started, which was about a quarter to seven. We passed Truro and Moncton in the dark, and early in the morning arrived at Dalhousie and Campbelltown. We stopped twenty minutes for breakfast. This consisted of steak, eggs, bread, butter, and coffee. After this breakfast I did not think proper to spend more on meals, and my stock lasted me fairly well until arriving at Point Lewis. Point Lewis is where the ferry crosses the River St. Lawrence, the City of Quebec being on the opposite side.

On arriving at Quebec the traveller is generally hailed with shouts from cabmen and hotel-clerks for the different hotels; so I resigned myself to one of these clerks, and was landed, with my luggage, in the hall of the hotel, situated near the St. Louis, one of the best hotels in Quebec. Having had dinner, I gave up a letter of introduction to the gentleman I called upon, and then retired for the night. I should have stayed in Quebec, but found the gentleman I had called upon was unable to do anything for me in the way of getting an appointment. I thereupon once more crossed over to Point Lewis to take the train to Hamilton, after getting my luggage re-checked.

One of the advantages of travelling in America, whether in Canada or the United States, is that no trouble is experienced by the passengers with respect to their luggage. When a passenger has taken his ticket, he informs the baggage-man as to the extent of his luggage, and receives tickets in exchange for it. This saves all porters' fees; and it is surprising that in England some similar plan is not adopted, the nuisance of travelling with many packages being so well known, and the trouble of looking after them being a task properly belonging to the servants of the railway companies.

I was given some pieces of metal with numbers upon them, the corresponding number being fastened on my packages, and the railway company were then responsible for them until the time came for them to be delivered up, which would take place as soon as I had arrived at my hotel or other place of destination.

After passing Montreal and Toronto, which latter city is called the Queen City of the Dominion, I was landed at my destination about 2.30 Monday afternoon. My first step was to see the gentleman who had advised me to come out to Ontario, and I went to his office and delivered my letters of introduction.

I had had the prospect held out to me of getting a clerkship in the central office of the Canadian Pacific Railway; but I soon found that there was no chance of that, as all the vacancies had been filled, and my only chance was to get another berth on a farm.

For the information of those who think of making Canada their future home, it cannot be too much impressed upon their minds that clerkships in Canada are not to be obtained without special introduction, and, when obtained, are hardly worth having, the pay being so small.

Those who come to Canada should make up their minds to a life on a farm, and if they are not suitable for this employment they should stop in England. It is only after some considerable residence in Canada that emigrants find other openings for themselves than on a farm.

My friend in Hamilton, finding he could do nothing for me, took me over to one of the Government agents, who promised to find me a berth if I could wait in Hamilton three or four weeks. This I did not like at all, as I was by this time again running short of money. However, he recommended me to an hotel, and to this I went. I waited there about an hour or so, and then in came the agent bringing with him

two Englishmen, one from Gloucestershire and the other from Herefordshire. These two gentlemen were named Crawshaw and Phail, and they had, like myself, come out from England for the purpose of learning farming as practised in Canada. They had both been on a farm at a place about five miles off; but the latter was on the look-out for another billet. The farmer he had been with, having got his hay and grain harvested, had no further use for him. Both these gentlemen belonged to very good families in England, and had received their education at public schools. We discussed our different pros[illegible], and the same evening Crawshaw went back to his farm, Phail remaining behind at the hotel. We immediately made friends, and determined to either get on the same farm or near each other.

We waited in Hamilton day after day, and week after week; but at last, in the month of September, we were told that a farmer at a place called Barnett wanted some assistance.

While at Hamilton we had a very pleasant time altogether, although dearth of funds was a great drawback. We used to row about the Bay of Hamilton, a splendid piece of water. Sometimes we would sail to the opposite shore, a distance of two miles, and there we would have

a bathe. Sometimes we would attend the cricket ground and have some practice We soon got acquainted with all the public buildings in Hamilton, including the Police Court.

On a subsequent occasion, on visiting this Police Court in the winter, when the number of emigrants had exceeded the demand by some thousands, I was surprised to find the same complaint of distress as in England. Some men actually asked the sitting magistrate to send them to prison, as they could find no work to do. During this temporary glut of labour the inhabitants generously came forward and provided free meals and lodging for the unemployed.

Having heard of employment at Barnett, a village on the North-Western Railway, some thirty miles from Hamilton, we started for it, and arrived at the half-a-dozen boards which represented the station. These boards were fastened on to two long blocks. The technical term for this kind of thing is a "jump off," and it was on this "jump off" that my own and Phail's packages were deposited. There was not a soul near the place.

We left all our boxes and wandered about in search of someone. At last we spied a man in the distance, and him we hailed.

On his coming up we asked him the way to Mr. Merry's, that being the name of the farmer we were going to.

"Take the first turning to the right, and the first house you come to with the farm in front is Merry's."

We thanked him, and went on our way rejoicing that we had not lost it.

On finding the farmhouse and going up to it we were informed by a female that Mr. Merry was hauling firewood, and we should find him in the bush.

"How do you get to the bush?" was our next inquiry.

"Follow that lane, till you get to the barns, then go through the second gate at the end of the yard, then cross the stubble to the potato patch, follow the trail by the side, and you will then see where they have been cutting wood on the edge of the bush; that's where you will find Merry."

We started off as far as the lane, through the second gate, and then sat on the fence and waited.

Presently we heard a wagon coming, and a man, we supposed was Merry, driving the horses. We were correct in our supposition, and, on going up to him and giving him our letters, he

said, "So you are the young men Mr. S. told me about. Well, just drive the horses to the house, and unload the wood, and I'll read these," pointing to the letters of introduction as he spoke.

Phail then took the reins, and we both jumped on to the load and took it to the house, and there unloaded it. We were then told to drive to the place where we had left our boxes, and bring them up and put them in the house.

We thereupon drove to the solitude in which was situated the "jump off," and our boxes. There they were just as they had been deposited, and there to all appearance they might have remained till the day of judgment, for any trace of human life surrounding the locality.

We drove back as quickly as we could, and arrived in time for dinner, to which we sat down. It appeared they had run short of meat, so there was nothing but a large dish of potatoes and bread and butter.

Before making our meal, the farmer introduced us to the female who had let us in, who turned out to be Miss Merry. We then did our best with the potatoes and bread and butter; and after we had finished, Mr. Merry informed us that he did not want any help on the farm, but if we liked to stop and make ourselves useful

for a few days we could do so ; and that he was going to commence threshing to-morrow.

At this piece of information we looked at each other. We had come a long distance, at considerable expense, with a view to being permanently employed, and were rather put out to find we had been deceived, but we nevertheless decided to remain and give Mr. Merry the assistance he wanted for a short time.

That evening the threshers came with the machine, which was drawn by six horses. It was the custom in this part for the owner of a threshing machine to go round the country with it, and thresh the wheat, oats, barley, or peas, for the different farmers in the neighbourhood at a stated price per bushel. The threshers, having put their horses in the stable, came into the house to tea, and that evening we went to bed among the apple barrels, pans, and numerous articles of household use. We had one bed between us and one pillow. We had some little dispute as to who should have the benefit of this pillow, but eventually I had it, and Phail rolled his coat up and said it would do for him instead of a pillow.

Next morning we were called at four. We went outside and had a wash, and then came breakfast, after which the threshing commenced. Several of the neighbours came over to help

Mr. Merry do his threshing, it being understood that he was to help them in return. I was put underneath the straw-carrier, and helped with three or four more to build a stack in the yard.

At twelve o'clock—the usual dinner hour—we had a somewhat better meal than on our first day. Roast pork and apple sauce, and apple pie to follow, was our usual dinner. We had time for a smoke, and at one o'clock went to work again. This went on until the whole of the threshing was finished, which took place the following Tuesday. I then took my departure. Hearing when I was on the stack that another farmer required assistance for two days, I went to him and earned two dollars. This was at a village seven miles distant; and that two dollars was the first money I had earned in Ontario, Mr. Merry only having given me my board.

From there I went on to Jarvis, where I saw a Mr. Aiken, who wanted help on his farm, and I went there on a week's trial, and if I suited I was to be engaged for a year for 100 dollars, with full board and lodgings. My friend Phail also obtained a place with a farmer about a mile from the farm I was engaged on.

I found this farm to be a small one of fifty acres in extent. I at once settled down to work. I rose at five in the morning, lit the fire, and

milked the three cows. I was by this time a fair milker, and had no trouble on that score.

The cleaning out of the stables is what upsets the nerves of so many Englishmen who come out to Canada, perhaps fresh from the University or a luxurious home. I have seen men of the first families in England, and Oxford and Cambridge B.A.'s, doing this unpleasant task.

After finishing the stables, turning the cattle out to pasture and grooming the horses, of which there were two, I then turned in for breakfast, which I considered I had well earned.

After working here for about ten days, I was quietly told by my employer that he wanted only a boy to assist him ; but his brother-in-law, Mr. Shannon, wanted a man to help him with his fall ploughing. I accordingly left, and was then immediately engaged for the month for ten dollars, board, washing, and lodging.

My new employer was a bachelor, a man of about thirty-five, tall, with a heavy moustache and side whiskers. His sister, who was several years older than him, kept house.

The house had two rooms on the ground floor, and I believe one upstairs. I never went up, as it was the domain of the spinster sister. The first room, which was the kitchen, contained a large stove in the centre, and the usual assortment

of kitchen utensils, a table and some chairs. The back room was our bedroom, and it also fulfilled the purpose of the general dining-room. Two beds were placed against the wall with curtains drawn in front, and here the farmer and myself slept. In the other part of the room was a table, two chairs, and stove, and my box, which was a pretty big one. I had got rid of the other packages, and now only retained the one box, which to me was quite nuisance enough in getting about from place to place.

It was getting late in the fall, and as the fall ploughing had to be done, the farmer set to work at it, leaving me to dig up the potatoes, and shovel out the ditches. I also had to thresh peas with a flail. This required some practice to get it done quickly. The peas were ground into meal and given to the pigs. I had seven cows to milk and look after, also two horses and a colt, besides the team my employer was using. Then, what with wood chopping and doing the chores round the house, my time was fully employed.

The seven cows were a great deal of trouble, as the pasture-fields were some distance from the house. They had to be fetched to the house the first thing in the morning, then turned out again, and fetched again in the evening for the

milking, which I did as well as the morning's milking. They had an unfortunate habit of bolting off, after being milked, in an opposite direction to their pasture-field. In fact, they were cows whose early training and education had evidently been much neglected, something like my own, so I could sympathise with them, notwithstanding the trouble they gave.

Phail often used to come over to see me, and this would vary the monotony, and then we would walk over to the village in the evening, about a mile off, and get the mail (*i.e.*, letters).

One afternoon he came with his gun and wanted me to go shooting with him, so I asked my employer to let me go. My employer deliberated a long time, and after much hesitation consented. I rather suspect he did not like Phail coming over so often. Phail was merely working for his board, and consequently got lighter work than I did; whereas I, as a hired man getting payment in hard cash, did about two or three times as much as he did, and of course, this was expected by the farmer employing me.

These considerations did not interfere with the sport we obtained. My gun was a muzzle-loader, which I had bought cheap. We started for the bush. We did not require any license,

so had no fear of being hailed by a policeman to produce it. We shot between us seven rabbits, five black squirrels, and three chitmunks.

The sport in this part of the country is not equal to the Muskoka district, which is the finest part of Ontario for sport, but the worst and most troublesome for cultivation.

On getting back we skinned the squirrels, and cured the skins, stretching them on boards to dry. I then did my usual evening task of milking the cows, and feeding and bedding the horses, and Phail and myself started for the village.

At the post-office we saw a young lady, but did not know her to speak to. I afterwards heard she was engaged to be married to my employer, and, in speaking to him about me, she made the following remark :—

"Harry, that's quite a man you have working for you; tight pants and all—quite a dude."

It was now well on in November, and my employer, having got through all the supplementary work on his farm, thought he could do without me, and determined to economise.

I once more packed up my things. It so happened that Phail at the same time had a misunderstanding with his farmer, so we decided upon returning to Hamilton together.

I said good-bye to the farmer and his sister. With reference to the spinster sister, I must say that she had been very kind to me during my stay. Though she was neither young nor beautiful, I shall always remember her kindness. In fact I was as well treated as any hired man could expect to be. Certainly a hired man in England would not receive a tenth part of the consideration I received. At the same time, I can honestly say I worked hard and did my duty.

CHAPTER VI.

WINTER IN HAMILTON—FURTHER EXPERIENCE AND DEPARTURE FROM ONTARIO.

WE (Phail and myself) arrived at Hamilton about twelve mid-day, and took our boxes to a boarding house, and after dinner we called on the same gentleman who had originally given us our letters of introduction. Unfortunately he did not know of any further employment for us, but he advised us to stay at the boarding house until he did. We remained about a fortnight, and were then joined by Mr. Crawshaw. But, with a view to economy, we decided to change our boarding house.

We had great fun in hunting up a new boarding house, and at last discovered one in Park Street, kept by a Mrs. Hall. There was a large room with two double beds in it, and this did for the three of us admirably, and we had the use of the parlour. I remained here for a

few days; but I was not satisfied with doing nothing, and made one more attempt to obtain employment.

There was little to be done in farming just at this time, but an opportunity occurred for obtaining a berth, some seventy miles from Hamilton, with a cheese exporter. I accordingly went to a place called Ingersoll.

The railway from Hamilton to Ingersoll passes some very fine agricultural country, through Paris and Woodstock. I was highly delighted with the appearance of the country round about Ingersoll, which was a good-sized place, with some four thousand inhabitants.

Mr. Cowell, the owner of the cheese factory, was out when I arrived; but his wife, after I had delivered my letters, asked me to remain until he came home, which I did. His daughter, Miss Cowell, was also at home, and they gave me a nice dinner, finding I had not dined; and afterwards gave me some books to read to while away the time.

Mr. Cowell did not arrive until late in the evening. He was a very pleasant, agreeable sort of man; but he very much disappointed me by informing me that he had already more men than he could employ, and asked me what made me come all this way to him. I then

informed him who it was who gave me his address. He then said it was a mistake, but as I had come so far, I was welcome to stay a time. I thanked him very much for his kindness, and offered to make myself useful, which I felt I could do after the experience I had already had, as there was a farm attached to the factory.

I stayed here a little time and made myself as useful as I could in the factory, helping to brand the cheeses which were to be exported to England, and I also did some work on a neighbouring farm; but as I saw there was not full employment to be had, it being the slack time of the year, I made up my mind to take my departure back for Hamilton, and arrived there finding my two friends in the same boarding house I had left them.

We spent the greater part of the winter at Hamilton, and amused ourselves with sleighing and skating on Hamilton Bay, where thousands used to assemble. We met some very nice families and young ladies, and frequently made up some very pleasant skating parties. We attended the Catholic Cathedral on Christmas Day, where there was splendid singing. We became very good card players, especially at the American games of euchre and poker.

In February we were still unable to find anything to do. Just then we changed our boarding house, and went to one kept by the widow of a schoolmaster.

The coldest weather I experienced in Hamilton that winter was about 17 below zero; but I have experienced cold much greater in other provinces—not in Ontario, which I am inclined to think is not so cold as Manitoba by many degrees. Sometimes in the latter province it is 40 or 50 below zero. In consequence of the absence of the moist clammy atmosphere, which so often afflicts England in winter, the months of January and February were quite pleasant and enjoyable in Ontario. We had constant skating parties on Hamilton Bay, besides visiting a great number of families in Hamilton, mostly friends of Crawshaw.

Towards the beginning of March Crawshaw began to get very hard up. He had come down to his last dollar, and nothing turned up in the way of employment. He had been a very successful athlete and runner at his college, and had quite a collection of prizes, consisting of silver cups, an oak and silver water jug and tray, two brass salvers, some silver medals, and also a riding saddle, which had never been used, and a handsome dressing case. These various articles

found their way to the residence of that most affectionate relative, the uncle of the three brass balls. The last loan he obtained was for twenty dollars (£4). "Five weeks' board, any way," said he.

The fact was, living this way in a boarding house, and mixing in pleasant society, was not the way to keep our money in our pockets.

There was a fine opera house in Hamilton, where we could enjoy the best of singing. All the noted stars would visit Hamilton *en route* for Chicago or St. Louis; and, altogether, Hamilton was about as pleasant a place for living in as could be selected.

Our troubles in finding cash were soon destined to come to an end. The approach of spring in Canada brings with it renewed activity in every department of industry. Crawshaw was offered a berth in a manufactory as book-keeper, at four dollars per week. Notwithstanding the smallness of the pay, he decided to accept it. The hard work he had undergone at the last farm he was in rather sickened him of farm life, and, in fact, he had no other choice but to take what he could get, although the salary only left him fifty cents per week for tobacco and all other necessaries, after deducting his board.

About the same time Phail got placed on a farm, and a few days later, about the 3rd of April, I also was successful.

Before starting, the three graces, as Crawshaw, Phail, and myself were poetically termed by our acquaintances, had a last parting dinner, and I was driven off a journey of about five miles, to be again a hired man to another farmer.

My new employer, Mr. Salterton, was a Devonshire man, who had emigrated to Canada about seven years previously. Besides a farm he had also a butcher's store, which was supplied from the farm, and he did a large trade in meat, which he would send in to the Hamilton Meat Stores or sell on the premises. I was to do the ploughing and seeding, while he attended to the store. I was to get twelve dollars (£2 8s.) per month, with board, &c.

Work, of course, commenced at once. Mr. Salterton and myself went to the stables to look after the cattle, while the other hired man, named George, and young Will Salterton drove to the market.

At the time of my commencement there were about twenty head of cattle, which was about the minimum number, on the farm. There were constantly changes and variations in the cattle. Mr. Salterton used to buy the fat cattle of the

neighbouring farmers, and kill them on the farm for market purposes. Whilst here I learned an art which I subsequently found very useful—that of killing oxen, pigs, and sheep.

