

Technical and Bibliographic Notes / Notes techniques et bibliographiques

The Institute has attempted to obtain the best original copy available for filming. Features of this copy which may be bibliographically unique, which may alter any of the images in the reproduction, or which may significantly change the usual method of filming, are checked below.

L'institut a microfilmé le meilleur exemplaire qu'il lui a été possible de se procurer. Les détails de cet exemplaire qui sont peut-être uniques du point de vue bibliographique, qui peuvent modifier une image reproduite, ou qui peuvent exiger une modification dans la méthode normale de filmage sont indiqués ci-dessous.

Coloured covers/  
Couverture de couleur

Coloured pages/  
Pages de couleur

Covers damaged/  
Couverture endommagée

Pages damaged/  
Pages endommagées

Covers restored and/or laminated/  
Couverture restaurée et/ou pelliculée

Pages restored and/or laminated/  
Pages restaurées et/ou pelliculées

Cover title missing/  
Le titre de couverture manque

Pages discoloured, stained or foxed/  
Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées

Coloured maps/  
Cartes géographiques en couleur

Pages detached/  
Pages détachées

Coloured ink (i.e. other than blue or black)/  
Encre de couleur (i.e. autre que bleue ou noire)

Shows through/  
Transparence

Coloured plates and/or illustrations/  
Planches et/ou illustrations en couleur

Quality of print varies/  
Qualité inégale de l'impression

Bound with other material/  
Relié avec d'autres documents

Continuous pagination/  
Pagination continue

Tight binding may cause shadows or distortion along interior margin/  
La reliure serrée peut causer de l'ombre ou de la distorsion le long de la marge intérieure

Includes index(es)/  
Comprend un (des) index

Title or header taken from: /  
Le titre de l'en-tête provient:

Blank leaves added during restoration may appear within the text. Whenever possible, these have been omitted from filming/  
Il se peut que certaines pages blanches ajoutées lors d'une restauration apparaissent dans le texte, mais, lorsque cela était possible, ces pages n'ont pas été filmées.

Title page of issue/  
Page de titre de la livraison

Caption of issue/  
Titre de départ de la livraison

Masthead/  
Générique (périodiques) de la livraison

Additional comments: /  
Commentaires supplémentaires:

This item is filmed at the reduction ratio checked below /  
Ce document est filmé au taux de réduction indiqué ci-dessous.

10X	14X	18X	22X	26X	30X
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12X	16X	20X	24X	28X	32X

# THE PROVINCIAL.

HALIFAX, DECEMBER. 1852.

## DECEMBER.

THE year is faint and hoary. It has gone on step by step, from childhood to maturity, from ripeness to decay. And now, sad and desolate, it is lingering out its few remaining hours in December. The white snow is weaving a pall, and the lonely wind is chanting a dirge for the funeral hours of the perishing year. Bright and beautiful through its early days, how closely it resembles the life that is our own: leaping in smiles and sunshine, in the fresh exuberance of Spring; blushing with fragrance and beauty in the sweet delicious Summer; ripe with fruitage and harvest in the golden Autumn; and fraught with desolate decay in its dreary Winter, we sigh as we recall the features that closely mark the seasons in our cycle of existence. Yet it is not all sorrow: for nature has beauty even in her darkest days—

“The desolate and dying year  
Yet lovely, in its lifelessness,  
As beauty stretched upon the bier  
In death's clay-cold and dark caress:  
There's loveliness in its decay  
Which breathes and lingers on it still.

Beautiful in its glory, it is touching in its decay. The bare and barren hills may look dreary in the distance; the far stretching plain, bereft of its verdure and the voice of its melodious streams, may have little to attract the gaze; but there is golden sunshine yet to light up the hill-tops and gleam upon the swaying trees, from whose bending branches, here and there, a faithful leaf, brown and broken, yet quivers in the rushing breeze.

December is not all shadow, though it has less of beauty than any other month; for despite all that poets have said in disparagement of November, it has more charms and pleasures than its successor. Winter has now commenced his iron reign, and will hold fast the sceptre for many a coming day. He has come with his glittering frost and fleecy snow flakes—

‘Now on a keen December night, Jack Frost  
Drives thro' mid-air his chariot, icy-wheeled,  
And from the sky's cusp ceiling, star-embossed  
Whiffs off the clouds that the pure blue concealed.

The Provincial farmer has made all secure for winter ; the little children have donned their hoods and mittens, and the school boys are thinking of skates, although the ice is yet too weak to venture boldly upon its surface. The lakes have hushed their waves at its touch, as with the mourner, when despair seals up the tears which flowed so freely, while sorrow yet had hope. The housewife plies her spinning wheel, or looks over the family wardrobe, resolved that the demands of winter shall not go unprovided for, while she adds largely to the flannel, and warm hosiery department. Bright eyes sparkle in anticipation of the sleighing pleasures which are drawing near. But the poor mother looks wistfully at her little ones, as she mentally surveys her cheerless prospects, the shattered easement, fireless hearth, and scanty clothing : slight indeed is the preparation of poverty to cope with winter, and its frost and storm.

December brings sorrowful thoughts to the children of adversity. Apart from its own cheerlessness, there is the dread of so many kindred months, wherein the meagre pittance which they know is their all, will be found sadly insufficient ; it is but the beginning of sorrows to a numerous class, even in this favoured Province. When employment is difficult to procure, cold and hunger are dark companions in the winter of a northern climate. But December has one 'jewel in its frosty crown,' one glorious ray that sheds brilliance on its dreariest hours—

"When the breath of winter comes from far away  
And the rich west continually bereaves  
Of some gold tinge, and plays a roundelay  
Of death among the bushes and the leaves."

Earth's children assemble in their different homes, and celebrate the advent of Him, whose coming planted as it were a ladder upon the earth, by whose supporting strength humanity may ascend to Heaven. Yes! December brings with it *Christmas*—that blessed time, when all classes and degrees, the poor and lowly, with the rich and mighty, commemorate the greatest event in Time's well-stored annals.

Christmas! what a world of memories and affections spring up at the word: age goes back to the days of childhood, when life was a tissue of delight—enjoyment for the present and eager hope for the morrow; when Christmas was the grand epoch of existence, with its toys, sweetmeats and entertainments; when all around looked joyous and happy, and the fire blazed and sparkled, as though it, too, knew that it was a time to be glad, and rejoiced with all beside.

Christmas brings sadder memories than these: it recalls beloved faces, whose smiles were once life's dearest sunshine; it brings back those joyous gatherings of the olden time, when all the loved ones were near to participate in our mirth; and it also tells how Christmas came and went, and one by one, the links in the bright chain fell off, the roses withered, our treasures were low in dust, and we were left sorrow-stricken and lonely. These are bitter memories as the pleasant time comes round once more, and we miss so vividly the 'old

familiar faces,' until our gladness is turned into tears, and the heart aches painfully at the mere mention of the once joyous season. But even through this darkness there is a light, shining out strongly upon our grief. It is Christmas day, and He whose birth caused us to set that time apart for rejoicing and love, came to this poor earth, taking its humanities and sorrows upon himself, that ours might be cancelled forever; pointing out a passage from its gloom and grief, to the winterless country above; taking desolation from the grave, and shewing us how far beyond its darkness those we loved so well are sheltered, from the tempest and trials of life. Thankfully indeed may we celebrate this advent time, for it brought in truth 'tidings of great joy to all people,' not only through time, but for eternity.

Christmas has been a subject for the Poet, the Painter, the Divine, the Moralist, the Philosopher and the Philanthropist. It is endeared more or less to every heart. The poor hail it as a time of good gifts and sympathies from their fellow-men. Hands and hearts act then in liberal unison, and there is scarcely a dwelling that has not some token to mark the day as one of peace and rejoicing. Long may Christmas be green in the love and enjoyment of all. Holy and happy time! And well may every other month in the year envy December the glorious privilege of being set apart for the anniversary of the Saviour's birth. This places a crown of summer upon its wintry brow. For the time, the poor man looks up cheered and comforted, and the dying year smiles out a joyful farewell, while the peace and beauty of Christmas gilds its expiring hours!

We are standing upon the threshold of another stage in the highway of Time. The recording angel is about to seal up his book for the closing year. We have but one month more to look over our account, and see that the balance be in our favour. The close of any period induces melancholy reflections, and though we are often called to part with the old year during our short span of existence, still the feelings it brings are always sad, and we tremble at what another may have in store for us. Friends that smiled upon us when this one was new, have been taken away, diminishing the links that bind us to our earthly home. The book of life has added other dark pencil marks to its already stained pages, and as we look upon the leaves yet to be filled, we would gladly trace a brighter record there. Solemn indeed is the 'farewell month of the vanishing year,' and we cling to its few remaining days, grieved to part with a period which may have brought us little joy, but is yet endeared by a thousand sorrows. Every heart has its own record, and the chronicle often has a backward glance as December journeys on. But alas! we lay the volume down as we took it, and it remains clasped and forgotten until the close of a succeeding year once more unfolds the accusing register.

## HENRY LESLIE.

## A TALE FOR CHRISTMAS.

It was Christmas Eve! The huge logs on the spacious hearthstone gave out a cheerful blaze, casting a ruddy light through the window-pane on the sheet of white snow which enveloped bush, tree, brake and soil, on that keen frosty night. The moonbeams glistened amid the long icicles, and the stars were mirrored in the congealed crystals. Everything without was bleak and un congenial; but within, the glad sunshine of merry faces, all eager with delight at the prospect of the morrow and its festivities, added to the light laughter and gay jests of those assembled round the cheerful fire, and made up a pleasant and enlivening picture.

The home in which such a joyous circle was gathered, in this beautiful and ever blessed season, was situated in one of the country villages of Nova Scotia, the property of an industrious and thriving farmer, Robert Leslie, who had inherited the homestead from his father, and whose labour and exertions were making it a still more valuable inheritance for his children. His family consisted of his wife, then a cheerful good-humoured matron of forty, a son, Henry, just growing into manhood, with two daughters, Ellen and Agnes, between whom came their brother, the pride and darling of the family; these with one younger child, a little lame boy crippled from his birth, but even dearer to them from this misfortune, were all that he called his own immediate possessions among the group. The joyous dark eyed girl who seemed the favorite of the party, Helen Murray, was the daughter of a neighbouring farmer, whose family were then absent on a visit to a distant friend, while she was spending the time with the daughters of her warm-hearted host. The three others who completed the circle, were visitors from Halifax. Two, Richard and Mary Burton, were the orphan children of a sister of Mrs. Leslie; while Frank Stewart was the affianced husband of Miss Burton, and hoped before another Christmas Eve, to be able to gather a similar party around his own hearthstone.