As a good deal of the land required manuring, I had the pleasant task apportioned to me of doing it. There had been a large accumulation of rich dung; the stables and outhouses having had straw on the top of straw put down for the cattle to tread in. Besides this, there was a big supply of putrid offal, and what was thrown away from the butcher's store. All this was worked in and made use of on the farm. This manuring business occupied about five days, and, though no doubt most beneficial to the land, did not improve the suit of clothes I wore, nor the boots. At the end of the time I had all these articles of apparel well fumigated, and they were hung in one of the open out-buildings, away from the house, where the permeation of the atmosphere with the odours which they exhaled was of no consequence.

I finished this unpleasant performance, but I mentally made a note of it. "Never," thought I, "will I do this kind of thing again; and, if ever I take a farm, it will be one which does not require any manure putting on it."

Just at this time I heard a great deal about Manitoba, and the opportunities for getting on in that province. None of the land there required manure. "That must be the place for me," thought I. Mr. Salterton and his wife were pleasant enough people to get on with, though I came to the conclusion that the position they had occupied when in England could not have been a very exalted one.

One day a parson of one of the Church of England churches at Hamilton called. I had known him during my stay in Hamilton. As I had not been hauling manure just then, and was otherwise tolerably presentable, he shook hands with me, much to the surprise of Mrs. Salterton and her daughter.

Soon after this incident, Mr. Salterton told me his time was so much occupied in his meat business, that he was going to get someone with capital to go shares with him in his farm. This new arrangement caused me to have another move; and after saying good-bye to Mr. and Mrs. Salterton, and receiving an invitation to come and see them whenever I liked, I started off with my box to a place called Branchester, where I temporarily engaged myself to a farmer there on the same terms as before.

This farmer was a short, thickset man, and his wife was a big Pennsylvanian Dutch Canadian. The wife was such a strapping big strong woman the neighbours used to think she ought to do the work on the farm—anyhow, she certainly was the boss of the show.

I had a very comfortable bed-room here, leading off from the drawing-room, and I arranged it very nicely; but there were four small sons, aged from fifteen downwards. These were the worst behaved children I ever came across, and they were always pottering about after the things in my room. I used to take the opportunity of pulling their ears whenever their big mother was out of the way.

The wife was not long before she started me on ploughing. There was a quantity of land which had been over-cropped, and it had to lie fallow during the summer. This I ploughed up in the course of a few days, though not without a struggle, as there were only three horses on the farm, and these had been half-starved. They consequently went very slowly, and, in fact, would stop still and refuse to move.

Now I had a cowboy's whip with a lash twenty feet long. I thought it might come in useful for making the horses move, so I fetched it. The effect on the horses was magical after they

had once felt it. The crack of it was sufficient, subsequently, for them. They did not wait to ask questions, but moved on more quickly than tramps followed by a policeman. Unfortunately the crack was so loud you could hear it a mile off; and one day, about six o'clock, as I was thinking of knocking off work, up came my employer, who was a quick-tempered man. "Charlie," said he, "I won't have my horses knocked about like this, and if you cannot drive them properly, I must get some one who can;" and he added a great deal of abuse, which it is hardly necessary to repeat. Considering the difficulty I had experienced in getting the brutes to move, and in getting the job done at all, I felt by no means inclined to accept this blame.

"I don't call these clothes-horse frameworks horses," said I. "Mules they may be, but they are things I have never been accustomed to handle. I have always had horses to deal with hitherto."

However, we ultimately made up our little dispute. The farmer admitted afterwards that the horses were not in proper condition, and everything went on satisfactorily.

The friend who had introduced me to this berth lived not far off, and came over to see me. On Sundays, and when I could spare time from

my duties, I used to go out visiting several pleasant families round about the neighbourhood.

All the farmers round were more or less prosperous, and there were many wealthy people in the vicinity. I used to get the *entrée* into the best society.

It may astonish people in England to find that I, who was only working for hire in the capacity of a common farm labourer, should have these advantages. It would not have been the case in England, but in Canada it was so. The fact is that in Canada there is no such being as the hopeless, half-starved labourer, such as he exists in England—a man who has no prospect before him but to end his days as a pauper. Such a being is the product of English civilisation, but Canadian civilisation knows him not. All workers have in Canada prospects and chances before them of rising to the top of the ladder. Besides this, the farm worker is often a man of superior education, who wishes to learn agriculture with the view of taking up land and becoming his own master, which in nine cases out of ten he accomplishes in the course of a few years.

To return to my narrative. I found that my employer's wife had some notion of marrying

me to her grown-up daughter. She had three, but only one old enough for marriage. This young lady was fairly good-looking, though without much style.

I might possibly have married her, owing to being so much in her company, had I not been possessed already of an ideal; and to compare this unformed girl with Lena in any way I felt was preposterous. I therefore did not rise at all to the bait which was held out to me; but Mrs. Denton—that was the name of my employer's wife—attributed my coldness to a wrong cause.

My friend who had obtained this berth for me had already introduced me to several nice families. With one of these I often used to spend Sunday, and there were two young ladies, one about twenty-five, and the other about my own age. I made an arrangement to take them to the races which were held at Branchester on the 1st June.

I was not aware that I paid either of these young ladies more than an ordinary amount of attention on that day, but it was reported to Mrs. Denton that I had.

The races were mostly trotting, but there was one running race, which was considered the event of the day. I foolishly gave the ladies the field, betting on an outsider, so lost several pairs

of gloves to them, which may have helped the rumour that I had engaged myself to the younger. A ball took place three days after at the Town Hall, and I was glad to have these ladies as partners, as they were good dancers. I contributed a dollar and a half to the expense of this ball. In this part, it was customary for the gentlemen to provide the band (which came from Hamilton) and the expense of the hall, and the ladies found the refreshments.

I wrote to my friend Crawshaw to come up and bring his dress suit, which had, fortunately, not gone to his uncle's. We walked to the hall where the ball was to take place, leaving my employer, his wife, and eldest daughter to come over in the buggy. There were eighty present, and we had a most enjoyable evening, and Crawshaw and myself arrived back at the farm about four in the morning.

After this I had several hints and innuendoes thrown out to me about the young lady I danced principally with at this ball by Mrs. Denton.

Crawshaw left the same day, and I was treated in the evening to a long, depreciatory account of my two new lady friends. This I did not like, and I said so pretty plainly. The result of this disagreement was that I determined to leave, which

I did as soon as I could, after giving a week's notice.

I went once more back to Hamilton, and almost immediately engaged myself to go on to a cattle ranche. I began to think I should like a change from farming.

The ranche was situated south of Virginia City, Montana, in the United States. I had to go by train, *viâ* Chicago, to my place of destination.

On my arrival, the first question I was asked was could I ride, which question I answered at once in the affirmative, having done plenty of it in England, including riding with the old Berkley Hounds. I was shewn a broncho—*i.e.*, an unbroken prairie pony—with a saddle and bridle on, and was requested to mount. This I tried to do, but it seemed an utter impossibility. The thing jumped about from side to side, reared, kicked, and did everything except stand still.

After a trial of about five minutes, one of the boys held the beast by the bridle, and I managed after a few struggles to get into the saddle, only to be put off on the opposite side, directly the cowboy left go of the bridle. Of course the broncho bolted, but was caught by some of the boys, and I tried again; this time with better success, though eventually I was thrown rather

heavily. At last, however, I managed to stick to my steed, which I rode till he nearly dropped in return for the hard usage I had received from him. This much amused the boys, and they admitted that I did know something about riding, although not brought up on a ranche.

I stayed in this camp three weeks, and then returned to Chicago, where my box had been left, and, having obtained it, went on to New York.

CHAPTER VII.

NEW YORK—AGREEABLE SURPRISE — EXPERIENCES OF A CATTLE-BOAT.

BY the time I arrived in New York my funds had begun to run short. I arrived there on a Sunday morning, and I had exactly three dollars in my pocket. I stayed the night at one of the Broadway hotels, and the next morning had my breakfast at a coffee-shop on somewhat cheaper terms than I should have been charged at the hotel. I then went to one of the employment bureaux, and told the people there I wanted to obtain a berth in a store, or as a clerk in a wholesale house. I had one or two addresses given to me, and I called on the different people named, but the usual inquiry was: "Where have you been before?" On discovering that I had been working on a farm, and not as a clerk, my services were declined in every instance.

I then went back to the employment bureau, and the official there recommended me to try

again, and gave me other addresses; but the result was exactly similar. I was now beginning to grow desperate, as I had paid seventy-five cents for my bed and fifty cents for my supper. On my way to the bureau I bought a *New York Herald.* In it I saw an advertisement for a waiter at a house in 142nd Street. I immediately went there and was let in by the servant, and on stating what I had come about was taken down to the kitchen. The mistress of the house not being in, I was given something to eat, it being about half-past eleven, near luncheon time. Presently a black man arrived, then another, then another, until there were about a dozen of them; but they were not favoured with luncheon by the white servant who handed me mine.

The mistress of the house then appeared, and told me she wanted a black man, so I said "Good morning." I did not wait to see which nigger got the place. I felt all the better for my luncheon; and had a vague notion I should have liked to have had the twelve niggers outside, one at a time, and given them each a thrashing for competing against me.

I had now a balance of one dollar and twenty-five cents (about five shillings) in my pocket. I went once again to the employment bureau, and told them I would take a place as coachman,

gardener, or anything. I then had a letter given me to a Mr. Cuthbertson, who lived thirteen miles from Long Island city, on the opposite side of the water from New York. He wanted a coachman and man to look after the garden.

The fare to his place being fifty cents, it left me only a balance of seventy-five cents. The arrangement with the manager of the employment bureau was that I was to pay him five dollars if I stayed a month, or half that amount if I stayed under a month, and I therefore felt it necessary to inform the manager how I was situated. He consented to take his commission out of what I was to earn, which was to be at the rate of five dollars per week.

I then started, and arrived at five in the evening, and having handed in the manager's letter was immediately engaged as coachman and gardener at the wages named. Although the wages I received were higher than I had yet taken on a farm, I felt myself somewhat humiliated in this employment. I was called John, and it was "John, get the carriage ready," "John, do this," and "John, do the other," whenever the bell rang. Then, again, having to ride behind the young ladies when they went out instead of at their side seemed pretty rough on me. One of them by the way was very pretty,

and was a little like Lena. She had the same coloured eyes and hair, and was a remarkably good rider.

I had my meals in the kitchen with one of the servants after the others had done theirs, as I generally had to attend to the horses just while the regular dinner in the kitchen was going on.

The girl I had dinner with was a lady's maid. I had some difficulty in preventing her from proposing to me on the spot. I told her I was already engaged, but she did not seem to think that intelligence of much consequence, so it was fortunate my stay in this establishment was not too long.

There were four horses, all fine animals. Two of them were perfect pictures of horse-flesh. I had the garden to look after. I knew very little about fancy gardening, and, I am afraid, I rather neglected it. Mr. Cuthbertson, my employer, was hardly satisfied, and told me one day I was above my place. However, he offered to give me a recommendation, as I had taken care of the horses.

By this means I was enabled to get a berth on one of the cattle boats belonging to the National line of steamers. I then called on the employment bureau, and paid them the two dollars fifty cents commission. I had not finished out the month in this place.

I had now a few dollars in my pocket, enough to last me for board, &c., until the vessel started. I thereupon took a look round New York, and paid visits to the various hotels, such as the Metropolitan, Fifth Avenue, and Aston House. I was immensely struck by the scale of magnificence on which these gigantic establishments were conducted. I also paid a visit to one of the opera houses One day I went on board one of the steamers, and was landed at Coney Island, a regular sea-side resort.

The bathing machines were some distance from the water, and a wooden walk from the machines to the water enabled persons of both sexes—young and old, many in the quaintest of costumes, little girls and boys, fat matrons, dudes from New York, dark and fair girls, some very thin-looking spinsters—to arrive in the water. Some looked as if they did not like it, and were only having a bathe because it was the proper thing to do. Altogether this seemed a gay and festive place. Plenty of real nigger minstrels, and all manner of amusement provided for the visitors.

While waiting here, contemplating this throng of human beings, looking so busy in their idleness, I suddenly saw a face I recognised. When one is a stranger amongst any mixed crowd of

people, how refreshing it often is to discover, unexpectedly, a familiar countenance, provided it be not that of a tailor, or other worthy personage, to whom one owes a bill.

In this instance my delight was not to be measured by words. It was Lena's lovely profile that met my astonished gaze in the, fortunately, not too remote distance. She was walking with two lady friends, and all three had their hair hanging down their shoulders in sweet profusion, more especially Lena, whose wavy tresses were at least some inches longer than those of her companions. How fortunate for me was it that this meeting should have occurred after, and not before, I had discarded the costume of flunkeyism in which I was arrayed whilst in Mr. Cuthbertson's service.

The bare contemplation of the possibility of such a catastrophe as that of Lena beholding her lover in so humiliating a garb caused a shudder to pass through my frame. And it might have happened, as Mr. Adair was staying in New York. Less than one short week ago was I dressed in a way which even my sweet one could hardly have helped ridiculing. Wearing a hat, with a silver band to it, and senseless silken cords forming acute angles about its brim, also a coat, baggy in the back, because it had

been made for the previous occupier of the situation—thank goodness such an episode had been spared both her and me.

I had been particularly careful to preserve a suit or two, notwithstanding the confounded nuisance it always was to drag about a heavy box from farm to farm, and now I had my reward. The suit I had on was the best of them. It was my riding suit, which fitted me well, and I had worn it very little, just enough to give me the aspect of a fellow who could ride. I think men, dressed in absolutely new riding suits, are to be regarded with suspicion as regards their equestrian capabilities, so I was pleased mine was not altogether new.

It was therefore with great inward satisfaction that I went up to the ladies, who had seen me approaching. Lena welcomed me in a most bewitching manner, and at once introduced me to her companions, but she then dropped behind and left me to walk with the shorter and plainer of the two young ladies to whom she had introduced me.

I had not bargained for that sort of thing, and really thought it was too bad of Lena, but there was no hope for it but to walk on. My melancholy returned. Of this my fair companion at my side took not the slightest notice, so intent

was she in telling me a variety of circumstances in which I was not interested. Her father, she informed me, was the celebrated engineer, who had made the wonderful tunnel, ten miles long, which I had heard about.

"Yes," said I mechanically, "which I have heard about, but very seldom see."

"No, indeed, you do not, unless you go through the Mont Cenis Tunnel."

I ultimately found myself agreeing with this young lady that the tunnel her father had made, between Jerusalem and Jericho cities, was equal, if not superior to any other construction of the same kind, and I kept on agreeing to the end of the chapter, though I made up my mind to cut it as short as I could. As my time for departing arrived I managed to give the engineering young lady the slip, and came alongside Lena.

"Is not Miss Delabouche nice?" said Lena, smiling. "She is so intelligent."

"Lena," I said, "you know I only consider one woman in this world either nice or intelligent. Surely it is not too much for me to expect from that woman a little of her society at this chance meeting. We may never see each other again."

Lena slightly coloured. "Oh, Charlie!" said she, "you know it can never be. I have promised dear papa never to marry without his

consent; and how can I break my word? I could never look into his face again. He has done so much for me."

"Lena," said I, "promise me one thing, and that is, whoever you may marry, you will not marry that odious Freestone."

"I promise," said she; and she held out her gloved hand, which I pressed, and this time the pressure was returned.

"I shall never marry," said Lena. "I shall always look upon you, dear Charlie, as one of my truest friends. You are so genuine, and so different to the others."

"The other fifteen," said I.

"Oh! has dear papa told you about them? How absurd of dear papa! He is always joking me about my proposals. I only receive them because I am rich. Were I poor the men would take no notice of me."

"Number sixteen did not know you were rich when he proposed," said I.

"Poor number sixteen is very unfortunate," said she archly. "He has for his consolation my profound sympathy and respect."

"When you went away in the yacht, I am afraid papa did not care about seeing poor number sixteen again, judging from the sounds which issued from his usually polite lips," said I.

"It was very funny," said she. "Dear papa was very much put out about something. What could it have been? And I thought he liked you so much. He got all right again after we left the harbour. How delightful it is going about in a yacht. I am never sea-sick; are you?"

"Well, I have been" (and here came the not particularly happy recollection of my voyage over). "But since then," said I, "I have had a great deal of practice in boating on the Canadian lakes, where we get very choppy seas, besides which I am much stronger than I was; so I do not think I shall ever be sea-sick again."

"Oh, I hope you will not."

Had it not been for the uncomfortable position I was in with reference to pecuniary matters, I should certainly have stayed, and put up at the best hotel in this really delightful island, leaving the cattle proprietors to find another man in my place as best they could, and thus I should have been enabled to have spent a little more time with Lena. Even as it was, it occurred to me I might make an arrangement with some hotel-keeper. On turning the matter over in my mind, I felt myself compelled to dismiss the scheme as impracticable.

All at once, Lena said to me, "Do you know, Charlie, how I propose to employ my time in New York?"

"I cannot guess."

"I am going to form a society for the care and relief of the distressed immigrants from Europe, who pour into New York in such shoals. I have already helped several to provide a home for themselves out West. Would you like to join our society?"

I had an idea that I could much better join this society as the recipient of a few hundreds than as a donor; but I kept the idea to myself.

"You know," continued Lena, "we people, who are so well off, ought to consider our poorer brothers and sisters."

"Yes," said I, "we ought to do so. How much is the subscription to your society?"

"One thousand dollars would provide for the necessities of each family, and start them out West on a small farm," said Lena. "This sum would be lent them, according to the rules of the society, without interest, and would be repaid in twenty yearly instalments."

"That is exactly the sum I require myself," said I, with an outburst of sincerity.