There were all the elements for good humour and glee, to make the party just described a merry one, and they fully availed themselves of their opportunity. The elders looked serene and cheerful as they glanced round the group, and felt grateful that not one of their own was missing; and though perhaps thought, hand in hand with memory, might go back to earlier days, when faces once dearly loved smiled back upon them a Christmas welcome, never to do so again, still they had too many blessings left to enrich the present, to grieve fruitlessly over the shadows of the past. The young people had not even a mournful memory to sadden them, for Mary and Richard Burton had never remembered a parent's fondness or care, but from earliest

childhood had known a happy home beneath the roof of a kind uncle, who, childless him-self, had adopted them as his own. It was the old man's custom however, to break up his household in the holiday season, and spend it with the friends who were ever anxious for his presence, sometimes taking his young charges with him, and at others, like the present, allowing them to accept the invitation of their own more immediate friends.

Brightly the ruddy fire leaped and sparkled, and brighter grew the glad faces around it. Frank Stewart had suggested 'fortune telling,' and all were eager to follow in his lead, when Mr. Leslie in reproachful tones, for one so habitually serene, forbade the pastime. 'They had sufficient enjoyment for the present,' he said, 'to prevent their clouding it by looking even in jest into the future. It was not well ever lightly to tamper with unseen things—and who can tell,' he added solemnly, 'how differently we may all be situated and feel, at this time next year.'

His serious words and altered manner produced imperceptibly a cessation of their merriment, and as the evening grew late they rose to say good night, but the tone was subdued and grave, unlike the joyous words of the preceding hours. The sorrow of coming events was indeed casting its shadows before.

Christmas rose—and a brighter day never smiled on a rejoicing earth. Everything sparkled in the golden sunshine, and even inanimate nature told that it was a time of 'peace and good-will to men.' It was a happy party that met round the breakfast table at Mr. Leslie's that morning; and warm were the greetings and kind the tokens exchanged between them. It was no formal speech to wish 'many happy returns of the day,' for they were all bound together by the strong links of kindness and affection; and individual prosperity was matter of general rejoicing.

Crisp and frosty rattled the snow beneath the warm feet as they trod the path to the village Church, decorated with its evergreen wreaths of spruce and fir branches, tastefully hung round the arches and reading desks; and as the appropriate motto glistening in green letters met the eye on entering the church, 'Glad tidings of great joy to you and to all people,' thankfulness thrilled the hearts of that worshipping assembly, for the blessings conferred by Him who was born on this day—a little child in a manger at Bethlehem!

Chastened and happy still, the homeward path was retraced, and the festivities of the day continued. Music and song resounded to the accompaniment of ringing laughter; good cheer was abundant; others had been added to the party of the previous night: the liberal hand had done its mission, and the liberal heart was satisfied. The day sanctified by time and eternity, lent its own blessed influence to all within its atmosphere, and no voice of separation whispered that they all should never meet again; that death would take some, and time divide, and sorrow overshadow all.

Weeks passed on and the winter wore away as that season usually does in the

country places of the Province. Mr. Leslie and his son attending to their varied duties during the day, and improving their minds by reading and conversation in the long evenings. There was an occasional sleighing party or merry-making for the young folks, in which the girls and their brother joined, while little lame Charlie sat patiently in his warm corner by the fireside, poring over the volumes of which he was so fond, and which helped to beguile the loneliness and confinement of his sedentary life. The Spring season was cold and backward; the cattle suffered severely from a disease prevalent through the country, and Mr. Leslie's stock was materially diminished by its effects. Losses of various kinds assailed him. A cargo of potatoes and other farming produce which he was sending to the Boston market, was lost on the passage; thus leaving him unprepared to meet the expenses of the coming season. The old proverb tells us 'that misfortunes never come single handed,' and so it proved for the Leslies, for the Summer was cold and backward,—the hay crop was a failure,—the blight again visited the potatoe, and the grain was much injured by the ravages of the weevil. It was hard struggling against so many mischances, and the farmer's honest cheerful face wore a cloud strangely unfamiliar to it in bygone years.

When agriculture had thriven with them, though often straitened in circumstances, he had always been able to keep out of debt; and though sometimes tempted still preserved his property unencumbered. This, however, could no longer be, and though he gave but a small portion in pledge, still it hung like a portentous shadow over him, and gradually obscured his cheerfulness.

Things seemed dark enough as the autumn season came on with its gloom and melancholy, and the lately cheerful household looked care-worn and thoughtful. Henry had never fancied a farmer's life, and would gladly have left his home years before, had not his father maintained a resolute opposition to any proposal on his part for a different occupation. Now, however, the farm seemed barely able to maintain those who of necessity must remain upon it; and his father listened with less reluctance when Henry again proposed leaving home, to try if he could do better in some other calling.

The young man's predilection, unfortunately for the peace of his parents, was for the sea, and he had many arguments to demolish, and much persuasion to resist, in order to gain the consent of either parent to pursue so hazardous a profession. His mother was vehemently opposed to his choice, and urged him rather to bear poverty with them, than expose his life to such risk and hardship. But the boy's resolution was fixed, and few can long withstand the determination of a strong will. Opposition availed not, and Henry left the home that had sheltered him in comfort from childhood, and the household to whom he had been so dear! His family were nearly broken-hearted at his departure: he had been an affectionate son and brother, and though

they felt it was to help them that he insisted on leaving, still when misfortunes were thick around them this last trial seemed harder to bear. Despite his own strong resolution and high hopes for the future, the boy's courage failed him when he heard for the last time the dear home voices; when his sisters clung around him and his mother blessed him as she faltered 'goodbye!' He almost failed in his resolution! The perils and dangers of a tempestuous sea rose up vividly before him, in dark contrast with the comfort and affection he was forsaking; but it was too late to waver—so dashing away the tears that were dimming his honest dark eyes, he tried to speak cheerfully, and promised that his absence would be brief.

With those last hopeful words he bounded into the coach that stood on the highway, and was soon out of sight. Mr. Leslie looked long and wistfully after the carriage that bore his son from his home, and as he turned to enter the house, tears were stealing down his cheeks, which the sorrows of the last year had furrowed with an iron hand. His smiles were fewer from that day, and though he spoke rarely of his son, by his abstracted manner and sad countenance, when Henry's name was mentioned, an attentive observer would see that he felt his loss more keenly than all.

The home of the Leslies was indeed very much changed from its former position, but still many comforts surrounded them; poverty had not yet come plainly before them, and though all felt more thoughtful, as they made a more intimate acquaintance with care, still there were many blessings which the gloom had barely touched.

It was far on in the month of October. The variegated leaves were drooping silently one by one upon the cheerless earth. Young flowers had folded up their beauty and passed away with the other glad things of Summer. Harvest was gathered in and stored for the Winter. The spirit of plenty sat in many a farmer's household; and even the Leslies though much reduced from former years, had yet enough of the substantial comforts of life to make the cold season endurable. The ruddy fire as of old, threw out its cheerful welcome, and though the band was smaller that drew around it, there was yet sunshine among them. Ellen and Agnes were bright, affectionate girls, softening by every means in their power the hard touches which care had given to their parents' path, and trying incessantly to beguile them from indulging in painful retrospect or gloomy fore-bodings. With the lightness of youth, when the first pang of parting with their brother was over, they had dwelt with fond anticipation on his joyful return; confidently hoping that one voyage would be sufficient to cure him of his love for a seafaring life, and that if they could not persuade him to remain with them at home, he might find more suitable employment in Halifax, or the adjoining Province.

The cold, gloomy midnight had folded the sleeping earth in its embrace, and not a star was shining through to greet the eye of the watcher by the sick bed,



or of the sailor on the deep. The keen north-east wind swept by with a merciless strength, but few of the villagers listened to its dreary voice, as it was the hour for slumber, and nearly all were clasped in its blessed repose. Mr. Leslie's house stood in an enclosure by itself at some distance from the highway, and still further from any neighbour's dwelling. Barns and outhouses abounded in his spacious farm yard, and close to the house stood a pile of firewood which had remained from the previous winter, and was consequently dry and combustible.

The season had been unusually free from rain; the brooks ran low, and the well adjoining the house yielded but a small supply of water for the household purposes. Provided, then, with so little to meet the giant strength of the element of fire, it was with feelings of horror and despair that Mr. Leslie awoke to find his dwelling in flames. The suffocating smoke had obtruded into his bedroom and aroused him from sleep. Springing from his bed it was the work of an instant to discover that the whole eastern portion of his house was in a blaze. It was, however, unoccupied by any members of his family, and with the speed of desperation he succeeded in arousing them to their danger and to his assistance. Servants and children were speedily at work, but the fire had raged too long, to yield to their feeble efforts. Kind neighbours, too, were soon on the spot, endeavouring by all means to check the flames; but without water at hand, the nearest supply being a lake situated a quarter of a mile from the house, their exertions were of little avail. All was done that could be, in such an emergency, but the most vehement efforts only resulted in saving a small portion of the clothing and furniture. The roof was falling in at all points, and the house was now approached at great peril.

Mr. Leslie, disregarding his neighbours' entreaties to keep back, made one last effort to save some valued household article, and while in the act, a burning rafter gave way, and falling upon him prostrated him in the flames. With much difficulty he was rescued, and borne away insensible from the scene; it was found that the beam having fallen upon his breast, the blow proved severe in the extreme.

It was a heart-breaking prospect, to stand as the cold grey light of morning broke upon the gloomy earth, and survey the smouldering ruins: the scene of Mr. Leslie's birth and childhood—where in the fresh eager hopes of manhood he had brought his young smiling wife; where his children were born; where the vigour and toil of an honest life time had been spent, hallowed as well by its sorrow as its joy. Perhaps it was better that he was not conscious at that time, or the overwhelming misfortune he had experienced might have been too keenly felt. It was with difficulty that any of the family were induced to leave the spot. It seemed impossible to believe, even then, though nothing but blackened brands and ashes lay before them, that it could not be rescued; and when at last their sympathizing neighbour, Mr. Murray, prevailed upon them

to seek the protection of his own hospitable home, they were led away, stunned and silent, from the spot. Mr. Leslie's injuries were so severe that medical aid had to be procured at once, and it was another grief to the already stricken family to learn that his recovery was very doubtful, while if it ever should occur his illness and confinement would be severe and protracted.