I here noticed the boat for which I had a return ticket, had just come in, and began to quicken

my pace, Lena doing likewise. "Oh, Charlie, are you really short of money?" said Lena, a new light seeming to illuminate her fair face. "It must be dreadful to be short of money. Do accept this" (pulling out a bundle of dollar bills).

I thanked her profusely for her kind offer, and grasped her hand, but refused point blank to accept the proffered money. By this time, her two lady companions had come up, and to them I took off my hat.

The vessel quickly left Coney Island behind it, together with my illusions; for I felt as I paced the deck that I had escaped the temptation of receiving money which I had never earned, and likewise that, even if I had it in my power, it would be impossible to marry a woman upon whom I should be dependent for everything, however good and pure she might be. I felt almost thankful I was about to enter on scenes which would help me to change the current of my thoughts and feelings.

As my time had arrived for going on board, I made my appearance at four o'clock on a Thursday afternoon at the National Dock, from which my vessel started. We got into the harbour, and then a Jersey City boat brought out our cargo, which consisted of 560 head of

cattle. Before these were put on board I had time to make the acquaintance of some of my companions, and looked round the boat. There were twenty men besides myself, and over us was the boss cattle-man.

Amongst us were two black men. Altogether they were a pretty rough-looking lot, but I afterwards found they were a good deal better than they looked. I daresay I did not myself look anything very particular. They had evidently, from their style and manner, all been accustomed to roughing it.

The ship having been fitted up specially for the reception of cattle, the top deck and all along both sides looked very like ordinary cat e stables. The cattle were on all the three decks of the ship, and I was told off to see to cattle on the upper deck. Planks were put across from the tugs to the steamer, and the cattle were then driven on board. The cattle came with a rush off the tugs, and those stationed on the upper deck, including myself, were kept busy.

We were to have one hundred and eighty beasts on the upper deck, and we had to drive them into the long pens on each side of the boat, and then partitioned them off, leaving about six in each division. This was no easy matter, as the cattle became rather wild from the driving

they had experienced, and tried to gore us when we went into the pens. We had to fasten short ropes round their horns, and tie them to planks facing the centre of the boat. In order to accomplish this, we had to go in amongst them and get on their backs, carrying with us lengths of rope, in which we made each a noose and fastened them to their respective hooks. Woe be to any one who slipped off the back of one of these cattle whilst this fastening-up process was going on. It would take all his dexterity and alertness to mount the back of another to avoid being trampled upon.

By two o'clock in the morning we had all our cattle fixed, and were informed we could have a sleep. I wanted to know where the sleeping berths were; but soon found out that no such luxuries as sleeping berths had been provided, and in that respect the cattle were better off than ourselves. I was told I was welcome to sleep with the cattle if I liked, or on the hay.

Not relishing the idea of the cattle as my bed-fellows, I slept on the top of the hay which was reserved for their feeding, and had a nap until five o'clock in the morning. I had no covering but the open sky. At five I was aroused to water and feed the cattle, and, having done this, one of our cattle-men went for our breakfast. This

consisted of bread, butter, and coffee. This meal might have been tolerable had it been better served. The butter was in a large open tin, and was very much mixed up with pieces of stale straw, which the constant movements of the cattle had caused to blow into it. The bread was in small rolls, and was carried in the honest, but by no means clean, hands of the cattle-man, whose turn it was to fetch the breakfast. The coffee was no better than what you get at a railway station in England; it had a strong chicory and beans flavour. There was, moreover, no table to put the provisions on except the backs of the cattle; so the meal was one of a most unappetising description. I did not wait to see the end of it, but left the others to enjoy themselves, and went to the top part of the deck.

The vessel was just then moving out from New York, and I had a splendid view of the harbour for about five minutes, and then commenced the work of cleaning down the decks. After this had been performed we had the pumping to do. We had six men, including myself and a foreman, for this business. We had to pump up sea water into a large condensing apparatus. This kind of apparatus is now carried on all steamers, and the deposits of salt being extracted and left at the bottom of the apparatus, the foreman, in

addition to looking after us to see we did our work, held the piping in his hand with which he filled various barrels. These barrels were 5 feet 6 inches high and 3 feet across, and from these barrels we had to fill the troughs of the cattle, having tin pails for doing it. We did all this by eleven o'clock, and then gave the cattle their hay from the place where it was stored, each one a certain allowance.

Having fed the cattle it was time to feed ourselves. What we had for dinner was more unpalatable than even our breakfast. It consisted of very fat boiled beef, and potatoes in their skins, all served in a large tin. The first time I saw the mess one look at it seemed enough, though I felt so hungry as almost to be able to eat anything.

I happened to pass the engineers' mess-room soon after this my second meal, and saw the steward coming out. He hailed me, and I suppose had heard something about my fastidiousness. He kindly offered to supply me with meals while on the passage for a consideration of five dollars. This was very tempting to me, but five dollars could not be raised; all I had in the world then was two dollars, which I had just received from one of the cattle-men for a pair of trousers I had sold him. I told the steward it

was impossible for me to pay five dollars. He said, "Have you any flannel shirts?" I happened to have two new ones. He then took a fancy to my pipe, and said if I would give him the pipe and two flannel shirts, he would supply me with first-class meals up to the end of the trip. I agreed to this arrangement, and, had I not done so, I really think I should have starved, as it was impossible for me to eat the ordinary food supplied.

We had watches similar to sailors, and another man and myself would take the watch from 6 till 12 p.m., and then again from 12 till 4. Every alternate night we were therefore up. The buckets of water were filled from the big barrels before mentioned. It was one man's business to fill the buckets, two carried them to the beasts, and two more lifted the buckets over to the troughs. At night two men always walked about with lanterns to see the cattle were all right.

The sleeping accommodation in the boat I have already alluded to. There were some mattresses and blankets, but it was difficult to find any place to put them as each man's turn for a rest arrived. After the hard work involved in pumping water to be carried through a hose from one end of the steamer to the other, for one hundred and eighty head of cattle, we naturally

required proper rest, and this we did not get, owing to want of space, as if we slept on the hay we were constantly disturbed.

However, it was fine weather, and at last we sighted Ireland. Although we were some seventy miles from the Isle of Erin, the cattle seemed to be aware that we had sighted land. They commenced a fearful noise and bellowing which I suppose was their method of showing their delight.

The night before arriving in Liverpool it happened to be my watch. It was very dark, and I paced the deck swinging the watch lantern in my hand. At two in the morning I was to call the men to feed and water the cattle, so as to be in readiness to turn them out early ashore.

There was one German on board who had slighted his work during the passage, making it fall on my shoulders. He was a clever man, and could speak French, Italian, and Spanish fluently, as well as English, and had at one time been in a good position. He had come aboard with a valise, and had on light pants and a tall white hat. Throughout the voyage he had somehow or another got off a good deal of his work.

As he knew we were approaching Liverpool, he had got his valise and tall hat, and lay asleep

on his mattress with them by his side. The head cattle-man seeing him, came and told me. We then went down to the lower deck where he was sleeping, and, quietly removing his hat, emptied half a pail of water over him; but this did not wake him. We then put a bale of hay, weighing about two hundred pounds, on the top of him. Judging from the muffled noises which proceeded from under that bale of hay, we concluded that the present cattle-man and ex-gentleman had awoke. "Hullo there," he bellowed out from under the hay. "You just get——" And we did get.

The next morning he was in a desperate condition about his hat, thinking he would have to land without it; so, taking pity on him, he was shown the place where his hat was, slightly damaged by sea-water. He went ashore more happy, however, than he would have done, had he been minus his much-valued tile.

At eight o'clock we arrived at the cattle yard at Birkenhead, which is a large place having convenience for the landing and storing of cattle. Planks were put from the shore to the ship, and we drove them across.

We next proceeded to the National Line Dock, and then we came ashore.

CHAPTER VIII.

EPISODE AT BIRKENHEAD — MY RIG-OUT AT LIVERPOOL — JOURNEY AND ARRIVAL AT MEWBY.

AFTER quitting the vessel, and being paid for my services, I thought it would be a good plan to go to some place and get a bath and brush up. My appearance after leaving the cattle-boat was anything but suggestive of a high condition of civilisation and refinement. The clothes I had on were particularly greasy, and so odoriferous as to preclude the possibility of banishing from recollection my recent contiguity with the bovine companions of my voyage.

I was also in a difficulty as to a change of clothes. The riding suit I had worn in Coney Island was full tight when I then had it on, and was altogether inappropriate for a city. All the other suits were tighter still; not only so, but the pants looked ridiculously small, the sleeves of the coats came half-way up my arms, and there

was no possibility of buttoning up the waiscoats. I had grown much broader and taller during the past year, and in trying to save the wear of my suits had omitted from my calculation the possibility of growing.

When I got my heavy box ashore, I considered how useless a greater portion of this luggage was to me, and cast about for a plan to avoid the necessity of taking it with me. In the midst of this perplexity, I happened to see the friendly steward to whom I was indebted for the improvement in my *menu* on board the cattle-boat. He was then waiting about the landing stage, underneath one of the sheds where the goods were unloaded, and had with him two sunburnt-looking men, who were testing specimens of honeydew tobacco and cigars. Both of the men were chewing honeydew and ejecting it from their mouths at intervals, after the usual fashion of tobacco-chewers. It struck me forcibly the steward was trying to have a deal with the strangers over some smuggled tobacco. Whatever he was about, I stepped forward and interrupted him. I beckoned him aside, and there and then explained to him that I wished to sell the greater part of my wardrobe to any gentleman requiring an outfit; and added that I should not have thought of such a thing, but

circumstances in the present case seemed to render such a course peculiarly desirable.

The steward was nothing loth to a deal if he could find anything he required; so, having got the box underneath the shed, I opened it and began to display some of the contents. The two strangers coming up, the steward informed them I was about selling some articles of clothing.

The strangers went on chewing their honey-dew, at the same time inspecting the various articles I pulled out. Presently some sailors from the brig lying alongside our steamer came along. They stopped to witness proceedings, and were soon joined by several loafers of the class which hang about the docks. The result was an impromptu auction. I sold nearly everything in the box, and wound up by selling the box itself for twelve shillings. The man who bought the box had a good bargain, as it was made by a Renton carpenter, of the strongest material, at a cost of thirty-five shillings, and I had paid extra for the lock and hinges. It was none the worse for its travels, really all the better for the seasoning; but it had been a great nuisance to me during my journeyings, so I was not at all sorry to see a man shoulder it off.

One thing annoyed me greatly, and that was that some of the things I got out of the box

disappeared in a most mysterious manner. I attributed this circumstance to the presence of the before-mentioned loafers, who had been all through suspiciously prompt in rendering a great deal more assistance than the occasion required. They had persisted in coming up to the box and handling the various articles without any warrant or permission on my part; and sometimes taking them to the light, as they pretended to test the quality. Amongst the articles I missed were a dozen pair of Nova Scotia hand-knitted socks, of a strength and quality not generally found in England, and these I had intended to keep. Of these, I must have been relieved by some gentleman who took a fancy to them while my attention was being diverted by the conversation of some other gentleman. I did not think it worth while to remonstrate, as many of my customers possessed knives, and might have resented any reflection on the stainless honour and scrupulous integrity in their dealings, which they emphatically informed me they possessed, together with a consuming desire for my welfare.

The socks were not the only things I missed. A pair of mocassin slippers, beautifully worked in beads by an Indian squaw, were amongst the vanished articles. However, as I had been acting the part of an auctioneer without having paid the

Government anything for a license, and got rid of a number of things which, though in fair condition, were absolutely valueless to me, I did not feel in a complaining mood. I had a nice little amount in my pocket, and was just about to depart, when a voice suddenly shouted out, "Drinks all round." This sentiment was immediately applauded by all the gentlemen present, except the steward, who said he should have to be off, notwithstanding the pleasure it would have given him to have joined the others. All eyes were upon me, and I instinctively felt that the drinks, whatever they might consist of, were to be had at my expense. It was the question of the amount; so I appealed to the steward to know what he considered the correct thing; but the steward declined to express any opinion on the subject.

As I had no intention whatever of entering a public-house I knew nothing about, accompanied by a number of strange men, some of whom had been stealing my things, I made a short address. I said, "Mates, I have been here as long as I am able to, I have some business to attend to, and then I have to catch a train and take a journey of over two hundred miles. But I am quite willing to arrange this little matter to your satisfaction." This speech

seemed to be approved of, so I then went to the proposer of this drink arrangement, who turned out to be the loafer I suspected of appropriating the socks. I could see distinctly suspicious bulges in his serge tunic, over which he wore a pilot coat. I told him I would leave half-a-crown for him to get what the others liked. He coolly informed me half-a-crown was no good at all, and as I had been taking money and receiving benefit I must make it a "quid" (meaning £1). I felt so indignant at this unblushing attempt at extortion, by a man who had already victimised me, that a scene ensued between us of an unpleasant character. I pointed out to him, in no very measured terms, that he was a thief, and rather than submit to his humbug I would knock him into a cocked hat for the small sum of sixpence. The answer which he gave me was the reverse of complimentary, and by no means calculated to appease the righteous indignation which burned within my bosom. Without waiting for the metaphorical sixpence, I at once landed him a stinging blow in the mouth, which knocked him backwards. He got up rather quicker than I expected and came at me butting like a goat. I could not very well strike at him the second time, as one of his companions came up and hustled me forward,

and I received the full benefit of my antagonist's butting in the pit of my stomach. This made me so short of breath that I could not speak for some seconds, not to mention the pain occasioned by this foul proceeding. The others had by this time surrounded and separated us, and the two tobacco-chewers took upon themselves the offices of judge and jury.

Said they, "It will not do to have a row here, as we shall all be run in by the bobbies. If the gentlemen would like it, I know a place where they could have it out quite comfortable, and we could see it all fair." My opponent, however, had already had quite enough of it, his upper lip bearing a considerable resemblance to a prize gooseberry, and as for myself, all I wanted was to get away. Someone suggested splitting the difference, and that I should agrèe to say no more about the socks, as my two quondam judges declared, with a great show of wisdom, that you could not ask a gentleman to strip on suspicion; and even if he did so, and similar articles to what I alleged were stolen were found on his person, how could I prove they were mine? Other people wore knitted socks besides myself.

They pointed out also that, though I swore I took the socks out of the box, there were

three or four others who swore I did not. Dissatisfied as I was with these conclusions, I handed over ten shillings to my judges for the proposed drinks, and left as quickly as I could. Directly I got outside in the road I mounted a tram I saw coming along, and soon arrived at the entrance to the Mersey Ferry pier, and thereupon crossed over to Liverpool.

Arrived at Liverpool, I made my way to Lewis's celebrated shop, where you can get everything, from a piano to a mouse-trap. I was there rigged out with a very neat and well-made tourist's suit; also with hat, boots, and all complete. I had the old clothes I took off carefully wrapped in brown paper, labelled "Stores," and addressed to the Master of the Liverpool Workhouse. I often wonder whether he ever got them, and what he must have thought on opening the parcel and finding a bundle of old clothes stained with sea-water. After my bath and rig-out I had nothing more to detain me in Liverpool. I experienced an irrepressible desire to get to Mewby as quickly as possible. It was still quite early, and I found on inquiry at the Castle Station I was just in time to book express to Newborn Junction, from which station trains ran on to Renton and Selby.

I think I must have slept the whole way to Newborn Junction. I was very tired, and the change of air made me sleepy. I was considerably surprised by my quick arrival at the junction, which was a large station with numbers of passengers waiting there. I found twenty minutes were available for refreshments before the arrival of the Renton train. This I was not by any means sorry for. The vacuum from which I suffered was not less acute than at the time of my first landing at Halifax, nor was I at all particular as to the kind of ballast to be used for filling the same.

I made my way without any delay to the refreshment room, jumping out a little before the train stopped, so as to get the start of any other passengers.

"Miss Thompson," said I to a beauty behind the counter, "let me have some of that Staggering Bob." I here nodded towards a dish I saw in the distance.

"I suppose you mean jelly," said she rather disdainfully.

"The very identical," said I. "You'll excuse me, I have no doubt. I have not long come ashore, and I have not quite got over my nautical expressions." (Staggering Bob was the name jelly was known by amongst the

sailors when they happened to see it, which was not often.)

"Oh, so you are nautical?" said the fair Phyllis.

"No, not naughty gal, naughty boy."

"Go along with you, do, and don't be so silly! How did you know my name was Thompson?"

"Oh! A little bird told me."

"Then he told you an untruth. My name is not Thompson."

"Oh, I am so sorry I gave you the wrong name. I'll never do it again."

"I suppose you find sorrow affects your appetite?" said she.

"Indeed, it does. The sorrow I feel for my culpability in giving you the wrong name is causing me to eat a great deal, and I have only a limited time before me."

The sailors on board the National cattle-boat never considered a meal off Staggering Bob as anything particular, and I was fully of their opinion. After eating half one of these gelatinous compounds, accompanied by two Bath buns, I began to think I should like something substantial, so I fell upon a plate of beef; and subsequently, seeing a plate of pickled salmon handy on the counter, I demolished that also, besides a couple of pork sausages. I concluded

my repast with a plate of mock turtle soup, and a bottle of Bass's bitter. The railway bell, and the porter calling out "Renton and Selby train," made me aware that my time was up, or I could have carried my gastronomic observations still further without having been at all distressed.

"You ought to have had your soup first," said the fair receiver of my cash as she handed me the change.

"I am aware, madam," replied I, with great solemnity of aspect (I did not venture again to call her Miss Thompson), "that according to the rules of Cocker, soup ought to come first, then fish and so on; but then you know the old order of things is passing away and a new order is arising. The soup which was first shall be last, and the cheese which was last shall be first. Already we see in Norway and Sweden the new system is adopted, and they take their bread and cheese first, like the fashion used to be when I was at school in reference to puddings."

"You are a silly man," said Phyllis, who had at last thawed and broken out into a smile. "You will lose your train if you do not mind."