It was now that the unselfish benevolence and sympathy, that characterize Nova Scotians as a people, was freely exercised. Though every neighbour would have been willing to lend his house as a refuge to the distressed family for a time, still five was too large an addition to any house during the long Winter season; so the first thought of those who now had to act for them, was to erect as speedily as possible, another house on the old homestead, and have it completed as far as possible before the winter arrived. Deed was as prompt as thought. One neighbour who had a frame prepared for building a cottage in the Spring, immediately offered it. This secured, another dwelling was soon raised and standing in the old familiar place. A carpenter in whose carelessness the fire was supposed to have originated, was working at Mr. Leslie's when it occurred, and had entered the work-shop adjoining the porch, with his pipe, late in the evening, where light shavings and other combustible materials were heaped. He was first to suggest that he might have dropped a spark among the inflammable pieces; and so keen was his sorrow at its lamentable consequences, that he devoted his whole time gratuitously to the building of the house until it was completed. It was small and insignificant, compared with the large substantial mansion whose place it occupied, but still sufficient for the accommodation of the family, who removed to it, unfinished and almost unfurnished as it was, about the middle of December. They could not bear to be a burden on the kindness of the Murrays, who unwillingly consented to their removal, and when at last they did so, provided them with many articles of furniture from their own well stocked and cheerful habitation.

Changed, indeed, was home to the Leslies. The small unplastered house, with its bare walls and cheerless apartments, contrasted sadly with their former dwelling—all those old household goods, which seem a part of ourselves, because we have grown up always accustomed to behold them in the same familiar place; those thousand home trifles unmissed by a stranger, but the loss of which we deplore daily and hourly, and which the wealth of the future can never replace—all the farming materials and a large portion of the stock had been lost by the fire, and they who had been so comfortable, and well provided with all things necessary for a farmer's life, had comparatively nothing to begin with again. Their money was gone, and in debt for their house and the few articles with which they had furnished it, they were unable to procure help, save that of a boy to attend to the remaining cattle, and provide, as best he could, fire wood for the winter's consumption.

Mr. Leslie's strength failed daily; they now knew that he was fatally injured, and that the life which hung on so slender a thread could not continue much longer. As consciousness returned, and he felt the full wretchedness of his family's situation, all looked very dark to the dying man, and the sighs which broke so painfully through the still night, came not so much from his severe bodily suffering as from the mental distress he so continually experienced.

It was now time to look for Henry's return. The vessel he had sailed in was bound to Cuba, and expected to accomplish the voyage there and back by the middle of December. No tidings had been received from him since his departure, and with all her other sorrow, his poor mother's heart dwelt anxiously and painfully on him. Mr. Leslie, too, seemed to have but the one wish—to see his son restored to his family before he died, that he might feel they had some one near to protect and provide for them. But days passed on and Henry came not, and though as yet there seemed no cause for anxiety, still where sorrow has made so many inroads upon us, we always fear another attack.

The hours of the husband and father were at length numbered. It was Christmas week, and his wife and children stood by his bedside watching for the coming of the angel of death. Peacefully and calmly his last moments drew on. He committed those most dear to him to the care of one who watches over the widow and fatherless, and his fainting heart was sustained. Could he but once more have looked upon his beloved son, and entrusted with a father's dying voice, his remaining family to his care, death would have lost half its terrors. Poor little Charlie looked sadly in his father's face as he held his emaciated hand, and marvelled silently in his child's ignorance why it was that he was left, lame and helpless, to be a burden to his friends, while his father, who could have comforted and provided for them, was to be taken away. Simple-hearted, gentle Charlie! unerring wisdom has a thousand mysterious acts which science or philosophy may never understand, but which the humble trusting christian submissively acknowledges to be for the best. Christmas eve had returned again—the anniversary of that happy time, when so joyous a circle had gathered in that cheerful homestead—and what a change had taken place in that brief period. The house which had then echoed to their untroubled laughter, was no more. Henry was far away, who could tell where? Mr. Leslie lay hovering between life and death, the sands of life speeding away with such faint pulsation, and the 'glad rejoicing smiles' which lit up those young sunny faces were quenched with tears. Their very voices seemed changed like echoes of the heart's sorrow, and few were the words that broke upon the chamber of death. They were not alone, however, in their sorrow: the blessings of sympathy and love followed those who had well deserved them in their happier home.

The party was not altogether changed—Mary Burton was now Mary Stewart, and on this Christmas eve was making the sunshine of her husband's happy home; but Richard was there—he had left the festivities and the friends in town to whom he was always a welcome guest, to condole with those who had greeted him joyfully under different circumstances, and to afford by his sympathy and deeds all the comfort he could bestow in this time of their affliction. Ellen's gentle voice and sunny smile had spoken to the young man's heart in thrilling tones, and as he looked round the altered home, he felt happy in the thought that it need not long be hers. His own circumstances were good: Ellen had returned his affection, and it was a bright ray through the darkness of Mr. Leslie's dying hours, that his daughter possessed the love and protection of one whose character and principles were so excellent.

The clock struck twelve—Christmas morning had broken upon the earth, once hallowed by a Saviour's tread. Old memories came rushing over the spirit of the dying man! Past and present mingled their light and shadow, and strange fancies passed before his dimming eyes. The bowl was breaking at the fountain, and the cistern's wheels were to circle no longer, yet once again his soul thrilled to the coming of Christmas. It was its spiritual presence that moved him: the recollection of all that Christmas had brought—the pathway to heaven—the key to its glory—the birth-right to its inheritance. Well might the dying man rejoice. He who on that day was a babe in Bethlehem, was the strengthener and the guide in that final hour, shewing the trembling soul that the path through the grave might be trod in safety, as he himself had once passed through and left a light to guide the steps of each faltering pilgrim for ever.

It was all over. Death had brought a sad offering to that Christmas time. The bereaved family sat stricken beneath their weight of sorrow, and Richard Burton, with Helen Murray (who, faithful in grief as she had been in joy, remained with her afflicted friends) attended to all necessary arrangements, and relieved them as far as possible from everything requiring thought and attention. Sad indeed passed away the Christmas hours, and mournfully came back the words spoken by Mr. Leslie, in reproof at their fortune-telling fancies, but one short year before. How prophetic they seemed, and the little band drew closer to each other as if in dread of what another year might bring of new sorrow and unexpected change. Grief kept its wassail instead of joy through that sad holiday season. Days and weeks passed on and still no tidings from Henry. His mother's heart failed within her, and his sisters wept and talked far into the still midnight of what might perchance be the fate of their absent brother. But no heart drooped more sadly, no bright eyes dimmed more painfully, than did those of Helen Murray. Henry had been dearer to her than a brother. She had given him the rich wealth of her young heart, and rejoiced in the possession of his affection, although unknown to

those around. And it was love for him that, independent of her strong affection for Mrs. Leslie and her daughters, that made her seek their dwelling at all times to sympathise with and comfort them under their many trials, and secretly to mourn with them the absence of Henry.

Tidings came at last. A vessel reported that she had passed the wreck of the 'Mermaid,' the ship in which Henry had sailed. Yet no clue was found to tell of the fate of the crew. A large brig was seen far in advance, which might have borne off the survivors, if any; but beyond this frail hope nothing remained to comfort them. Yet how they clung to the bare idea of rescue by that unknown ship, and how eagerly they waited for intelligence of his safety, feeling sure that it must come at last. But time passed on and the hope grew fainter, and at last died away altogether, save in the faithful hearts of his mother and Helen Murray. When all others forbore to mention his name, lest the sorrow might be aggravated, they sat together and comforted each other, dwelling on every means of escape, improbable and wild though they might be, determined to hope everything, rather than yield to the desolation of reality, and feel that 'he was gone and forever.'

Spring came with its toil and sunshine. Mrs. Leslie's neighbours were kind as before, and her farm was partially attended to by their gratuitous aid. With this assistance and the labour of a serving man, the crop was planted, and might yet be, if successful, sufficient for the wants of their decreasing family.

Little Charlie was growing weaker, his lameness increased, and the gentle blue eye was less radiant than of yore. Patiently did he bear his suffering and confinement, and eagerly welcomed the rest of the grave, to which he knew he was hastening. He was a thoughtful and serious child, with a mind beyond his years, and endeared to them all by his gentleness and affection. They would carry him out to the green bank by the cottage door, and there he loved to lie for hours, his pale sunken cheek resting on the warm glossy head of his pet companion, Carlo, and seeming to enjoy while he could what little remained to him of life and its beauty. When the cold autumn came again, he resumed his old seat by the fireside, with his book on his knee, but he often now had to lie down, for his cough was violent and his weakness increasing daily. It was sad to see him fading like a leaf before the coming destroyer, suffering yet so patient, but happy still to feel that he was going to his Father's home, and the dwelling of Him who said 'suffer the little children to come unto me.'

Everything was now prepared for Ellen's wedding, but she could not bear to leave her dying brother, or go so far from the mother and sister whose sorrow it was something to share with them. Mrs. Leslie urged Richard's claim, as he had been so kind a friend. Little Charlie too, begged that they might be married on Christmas eve, to please him 'for the last time,' as he gently added. Ellen yielded to the sick child's pleading wish, and promised

to be Richard's wife on the anniversary of that season so mingled in memory with joy and sorrow.

It came once more—that eventful eve—and Ellen stood a bride among the tears and blessings of her friends. Only the good old Rector, their friend the Doctor, with the Murrays and Frank and Mary Stewart, were present. It was a solemn bridal: memory brought back the scene of the preceding year, but not with awe, for the spirit of her departed father seemed lingering near to bless his child. But as the image of poor Henry rose up before them, bitter indeed was the anguish that thrilled their hearts, and Helen Murray was with difficulty able to bear it. She of all who mourned him, had loved him best, not even excepting his mother, and now as a year had passed away with nothing to keep hope alive, the spirit of the faithful girl sank within her, and for the first time despair triumphed.