I rushed out of the refreshment room with the satisfactory feeling that it would then have taken a good big gust of wind to have blown me away; and the bodily vacuum being dispelled,

I could proceed to consider that of the mind. With that view I obtained a copy of *Tit-Bits*, and while going along in the train I mentally decided that in the event of my death by an accident, the hundred pounds to which my representatives would become entitled through my having a copy of *Tit-Bits* in my possession, should go, one half to my mother, and the other half to be divided equally between my four sisters—that is to say, fifty pounds to my mother and twelve pounds ten to each of my sisters, and I wrote their names and the amounts on the paper I had purchased.

An accident, however, on this occasion was not amongst the list of pre-ordained occurrences, and I arrived in due course at that, to me, familiar spot, Renton. Thanks to the sparseness of my luggage, I had nothing to hinder me from doing the remainder of the journey on foot. I passed through Renton without being recognised, although I saw one or two familiar faces. "Something must have wrought a change in my appearance," thought I. "Time, I suppose, the great changer of all things." However, I was glad not to stay, as I was quite anxious to get on to Mewby.

I noticed some building springing up in red brick, and on nearing it saw by the placard it

was a new Board school for Renton. There were numbers of bricklayers and masons about, but none of them were local men. They were evidently employed by some contractor who came from a distance, and had his own men on the work.

I was soon on the Mewby Road, passing the familiar spots of my childhood, nearly every inch of the way being registered in my memory. I passed along the well-known grove of trees up to the church, and was not long arriving at the rectory. During the entire distance I only met some tramps and a grocer's cart.

Great was my disappointment on reaching the rectory to find it closed. I went round the house and peered through any windows I could get at, which had no shutters up, but without avail. I could make no one hear, for the very good reason that no one was inside. I went next up into the kitchen garden. I found everything there in perfect order; the frames were filled with seedlings ready for planting out, and the whole garden looked as if it had been recently dug and put in order.

At last I saw two women coming along the road towards the rectory. One of them I noticed had a bunch of keys dangling at her side. They turned out to be Mrs. Blobbs, the charwoman,

and our Ellen. They evidently did not know me, and seemed considerably scared at seeing a man in the rectory grounds. I was disposed to keep up their sensation of fright, and made a very good imitation of the war whoop, as performed by the North-West Indians, at the tip top of my voice.

The two women shrieked aloud, and bolted away as fast as their legs would carry them. I ran after them full tilt. I soon found I was catching them up. Poor old Mrs. Blobbs' breath appeared to be giving way, and she seemed like toppling over. Ellen in her fright dropped the bunch of keys which I picked up.

"Hullo, Ellen," shouted I, "what do you want to lock me out of the rectory for?"

Here Ellen recognised my voice and stopped short. "Lor', bless my 'art alive," said Ellen, as she turned round, "and if it ain't Master Charlie. Oh, I be that skeered, I thought it wur a strange man in the grounds."

"Well I never!" said Mrs. Blobbs. "Just to think of this now. And 'im a cummin' back and fin'ing the 'ouse shut up!"

I soon discovered from Ellen the cause of all this. The governor had had an attack of rheumatism in the joints. He had been unable to hold his pen, and had consequently

gone down to Bath to see what benefit he could derive from the waters, which had been very strongly recommended to him. The mater, Constantia, and Gertrude had gone with him, the other two girls were at school, and Herbert was in London working up for his profession.

"You can have a bed in the rectory," said Ellen. "It would be a pity for you to have to go away so quick. Mrs. Blobbs will hair the bed in the frunt room, and I'll be gettin' yer summut to heat meantimes."

"Thanks, Ellen; I don't know but what I had better stop. It is of no use my attempting to get up to my brother's in London now."

It was thereupon arranged that I should stay the night at the rectory.

When Ellen opened the letter-box she found several letters for me. As they had all been expecting me home, it was thought useless to write, as I should have been half-way across the ocean before the letter would have arrived. The letter I opened fully explained the family arrangements. The governor, it appeared, was to remain away from Mewby for a year, and in the meantime the Rev. Titus Timothy, of St. Bernard's Theological College, would, with the sanction of the Bishop, take charge of the parish, and likewise provide himself with some suitable

lodgings, as the rectory was about to be let to a highly respectable family for ten guineas a week.

The latter part of this arrangement had been cleverly carried out by the mater, with the view of helping up with the governor's expenses at Bath, and Ellen and Mrs. Blobbs had been getting the rectory ready for the reception of the said highly respectable family.

"I suppose," said Ellen, "Mr. Charlie, you means to stay over Sunday and see Mr. Titus."

"No thanks," said I, "it is quite enough for me to have a parson for a governor without having a number of parson acquaintances; besides, Mr. Titus has the old maids on the green to look after, so he don't want me."

The next letter I opened was from Messrs. Fisher & Findim, of Plug Court, Temple, informing me that I was entitled, under a codicil of the will of the late Miss Elizabeth Ashford, to the sum of two hundred pounds, less legacy duty, and requesting me to call at their office at my earliest convenience.

On reading this I gave such a sudden jump in the air that Ellen and Mrs. Blobbs, who were dusting the room, both thought I had gone cranky, and as I continued my jumps the look of alarm which had been on their faces when I

delivered my war whoop returned with double force.

"Lor, Master Charlie, whativer's the matter?" said Ellen.

"Nothing, Ellen, only spasms in consequence of a difficulty in assimilating the contents of this letter."

"Git 'im a drop of gin," said Mrs. Blobbs. "That's wut I 'as w'en I 'as 'em."

The last letter I opened was from Phail, who stated he had made his mind up to try Manitoba, provided I would join him. He enclosed some letters from people who had recently settled there, and who were doing well; also statistics of the crops for the last few years, and a great deal of information. As I felt able to have my own way, I sat down and wrote him a letter to the effect that I liked his description of Manitoba, and that I had made up my mind to come over there and join him as soon as I conveniently could.

While Mrs. Blobbs and Ellen were arranging matters for my comfort, I went out to post this letter, and to have a stroll round the village.

CHAPTER IX.

MEWBY, ITS PECULIARITIES AND INHABITANTS —THE "THREE CROWNS" AND ITS FREQUENTERS—QUIETUDE AT THE RECTORY.

EWBY is a very straggling village. There is no main street, as in many villages. A stranger might go through it without being aware that he had been in a village at all. Only the residents and the initiated knew of the existence of Mewby, which consisted of a house here and a house there, then two houses up a lane; further on a row of six cottages, then a small green, on which were two fair-sized houses, one inhabited by two old maids, and the other by a blind old gentleman. Beyond the green, and on the left of the road which went through it, was another lane with a few more houses. Besides the two respectable houses on the green was an inn called the "Three Crowns," which was of some importance to the village, being the principal of the two public-houses the village possessed. The rectory and the church were a little distance from the green.

It was towards the green that I bent my steps whilst my room was being got ready. I heard there had been a coroner's inquest, or, as Ellen called it, a "crowner's" inquest, at the "Three Crowns." The united wisdom of twelve intelligent inhabitants of Mewby had been brought into play through the medium of this inquest. Aided by the coroner's profound judgment and the skilful diagnosis of the village doctor, the combined sphynx had been able to deliver its verdict, "That the child had died from natural causes;" but the foreman added a rider to the effect "that the jury considered the practice of selling toffy and hardbake to very young children was extremely reprehensible."

After the delivery of this elaborate verdict the twelve intelligent rulers of their country received every man one shilling, or, as old Billy Tubbs used to put it, a "bob a-piece." It was this "bob a-piece" that the men to whom the destinies of their country had been confided were engaged in spending. They were spending it in a most benevolent manner. They were not altogether consulting their own inclinations in doing so. Each one of them would have scorned such selfishness. They were each and all animated by higher motives altogether. In fact, they were spending it "for the good of the 'ouse."

It was towards this temporary abode of wisdom and disinterestedness that I was now bending my steps, and on approaching I saw a man come out and stand in the porch. No sooner did the man turn round in my direction than I recognised old Billy Tubbs. He came towards me and looked at me as he might have done at any stranger. He then passed me. I turned round.

"Billy Tubbs," said I.

His astonishment at the sound of his name was intense. He conned me over till at last recognition shone from his rubicund visage.

"Woy," says he, "I'm blest if it aren't Measter Charlie cum from furrin' parts. 'Oude 'ave thort it? Woy, larst time I see yeou, Measter Charlie, yeou was only a nipper, and neow yeou're a growed-up gen'llman all over. Yeou mus' cum in the 'Three Crowns' an' see 'em all. Thay're all there—Muster Croxley an' all. Thay're bin 'avin' a hinquest."

So saying, he led the way into the "Three Crowns."

In the usual way, it would have been thought somewhat *infra dig.* for me, the son of the rector of the parish, to have entered the "Three Crowns"; but circumstances alter cases, and I went in. The twelve jurymen, with a few other choice spirits, were sitting round the common

room, smoking long clay pipes. Here and there were blue mugs containing beer, or what purported to be beer. I believe the "Three Crowns" had a somewhat doubtful reputation for its liquor, and that had the Adulteration Act been strictly enforced it would have gone hard with the landlord. The liking for the beer of the "Three Crowns" was quite an acquired taste—a taste which was only gained after considerable apprenticeship. Thus it happened that no stranger ever spoke well of the beer supplied at the "Three Crowns," nor did he express any desire to try it again after his first experience.

The people inside the "Three Crowns" on the present occasion had mostly been through the apprenticeship necessary to give them the proper appreciation of the "Three Crowns'" liquor. Those that had not, were drinking it from the motives of benevolence before hinted at. The supply of mugs at the establishment was insufficient to allow of each gentleman having a mug to himself; but then there was an ample store of long clay pipes with which to smoke the dried cabbage and chopped hay mixture provided for the purpose.

"Oi du suppose Oi brort wi' me?" said Billy Tubbs as he re-entered. "It's Measter Charlie, as true as I'm smoking this 'ere pipe."

"So it are," said Croxley, rising up and shaking me by the hand. "I am pleased to see ye lookin' so well and 'arty, tho' I shouldn't a knowed ye agin, not if I see ye in the street."

"Do you think I am so much changed then?"

"I should think ye be. There's more change in ye larst two year than ever you'd see in Renton in twenty."

"Oh, I saw some change going on there. I saw the School Board building spring up."

"They may say wut they likes," said Croxley, waxing energetic; "and though I ain't no scholar mysel', and p'raps ses it as shouldn't say it—I may be wrong you know, and doan't say as I ain't—but I doan't see the good of all this 'ere eddication. Now theere's Dick Diggle got 'is 'ed full of Latin grammar and sich muck as that; 'e larnt it at a Board school; that man carn't lay a 'edge to save 'is life. I ses, 'Dick,' I ses, 'you made a foine mess of that theere 'edge, and oi must git sum un as knows 'ow to do it.' Then there's my Susie agin. She's never bin no good, never since she went to that 'ere 'i' school and learned 'ow to play the pie-annie. She carn't milk an' she carn't do nutthen. We carn't afford in these 'ere 'ard times," continued Croxley, "'aving more rates stuck on to pay this 'ere School Board."

"Rite you are, Muster Croxley," simultaneously echoed several voices from the body of the room.

"We carn't pay our rent as it is," said Croxley. "If it worn't for the 'ounds, I shoon't 'ave bin able to 'ave paid enny rent, an' thet's as true as I'm 'ere. It's the 'ounds does it," said Croxley, emphatically. "I should never 'ave bin able to er paid nutthen if it worn't for the 'ounds. As to thet medder land down in the bottom bein' wurth too pun' ten a acre, it ain't wurth thirty bob—it ain't wurth twenty bob. It wur all very well" (here Croxley turned round to me) "your brother—beggin" of your pardin' all the same, Mister Charlie, fur spekin' so plane—I ses it's all very well fur Mister 'Erbert kiddin' me on to pay too pun' ten. You should jus' see the thissells as growed in them two medders. It's enuf to make yer 'art ake, it is indeed. And I ses I'll give thirty bob an' no more. 'Too pun five,' ses Mister 'Erbert. 'No,' ses I. 'I'm dun. I doan't see it.' 'More doan't I,' ses Mister 'Erbert. All the same 'e cums to me nex' mornin'. 'Croxley,' 'e ses, 'arter all,' he ses, 'you shell hev it.' So I hes it, an' I pays thirty bob on lease, an' I ses now, if it warn't for the 'ounds——"

"Thet's so," said Billy Tubbs interrupting. "Ef it worn't fur the 'ounds an you're sellin' thet theere brood mare you wouldn't 'ave——"

"Ain't thet wut I sed?" said Croxley testily. "If it worn't fur the 'ounds, 'ow'd I got enny price fur thet mare?"

"Oi din't say as you din't say so," said Billy Tubbs. "Oi ses if it warn't fur——"

"Look y'ere," interposed Croxley, "you an' me 'as no call to argify a p'int like thet, an' Measter Charlie a-standin' 'ere as is jus' cum back. 'Adn't we better drop it?"

I could see perfectly well the little game Croxley was endeavouring to play. He was posing before me as a distressed agriculturist who could get no profit out of the land he rented from my governor, and he was mortally afraid old Billy Tubbs would say too much, and show the other side of the medal. Although I strongly disapprove of the system of rents in the abstract, having lived in a country where each individual farmer is his own landlord, the present case was quite a personal one. My governor got his living out of the rents, so I was not such a fool as to show any sympathy to Croxley, otherwise he would have been writing, or rather would have got someone else to have written (he could not write himself), a crawling letter to the

governor, dragging my name into it, complaining of hard times, and asking for what I knew very well the governor could not afford—a remission of rent.

"Thet's jus' as you likes," said Tubbs in answer to Croxley's suggestion to drop it. "Oi knowed Measter Charlie ever sin' he wur only thet 'igh" (here he pointed to a pint pot that stood on the table), "and well Oi recollex Measter Charlie's fearther fust cummin' down in these 'ere parts. Oi allus ses, and Oi allus do say, speke of pe'ple as you finds 'em, an' Oi allus sed, Measter Charlie, as your fearther wur a gen'llman all over."

"'Ear, 'ear," ejaculated several voices, and as many heads wagged in a wise and knowing way.

"Well," continued Tubbs, "when your fearther, Measter Charlie, fust cum, it wur the year arter them big elephant taters wus growed an' cum off the——"

"Taters?" said Croxley interrupting, "taters is all very well; but you carn't 'ave all taters. 'Oose goin' to pay 'is rent orf taters?"

"Thet ain't wut I wur a-goin' to say," said Tubbs.

"Well, wut wur it?" said Croxley. "Look alive, mun."

"Wut Oi me'nt," continued Tubbs, turning his back on Croxley, "wur the date when Muster Ashford fust cum. Oi wur a-wurking on them 'lotments on Renton Rode, an' Oi see Muster Ashford cummin' along in 'is dorg-cart. Yeu recollex the dorg-cart 'e used to drive, Measter Charlie?"

"Oh, yes; I recollect the old dog-cart well."

"Hi, sure. It wur a new dorg-cart then, an' it looked slap up as 'e druv it along with the bay cob, which it wur a five-year-old then. Yeu recollex the bay cob, Measter Charlie? Yeu weren't born when your fearther fus cum, but I dussay yeu recollex the bay cob?"

"Oh, I recollect very well the bay cob. I was eight years old when I first mounted him," said I.

"Hi, sure," continued Tubbs. "Well, yeour fearther wur a cummin' along an' thur wur old ——Lor' bless my soul, my mem'ry gits thet bad as I forgits the names, old——"

"Old Mike Wheeler," suggested Jilks.

"Noa, Oi din mean old Mike Wheeler, Oi means 'im as used to live down Ballzes Lane."

"Woy, yeu means Tim Slatters," put in more than one voice.

"Noa, Oi dun't. Tim Slatters din used to live down Ballzes Lane. He's cum there neow. Oi

means 'im as used to 'ave Tim's 'ouse as is neow. 'Im wut 'is ole 'ooman used to tek in Squire Oskinses washing."

"Oh, ar, yeu means ole Jacky Bunce."

"Hi, that's 'im sure," said Mr. Tubbs with a sigh of relief. "Well, Oi was a-sayin' Oi see Muster Ashford drivin' of 'is dorg-cart, an' lookin' quite all there yew no', w'en he sees ole Jacky Bunce an' 'is barsket jus' on in frunt. Ses Muster Ashford, ses 'e to 'im, 'Yeu finds that 'ere barsket 'evvy.' 'Yes, shure,' he ses, 'so it be, an' its verry 'ot too, parson.' 'Step up be'ind,' sed Muster Ashford, 'along er yeour barsket.' So Jacky Bunce, up 'e steps, an' yew'd 'ardly believe it, but 'e worn't longger then Oi cud say Jack Robinson afore Oi see 'im a-sittin' in the road atop of 'is barsket bottom side up. So Oi cums along. 'Jacky, ole chap,' ses Oi, 'wut be the matter?' 'E wur a sorter dazed like. There wur the Squire's collers an' the Squire's leddy's best lace petticotes all blowin' about the rode. So Oi 'elps 'im hup an' gits the things, which they was all dirty an' spiled, an' shuvs them in the barsket, which the bottom was broke through 'is sittin 'on it. So Oi ses, 'Ole man,' Oi ses, 'wake hup!' 'E'd 'urt 'is 'ip terrible 'e 'ad, and 'e cud 'ardly wark. Arter we'ed bin into this 'ere 'ouse an' 'ad a drop o'summut, Oi tuk 'im 'ome,

an', Lor' bless your 'art, din't 'is ole 'ooman go on toe be shure! She sed as 'ow Oid bin mekkin of 'im drunk, an' so 'e tummelled down an' spiled the close wich they belonged to the Squire. Howmsoever, next mornin' Muster Ashford, he up and he see the Squire, an' 'e tuld the Squire 'ow it 'appened."

"'Ow did it 'appen?" asked one gentleman more inquisitive than the rest.

"Oi never 'eerd quite the rites on it," said Mr. Tubbs, "w'ether the chane bruk, or w'ether old Jacky didn't 'old on tight enuf, Oi dunno. Muster Ashford, 'e sends ole Jacky a suverin' an' the things as use to go up there for dinner, soup an' blummunges, an' all sich things, as Mrs. Ashford sent up to the ole woman. 'Jacky, ole man,' ses Oi, pokin' 'im in the 'ip, wich wur all rite then, 'w'en are yeu goin' to 'ave enuther tummle?' 'Ise better orf 'aving tummles then goin' in the wukkus,' sed 'e. An' Oi ses, an' Oi allus dew say, speke of pe'ple as you finds 'em, an' Muster Ashford allus wur a right-down gen'll-man, so he wur."

"So he wur," echoed several voices. One voice called out that "'E allus liked to speke of pe'ple as 'e finds 'em." "So do us all," echoed the voices.

"And I 'ope, Measter Charlie," said another voice, "as your fearther will soon get 'is 'elth and cum back."

"I hope so, too, most fervently," said I. "In the meantime, perhaps you would all have no objection to drinking his health in his absence; if so I will order all the mugs to be filled."

"'Ear, 'ear," said the assembly.

"I 'ope, Measter Charlie," said Croxley, "as wut I sed, no offence wud be tuk agin, no wur offence ment. In these 'ere 'ard times wun's obleeged to look arter number wun. Yew knows my meaning, Measter Charlie?"

"I think I can guess your meaning, Mr. Croxley, quite near enough; and I can assure you no offence whatever has been taken on my part."

I was perfectly certain that my father would have been particularly disgusted at having his health drank at the "Three Crowns," or, indeed, at any public-house whatever. I therefore resolved to keep a discreet silence on this little episode; and as he was not about to re-appear on the scenes for a twelvemonth, I trusted to time to efface the recollection of what he might have considered an indignity, although not intended as such by the parties by whom it was offered.

For myself I had a bottle of lemonade for the ceremony. I could not and would not tackle a glass of the "Three Crowns'" ale.

On arriving at the rectory, I could see that Mrs. Blobbs and Ellen had been looking out for me. They were about preparing a rattling good steak and onions and hot toast for my repast, together with hot coffee. Ellen had originally suggested sausages, but I repudiated sausages. The Mewby butcher used to make his own sausages; and, although they were of a very good flavour, they were very unsymmetrical in appearance, all of different weights, sizes, and shapes, like the special constables at the Hyde Park gathering.

The steak and onions and hot toast having been duly devoured, I departed to rest in the best bedroom, and soon fell asleep, thinking how funny it was to be in the rectory all by myself.

CHAPTER X.

THINKING ABOUT LENA—A DISTURBED BREAKFAST—BILLY TUBBS AND JILKS AT THE RECTORY ON BUSINESS.

I WAS up early the next morning. During the night I had a curious dream, in which Lena and her father largely figured. Freestone also interposed himself as the evil genius of the dream. I tried ineffectually to recall the details; the impression alone remained.

I am not by any means given to superstitious fancies, but on this occasion an idea took hold of me in spite of myself. I imagined that Lena must have been thinking of me, and that in some mysterious manner our existences were linked. Yet I felt positive that Lena would never forego what she considered to be her duty to her father, nor could I consistently ask her to do so, even had she such a desire. It is true I had already proposed on the spur of the moment and been refused, but before again incurring the risk of a rejection, I felt I must

make my way in the world, and prove to her that what her father treated lightly, if indeed he did treat it lightly, was worth acceptance.

I never could bring myself to the opinion from what I had seen of Lena, that she was capable of trifling with true affection. The Colonel, her father, had, as I thought, snubbed me undeservedly when we took leave of each other at Halifax Harbour, and the letter with which he had since favoured me was a proof that I had thought rightly; that the snubbing was intentional; that he did not care for me as a son-in-law; and, lastly, that as Lena relied on her father's judgment, so long as he lived she would be guided by it. I did not believe he would have written this letter without having given her some intimation of it. At the same time I did not credit the statement that she was really and truly engaged.

What was my own position? Was it improved in any way? Well, yes, I could not help thinking it was. I was about to be the possessor of two hundred pounds; I had gained considerable experience of colonial life; and with such a sum and such experience what might I not accomplish in a new country!

The more I thought over the matter the more I came to the conclusion I would try and win

Lena, and overcome the old man's scruples by showing him I was not the mere gelatinous creature he most likely considered me; that I had an undeniable backbone, and could make my own way in the world unaided by the surreptitious assistance of a fortune. I, perhaps, might fail in the end; then I should only have the consciousness of having done my level best as a consolation, and should be no worse off than I was when I first encountered Lena and himself. In my present frame of mind I certainly did not feel like failure.

So absorbed was I in my meditations that I hardly noticed Mrs. Blobbs and Ellen when they came in to lay the breakfast things. I am afraid I must have given curt replies to their inquiries as to "'Ow I slep'," and "Wur the bed cumfle."

I consumed my breakfast during intervals of walking up and down the dining-room. First I eat a piece of buttered toast, then I walked to the window, came back and drank some coffee, then demolished a piece of bacon, then to the window, then back again to the buttered toast, till at last my breakfast was over; and I found whilst I had been walking up and down, and thinking out the problems of my existence, I had mechanically assimilated all the edibles and

drinkables on the table, half a stale loaf of bread only excepted.

During the course of my peregrinations in the dining-room, my abstracted gaze had on each occasion sought the window at the opposite end to which my breakfast was placed. I gazed, yet I saw not. On the last occasion, the figure of a man holding earnest conversation with our servant Ellen drew me back to immediate mundane concerns. My reverie was at an end.

"Who can that be talking to Ellen?" thought I. Now I knew Ellen was not by any means the kind of girl given to running after the men. Indeed, it would have been no use her doing so. She was so plain and homely, and probably was dimly conscious of the fact. Still, however, she had a young man. I came to the conclusion, therefore, it could only be that particular man to whom Ellen was talking in such a confidential manner. And so it proved. It was Jilks, her special, the one she was "a-keeping company with."

Still I thought to myself it was rather early for Jilks to be there, as the courting generally went on in the evening, more particularly Sunday evenings. I will just go and see what he wants.

I went. Ellen retired inwards.

"Mornin', zur," said Jilks, pulling at a kind of small bell-rope of hair sticking over his forehead.

"Good morning, Jilks. What brings you here so early?"

"Pleese zur, Oi see the hagent."

"Seen what agent, Jilks?"

"Seen 'im as sells the tickets."

"Tickets?" said I.

"Didn't Billy Tubbs tell 'e, zur? We be going to MerryK."

"Going to America!" said I in astonishment. "You don't mean it."

"Ees, zur, we does. Me an' Ellen get spliced nex' Sunday, an' cum a fortnite nex' Monday we be orf; me an' Ellen an' Billy Tubbs."

"Well, Jilks," said I, "I think it might be a good move for you and Ellen to go out to America; but as to Billy Tubbs, I should say it was rather late in the day for him to think of making a new home."

"Zo Oi be told," said Jilks. "Varmer Croxley ses as it's wun of the rummiest goes 'e hever 'eerd tell on, er Billy Tubbs goin' out to MerryK. 'E be goin' all the same. 'E 'as tin, 'as Billy."

"Oh, yes, I daresay he has put by some cash. He has always been hard-working and saving. If he were only ten years younger it would be all right."

I was fairly puzzled at the piece of news I had just heard, and the more so when I found the decision had been come to since I had been telling them about Canada on the previous day at the "Three Crowns." No sooner had I left that important *rendezvous*, than Tubbs and Jilks made up their minds to emigrate. So enthusiastic were they on the point, that Billy Tubbs as soon as he got home took down an old stocking, in the toe of which he kept a reserve, and counting out ten pounds, sent Jilks over to Renton to secure three steerage tickets by the Allen Line of steamers, before, as he said, they were all sold out. The postmaster of Renton had lately taken to the agency for selling emigrants' tickets, and these tickets were actually the first he had sold.

As to Ellen, she was equally enthusiastic with the men. She had been wondering what was to become of her after her service at the rectory had been concluded, and this decision of Billy Tubbs and her young man saved her the trouble of thinking further on this score.

Jilks, after giving me this startling information, then went away; but he returned to the rectory in about half-an-hour, bringing back with him Billy Tubbs, and Ellen informed me they both wanted to see me on business.

The two men having been shown into the dining-room performed the usual salutation of pulling their bell-ropes (in Billy Tubbs' case it was a shock of hair). They entered upon their business with a becoming sense of the gravity of the task they had undertaken to perform, and unrolled a couple of documents which they handed me to read.

The papers in question were simply forms requiring to be filled in to enable them as depositors in the Renton Land and Investment Association, Limited, to withdraw their savings. The enterprising secretary of that well-conducted association tried hard to make them believe it would be better for them to leave their cash behind them in his safe custody while they paid their visit abroad. He said they were sure to come back. His eloquence was thrown away. His views and their views being diametrically opposed, they brought with them the printed notices to withdraw their money, to which they now directed my attention.

I looked through these forms that possessed so much cabalistic signification to the minds of these men. I filled in the blanks in a proper manner, and then all they had to do was to affix their signatures; but to Billy Tubbs, being "no scholar," was assigned the more humble task of affixing a mark.

Billy Tubbs tackled his document first, and endeavoured to put his mark, but the attempt was a failure. Billy Tubbs had very large hands and very thick fingers, hardly suitable for grasping such an effeminate instrument as a pen, though admirably adapted for wielding the clumsily made and enormously heavy agricultural implements in use at Mewby. The pen slipped upwards through his unaccustomed fingers as he attempted to grasp it; a big blot was the consequence, and this totally obscured his well-intentioned though incomplete endeavour to comply with legal requirements.

"Try again," said I. "Put some more ink in your pen."

"Oi worn't eddicated an' med a scholar loike 'im," said Billy Tubbs, pointing to Jilks. "It wur afore my time."

He here made a sudden and determined dash with the pen, executing quite a work of art on the document, which he then held up to me in triumph, expecting my admiration.

"Why," said I, "that is just the very thing, only it is in the wrong place."

I here took the enormous brawny right hand of Billy Tubbs, and holding it firmly between my own two, so that the pen could not slip,

directed it to the precise spot where the necessary mark was required to appear.

"If you can only repeat the same operation here that you did in the other place the thing is done," said I.

This time success was achieved, though Billy Tubbs's sleeve added to the performance an extensive smear, which gave it that sombre picturesque aspect sometimes observed in "studies in indigo, of the Thames in a fog, by a celebrated artist."

I then turned my attention to the "scholar," who, with his tongue out, rolling uneasily from side to side of his mouth, was making a desperate effort to effect a signature, the result being that "jilkes dannel" was written just in the place where my signature as witness was required.

"Your name is Daniel," said I, "and I think your name Jilks has no e."

"'E ˌwur crissend Dannel," put in Billy Tubbs.

"Roight yew be, Billy," said Jilks. "Sumtoimes oi spells moy name wi' a he, an' sumtoimes oi spells it wehout a he, Measter Charlie," said Jilks.

As I did not want to enter into an abstruse argument with a reputed scholar, I simply

asked him if he would kindly re-write his name D. Jilks. In order not to offend his susceptibilities, I suggested this course might prevent the authorities making any unnecessary bother.

He thoroughly concurred with my view as to the desirability of preventing the authorities from making a bother; he grasped the pen a second time; his tongue again came into play; I held my forefinger near the proper place, and the signature "d. jilks," in a shaky round text hand, slowly came into existence.

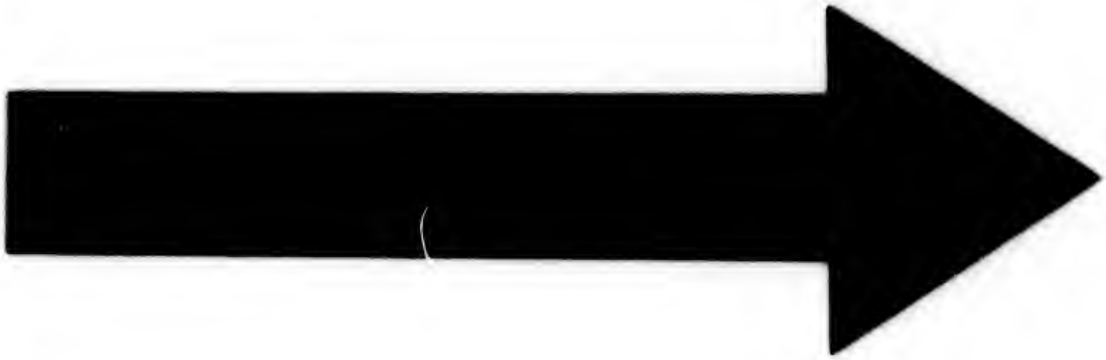
I am bound to say I have seen the signatures of many eminent scholars in their letters to the governor, not done half as well. The governor once sent a letter to the Earl of Titmouse, who was a member of the Ministry, asking his interest to get me some appointment. An answer came back which none of us could read, although we submitted it to all sorts of microscopic tests. As to the signature "Titmouse" at the end, I would have defied any one to have made Titmouse of it. Only for the crest we should never have known who it came from; and whether or not Lord Titmouse was willing to use his interest to get me the appointment I never knew, so was unable to thank him, but most likely he was not.

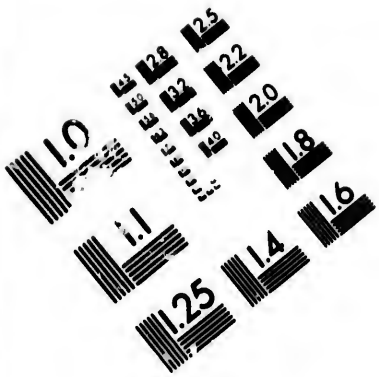
After this business had been got through, these two men expressed the most unbounded

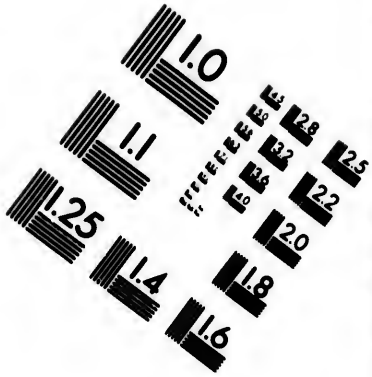
gratitude to me for the services I had rendered them. Any one would have thought I had been making them a present of the money they were about to draw out instead of its being their own. They both expressed a most ardent desire to see me as soon as they had settled in "MerryK" any time I liked to drop in, and were so excessively sorry to think "they wurn't goin' over in the same boat I wur." I could not own to feeling equally sorry. I was unable to share in their regret on account of their being such "cautions." However much I respected their honest straightforwardness of character, I was not blind to the possibility that their constant companionship on a voyage of ten days and a half might become a trifle monotonous.

I handed over to them some letters of introduction to Canadian farmers I knew, and bid them adieu, little thinking under what extraordinary circumstances I should again see them.

Some of my readers may be disposed to think that my governor, as rector of Mewby, must have been much to blame for the absence of any desire for education displayed by the residents; but this was far from being the case. I have heard the governor say that, when he first came to Mewby, the only school-house in the place was a barn, and the only instructress an old







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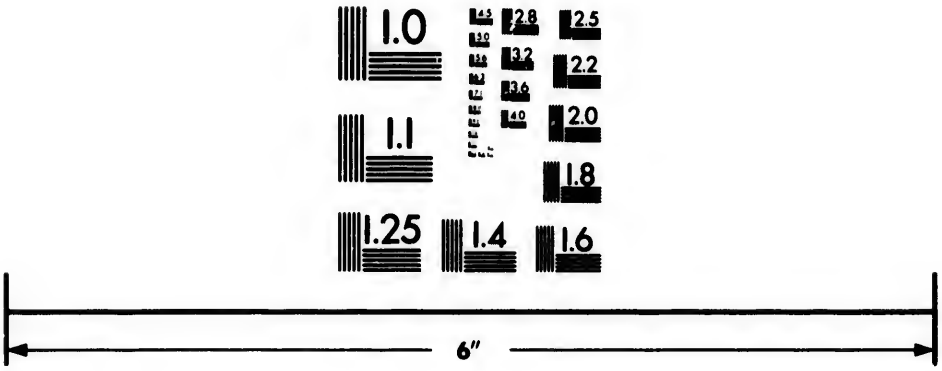

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woman, who had a class of both boys and girls. Such was the opposition and apathy manifested to any expenditure on behalf of education by the squire of the parish, and by all the farmers, that the expense of building a new school-house, and providing the salary of a master, fell principally on the governor's shoulders. The school was very sparsely attended when built, and it was with the greatest difficulty pupils were secured, the parents thinking they were conferring a great favour on the governor in sending their children, until the Education Act of 1870 woke up Mewby as well as many other dormant parishes. Compulsory attendance was then introduced. The growing generation of male and female Mewbyites were looked up, and caught in the net fabricated by the promoters of the Act of Parliament. They were compelled to abandon their professions of bird-frightening and baby-nursing, at any rate during school hours. Much against their own wish and that of their parents, and despite the prejudices of the local magistrates, the germs of education in the shape of the "three R's" were forced into their reluctant minds, thus rendering it possible for the Mewby of the future to produce its Sir Isaac Newton or some other equivalent celebrity.

After taking leave of Mr. W. Tubbs and the "scholar," I sat down and wrote a letter to Phail, making some arrangements for our meeting, so as to proceed to Manitoba together. I determined on going out *viâ* New York instead of *viâ* Halifax, as I intended to take an opportunity of meeting Lena there, if possible.