Again Christmas day shone upon the little village, and now Charlie had another last request, that he might once more be taken to the old Church, and join in the worship of Him 'who made the blind to see and the lame to walk.' It was complied with, and for the last time the tiny form was seen in its wonted corner, and the gentle voice heard to join in the responses. But they carried him home exhausted and fainting, and laid him upon the bed from which he never rose again.

Richard and Ellen departed for their own home, and once more the little household was bereft. Agnes and Mrs. Leslie were continually occupied in attending to the sick child, and but for Helen Murray's unfailing sympathy and kindness, the Winter would have been desolate indeed. It wore on, however, in its sad monotony, till once more the long days came, and the atmosphere grew softer with the change. But while all young fresh things were about to bud and bloom upon the reviving earth, on one bright sunny day in April, when the sunset clouds were gleaming on the loosened lake, and the home voice of the robin warbled amid the budding branches of the household trees, little Charlie's spirit passed away from the fading beauty of earth, to the immortal light of 'the winterless land.' His death had been long expected; and as Agnes bent over him, and closed the gentle eyes that had given her their last look of love, though the hot tears fell thick and fast as she did so, still she could not mourn that the child was at rest. The storms of life had been sharp and deep to his tender soul, and they could not grieve that he was at last 'by the living waters' of those 'green pastures' he had so longed to see.

Mrs. Leslie and Agnes could not meet with cheerfulness even the glowing beauty of the Summer time. Their small farming operations were attended to, but with a listlessness and gloom that told of hearts far away. Their cup of sorrow had been hard to drink at any time, but it seemed more bitter when they alone were left to share it.

Agnes lost her customary health,—her cheek grew pale,—and her movements were slow and languid. As even the bracing air of autumn seemed powerless to revive her, the Doctor recommended change of air, and insisted on her accepting Ellen's invitation to spend some months with her. Agnes most unwillingly consented to leave her mother, who refused to accompany her, much to the disappointment of Richard and Ellen, who wished Mrs. Leslie to dispose of her property and make her home with them.

But the old lady had always been accustomed to the freedom and charm of a country life, and her village had attractions for her which others might not see. There she was born;—there was she married;—all her memories, her joys and sorrows, clung around it, and it was the wish of her heart there to die. It was useless to attempt to overcome her objections; but she urged the departure of Agnes, as she saw with anxiety her colourless cheek and wasting form.

Her neighbours promised she should never be left alone. She had sisters and nieces, with other friends, who would be glad to cheer the solitude of the lonely widow, and there was faithful Helen Murray, ever near with her counsel, her sympathy, and her aid.

Agnes consented to leave, and her kind brother and sister soon succeeded in restoring the bloom to her cheek; and by cheerful conversation and companionship, to revive the spirits which such constant association with sorrow had impaired. They persuaded her to prolong her visit till after the Christmas season, fearing that a return to the scenes so fraught with painful remembrances at that time, might undo what the previous time had done.

And now the fourth Christmas eve in our simple story had come, with its preparations, its merriment and its memories.

Helen Murray, as of old, was with her friend Mrs. Leslie; and as thought found utterance in words, they went back over the oft trodden paths of memory, and marking the mile stones one by one, rested at that centre of all their hopes and all their agony—poor Henry. Long did they sit together, till the afternoon wore into evening, and the moonbeams sparkled once more on the jewel-like icicles that hung pendent from the casement—still talking of the lost one, and trying yet again to fan the almost buried hope into life, that he still would return. But as they dwelt so fondly and yet so painfully on that absent one, memory and sorrow grew too strong, and Helen with her wonted unselfishness, forgetting her own grief, remembered his mother's, and rising, changed the subject.

As she stood by the window which the frost was painting with its silvery touches, the sharp ringing of bells fell upon her ear, and presently the stage sleigh with its bounding horses, was full in sight, well freighted with passengers, letters and news from the city.

'The Coach is late to-night,' said Helen; 'while we were talking, we had forgotten about the letters from Ellen and Agnes, and our Christmas boxes.'

she said, cheerfully, as she noticed that the widow's tears still fell fast, though silently. 'But look, Mrs. Leslie,' she added quickly, 'you have a visitor' as the coach stopped before the gate and some one sprang out and approached, laden with luggage.

Helen turned from the window as a brisk step was heard crossing the snowy pathway; and in a moment, without knock or summons, the door was opened. The servant opened for him the parlour door.

It needed no second look to tell who that stranger was: time had added manhood to his countenance; travel and toil had altered and embrowned; but less keen eyes than those of mother and betrothed, could have told that it was Henry Leslie.

We essayed to paint the scenes of sorrow, through which the stricken family had passed; but we will not attempt to tell of the happiness, the joy of that unexpected but blest return. It was long before he had time or words to tell his story, or gratify his eager listeners, by the recital of his escapes and adventures.

A heavy gale had overtaken the 'Mermaid' on her homeward voyage, and all but himself and two others were lost with her. They were clinging hopelessly to the wreck, when the ship of which the vessel who brought the sad intelligence had told, discovered them, and came to their rescue. She was bound for California, that Eldorado that was then beginning to attract thousands to her treasures; and Henry, with the other sailors, began to consider their shipwreck a fortunate circumstance, as it was to lead them to that golden shore.

On arriving there he determined to stay, and wrote letters by the first homeward vessel, acquainting his family with his decision. The ship was lost when but a few days out of port, and consequently his letters were of no avail. The country was then most unsettled and lawless. It was difficult to procure the material for writing, and as much so to forward it when written.

Henry was so engaged in his multiform occupations, that though most anxious to hear from home, and despatching other letters as soon as he heard of the fate of his former ones, still he had but little time for anything but work, which accumulated rapidly, as did his wealth. A year passed in this way, and his thoughts began to turn homeward. Emigration to California had not yet commenced from his native land, and he heard no intelligence from those at home. He had been fortunate beyond his most sanguine expectations; to him it had been a golden land; and after a few months more of toil and exertion he had secured enough to render himself independent for the rest of his life.

He embarked in the first seaworthy ship sailing for New York; and on arriving there met with some Halifax friends who told of the changes that had occurred to his family, and of their certainty as to his death. Personal assurance he knew would be better than written hope; and though the securing his



property caused some slight delay, he concluded not to write, but to tell of his safety in his own presence.

On arriving in Halifax, he spent one day with the sisters who had so loved and mourned him; and then as the most welcome Christmas gift he could offer to those even more dear, he proceeded to his village home, to bring rejoicing to the hearts that mourned over him, and yet hoped against hope to see him once more.

The ensuing Christmas was indeed a joyful one. Sorrow and change had passed over the family in a few brief years; but all was forgotten in this unlooked for joy. It was like one being restored from the grave; and as friends and neighbours heard the joyful intelligence, Mrs. Leslie's small dwelling was crowded with visitors, who having sympathised with her in her desolation, were now foremost to rejoice with her in her joy. Richard and Ellen, with Agnes, joined them soon after breakfast, having travelled in their own sleigh; and the whole family were once more united.

Happy hearts breathed out their thanksgiving in the old spruce-wreathed Church on that glorious Christmas morning; hearts that knew well how to estimate happiness by the sorrow they had gone through; hearts that had been chastened and purified by trials, only to shine the brighter when the day of rejoicing came.

With its brighter side our story ends. Henry had had enough of wandering and exile; and the home of his father was henceforth to be his own. Soon a new, substantial dwelling rose on the model of the old homestead, and the farm speedily wore its wonted thriving appearance. He had means to procure the labour requisite to prosecute agricultural pursuits with success in our Province, and his exertions were rewarded accordingly.

But the new house had a new mistress, though the old one still kept her honoured place. Helen Murray had no cause to repent the love and trust she had given, with woman's confidence, to her boyish lover. Her voice was as merry as of old, as she presided over his almost luxuriant home, and welcomed her friends to the Christmas board. Shadows at times stole in and sat by the hearth stone: the shadows of Mr. Leslie and little Charlie. But there was a glory around them through all: their memory was no longer sorrowful, but sweet and holy. And holier than ever seemed they when Christmas brought its treasury of remembrance and peace: for then they felt more vividly that through Him 'who was made man' on that hallowed day, they were sheltered safely from the sorrows and changes of earth.

Agnes married and settled near her brother; and Mrs. Leslie gave a portion of her time to each of her children. Her sorrows seemed ended at last. With the return of her son, her native cheerfulness revived; and happy in his prosperity and that of her other children, she had nothing else of earth's good to wish for.

And now the Christmas sunbeams are stealing once again over our land, and glad greetings and fond wishes rise up from every lip. May it be a happy time to our readers, full of the joy it ought to bring, and darkened by none of the shadows and changes which marked our Christmas story.

PERSONAL ADVENTURES OF 'OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.\*

This is a sprightly volume, containing both interest and humour. Over four hundred pages are filled with a medley of politics, intrigues, comic anecdotes, and valuable information.

Mr. Honan, so we gather from his work, has been for more than twenty-five years the 'foreign correspondent' of some portion of the English press, and appears to have filled his situation with credit to himself and profit to his employers, although we have only his own word for authority. His work has been severely censured for its egotism and gallantries, but we think very unjustly, as it only professes to treat of the personal and humorous adventures of an eventful campaign, and neither pretends to politics or philosophy.

His last campaign was taken in the service of "The Times," during the revolution in Italy and the adjoining States in 1848; when in addition to the voluminous correspondence (so fraught with interest at that time to the whole intelligent world) which he constantly forwarded to England, he had time to meet with a variety of personal adventures; and with a spirit of fun and good humour, to enjoy them keenly. A true son of the Green Isle he was always ready for conviviality and fun, and he managed to partake of as much, as one in his important position could possibly do.

The volume before us, as he remarks in his preface, is not a reprint nor a *rechauffe* of his correspondence from Italy to "The Times," but a graphic, spirited account of his own private encounters and experience, during that eventful period, when Europe was shaken to its centre, and crowns and thrones were levelled by public ferment.