The next morning I started to catch the early train. Farmer Croxley had offered to drive me, but he had broken the shaft of his cart. It was no great hardship for me to walk under ordinary circumstances, only the heavy rain in the night had completely spoiled the roads for walking. I did walk, but I got up to my eyes in mud. The roads all round Renton and Mewby were very badly kept. There appeared to be no local authorities to look after them. Authorities there were certainly, who collected the rates, but that is all they did beyond putting two or three wretched old paupers once or twice a year to muddle about on some stone heaps.

CHAPTER XI.

ONTARIO VERSUS MEWBY AND RENTON—LONDON, ENGLAND, AND LONDON, ONTARIO—CABS, CO-OPERATIVE STORES, AND CODICILS.

DURING the course of my walk to the station, a forcible contrast presented itself to my mind between the neighbourhood about Mewby and Renton and the portions of the Province of Ontario I had been in, more particularly the country round Hamilton and London. In the latter were found neat farmhouses, well kept and wide roads, intelligent inhabitants, and a general appearance of brightness; whereas round Mewby and Renton the roads could only be considered lanes, being so narrow two carts could not pass each other unless one sided into the hedge; muddy they were in the extreme, the inhabitants mostly seemed as stupid as owls, the farmhouses were rotten and old, the cottages filthy and overcrowded. A dull, apathetic aspect

pervaded everybody and everything. Either agricultural depression or some other species of dry rot had affected the place, or my eyes and feelings had undergone a strange transformation since my absence in Canada.

What utterly surprised me was the enormous price asked for land in a country district presenting so few attractions. Sixty to seventy pounds per acre could still be obtained for agricultural land such as in Ontario could be purchased for about three, all improvements included; and as to building land in the vicinity of Renton, if it could be at all obtained, some five or six hundred pounds per acre would be charged.

It did not, however, behove me, as the son of the rector of the parish, to say anything tending to make the natives feel dissatisfied. I prudently kept my reflections to myself, lest the people should all want to ship out at once to Ontario, leaving the governor the empty village with no one in it to pay his rents or do his work. Had it not been for these considerations I might have felt inclined to have opened my mind to some of the Mewby farmers I met going along. These people here and there stopped me to inquire after my father's health and welcome me back, and I felt it cruel to engender feelings of discon-

tent in their breasts by drawing invidious comparisons. What I had already said on the subject had, in a great measure, induced Billy Tubbs and his nephew to alter the course of their existence; so I felt already a certain amount of responsibility for having held out visions which might be beyond the realisation of persons unable to adapt themselves to the circumstances of a new country.

I caught sight of Billy Tubbs as I was leaving in the train, and had the opportunity of bidding him a final farewell. He was astonished to find I was going to London, a place which he averred he had never been to and never wanted to go to. In that respect he resembled the majority of the Mewby inhabitants, who all entertained similar objections to the great city. Farmer Bott went there one year to the Agricultural Show, at a time when there was a dense fog in the metropolis. The poor man lost his way in the fog, and, according to Mewby report, was never the same man afterwards. It was universally believed in Mewby his death was accelerated some years in consequence of this fatal visit. The Mewby prejudices had, however, little weight with me. Having been so much of a traveller, my curiosity had been only stimulated by what I had seen; and the prospect of beholding a city wrapped in the

obscurity of a fog was to me as alluring as it was novel.

But in this respect I was doomed to disappointment. I arrived in London, England, about eleven in the morning; and though I found the atmosphere much thicker than what I had been accustomed to in London, Ontario, during my visits to that city, still I could see perfectly well to get about.

Now, whatever I may have thought of the agricultural inferiority of Mewby to most of the Ontario province, I am bound to say the intense bustle and life of London, England, put its Canadian namesake completely in the shade. Not but what London, Ontario, is a fine city, especially around Richmond Street, with its tramcars running right through the centre, its well-lighted avenues, plenty of good stores, manufactories, &c.; still for all that it will take its inhabitants, enterprising as they are, a long time before they can bring their place on a level with London, England. Both cities are situated on rivers, each of which is respectively named the Thames. The Canadian Thames in the vicinity of London, Ontario, is far less imposing in appearance than is the English Thames, though for skating purposes, had I my choice, I should prefer the Bay of Hamilton to either.

In drawing these comparisons it is far from my wish to offend the susceptibilities of any of my friends in London, Ontario, and I may say I have not seen the Thames in Canada where it falls into Lake St. Clair; so I trust this mention may be considered a sufficient apology to any of my Canadian readers.

I could very well have spent a fortnight in London, England, without exhausting the objects of interest; but having only a few hours at my disposal, I chartered a cab with the intention of getting over the ground quickly and viewing some of the places mentioned to me by the Colonel.

First of all, I drove to the hotel the Colonel stopped at. I got out and gazed at its exterior without noticing any special point to distinguish it from other hotels. As it had been the home of Lena for about six weeks, I felt interested enough in it to go inside; this I did. While proceeding to examine the principal saloons my progress was arrested by a flunkey, having underneath his arm a table napkin, and wearing the customary tail coat and white tie costume. I explained to this individual that I wanted to see Colonel Adair and Miss Adair if they were staying in the building, if not, I asked him to get their present address. This sent him off to make

inquiries, and left me at liberty to look around and continue my inspection. While doing so I came across a screen which I had not at first noticed. Behind this sat another flunkey of sinister aspect, who had been eyeing me over suspiciously through a slit in the canvas of the screen. Not liking the look of this last man, whom I thought fully capable of giving me in charge on suspicion of stealing a spoon or some other unimportant article he might himself have pocketed, I walked straight out of the hotel. I had and still possess the greatest possible dislike to any species of espionage, acting as I do always on the square.

On getting outside I found my cab gone, so I hailed another and entered it. Of course I thought it strange the former cabdriver should have left without getting his money, and I accounted for this proceeding on his part by the natural impatience he had most likely felt at having been so long kept waiting.

It did not take me long to discover I had formed quite an erroneous view of the situation. No sooner was I well under weigh in the fresh cab than the original cabman turned up and rattled after me as hard as he could. He had evidently been having some refreshment, and had not the slightest intention of letting me off gratis.

From the inside of the cab I was in I could hear both cabmen using most profane language at each other, and it was not until I arrived at the place of destination, and I had paid both of them full fare, that the storm was assuaged. I accepted the alternative of paying both men rather than put the case into the hands of an impartial but to me totally unsympathetic "Robert" who appeared on the scene of dispute, attracted, no doubt, by the huge concourse of strangers which speedily collected.

The crowd persisted in following me all down the street with Robert in their rear, and when I stopped to look in at a shop window the crowd also stopped. I felt considerably exasperated in consequence of having had to pay double fare, still more so at being followed about, and I should have hit out right and left had this gone on much longer. There was nothing particular about my appearance to excite this kind of morbid curiosity on the part of strangers. I had on the same deer-stalker's hat I usually wore in Hamilton and Montreal, and it seemed very queer I could not walk about without the attendance of a mob of loafers and small boys, all collected together simply because of my dispute with two cab-drivers.

At last I turned round and, appealing to the

most respectable looking of the set, asked him what they were all waiting for.

"Waiting to see you took," said he.

"Took—what for?" I remonstrated.

"Why fur making a disturbance and obstructing Her Majesty's eyeway," put in Robert at the back.

The man I spoke to here came close up to me and said in a low tone of voice, "'E carn't do it 'isself. 'E's waitin' fur his pal. Look y'ere, guvnor. 'And us over sixpennorth of coppers, and I'll see you through right."

"Anything you like," said I, and pulled out all the coppers I had.

It so happened I was very rich in coppers, and must have handed over more than a shilling's worth. The greater portion of these disappeared into the pocket of my would-be benefactor, but a moiety spun out of his left hand into the air by means of a remarkable back-handed twist which he dexterously imparted thereunto.

"Now, then, guv'nor," said he, "you slope."

This advice I was at once able to follow out, as the crowd, seeing the coppers spinning in the air, pushed helter-skelter towards the point of the descent of the coins, leaving the coast clear for me. While the scramble was going on I rapidly disappeared up a side street, the infuriated

Robert being unable to get through after me, his progress being impeded by the scramble so artfully created just in front of him.

I was glad enough to get clear of this embroglio, and emerging into a rather wide street found myself opposite one of the most important public buildings in London. This was no other than the celebrated Civil Service Stores, built by a rich contractor named Brass, and devoted to the purposes of exchange of production.

From an architectural point of view there is nothing very original about this building. It is, in fact, a mere servile imitation of the commercial buildings of Hamilton and Toronto, from one of which cities the plan was no doubt derived, thus showing how the younger civilisation of the colonies acts and re-acts on the mother country.

It was the interior of this important building which most interested me, more especially as it was down on the Colonel's list as a place worth visiting. It immediately struck me that it would be the proper place to buy the presents I intended to make to my mother and sisters. With this intention in view, I entered the building and soon arrived at the jewellery department, where I had no difficulty in selecting suitable presents. It was only when I came to pay for

them that any difficulty presented itself. The man at the counter refused to take the money for them, and asked me the number of my ticket.

At this I was considerably nonplussed. I was totally at a loss to understand what the man meant, never having been thus interrogated in any of the big stores I had been in, either in Canada or the States.

I stared hard at the man in order to find out whether he was trying to take advantage of my being a stranger in order to perpetrate some flippant joke at my expense, in which case I should, without any more ado, have pulled his nose; but I could soon see that he was quite in earnest in making the inquiry. It so happened there was a very well-dressed young man standing at the counter who overheard the conversation. This young man very politely came to my assistance. It appeared he had an account at these stores, and offered to have the amount which my purchases came to paid into his account. I was thus able to bear away my purchases by paying the young man instead of the store clerk.

I was so interested in the working of this institution that I requested my new friend to furnish me with full particulars. This he very kindly did; and the information that he imparted

on the subject was so important, I felt convinced it would do good to have it made known in Canada. I was determined, if I succeeded in settling in Manitoba, to be instrumental in founding out there a similar institution.

I will here give the information exactly as I received it from my informant. The Civil Service Stores were so called, said he, on account of the extreme civility with which the service was, and for all I know to the contrary still is, conducted. The persons who serve in these stores are, according to the rules, all obliged to be shareholders as well as customers, and thus they have every inducement to take an interest in the welfare of the association.

The stores were founded originally by a society of farmers, and the names of the two original founders were Johnson, an Englishman descended from the family of the great lexicographer, and Moore, an Irishman. These two met each other at the Agricultural Show, Islington, and subsequently became great friends, both putting up at the same hotel. Although coming from different places, they each had many grievances to complain of which might be considered common to both. They put their heads together to formulate some plan of redress, and the result was the founding of the magnifi-

cent institution which I am now attempting to describe.

The idea of Johnson was to combine together a number of owners and occupiers of farms into an association for the purpose of selling their produce directly to the consumers without the interference of any middle man. Moore, the Irishman, improved on this idea. Said he, "Why sell at all? Why not exchange directly your produce for the articles of consumption you require? If you first exchange your produce into money, you must of necessity give the owner or broker of this money commodity a certain amount of profit which is just as well in your own pocket, money being a commodity like other things and having its price. What you really require in exchange for your farm produce or commodities is not money, but the requisites which money has hitherto been able to obtain."

Johnson was soon brought to see the advantages to be derived from a direct system of exchange instead of the roundabout method through the agency of money. It was therefore decided they should, in founding these stores, go upon the principle of excluding money as far as possible, and after some experience it was found in effect that hardly any money was in reality required.

The agency of the middle man being eliminated, the low prices for which the farmers could in consequence afford to sell their produce, attracted the notice of no end of purchasers, and enabled the society to select their own class of customers. This they did from those who had articles of manufacture or other productions to give in direct exchange for farm produce. By this means the use of money in the transactions of exchange was virtually abolished, to the great advantage of both sides, the profit which the money manipulators made being saved. Instead of a farmer being obliged to put up with the price for his produce given him by the money broker or money manipulator, he was able to exchange it for its full value in kind whenever required. The accounts were rendered half-yearly, and the balance placed to the credit of each shareholder. The reckoning was reduced to money terms as a matter of convenience, so as to show a uniform standard of value; but the practice of the stores being the direct exchange of farm produce for manufactured articles, and *vice versâ*, any shareholder wishing to close his or her account and withdraw from the undertaking would, according to the rules, receive the balance in kind and not in money, according to the scale of prices in the price-list. Thus the large number of *employés*

engaged in butchering, baking, and all the other required duties were in constant and profitable employment.

"What we are aiming at," continued my informant, "is to enable labour to have its full reward, and this we accomplish by doing away with all intermediary agencies. We require no middle men. The manufacturers either send their products up to our stores direct, or, what is the same thing, they enter into our books what they have to dispose of and take value in kind from our farmers or other shareholders as agreed on. We thus," said he, "do away with all intermediaries, and, above all, the agency of money. Money," continued he, "is a very convenient method of exchange; but if the temporary owners or possessors of it will lock it up in their own keeping so as to take every possible advantage of the workers, in what consists its advantage as a medium of exchange? It simply becomes the agency for the artificial production of poverty and destitution, such as we see around in this city. The owners of the commodity called money lock it up if they cannot obtain an advantage, and only let it loose when they can get an advantage over workers.

"Now the owner of a commodity such as butter is obliged to part with it. He must take

for it what it happens to fetch. If he takes its value in money he is obliged to accept what the money owners or brokers will give him, value or not. He is therefore constantly a loser, and the profit he would otherwise make goes into the pockets of the money owner or broker. But by becoming a member of our stores he is able directly to exchange his butter for its value in any other commodity he may happen to want, thus saving the profit of the money agent. Everyone eats butter, at least all our shareholders do."

"But," said I, in astonishment, "if these kind of institutions were to multiply, actual money would become of no value whatever."

"Precisely," said he. "That is exactly the object we wish to attain. We wish to show to the world that exchange can be effected without the medium of coin. When that problem is demonstrated, people will no longer be so foolish as to pay a premium for the permission to use coin. At present we have only our shareholders to consider, and none of them care to use money at all. They can get everything they want through our stores; can exchange their labour or any other commodity they have to exchange, and get its value in kind. Outsiders are compelled to exchange their productions, wares, or

labour into the commodity called money, and, of course, to the owners of this commodity they are compelled to pay a heavy premium; but as we do our exchange direct, we save all this expenditure."

"Don't you think," said I, "that the system which you and your people have inaugurated is a step backwards in civilisation? Is it not a return to the old system of barter which the introduction of money was intended to abolish?"

"On the contrary," said my informant. "What you assert might be true if we leave out of consideration our railways, telegraphs, and all other adjuncts which have been made to civilisation during the last fifty years. Before these discoveries, a direct system of exchange would have been impossible. Money in the shape of coin was absolutely necessary to carry out everything. Now it is not so. Why should we continue to pay a tax to the holders of permissions to use coin when virtually we have no necessity to use it at all?"

Much more was told me by this gentlemanly and well-dressed young man, whom I had at first taken for an ordinary masher. I began to feel that the metaphysical subtleties put forward were getting too much for my brain, so I

took my leave, after again thanking him for his kindness.*

It did not take me long to make my way to 5, Plug Court, Temple, which was a mean house up a mean court. Nor was the interior more prepossessing. The house contained a number of very small rooms. These small rooms, as if for making them more stuffy, were divided across by painted deal partitions, behind which sat several pale, emaciated-looking clerks, engaged in writing round text-hand on parchment. I went into three of the rooms before I hit upon the right one, and was then confronted by a small boy, who asked me to take a seat. This I did, on the only seat available—a long cane bench where several other victims were sitting, chewing, meanwhile, the cud of expectation. I waited and waited while each of my fellow-sufferers was being successively polished off.

The small boy kept bobbing in and out of a door leading into a "sanctum sanctorum" on the

* Since the above appeared in print, C. A. received a letter from an association of farmers, who state their stores are not christened "Civil Service," and they have no connection with the one described by the young man; also letters from various proprietors and secretaries of stores, "Civil Service" and otherwise, all affirming their establishments have nothing to do with the one described.

opposite side of the partition to where we were sitting. He called out the name of the sufferer whose turn it was to enter the sanctum. He called out "Mr. Jones!" and a depressed-looking person, answering to that name, rose from the cane seat and disappeared through the green baize door into the spider's web beyond. Depressed as this individual looked when he went in, it was nothing to the appearance he presented ten minutes afterwards as he returned through the baize door, nervously mopping his fevered brow with a faded silk pocket-handkerchief. I felt morally certain that this man had not been the favoured recipient of a legacy of two hundred pounds; much more likely was it that he had had one of his best back teeth extracted.

It was now getting near my turn to go in, and my spirits began to rise at the thought of the legacy of two hundred pounds I was about to receive. I was prepared to have certain deductions made on account of legacy duty, &c.; but still, on calculation according to Phail's letter, I felt I should have ample for a commencement on a free grant in Manitoba.

While waiting, I drew out a list of the absolutely necessary requirements and the cost thereof. Here it is:—

	£	s.	d.
Oxen	20	0	0
One cow	9	0	0
Two pigs	2	5	0
Breaking plough	3	0	0
Ordinary plough	2	10	0
Wagon	12	0	0
Wire for fencing	6	0	0
Harness	2	10	0
Churn	0	10	0
Stove	5	0	0
Fowls	1	0	0
Log chains	1	5	0
Seed	3	10	0
House	20	0	0
Mower	10	0	0
Hay rake	6	0	0
Set of harrows	3	0	0
	£107	10	0

I could not find anything further to put down as an absolute necessity, and was congratulating myself on the thought that I should have a fair sum in hand to commence upon, when the small boy squeaked out my name, and through the baize door I was ushered into the presence of a small, hump-backed man, with sharp, twinkling eyes and a large diamond ring on his finger. This was Mr. Fisher. We both bowed to each other, while with an elegant wave of the diamond I was motioned to a seat.

Mr. Fisher proved to be very deaf, and was unable to listen to any of my observations with-

out the assistance of an ear-trumpet. This trumpet he was continually dropping on the ground. He would then ring a gong; the small boy would come in, pick it up, and retire backwards. This practice accounted for the number of times I had seen this youth bobbing in and out while I had been waiting.

I had no option but to listen to Mr. Fisher's description and explanation of how my legacy of £200 had become liable to certain deductions, owing to costs which had been incurred through the opposition of one of the legatees to my aunt's will, and I was asked whether I would accept £94 14s. 7d. as a settlement.

"You need not accept it unless you like," said Mr. Fisher.

"Suppose I don't accept it—what then?" called I down the trumpet.

"Oh, well—er—that is a matter for your own consideration as to what you will do. You can give us your instructions and enter a *caveat*."

"I would sooner enter the infernal regions," said I. "I see perfectly well that unless I accept this offer I shall get nothing."

"Then you accept the proposed settlement?" said Mr. Fisher.

"Well, I suppose I must."

The gong sounded, the small boy re-appeared,

together with two cadaverous-looking clerks bearing some papers for my signature. This done, I received a cheque for £94 14s. 7d., signed by Fisher & Findim, and departed on my way, not exactly rejoicing, but fully comprehending the causes for depression in those individuals who entered through that mystical baize door.

I soon went and got the cheque cashed, and after calling on my brother Herbert at his offices in Chancery Lane, which were a very agreeable contrast to those I had just quitted—

"Do you know Fisher & Findim?" said I to Herbert.

"Know them? I should think I did. They are the biggest thieves in London."

I here detailed my experience, and had the consolation of hearing that I had done the wisest thing possible in accepting the amount offered as a settlement, as had I given them any instructions the matter would never have ended, and I should have got nothing.

I accompanied my brother to the place where he dined, the "Tivoli," in the Strand, celebrated for its lager-beer, the only liquor Herbert was allowed by his doctor to take while engaged in his studies.

After this I bid him adieu, and was just in time to catch the "Flying Dutchman" to Bath.

CHAPTER XII.

COLONEL ADAIR AND LENA'S PROJECT—LENA MEETS WITH MEWBY NATIVES.

COLONEL ADAIR'S business was carried on under the title of Adair & Co., though he was the only principal in it. His late wife, Lena's mother, had been an heiress in her own right to about half a million of dollars, and Lena had also inherited from her aunt about fifty thousand more.

The trustees with whom these amounts had been vested allowed them to be merged in Colonel Adair's business, so satisfied were they with its stability and security; but they stipulated that, in consequence of this advantage, he should trade as Adair & Co. instead of as before solely in his own name. It was further stipulated that a proportionate amount of profits should be accumulated half-yearly, and the trustees would occasionally come to inspect the business accounts on behalf of their *cestui que trust*.

The Colonel was always proud to show them his accounts with his gradually increasing profits. In due course the trustees died and his wife died, but the "& Co." remained still affixed. The Colonel had long been anxious that his daughter should draw from the business the amounts due to her in her mother's right, and have them invested in her own name independently of the business. He told her she should have the privilege of investing her money in her own way, and selecting her own securities for investment. He would not put a veto on anything she might choose, provided only it were safe. "You must recollect," said he, "high interest generally means bad security, and low interest the reverse."

In making this remark Colonel Adair had in view the great desire which existed amongst too many of the New York young ladies in outdoing each other in display, thus making a very large income and a high rate of interest necessary; but he was little prepared for the choice which his daughter ultimately did make.

After the lapse of a few days Lena told her father what she had determined upon. She said she wished to lend the whole of the money, without charging any interest, to deserving immigrants from Europe having families, in order to

assist them in making a home for themselves. "You know, dear papa, you told me high interest means bad security. I have chosen a security which pays no interest at all; therefore, according to that rule, the security must be very good."

"What!" said the Colonel, almost beside himself in astonishment, "lend the money without interest! That would be a most unbusinesslike proceeding. It would encourage these people in idleness."

"Dear papa," said Lena, "have we not a very large income—more than we can possibly spend? Cannot we try to benefit others a little with it?"

"Well, my dear," said the Colonel, "I promised you you should invest this money as you thought proper, provided it were put out in a safe manner, and I will keep my word. If you are bent on doing without your interest, it will be your loss alone. You will not have so much to spend. It is your own money, and comes to you by right of your mother."

Lena having got her own way, went into her scheme with all the enthusiasm of her nature.

She, accompanied by Miss Delabouche, paid daily visits to Castle Garden, where the immigrants landed. There they came in contact with people from various nations of Europe—English, Scotch, Irish, Germans, French, Italians, Scan-

dinavians, Poles, Hungarians, Spaniards, and also a sprinkling of the Asiatic and African element. All these people had emigrated from their respective countries into America, to be fused into the one common nationality of the great Republic.

Lena and her companion at first devoted their time entirely to conversations with the wives and children of the immigrants. From these conversations they learned a great many particulars of which before they had had no conception, living, as they did, luxurious lives. Their hearts were touched with pity at the extreme poverty of some of the immigrants; and on one or two occasions they returned with their purses empty, having given away, in charity, all the money they had brought with them. But they felt that this kind of indiscriminate almsgiving was not the work they had set themselves to do; and, after about a week spent in taking notes, they determined to make a commencement by selecting worthy recipients of their bounty. They made a choice from amongst the various families recently arrived at Castle Garden from Europe. These families, were sent West on to selected lands which Lena had bought.

To Lena's great astonishment, Freestone, who was not by nature given to philanthropy,

seemed quite as enthusiastic in her project as herself. He volunteered his assistance in making the selections of lands, and was very successful in getting the immigrants properly settled. He said, with much justice, that these Europeans were mostly unfitted for the wild bush lands. He, therefore, settled them on lands contiguous to towns which, although costing much more to purchase, were really good investments for the money Lena laid out; and he was careful to see that all the conveyances were made in Lena's name, so that Lena was virtually the owner of all the properties until the new occupiers had paid her back the whole of the money.

Lena reserved to herself the right of choosing her *protégés*, and in this task she was assisted by Miss Delabouche. The two young ladies would go down to Castle Garden daily for this purpose.

On one occasion they saw landed at Castle Garden a number of Scandinavian immigrants. It is the custom at Castle Garden to have meals provided at a cheap rate for the newly landed people desiring them. Most of them did. They were also given, very often, copies of the New Testament (the Revised edition) by ministers anxious about their spiritual welfare.

It may interest any of my readers who happen never to have been to Castle Garden to know

that it is a perfectly circular structure of large dimensions and lofty height. In the interior is a smaller circle, set apart for the officials who attend to immigrants and book them to their destination. Not only so, but they direct them to places where they can find employment. Of late years it has been the custom to ship back to their own country immigrants of the pauper class and other ineligibles. This is a very good practice, as it is very unfair for one country to incumber another country with its unsatisfactory specimens of humanity. Outside the above-mentioned smaller circle are no end of benches and conveniences for the passengers recently arrived. In fact, an immigrant feels, when he he has landed at Castle Garden, that he ha, a roof over his head and shelter where he can stay a reasonable time, and leave his luggage until he knows what to do and where to go. It is altogether an admirable institution, and worthy of the great American nation.

"These cannot be Norwegians," said Lena, as she noticed a countrified individual in a brown smock-frock with a very blooming-looking countenance, and having on his head a striped Pickwickian night-cap.

In company with this individual was a younger man, having a broad expanse of chest covered

by a velveteen waistcoat, on which a massive steel watch-chain was displayed. This second man had also a very rubicund, broad countenance; he wore a billycock hat, and the nether portions of both men were arrayed in (to English eyes) the familiar corduroy. There was a woman also with them who appeared to be the wife of the latter and general factotum and commander-in-chief of both men, one of whom she ordered, and to the other used the arts of persuasion. Where you see a woman in company with two men, one on each side of her, and you notice that she is tolerably polite to one, you can safely conclude that one not to be the husband.

Although Lena was not a married woman, she at once came to the correct conclusion as to which of the two men was the husband, showing how great is the perspicuity of a woman in forming on the spur of the moment an accurate judgment.

"Surely these are British?" said Lena to Miss Delabouche.

"I guess they are," said Miss Delabouche. "However could it happen they should have shipped over here with a lot of Norwegians? Let us go across and talk to the woman."

Miss Delabouche and Lena accordingly went to the side of the woman.

"Madam," said Miss Delabouche, "would you not like some refreshment after your voyage, and these gentlemen also?"

"Yes, please, mum," said the astonished woman, dropping a curtsey. "We 'ad a very 'ard time along wi' these ere furriners. My 'usband ain't used to the sea; and as to Tubbs, 'e's just as bad as 'im. Oh! I wish we was back agen. I wish as we'd never cum."

"Why did you not ship in a vessel along with your own people?" said Lena.

"Please, mum" (dropping another curtsey), "we missed the boat as we should 'ave cum by, and we was put on this 'ere steamer by some gen'l'man, and we 'ad to pay dubble."

"Dear, dear," said Lena. "Now you are here, perhaps we can do something for you."

"Thank you, kindly, mum," said Ellen, for it was she, thoroughly humbled by the effect of her sea voyage.

"What part of the British Isles do you come from?" asked Miss Delabouche.

"Please, mum, we cums from Mewby."

"Oh, Mew-by. Lena, she says she comes from Mew-by. Do you happen to know it?"

"Yes," said Lena, "I know it."

"There!" said the gentleman in the smock frock, who was no other than Billy Tubbs. He

had been listening in rapt admiration to the conversation. "What did I tell 'e, neow? I says, says I, we're shure to cum out all rite. 'Ere's a leddy as knows Mewby. Mebbe she knows Measter Charlie?"

"Do you mean Mr. Charles Ashford?" said Lena. "I know him, certainly."

"Well, I'm jiggered!" said Tubbs, excitedly. "Excuse me, mum, givin' way to my feelin's. I says, says I, w'en we cum aboard we're shure to cum out all rite, says I, and so it is."

Here Mr. Jilks came forward and pulled a piece of hair on his forehead. "This is my 'usband," said Ellen, "please mum."

Miss Delabouche had, in the meantime, given orders for refreshment which now arrived, and consisted of quite a substantial repast of steak and onions, coffee, rolls, eggs, butter, and buns.

With the exception of the coffee the meal was as good as would be supplied by many a good hotel, and the cost was but trifling; but it is not to be expected that coffee should be very splendid when heated in a large tin with a spout to it, the milk being thrown in during the process of heating, as also the sugar, and the whole boiled together; this is not the way to make coffee taste as it should do. The decoction thus turned out resembles the compound supplied to first-

class passengers at Dover after their arrival from the Continent. It is in speaking of this Dover fluid, the teetotal member for Buckinghamshire, Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild, once said: "Drinking a cup of it was almost enough to drive a temperance man from the paths of teetotalism to those of beer-drinking."

Our Mewby friends, however, not being so fastidious as the Baron, enjoyed their solution of coffee quite as much as they did their eatables.

"Ain't we got nuffin' to pay for this 'ere?" said Tubbs.

"No, my man," said Lena, "you have nothing to pay. As you are friends of Mr. Ashford's, I consider you friends of mine also."

Mr. Tubbs, on the receipt of this intelligence, was even more "jiggered" than he had been at first.

"Lor bless the leddy," said he, "if this aun't a bit o' luck for us chaps, I dunno wut are."

While the newcomers were finishing the meal, Lena and Miss Delabouche went to get the deeds for the property settled.

Lena immediately came to the conclusion to let the two men each have a property, and to lend them one thousand dollars apiece, without interest, to start them on it.

On the arrival of Freestone this business was

concluded. Freestone eyed the newcomers over in such a very supercilious manner, it rather discomposed them. However, he could say nothing adverse, as Lena had decided to send them out West at her own expense.

There was a new settlement about being formed on the Kansas Pacific Railroad, near a good-sized town. This was one of the places in which Lena had bought land for the purpose of settling immigrants, so Tubbs, Jilks, and Ellen were sent thither.

It did not take long, the filling-in of the documents respecting the title. The newly arrived immigrants engaged to take the oath of allegiance and become citizens as soon as eligible; and, after the forms were complete, Freestone being in a hurry to go, called his servant.

This servant was a muscular-looking young Englishman with a flat nose. He had been a votary of the noble art of self-defence when in England; hence the nasal peculiarity with which he was ornamented.

"Now, Old Solomon," said Freestone, turning to Tubbs, "it's time you were off. Here, Nobbly" (to his servant), "take these beggars and put them aboard the Erie railroad car which starts at 2.15. Book 'em to Dodge City, on the K.P.R."

In order to give the two bewildered men a start, the Nobbly pulled hold of them, Tubbs by his smock-frock, and Jilks by his steel watch-chain, Ellen following behind.

"Wut made 'im cawl me Ole Solomon?" said Billy Tubbs.

"Oh, you be blowed," politely answered the Nobbly. "Take care of them papers. They are your titles. You'll be a dropping of 'em if you don't look out."

"Look 'ere," said Billy Tubbs indignantly, "I ain't a babby."

"All right, Old Cock," said the Nobbly, "simmer down. We'll come and have a drink. What was it she said to you when you first met?"

"Wut the leddy says to me and wut I says to the leddy ain't nuffin' to nobody," said Billy Tubbs.

"An' they ain't goin' to 'ave no drinks," chimed in Ellen from behind. "We ain't going to be knocked down an' robbed to 'blige you. I don't like the look of that there marster of yourn."

"More don't I," said Jilks.

The Nobbly here began to think he was getting it hot, and his reflections were not satisfactory.

What he ought to have done came pertinently before his mind. "I ought," thought he, "to have soaped them over a bit, so as to have found out how they did it. Here am I, about as likely a young chap as ever walked, and nobody never says to me, 'Here, Nobbly, old man, here's a farm for yer, and a thousand dollars to start it.' And yet them blooming country bumpkins get all that directly they land, and don't think nothing of it now they got it. Five dollars a week I don't reckon no wages at all, so I shall tell the boss. It's like throwing oneself away. Of course I get the grub and clothes, but what's that? Don't I lift 'im into his trap three nights out of six? No, I don't see it, when fellows like them jump right into a small fortune and do nothing fur it. It's no good my tryin' to get nuthing out of them, they're both just as mum as a door mat; besides, they got that woman with 'em."

The information so much desired by the Nobbly, as to "how they did it," was, therefore, never communicated to him, and what was also just as mortifying, he had no opportunity of earning any commission on the purchase of the railroad tickets, as Freestone had given him only the exact money.

It had been the Nobbly's practice during the course of his life to, as he considered, turn any honest penny whenever he had the chance. He indulged in the system of small pilfering very common with people of his stamp and way of thinking, and was never so happy as when he had successfully secured a nip of somebody or something.

One of his present companions, however, took his measure much more accurately than he had any idea of, and that was Ellen. Had it not been for Ellen's deterring influence, drinks would inevitably have been ordered and imbibed at some convenient liquor store. The sequel might have culminated in a species of fraternisation between the Nobbly on the one side, and Billy Tubbs and Jilks on the other. This fraternisation might have been pleasant whilst it lasted; but Ellen instinctively felt the ultimate advantages to be gained would have inclined very greatly to the side of the Nobbly, as against Tubbs and Jilks, whose brains, even when united, Ellen deemed totally insufficient to cope with the wily machinations of their new acquaintance.

The task which Ellen had set herself to perform, that of getting these two men into the railroad car without their taking liquor with the Nobbly, was a somewhat difficult feat to perform.

Not only had she the persuasion of the Nobbly to neutralise, but she had also to contend with the inclination of the men themselves. Already had Billy Tubbs expressed his consciousness of a drought, such as is usually experienced only in the extreme tropics. Like the old Obadiah in the song, he uttered the refrain, "I am dry," "I am dry;" while Jilks unconsciously parodying the words of the young Obadiah, had exclaimed, "So am I," "So am I." Ellen, however, declared that if they chose to assuage their thirst, she would walk off and leave them to their fate. This threat had more weight with them than any amount of moralising and sermonising.

Both men had previously agreed to wrap up their united stock of money in a certain blue cotton handkerchief which had formerly been used for the purpose of bringing Billy Tubbs' meals to him when out ploughing. This handkerchief was tied round with a string and given in charge of Ellen, the men themselves not having a cent in their own pockets; so the inconvenience to them of Ellen carrying out her threat of walking off was clearly palpable to both.

When the Nobbly became aware of this fact, his sarcasm knew no bounds. The mild suggestion made to him by Jilks, that he, the noble and disinterested Nobbly, after all the important

services he had already rendered, should, in addition, stand treat, was regarded by him with ineffable scorn. He poured forth a voluble amount of chaff, which, being delivered in a sufficiently high key, excited the attention of the other immigrants going to the same depôt, and rendered both Billy Tubbs and Jilks the objects of unmitigated ridicule.

It was, therefore, with great feelings of relief that our travellers found themselves in the railroad car ready for starting. Billy Tubbs had stood the Nobbly's chaff pretty well, but thought he might take the opportunity of paying back a portion.

"Oi say, afore yeou goo," shouted he out of the window, to the Nobbly on the platform, "jus' tell us wut yeou bin an' dun to yeour smeller. Bin ploughin' wi' it, hey?"

This personal allusion to the Nobbly's nasal peculiarity created a roar of laughter amongst the immigrants seated in the cars.

"Look ere, Old Chawbacon," retorted the Nobbly, "if I meet you out West, I'll pull yourn for yer."

"Good job for yeou, yeour bit of gutter-percher ain't nuffin' to ketch 'old by," said Tubbs.

Here they parted, the Nobbly declaring to a man on the platform, as the train steamed out,

that, of all the blooming duffers he had ever come across, them two he had just seen off were the "bloomingest."

Leaving our friends Tubbs and Jilks to pursue their journey to Dodge City, we will, in our next chapter, give a slight retrospect shewing the cause of the relation which existed between the Colonel and Freestone.

CHAPTER XIII.

COLONEL ADAIR AND FREESTONE—MACHINATIONS OF THE LATTER.