Mr. Honan enters largely into the political condition of Italy, as observed at that time, and exposes the deceptive policy of Charles Albert with unsparing pen. Present through the whole of the Revolution, and always on the alert for early and accurate intelligence, he had better opportunities of understanding the actual condition of affairs, than almost any other person at that period; and he gives a more lucid explanation of the popular struggles for liberty and the

\*"The Personal Adventures of 'Our Own Correspondent' in Italy." By MICHAEL BURKE HONAN. New York: Harper and Brothers. Halifax: E. G. Fuller.

stratagems of Charles Albert, than any we have previously met with : and this portion of the work may be recommended to those who sympathised with Italy in her efforts for freedom, and mourned with her over their ineffectual result.

But this, to some, may be the heaviest chapter in the volume ; and to those who think so, the light sketchy style of " Our own Correspondent," displayed in the remainder, will be most entertaining. He has met with a great number of droll characters and laughable adventures, and he describes and tells them all with the inimitable humour of an Irishman, who enjoys a joke even at the expense of his country and his creed.

We have not space for extracts from this portion of Mr. Honan's book, but will leave the curious reader to gather its honey for himself. We will only transfer to our pages a few paragraphs relating to the vast amount of labour and responsibility concentrated in the production of a London journal, whose leaders influence the public mind, and whose consistency and accuracy must be above the breath of calumny. A reviewer in one of the London journals thinks the picture overdrawn, but we should imagine it to be tolerably correct.

' I know no state of slavery upon earth like that attendant upon a newspaper life, whether it be as director or subordinate. Your task never ended, your responsibility never secured, the last day's work is forgotten at the close of the day on which it appeared, and the dragon of to-morrow waits open-mouthed to devour your thoughts and snap up one morsel more of your vexed existence. Be as successful as it is in the nature of things to be ; write with the least possible degree of exertion ; be indifferent to praise, and lion-hearted against blame ; still will the human frame wear out before its time, and your body, if not your mind, exhibit every symptom of dry rot.

' The managing director of the " Times " commences his nightly task at nine, and never leaves the office until five in the morning. He re-appears at one in the afternoon, and is occupied until six either in arranging matter for the following day, or seeing the persons from whom that information, which is to guide the world, is derived. During that period, everything must be organized, and everything examined, the business of the week arranged, parliamentary law court reports discussed, libels ferreted out and expunged from police reports, and the general duties of the gravest responsibility fulfilled.

' He has numerous assistants at command, sub-editors and subordinates to manage details ; but as he is accountable before the world, he cannot take anything for granted ; and all that they have done must be revised by him. Manuscripts from secret contributors must be read, and every sentence weighed, so that no heterodox opinions are allowed to pass, and the consistency of the paper be maintained. One leading article must be measured by another, and those profound discussions which make ministers tremble, and all Europe respond, must be noted word by word.

' In addition to these wonderful demands on his time and intelligence, the parliamentary debates must be looked after, and short leaders be written in the space of a moment, for matters that admit of no delay. To sustain all this exertion and produce a journal such as the " Times " is, six days in the week, a man must have a head conversant with all human learning, and a body on which fatigue makes no impression. How long, think you, can such a machine last, and where is the frame that can sustain the labour for many years ?

'When I reflect on the numerous gifts which nature and education must accumulate in one person, and know what unceasing exertions are made by him in the fulfilment of his herculean task, I am stung almost to madness, on hearing how the ignorant and malicious speak of a thing so much above their comprehension as editorial responsibility. In France, in Spain, and Portugal, the road to fame, to honor, and to place, lies through the newspaper press; but in England, where journalism is alone conducted on sound principles, and where no one employed looks for any reward beyond that derived from a legitimate source, the public sneer when the word editor is mentioned, and while men bend implicitly to its will, affect to undervalue the person who directs it.'

We would recommend the chapter from which the foregoing passage is extracted, to the careful consideration of all, in the habit of condemning the efforts of the conductors of a Newspaper, or a Magazine. If they would but reflect upon the labour and anxiety endured by those individuals, contrasted with the inadequate amount of support and encouragement they receive from the public, they might be less ready to censure the endeavours made in their service.

Mr. Hoan has retired from the onerous service of Foreign Correspondent to the English press, and is now repairing his shattered health in rest and retirement. He promises, should his first volume be acceptable to the literary world, to furnish another, with sketches of his previous campaigns in equally interesting localities. We imagine he will receive encouragement enough to fulfil his promise. He has been a pleasant companion through the scenes he has introduced us to, and we will gladly take another journey with him when he is so inclined. An Irishman and a Roman Catholic, his work is free from prejudice and bigotry, and he makes the dry detail of information light, by the pleasant sparkles of wit and humour his versatile fancy throws over it.

### THE KIND WORD.

It cheers the sorrowing pilgrim's heart;  
 Gives vigour to his trembling step;  
 Bids fear, and doubt, and tears depart;  
 And care its anxious load forget  
 What music in its sound is heard!  
 Oh! who that speaks it can regret—  
 The kind word?

It cheers the menial's toilsome hours,  
 And makes his arduous labours light;  
 It strews the thorny path with flowers,  
 The weak inspires with vig'rous might!  
 Who then that hath its accents heard,  
 Would cease to speak with glad delight—  
 The kind word?

It gladdens all who hear its sound,  
 Within life's tearful, rugged way :  
 Like water in the desert found :  
 It, freshen'd vigour doth convey !  
 What music in its sound is heard !  
 Ah ! what shall bid us then to stay—  
 The kind word ?

W.A.C.

Church Cottage, Wilmot, 1852.

## LOUIS LE GRAND: OR, FONTAINEBLEAU AND VERSAILLES.

## ACT III.

SCENE 1ST.—An avenue in the gardens of Versailles—evening.

*Enter St. Aignan and Page, dressed as Leo, one of the signs of the Zodiac.*

PAGE.—Oh, my Lord ! my Lord ! come quickly, I beseech you. If you do not speedily interpose your authority, the masque will be a failure.

ST. AIG.—A failure ! impossible.

PAGE.—Since it became known that the king had declined joining in the dance this evening, the performers in the ballet have been in a state of insurrection : morning and midnight quarrelling for precedence ; evening in the sulks ; noon nowhere to be found—and the seasons at a stand still in consequence.

ST. AIG.—Go tell them, with my compliments, that we are independent of them : the seasons shall be dismissed, and the hours of the day and night sent about their business—but no pay—let them remember that !

PAGE.—And, my Lord ! the signs of the zodiac are, to say the least, equally eccentric. The crab and the two fishes have taken too much wine. The scorpion has stung Sagitarius with his sarcasms. The twins are disunited. Aquarius has sullied Virgo's purity, with aspersions from his pitcher. The ram and the goat consider me, Leo, a bore ; and the balance is in their favour. Did you ever hear of such conduct ?

ST. AIG.—Come with me, boy ! I will soon settle differences between the heavenly bodies : for since the King, the centre of our system, will not condescend to shine to-night, the satellites shall be put out—and the ballet proceed without them. (*Exeunt.*)

*Enter King, with domino over rich dress—lights lowered.*

KING.—My precipitation this morning interrupted De Lauzun's avowal of the name ! Had I but listened patiently, how much agonizing suspense should I have been spared. The recollection of his presence in the ante-chamber—the notion that he was the author of the forgery—goaded me to madness ! There is still time before the fête commences. I will seek him, learn the whole truth, and then—what then ? (*pauses and considers.*) Yes ! it shall be so—if in spite of all, La Valliere loves him—the idea is torture !—if she really loves him—'twill, yes ! it will be a noble instance of self-sacrifice ! magnanimous ! The universe at large gives me credit for magnanimity : it shall acknowledge that the descendant of Henri Quatre deserved his reputation. I am resolved to be magnanimous.

*Enter Madame, speaking to servant.*

SERV.—His Majesty is in this Avenue, madame.

MAD.—'Tis well! I will seek him. (*Exit Servant.*)

KING.—(*aside.*) Ha! Henrietta's voice! It reminds me of her share in the foul transaction. I will question her.

MAD.—(*aside.*) He fancies himself incog! Expecting his paramour, no doubt; they shall not enjoy a tête à tête on this occasion, I am determined. (*aloud.*) What, Louis! alone, musing! What knotty point of finance, or policy, or war, or perchance love, engages your attention, when the gaiety of the pageant is so near at hand?

KING.—(*severely.*) Madam, your arrival is opportune.

MAD.—Madam! So cold a greeting, Louis! you were wont to be more affable at my approach, to call me sister, to smile, as you alone can smile! Nay, turn not from me! Have I deserved this treatment?

KING.—Ask your own conscience, Madam!

MAD.—Conscience! ha! ha! as if conscience were a courtly commodity.

KING.—If you have no conscience, and avow it—tax your memory---that, at least, cannot be so treacherous as your conduct. Answer me! have you not assisted in a base plot to destroy the happiness of him you still profess to regard?

MAD.—Your language is incomprehensible. (*aside.*) Who can have betrayed us?

KING.—(*Seizing her hand suddenly.*) The forged letter, Henrietta! Is that incomprehensible? (*flinging away her hand.*) You understand me now! your hand is icy cold, it trembles, you are guilty!

MAD.—Sire; This insinuation!

KING.—I insinuate nothing. I accuse! accuse you of participation in a conspiracy.

MAD.—You are surely delirious!

KING.—Evasion will not serve you, Madam! Reveal to me at once the names of your accomplices, or dread the consequences.

MAD.—Oh! spare me, Louis! dearest, more than brother!

KING.—(*Putting her away.*) No more of this cajolery, Madam! Name them, I say! and avert the scandal of a public investigation.

MAD.—Mercy, Louis! I will confess.

KING.—Be explicit, then, and I may perchance be lenient towards you.

MAD.—Distracted at your increasing coldness, stung with jealousy---excuse a woman's weakness---dreading a rival in my own maid of honour, I yielded to the suggestions of the Countess.

KING.—So, the Countess too! 'Twas she then, doubtless, who wrote the letter?

MAD.—No, Sire! The Marquis de Vardes.

KING.—And the translator, who was he?

MAD.—Spare me the avowal!

KING.—The translator, I say!

MAD.—Alas, Sire, the Count de Guiche!

KING.—Double traitor! through whose base insinuations suspicion was cast on an innocent man. He shall be severely punished!

MAD.—Pardon, Louis, for De Guiche!