DUNCAN FREESTONE was the son of General Ralph Freestone, an American officer, who had been educated at West Point Military College at the same time as Colonel Adair. The young men had been bosom friends whilst at college. Their subsequent careers, however, separated them widely apart. Ralph Freestone entered the Mexican Army, and having become enamoured of a beautiful Mexican heiress, was ultimately naturalised as a citizen of the Mexican Republic, a step his bride's father compelled him to take before he would give his consent to the match.

Ralph Freestone, however, never took any real interest in the country of his adoption. When the French invasion of Mexico took place, and Maximilian was installed as Emperor, Ralph cast in his lot with the usurper. His military

talents secured for him the position of general and governor of a province. So long as the newly founded empire was bolstered up by foreign bayonets everything went successfully with Ralph, whose objects in life were by no means high and lofty. He had calculated to make use of his position to double and treble the fortune he had received with his wife. That done he had intended to retire from the country as soon as possible with his ill-gotten gains. But the collapse of Maximilian and the empire came upon him too suddenly to enable him to effect his purpose. He had succeeded in raising some regiments of militia to come to the assistance of the sorely beset Emperor when the crisis occurred. The excuses made to the Republican conquerors by Ralph Freestone that he had all the while been acting as a friend in disguise to the Republic, and that it was only under compulsion he had served the Emperor—these, together with the plea that he was now most desirous to transfer his allegiance, had no weight with the stern Juarez. Such apologies for treason were too palpably flagrant to be accepted, and the promise of future loyalty was considered worthless. Before he could complete his preparations for escape he was caught, thrown into prison, and shot as a traitor, all within the space of a few

hours. His house was sacked and burned to the ground by an infuriated mob, and his wife, accompanied by her son Duncan, barely made good their escape to the nearest port, where they embarked on board an American yacht bound for New York. In due course the handsome Mexican widow, with her interesting son, made their appearance at Colonel Adair's mansion in the Fifth Avenue.

Colonel Adair was at first somewhat perplexed to know what to do with his unlooked for and almost destitute visitors; but his wife, a most amiable and generous lady, did her best to console the disconsolate Mexican beauty by offering her a home for herself and son in her own magnificent establishment.

It was thus that young Duncan Freestone came to be brought up by Colonel Adair, who subsequently made him a clerk in his own business.

But for the birth of Lena, Duncan Freestone might have been adopted as a son by Colonel and M--. Adair. His talent for mercantile business proved to be such as to command the admiration of the Colonel. As Freestone grew older he quickly rose to the post of manager in the firm of Adair & Co., and showed his capabilities by developing the firm's operations

far beyond what the Colonel, with his old-fashioned ideas, was capable of doing. Agencies for the firm sprung up in all directions—on the Baltic, in Southern Russia, in Canada, California, and the Western States. Through the medium of these agencies the firm controlled the price of timber at all the large centres, and no smaller firms could buy or sell except at the price dictated to them by Adair & Co. But Freestone's ambition was not to be bounded by the mere managership or even partnership in a timber business. He aspired to be the leading financier in New York, and to get supreme control of all the markets in the world. He soon made his mark on the New York Stock Exchange, together with the acquaintance of various leading speculators. He joined some of the rings engaged in combinations for the purpose of taking advantage of fluctuations in market prices of produce. By degrees this business came to occupy almost his whole attention; and, finding it more profitable than his managership, he resigned the latter. At first the Colonel found he could hardly get on without Freestone's assistance; so it was arranged that the new manager appointed in Freestone's place should submit the firm's transactions to Freestone's supervision.

Freestone had long since given up living at Colonel Adair's mansion. He occupied a magnificent suite of apartments in one of the best hotels in New York. He felt, while at the Colonel's, a certain amount of restraint which was very galling to a man of his temperament. The Colonel was a strict teetotaler, and had somewhat of the ideas of his Puritanical ancestors; for, notwithstanding the Colonel's constant boast of being brought up at an orphan school, he was very proud of his descent from an old Boston family. Freestone despised teetotalism, and, being a born Southerner, had little or no sympathy with Northern Puritanical ideas. The amount of stimulants which Freestone daily took in the shape of wines, spirits, and liquors of all kinds never seemed to have any effect on his brain, or to diminish his capacity for business. In that respect he was a puzzle to the Colonel, so completely did Freestone overthrow all that worthy man's preconceived ideas, arrived at after a large amount of observation and reflection.

As Freestone gave the whole of his day to his Stock Exchange combinations, he, in order to meet the views of the Colonel, would come to the latter's residence in Fifth Avenue about three evenings per week. Freestone offered to do the

Colonel's business at his own place, but the Colonel would not hear of it. Although the Colonel had spacious offices at his wharves for the manager and his clerks, he considered it necessary to have, in addition, at his own residence a special room fitted up where he could write and regulate his affairs whenever he did not feel inclined to put in an appearance at his legitimate places of business. The room he had selected was a fine, lofty apartment, about forty feet long, on the basement floor of his mansion, luxuriously fitted up, and quite away from any noise or sound occurring in any other part of the house. It was, however, easily accessible from a lift which led past the principal staircase. In this room were telegraphic and telephonic communications. The Colonel could from this room send or receive a message to or from any part of the world. He could sit in this room, and by means of the telephone converse with his manager, and, in fact, do most of his business in it if required.

It was to this room that Freestone used to come three nights a week. He would often pass the whole business of Adair & Co. under his inspection, and make various suggestions and improvements for the new manager to carry out which were invaluable. Colonel Adair was fully

sensible of the importance of Freestone's suggestions, and through Freestone's agency he could float any number of his bills of exchange with the certainty of getting them renewed when time for payment became due. This was no mean advantage, and one which the Colonel duly appreciated now the sums he had to deal with had become so enormous.

Now, for a long time Freestone acted in a perfectly loyal and straightforward way. As Lena grew up it came to be understood her destiny was to be the bride of Freestone, who began to look upon this "crowning of the edifice" as a matter of course. It had been so looked upon by all Lena's friends and acquaintances as well as by those of Freestone, who, in consequence of being considered next door to a married man, failed to receive as much attention from ladies engaged in making matches, or in looking out for husbands, as is usually bestowed on independent bachelors, tolerably good-looking, and able to make a large income. This did not trouble Freestone in the slightest degree. Essentially he was not a ladies' man. Nothing he considered such utter waste of time as an aimless *tête-a-tête* gossip with a person of the opposite sex. With the prospect he considered he had before him of a union with

Lena, Freestone did all he could to further the welfare of the firm of Adair & Co. The advancement of that firm in Freestone's mind ranked second in importance only to his own personal aggrandisement.

Lena, as she grew up, developed extraordinary personal beauty, as well as a refined intelligence, rendered more striking by careful cultivation. She at first accepted her father's "dicta" without reserve. Soon, however, an element of doubt intruded itself into her mind which a study of Freestone's character helped to confirm. Besides this, in spite of her assumed engagement, she had a large number of offers, some from men of undoubted position and talents. Freestone in manner was domineering and swaggering to men, but to women he was contemptuously polite. Lena, out of deference to her father, endeavoured to blind herself to the faults of her lover, or, more correctly, her would-be appropriator. Nature, however, was too much for her. She came to the conclusion that she loathed him; while in her own heart she could not help thinking she should choose the one of all her lovers who had neither fortune or position to recommend him, the initials of whose name were C. A. She could hardly bring herself to pronounce the full name.

Freestone, on his part, ultimately became aware of the sentiments Lena entertained for him; but, as he considered love silly and superfluous, as well as unbusiness-like, he was fully prepared to do without it. He was convinced that, though Lena might dislike him now, still, if she became his wife—which was what she was intended for and born for—he would soon be able to make her fear him, make her obedient, and knock all the unnecessary nonsense out of her head. She was rich and good-looking and on the spot, and he had neither the time nor inclination to search for any further article.

Lena's mother and Mrs. Freestone having died some time since, the young girl felt the irksomeness of the presence in the house of a man like Freestone three evenings a week. Although he usually confined his attention to the business room in the basement, he would sometimes come up the lift into the drawing-room or dining-room and bring friends for Lena to entertain. These were usually Stock Exchange speculators, who talked shop the whole time. Rises and falls and percentages were their sole subjects of conversation, and in these Lena could feel no interest. He likewise had provided for himself from Colonel Adair's cellars an unlimited quantity of fluid refreshment of a stimulating character,

which was kept in a certain cupboard down stairs. Freestone alone had access to this cupboard. Lena, from having to superintend housekeeping matters, became aware how large an item of consumption the intoxicating beverages became.

In a household, the head of which was a teetotaler, this was an anomaly, to say the least of it. The Colonel was never aggressive in his teetotalism. He had a large number of friends and acquaintances who disagreed with him entirely, and looked upon his total abstinence principles as a harmless species of eccentricity which they tolerated in him, but never intended to conform to themselves.

Freestone made no pretence of conforming to the Colonel's principles. He gave the Colonel to understand that he was coming to his house three evenings a week solely on business connected with Adair & Co. He might on these occasions have to see friends on those evenings—friends whose assistance, financial or otherwise, might be extremely useful. This being the case, and as most of them were not teetotalers, he should require to put before them something besides soda water and lemonade. He therefore requested that the Colonel would allow him the use of the cellars for a few dozens of wine, which he would, of course, pay for.

The Colonel was far too generous a man to allow any one to incur such an expense on his account. So many of his own friends and relatives were not abstinence people that he kept always his cellars full and in charge of his butler. He simply told Freestone that he had better send to the butler for whatever was required; and this was done, and a supply placed in the cupboard, to which only Freestone had access, for the use of himself and friends. Now, the Colonel never suspected that Freestone could be capable of becoming intoxicated; and he was, to some extent, correct.

Freestone's brain was of that remarkable character that the consumpton of intoxicating liquor on his part seemed only to add to the force and strength of his ability. What would have put an ordinary man under the table was to Freestone a mere fillip to his extraordinary constitution. It used to be a favourite pastime with this man to invite his business acquaintances to card parties at his hotel. These parties were really nothing more nor less than drinking bouts, cards being only a pretext, as, strange to say, Freestone himself was rather an indifferent player. On these occasions a variety of exquisite and high-priced wines would be produced; and, although drinking with his visitors

glass after glass, Freestone would end by seeing them all helplessly under the table, himself remaining as sober as a judge; such was the power his brain possessed for resisting the effects of alcohol. The deluded victims of these debauches would drivel into Freestone's willing ears the secrets of their business operations, and take him into their full confidence. The information thus gained, Freestone never failed to utilise to his own advantage, and many a man owed his ruin to having attended these festive gatherings.

Freestone, however, found he could not altogether escape the penalty exacted from worshippers at the shrine of Bacchus. That jovial deity will occasionally condescend to stoop to conquer. Alcohol, because it does not master the brain of its votaries, is not, on that account, expelled from their systems. It will descend to the feet and master them, and so Freestone found out, on more than one occasion, to his cost. After a more than usually protracted debauch with some of his acquaintances who had retired home having attained various degrees of imbecility, Freestone sat himself down and wrote various business letters. He finished them, and was about to rise to ring the bell, when he discovered himself unable to move. *He was intoxicated in his legs.*

Fuming and swearing, he was obliged to re-

main sitting in the same chair for an hour, at the expiration of which time the Nobbly, expecting to find his master gone to bed, put his head in at the door. Freestone bellowed for his assistance. This the Nobbly gave at once, or dismissal would have been the consequence. Mounted on the back of the Nobbly, this genius of finance was wafted to his bedroom.

As time rolled on, the Nobbly's back became more and more a necessary adjunct to Freestone's establishment. By this means he was enabled to emerge from Colonel Adair's basement room to his carriage outside, whenever circumstances arose causing him to be similarly overcome.

Once, however, when he was in the act of leaving the Colonel's premises in the aforesaid uncomfortable and undignified manner, who should turn up but the Colonel himself.

Now the Colonel had heard certain vague rumours about Freestone's habits, but he refused to believe them, and deliberately shut his ears. Like the dear old lady who was the principal mainstay of a celebrated Nonconformist chapel in the north of London, he refused to believe except on the evidence of his senses. This dear old lady, it may be remembered, had one particular favourite among the deacons of the chapel to the support of which she subscribed so

heavily. Quite perfection of a man he was: tall, with a pale, interesting face, and apparently had very pious habits. He had one weakness, and that was suffering occasionally from what appeared to be fainting fits; but this only served to arouse the sympathies of the female members of the congregation in general, and those of the dear old lady in particular. By and by it began to be whispered about that the deacon was more convivial than was consistent with his position. The dear old lady still remained his devoted friend, until one morning, about two o'clock, she was awoke by some unwonted sounds, and, looking out of the window, saw on the opposite side of the street her beloved deacon embracing a lamp-post. She was disillusioned. And so was Colonel Adair when he saw Freestone on the Nobbly's back.

Freestone now felt that he had lost Lena. So long as the Colonel approved of the match it was of no consequence to Freestone what Lena's private feelings might have been; but now he felt the die was cast. A discovery he also made, through seeing in the hall letters that communications had been addressed to the name and address of Charles Ashford, filled him with rage and mortification; and he determined to have his revenge on all parties concerned.

His opportunity came. In a large business like that of Adair & Co., with its ramifications extending over two continents, the credit system plays an important part. The Colonel had promised Lena to draw off from the business the amount of her mother's fortune, with additions amounting to nearly one million dollars. This had been done and dealt with as Lena had wished. But just at this time the Colonel had experienced a heavy loss. He had been instrumental in introducing Californian timber to the various European markets. This timber was considered the best in the world, and was in great demand. Adair & Co. had already supplied a large quantity at a considerable profit, and entered into extensive engagements to supply larger and still larger quantities, the consignees paying him deposit cheques in advance. Unfortunately for Colonel Adair a sudden and unexpected rise in freights, combined with a considerable rise in the value of the raw material, changed a prospective profit into an actual loss. The Colonel felt he had entered into his contracts at too low a figure, but having once entered into them he was bound to carry them through, loss or otherwise.

This occurring just at the time so large an amount had been drawn from the firm, placed it in a fix.

It would have been nothing but for the dispute with Freestone. It was in this man's power to wreck an otherwise prosperous and solvent business.

Colonel Adair was compelled to travel to California to endeavour to make better terms with the timber growers; and he left, as he imagined, his affairs in good order, and all his prospective payments provided for as they became due.

Freestone, however, spread the report of the loss which the Colonel had sustained, until at last the rumour was magnified to such an extent it began to be believed the Colonel had absconded.

Of course Freestone might easily have set matters right. No one had heard that any quarrel had taken place between him and Colonel Adair, whereas the intimate relations which had existed between the two were well known. When, therefore, Freestone was appealed to for information and gave a dubious and suspicious answer, the creditors of Adair & Co., taking also into consideration the Colonel's absence, became thoroughly alarmed. The bank which had promised to discount the bills left with them before Colonel Adair went away, sent them back to the manager regretting, &c., &c.

The unfortunate new manager, in the absence of his master, not knowing how to act, appealed to Freestone, whose syndicate held all the bills

of exchange becoming due, amounting to a quarter of a million of dollars.

He might as well have appealed to a piece of iron. Freestone intended to wreck the business he had been instrumental in founding. He refused, in the name of his syndicate, any renewal of the bills held.

They were thus all presented on the same day, and payment not being forthcoming, Colonel Adair having apparently absconded, an order was promptly obtained from a bankruptcy judge to liquidate Adair & Co.'s business, and Freestone was appointed receiver for the purpose. It seems incredible that Colonel Adair should have gone away and not have left any clue to his address. He had gone on an expedition to examine the native Californian timber, and endeavour to arrange some cheaper terms for getting it conveyed to Europe, and he might be away some weeks. This the manager explained to the judge, but the explanation was received with incredulity. It was considered that the Colonel had absconded; so Freestone, as the receiver appointed by the Court, had full power conferred on him to make all arrangements.

The rascally and unscrupulous syndicate with which Freestone acted knew full well that they were wrecking a solvent business. They calculated on having a forced sale of all Colonel

Adair's business, stock, and effects, giving their own ludicrously low prices, and clearing afterwards at a real sale about three times the amount they had given. In particular they seized, in the name of the law, the strong box containing the deeds of the properties Lena had bought with a view to the benefit of her immigrant families. The value of these properties, amounting to something like one million of dollars, was an important asset. But Freestone took good care to have these properties placed on the list at a ridiculously low value, and had they been put up for sale in New York might not have drawn a customer for the want of any proper explanation of their merits. They would then have fallen into Freestone's hands for the price of a mere song.

Lena was highly indignant and astonished at the whole proceedings, and especially at finding she was only living in her father's house by permission of a band of speculators; still more at finding the deeds of her properties seized. Beautiful as she was in form, and gentle as were her manners, her mental development was not of that plastic quality which takes things for granted without examination. At first she was so overwhelmed she did not know how to act. She was told that her father had absconded, and she was not aware of any real cause of quarrel

between her father and Freestone. She had, however, reason to suspect the latter of duplicity, and in reference to her immigrant properties she had employed a confidential lawyer on her own account, and he had been quite busy executing her orders totally without the knowledge of Freestone. To this man she accordingly went and put the case before him. He took a course which was most effective. He was away from New York about eight days, and then presented himself before the judge with an order signed by the principal magistrates of Dodge City, Eupatoria County, State of Kansas, and countersigned by the governor of the State, requesting, in the names of citizens William Tubbs and Daniel Jilks, that proceedings should be stayed in the case of Adair & Co., and setting forth reasons for the same. It was now Freestone's turn to be astonished.

I here take the opportunity of bringing this narrative to a close; but, for the information of such of my readers who may feel interested, I may say that my subsequent experiences in Manitoba, &c., will form a sequel to this edition, and, in the meantime,

Have the honour to remain,

Your obedient servant,

CHARLIE ASHFORD.

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