KING.—This interest for him! I understand! Hear me, Henrietta! In consideration of my former regard, so ill requited, I forgive your share in the

transaction. But plead not for the rest, especially for that traitor De Guiche. Retire, Madam! but above all things be present at the fête, be silent, appear as if nothing had happened; or the pardon shall be withheld. (*walks up.*)

MAD.—(*aside and exit.*) Poor De Guiche!

*Enter De Lauzun.*

DE L.—Another night of uncertainty. It will be impossible, before this tinsel pageant, to obtain an audience. (*sees the King.*) Ha! By all that is fortunate—the King!

KING.—(*turns.*) Monsr. De Lauzun!

DE L.—(*kneels.*) At your feet, Sire!

KING.—Rise, De Lauzun, we earnestly desired a conference with you.

DE L.—The desire is mutual, Sire.

KING.—During our painful interview this morning, you alluded to your attachment to a certain lady. We have given the subject our consideration, and have determined—at much sacrifice of feeling—to inform you, that if Madlle De La Valliere—

DE L.—(*interrupting.*) Madlle De La Valliere!

KING.—Yes! Be assured, that if Louise returns your affection—my heart will burst—we will respect her feelings, and sanction your union.

DE L.—My union with La Valliere!

KING.—You love her—do you not?

DE L. I esteem the lady—prize her friendship—

KING.—Pshaw! was it mere esteem that induced you to seek her in the private apartments? was it friendship only that induced her to address a letter to you? Come De Lauzun, be candid.

DE L.—It is true, Sire, that I went thither to meet her; true, also, that she was the bearer of a letter addressed to me.

KING.—Well, sir, what does that prove?

DE L.—That Madlle. De La Valliere is the most estimable of women—the warm friend—the trust-worthy confidante of the lady to whom I am devoted.

KING.—Ha! the bearer—not the writer of the letter?

DE L.—Precisely so, your Majesty.

KING.—De Lauzun, your explanation elevates me from the depths of despair, to the summit of happiness. Singular misconception! How much blindness, how much self-inflicted torture! But it is past. Tell me—if you do not love Louise—who in the name of Cupid do you love?

DE L.—Sire, my aspirations have dared to soar—

KING.—Soar as high as you please, so that Louise be not the object! But, to return to your inamorata, her name? Dont hesitate—any name you please.

DE L.—Sire, the Queen—

KING.—(*Interrupting.*) The Queen! Come, come, De Lauzun, you are soaring indeed. Ha, ha! you must allow us to make exception in favour of our consort!

DE L.—Your Majesty arrives at conclusions somewhat hastily.

KING.—Forgive me—ha, ha! I am so happy! Go on.

DE L.—I was about to observe that her Majesty has long been aware of the attachment between your august kinswoman and myself.

KING.—Kinswoman! which? we have so many.

DE L.—Maddie. De Montpensier, Sire. (*aside.*) 'Tis out at last!

KING.—What! La grande Mademoiselle? Our cousin who fired the

cannon of the Bastille upon our troops! Oh, admirable! Give ye joy, De Lauzun—come to us to-morrow. In the meantime do not despair, but be happy—happy as we are!

DE L.—Your Majesty's magnanimity—

KING.—(*interrupting.*) Ha, ha! I had determined to be magnanimous, but you have robbed me of the opportunity. My dear De Lauzun, I owe you reparation for unjust suspicions: accept the appointment of Colonel General of our Dragoons—a higher rank than you solicited.

DE L.—Your Majesty overwhelms me.

KING.—I will not break my word, this time; nor you, I trust, your sword! apropos of swords—you have not yet replaced the broken weapon, I perceive. Here!—take this—(*taking off his sword and presenting it*). I present it as a slight token of regard.

DE L.—(*kneels & takes sword*). My gracious sovereign!

KING.—One word more. The vile authors of the forgery are discovered: they shall be punished. You who have suffered from their insinuations, shall be the instrument of retribution. Order a troop of dragoons—henceforth yours—to be in attendance at the close of the ballet. You shall receive further instructions.

DE L.—Your Majesty's commands shall be obeyed.

KING.—Away with care! Vive la joie! and now for the fete, and sweet La Valliere's smiles. (*Exit*).

SCENE 2nd.—*Fountain of Latona, at Versailles; parterres, shrubs, vases of orange trees, statues. In perspective a sheet of water with jets d'eau, green-ward, rows of statues, avenues of trees on either side. At the wings, pavillions, arbours, triumphal arches, &c. decorated with festoons of flowers, the Royal Arms, and other devices; the whole illuminated with coloured lamps. A chair of state under canopy;—tables and seats for a banquet.*

*Enter Countess.*

COUX.—The preparations completed—no sign of postponement—and yet Bontemps informs me that he saw Madame De Navailles reading the letter on her way to the Queen's apartments. (*Enter De Guiche, dressed as leader of the Persians.*) Ha! De Guiche, what is the matter? you appear anxious.

DE G.—Let us retire out of sight of the attendants. (*Leads Countess to one of the pavillions*). If seen together we are ruined.

COUX.—You alarm me—what has happened?

DE G.—His Majesty knows all!

COUX.—Who can have betrayed us!

DE G.—That officious old idiot, the Duchess, carried the letter at once to him, instead of taking it to the Queen, as we expected.

COUX.—Well! well!

DE G.—He sent for me—questioned me.

COUX.—Did you confess?

DE G.—No! I fortunately succeeded in misleading him, but he will not allow the matter to pass without further enquiry.

COUX.—Is her Highness aware?

DE G.—A short time since I saw her in angry discussion with the King: this, I fear, bodes no good.

COUX.—She must have kept the secret, or we should have, ere this, received a summons to the presence.

DE G.—Perhaps so! but yet—



COUR.—Hasten to de Vardes, and caution him.

DE G.—I dare not. (*music without.*)

COUR.—Hark! the courtiers are assembling: we must separate.

DE G.—Let us join them instantly, our absence will be remarked. We are under surveillance, depend upon it. (*Exeunt.*)

*Enter King, Madame, Countess, La Valliere, De Lauzun, De Houdancourt, Meid of Honour, Courtiers, Pages, Mousquetaires, &c.*

KING.—(*going to La Val. and taking her hand.*) Come, fair creature, the chair of state awaits you.

LA VAL.—Sire! I dare not.

KING.—Nay, nay! This entertainment is given in honour of you, and you alone.

LA VAL.—The Duchess d'Orleans claims precedence.

KING.—True, in public ceremonial: But on this, a special occasion, we hail you Queen of the Enchanted Isle.

LA VAL.—Your gracious notice will excite attention!

KING.—Refusal will be more remarkable than acceptance. Come! grant me this favour. (*hands her to chair, &c., and stands beside her.*)

LA VAL.—(*aside.*) He solicits, when he might command.

MAD.—(*aside.*)—To see her thus! Oh, degradation! (*Courtiers hasten to pay homage to La Val.*)

COUR.—(*aside.*) They hasten to worship the rising sun.

*Enter Masque of the five nations, Romans, Persians, headed by De Guiche, Turks, Americans, Indians. They perform a martial dance, to music from Lully's operas, during which the King converses with La Valliere observed by Madam and Countess.*

KING.—Charming Louise! The moment—the happy moment—is at length arrived that permits me to do homage to thy matchless perfection.

LA VAL.—Oh, Sire! This unmerited distinction overwhelms me with confusion, yet commands my warmest gratitude,

KING.—Gratitude, my fair enslaver! Oh give the emotions of your gentle bosom some tenderer expression. Renew the avowal which first revealed to my doubting heart, the rapturous truth. Repeat, I pray you, the assurance that mutual love regards nor rank nor station!

LA VAL.—Banish from your mind, I beseech your Majesty, the unguarded expressions of a silly girl.

KING.—Forget them? never! As my ear imbibed, my heart recorded the balmy incense.

LA VAL.—Believe me, Sire! The declaration was involuntary.

KING.—And therefore the more precious—realizing the cherished dream of my existence, and promising un hoped for happiness. But say, can you forgive my apparent estrangement since our last meeting at Fontainebleau, during the chase?

LA VAL.—Forgive *you*, Sire?

KING.—Yes! For daring to question the happiness in store—for disbelieving the evidence of my own senses—for yielding to the promptings of doubt and suspicion.

LA VAL.—See, Sire! her highness is remarking—

MAD.—(*aside.*) He is fascinated past redemption. (*The King continues to converse with great earnestness with La Valliere.*)

*Enter Bontemps.*

BOX.—(To Coun). Madam, I have informed Monsr. De Vardes.

COUN.—Well?

BOX.—He departs instantly for Paris, there to await further intelligence.

COUN.—Thanks, Bontemps! (*Bon. retires*). The first burst of indignation over—the King will relent—he will never allow the affair to transpire.

LA VAL.—The eyes of the courtiers are upon us.

KING.—Let them gaze! We would call the world to witness our enthralment. Confirm my delight, sweet girl, with one fond look.

LA VAL.—I dare not.

LOUIS.—One word, then!

LA VAL.—Oh, Louis!

KING.—Enough! The magic word is uttered. Dearest Louise! oh, intoxication of delight! My own Louise—my modest violet—no longer your sovereign—henceforth your slave!

DE L.—He is too much absorbed to think of the signal. De Guiche will escape. (*Dance over*).

LA VAL.—The dance is ended—the procession advances!

KING.—Already! adieu, then, to elysium for a time. *The procession defiles before the King. The courtiers advance and bow obsequiously to La Valliere. The King, after conversing with some of them, makes a sign to De Lauzun, who intercepts De Guiche advancing toward the King.*

DE L.—(To De G.) Sir—you are my prisoner.

DE G.—How, De Lauzun! you are out of order: this is not in the programme.

DE L.—I arrest you, at his Majesty's command.

COURTIERS.—Long live the King!

DE G.—I beseech you, Sire! This is some mistake!

KING.—True, sir, there has been a mistake—we have too long harboured traitors, near our person. Monsr. De Lauzun! remove the Count de Guiche—apprehend the Marquis de Vardes—conduct them forthwith to Vincennes.

COURTIERS.—Long live the King!

*De Guiche gives up his sword to De Lauzun—and is placed between a file of Musquetaires—Madame utters a cry and faints in the arms of ladies.*

LA VAL.—See, Sire! Her highness faints—(*rushes to Madame*)—she is dying.

KING.—(*leads La Val. to front*). Be not alarmed! she will speedily recover. (*Madame borne off*.)

LA VAL.—I beseech your Majesty to pardon them!

KING.—Guileless—compassionate creature! (*aside*). It would be good policy—avoid publicity—and keep the Queen in happy ignorance.

COUN.—(*Falls at King's feet*). Mercy, Sire, for De Guiche—for De Vardes—for myself!

LA VAL. (*kneels*). Permit me to unite my prayer with that of the Countess.

KING.—Rise, angelic girl! To your solicitation they are indebted. De Lauzun, release Monsr. De Guiche, we pardon him as also Monsr. De Vardes. Both, however, must bid adieu to the court, during our pleasure. (*De Guiche bows and exit*).

SOLDIERS.—Long live the King!

KING.—Come, Lords and Ladies, to the banquet. (*Hands La Val. to a table in a pavillion; takes his place beside her. Courtiers, ladies, &c. seat themselves.*

*Enter shepherd and shepherdesses, &c. bearing fruit, flowers and viands, which they place upon tables. Singing birds flutter about; music from Lully's operas. Enter Pan accompanied by nymphs and fauns dryad, hamadryad, &c. a Ballet—during which the fountains and jets d'eau play—at the conclusion a display of fireworks in the distance.*

COURTIERS.—Long live Louis le Grand!

*Curtain falls.*

### TALES OF OUR VILLAGE.—NO. 6.

In those days of improvement and progression, when conveyance from one place to another is expeditious and secure, when lodging houses stud the roadside even in slow-paced Nova Scotia, and the highways admit of the passage of any kind of vehicle, it is not easy to imagine the hardships encountered by the early settlers, or the difficulties that beset them in their efforts for a livelihood.

They must have been a more hardy race than their successors; or else energies were called forth to suit the exigencies of the time; for it required a strong arm and a brave heart to surmount the trials, and often perils, that surrounded early Provincial life. Wood covered by-paths were all that existed to connect the scattered hamlets. These in many cases could only be travelled on foot. There was no resting place from the commencement to the end of the journey; and the foot-sore wayfarer was often compelled to rest beneath the shade of some spreading tree, there to untie his knapsack, and partake of its humble refreshment; often, when wearied by the fatigues of the day, to make his bed in the dark forest, and sleep till the light of morning might guide him anew upon his way.

Perils, however, as well as fatigue, often attended these solitary peregrinations. Paths intersected each other, and, unless well acquainted with the intricacies of the forest, the traveller often missed the way, and perhaps only found it again to find himself further from his place of destination than before. In summer, however, the danger was comparatively light; but in winter, when subjected to violent snow drifts and intense cold, the early settlers' forest, path was one of difficulty and peril.

Yet in a new country all these mischances must be encountered and endured. Toil and danger must be borne while struggling for a living. Men are fitted to the times in which they dwell, and do not shrink from the trials imposed upon them.

The inhabitants of our Village, even at its earliest settlement, had less of these dangers to encounter than others in more remote portions of the province. Their near proximity to Halifax made their wants easily satisfied, so far as food and clothing were concerned; and as the country beyond was as yet almost wilderness, they had but slight connection with it.

However, as years passed on and improvements increased, though slowly, the trees disappeared beneath the axe of the woodman; cottages sprang up where the pine had waved alone in its majesty; lowing cows filled the space the Moose and Cariboo had abdicated; children's young voices rang out, where once only was heard the singing of the birds; smiling fields laughed out to the sunshine, covered with the grain and vegetables that fill the farmer's store-house, where once grey rocks and gnarled branches held entire dominion. Settlements were formed, and roads branched off from these to other settlements, once unapproachable till labour and energy went on their work of improvement. Our Village extended its boundaries, and though the homes were scattered, and convenience small, still the genius of civilization was doing its work, until gradually the face of nature wore a brighter and a better aspect.

As each fresh labourer came to the task, some new beauty, or source of benefit was developed. The country on the eastern side of Halifax abounds in lakes and rivers, some of them beautifully picturesque, and peculiarly adapted as a means of benefit to the surrounding inhabitants. When enterprise and wealth shall favour science and industry, may we hope to see canals intersecting this fine province, to the prosperity and welfare of its population.

Nature has bestowed upon our Village some very beautiful water scenery, as regards lakes and rivers. As one pursues the highway that winds gracefully through a pretty forest filled with every variety of tree our lower Provinces produce, the eye is often pleasantly surprised by the appearance of some little sheet of water, sparkling and smiling among the dusky trees, like a 'star upon the brow of night,' with the fair graceful lilies, sleeping among their green leaves on its placid bosom; or suddenly the ear is arrested by the lulling sound of falling water, and you see a rapid brook dashing over the brown rocks and making exquisite melody in the summer morning. Or it may be that some broader stream, magnified by courtesy into *river*, spans the way, sheltering as it does the queenly lilies, so abundant in every part of Nova Scotia.

But we intended to tell a tale of sorrow, connected with the hardships of our early inhabitants, and not to dwell upon the beauty of the country in which they underwent so much privation and toil; but as our story is brief in detail, we may be pardoned for devoting a few lines to the scenery of the spot round which all our little episodes of human life linger, and to which the affections of its children will turn, viz. 'Our Village.'

Some forty years ago, a farmer by the name of S—— purchased a lot in the vicinity of P——, and proceeded in the erection of a house. He married a girl of the village, and while he stocked his farm with flocks and implements of husbandry by dint of exertions and labour, he filled his house with a number of sturdy boys and girls, who grew apace, and held out the promise of giving much assistance to their parents, ere many years had passed away.

The land in this neighbourhood is not well adapted to agriculture, and S—— had much difficulty in providing for his increasing family, from the produce of his farm. But it was a well wooded country in those days, and vegetable fuel being more in demand in the Halifax market than at present, he was enabled by transporting a quantity of this commodity to town during the winter season, to increase his funds, a thing much to be desired during that inclement period. He was also distinguished for his mechanical ability, and the various implements necessary to husbandry in Nova Scotia, were manufactured by him, during the winter evenings, and disposed of to his neighbours for fitting remuneration. His wife was competent to assist him in the management of his farm, and did so, but if rumour be not as false in this case as in many others, she who by right should have been the weaker vessel, asserted her privilege as the stronger, and usually came off victorious. His domestic life could not have been a happy one, if Tradition gives us a correct account, and we fear in this case her pen was not dipped in falsehood.

Doubtless all difficulties might have been overcome, and industry left but little time for despondency on his part, had not his wife been possessed of a most unconquerable temper, sufficient to fetter his best exertions, and materially affect his prospects of comfort or independence. She had brought him some small property at her marriage, and this was a fruitful source of provocation on her part, as she magnified the inheritance beyond its fullest extent, and perpetually taunted him with the good he had derived from his marriage with her—a very questionable benefit, as the poor man's inmost convictions would freely have allowed.

The property, whose possession coming through a channel of peace and good will, might have been of great assistance to him in his efforts for maintenance, was a continual source of discomfort. His home consequently was made very unhappy by these incessant bickerings; but still he pursued his course of honest industry, and toiled hard enough for the support of his family, to have satisfied the wishes of any woman less domineering and ill-tempered than herself.

His labour was unremitting. In field and forest might be seen the form of the hardy farmer as he cheerily whistled to the accompaniment of his spade or his axe, forgetting his cares, in the diligence wherewith he pursued his toil; and whatever may have been his temptations on other grounds, 'idle hands' gave Satan no inducement to furnish him with employment.

Some years after his marriage he purchased a tract of land in the adjoining settlement of M—— which furnished him with hay and other green crops in the summer season, and in winter was valuable to him for the growth of wood ; and provided him with better material for his mechanical trade, than the forest around his homestead.

His time was nearly equally divided between this settlement and his own ; and he made frequent journeys to the place, many miles distant from his home, usually alone, but at times accompanied by one or more of his sons, who were now becoming useful to him, and able to assist in his various labours ; sometimes taking his gun when game was abundant, and often returning well laden from his sports to his family. The journey through the woods was long and perilous ; in winter particularly, the path was rugged and not well defined ; forest surrounded it on either side, and it required a skilful and careful pioneer to go through it with speed or safety.

S——, however, had long been accustomed to the journey, and had no fears. Some matters connected with the protection of his property in M—— requiring his presence there, on a fine frosty morning in February, he set off, accompanied by one of his sons, to visit it. The journey there was performed in safety, his business arranged, and father and son proceeded on their homeward path. The morning of the day on which they left was fair ; but dark shadows ever and anon came stealing over the sky, predicting a snow storm, before many hours. S—— and his son were good walkers, and calculated on reaching their home before nightfall ; but the snow which had already fallen must have delayed their progress, as the road was one but little travelled at that time, and a tramp of twenty or thirty miles through the crusted snow of a Nova Scotia forest, is enough to tire the strongest frame ; certain it is that they were belated in their journey, a circumstance not anticipated by themselves at its commencement.

The night passed on and yet the travellers had not returned ; but this excited no uneasiness in their family, as the period of their absence was indefinite, and it was more than probable they had not yet left M—— At twilight, however, the snow which had been threatening all day began to fall ; the wind rose keen and piercing ; not a star was visible through the overcharged atmosphere ; and all threatened the commencement of one of those pitiless storms, so familiar in the wilds of North America. It was terrible to listen even to the fury of the driving east wind, and hear the sharp sleet drift against the window pane. The eye vainly tried to pierce the darkness of the night : anon there was nothing to be seen but the drifting snow flakes, which fell in such quantities that the vision was blinded that essayed to gaze upon them.

Morning came ; but though the fury of the storm was abated, its work was left behind : snow wreaths hung upon every bush and bough—a keen, frosty

atmosphere hardening them where they laid, and giving an air of wild grandeur to the desolate country around. Supposing still that the father and son had not yet left M——, the S—— family were under no apprehension for their safety, and felt they should not see them home for some days—as the snow storm had made the forest path almost impassable. That day passed on and the next one rose, fair and frosty—a glorious winter day—when icicles hang pendant from every bough, and the snow drifts glisten purely in the golden sunshine, like white peaks lifting up their brows to heaven.

Labourers were at their usual work in the woods, drawing out a supply for the hearthstones, whose cheering blaze was peculiarly needful in this frosty time. The S—— boys were also at work, and they had harnessed their team accompanied by a neighbour to proceed to the forest; about a quarter of a mile from the house they discovered something which appeared like a hat lying in the distance. On going forward to see what it might be, imagine their horror and amazement in discovering beside it, the body of their father, stiff—motionless and cold. They raised him from the ground and bore him to the sled; one glance was sufficient to prove that mortal aid was of no avail.

A natural feeling told them that their brother could not be far distant, and they proceeded in the search. It was some time before they discovered him; but at last only a few yards further on lay the frozen body of the young boy. He had evidently sank first beneath the fatigue and cold of the merciless storm. A father's affection had done its last for him; he was laid in a sheltered nook and covered with some boughs—his face protected by his father's handkerchief—proving that despair and suffering had not effaced parental care, but that even in his own wretchedness he had thought of his child, and done what he could for his protection.

The boys assisted by their neighbour, lifted their young brother from the ground and bore him to the sled, laying him by the side of his dead father. It was sad tidings to bear to their desolated home, and few mothers and wives could have borne them with calmness; and Mrs. S—— notwithstanding her violence of temper and shrewish propensities, had keen, strong feelings, and a kind heart, (for there are few women without them) and the sight was too much for her fortitude.

Whatever might have been her feelings with regard to her husband, and it is natural to suppose that constant quarrelling had worn out what little affection might once have subsisted between them, she had still the common feelings of humanity, and they must have been painful at such a sight; still more so, if rumour was correct in saying, that in a quarrel which took place just before S—— left home for M——, she told him, in her passion, she hoped she never would see him alive again: a dreadful wish meeting with a more dreadful punishment.

Her boy lay there too—her cherished child whom she had watched with a

mother's fondness, and circled with a mother's love: he lay there inanimate—dead—deaf to all her prayers,—her entreaties,—her caresses. Sad to dwell in imagination on the terrors of that dreadful night—when surrounded by darkness and blinded by the storm, they vainly buffeted with its fury—groping their way through the tempest, only to be brought up by some gigantic tree, tossing its wild arms in the grasp of the hurricane; shrieking for help when there was none to hear, home just within their call, and home lights and home voices so near them; and yet to perish within reach of help; to sink in despair and without one farewell word, one voice to cheer and comfort.

But we will dwell no longer on the painful recollection. Such tales are, doubtless, familiar to nearly every nook in our Province; but they lose none of their melancholy reality from their familiarity. Happily, they are now of rare occurrence; good roads, as we before remarked, at last intersect the entire country, and comfortable dwellings are always open to the travel-worn wayfarer. It was only those sturdy men who levelled the wilderness to make us homes, that were subjected to such perils, and we should be grateful to Heaven that the day of their occurrence is now nearly over.

S—— and his son were buried in the Churchyard on the large hill that holds so many of the dead of our Village. His widow continued to occupy his farm, assisted by her children, but they were intemperate and undutiful, and she had a hard task to procure a subsistence for them and herself. The worth of her husband was now plainly manifest, like much on our earth, that is only discovered to be valuable when gone forever. In an evil hour she married again. Unwarned by prudence or experience, she linked herself to a notorious drunkard, and strangely unlike her former husband, whose industrious habits were so conspicuous. Two more boys were the result of this marriage, and shortly after their birth, she separated from her husband, as it was impossible to continue under the same roof with one who disposed of every available article to satisfy his insatiable craving for strong drink. It is not many years since Mrs. S—— died, a broken down, deserted old woman; her children, one by one, left her; her farm was sold, and the proceeds afforded her but a miserable pittance for subsistence.

The larger number of her children married, and removed to the United States. Some linked their fortunes with the deluded Mormons, and followed them in their journeyings to Deseret, where perhaps they are now sharing in their prosperity.

The industrious example of their father was not very closely followed by themselves, nor did the sad spectacle of his successor's drunkenness, warn them to beware of it. They have all now deserted the scene of their parent's labour, and his grass-grown grave only remains to tell of the industrious farmer, to which, some who yet remember him, will often call attention and recount the circumstances of his melancholy end.



## OUR CORRESPONDENTS.

As our volume for the year closes with the present number, we must look over the stray papers in our literary drawer, and acknowledge (with thanks to the correspondents who occasionally favor us) some of the contributions we have received since our last notice. As before, the larger number of our manuscripts denote a tendency to rhythm on the part of their several authors, and we regret that these have not marked an improvement in style or originality since our last notice.

The first we shall refer to are lines entitled "Morning" and "Cool Evening Breezes," above the signature of S. K., to one of whose compositions we gave insertion in a previous issue. We would by all means encourage literary efforts, but would take this occasion to suggest to our correspondents that there is a wide difference between rhythm and poetry; the former may be written without reason or originality, the latter must have both, with various other excellencies to which few ever attain. It is therefore better to avoid committing every chance thought to paper, and dignifying it by the name of poetry. Far wiser when the real elements of that divine art are wanting, to confine ones remarks to prose, which if written naturally and simply, though devoid of eloquence, will always be acceptable.

Premising thus far, we submit an extract from "Morning" by which our readers may judge of its merits:

"Night's misty mantle flown  
 Away in the sightless air,  
 Leaveth the vernal hills more fair  
 Than if as ever unknown  
 The evening had not blown  
 Or darkness settled there.  
 O'er Zephyrs from the sea  
 On every awakening song  
 Each vestige of morning is borne along  
 Till it merges in the ray;  
 And quit of its drowsy play  
 The world is a busy throng."

"Evening Breezes" is marked by the same faults that distinguish the foregoing lines, and, as we have more acceptable matter to present, must decline giving an extract.

Lines on "Religion" have the same fault, alluded to in the notice of other verses—want of originality—with here and there a line nearly foreign to the subject, and only brought in to aid the rhyme or metre. But our readers shall judge for themselves:

"The Eagle from her airy nest,  
 Looks down upon the deep,  
 And sees the foaming waters rise  
 The stormy billows leap;  
 And hears the seaman's drowning cry,  
 Borne onward through the gale—  
 And feels secure amid the storm  
 When man's brave courage fails."

And thus amid the fiercest storms  
Which may around her rise—  
Shall mild religion spread her wings—  
Mount upward to the skies,

And though the stormy seas of life  
In billows round her roll,  
She still will feel secure and safe  
A joy beyond control.

And this is through a Saviour's love  
For us his fallen race,  
We still may hope in heaven to find  
A calm sweet resting place.

Next are verses entitled "She fell," suggested by reading a tale in 'The Provincial.' We have only space for the commencing verse, and as the same idea runs through the composition, it will be sufficient to indicate its merit :

"She fell when youthful hopes were glowing,  
Painting earth with heavenly charms ;  
When pleasure's cup was overflowing :  
Life was lost mid death's alarms."

"Evening" is a prose composition to which we give insertion entire, but trust the writer will give us something more original, and on a less hackneyed subject, at his next effort :

'No hour of the day seems possessed of that peculiar charm, and melancholy exciting power, which are felt at that hour when,

— "twilight grey  
Has in her sober livery all things clad."

'It is the hour of serious thought,—of spiritual musings;—the hour when man recognizes his own individuality, and is disposed to converse honestly with his own heart. As one object after another becomes enshrouded in the mantle of overspreading darkness, and fades from our view, memory busies itself in presenting to the mental vision, scenes and incidents embalmed within our heart of hearts !

'At the re-appearance of those pictures of the past, there gush up from the inmost soul, springs of intense feeling, which affect us now with joy, and now with sad yet pleasing melancholy. Especially to the stranger in a strange land, evening is an hour fruitful in remembrances of the past. Amid the busy whirl and excitement of the crowded streets, during the day, one may easily forget home, but when at eve the lonely stranger strolls through the almost deserted streets, his attention may be arrested by the glare of light proceeding from the windows of some dwelling which he is passing. He sees within a family group, seated around a cheerful fire. At once he thinks of "home, sweet home," and in imagination is transferred to the bosom of his own loved family circle. He fancies that he sees the countenances of the loved ones as they smile his welcome and hears the merry voices of the little ones as with clapping hands and joyous hearts and lips they greet him.

'It is the hour of evening, too, in which the heart seems most full of pure and tender emotions. The hour when the wayward child, who has all the day set at nought the restraints of an indulgent mother, draws his little chair near to his parent's side and with heartfelt tears entreats her to love her penitent boy again. Promptly the fond mother forgives, and kneeling with her loved offspring, she teaches him to clasp his tiny hands in prayer and crave the forgiveness of his Heavenly father.

' It is the hour for love, ' when the dewy twilight lingers on the balmy air,'—the hour when the heart is most susceptible of the tender passion,—the hour

" When lovers will speak lowly, for the sake  
Of being nigh each other."

—the hour

" When love  
Shoots up the eye like morning on the east,  
Making amends for the long northern night  
They passed ere either knew the other loved."

But for the christian too, Evening has its peculiar charm. It is the hour whose solemn stillness invites to holy thoughts and to communion with the Father of Spirits.

'How often too, do the falling shades of Evening suggest to the Christian, thoughts in respect to the Evening of life, and now as he sees the crimson couch of the setting "King of day," fade away before the approach of the sable goddess of night, he feels that soon must his sun of life set, and the cold, dark grave receive his mortal remains, until the trump which shall usher in an eternal day shall rouse his body to put on its new garb of immortal loveliness.'—SEEWUS.

While thanking our correspondent 'MAUDE' for kind labours in our service, we regret that we cannot give insertion to the tale in verse, entitled 'The Bride of Sals-brook.' It is too long for the compass of a journal like 'The Provincial,' where variety as well as excellence should be aimed at, and has several faults as a poetical composition, which doubtless could be expunged after careful revision. But if permitted, we would suggest the reproduction of the tale in prose. The incidents which are touching and interesting, could be thus more skilfully and prettily told than in verse. From what we know of MAUDE'S art in this species of composition, we feel, the story could not be in better hands to weave into one of those brief romances, so acceptable to the readers of this Magazine.

We conclude our extracts with some verses under the designation of "Albyn's Epitaph—written in the Brookhouse Burying ground." We hope it may be long before our correspondent will require such a tribute from himself or others :

" Albyn lies here  
The mortal Albyn—the immortal's gone  
Unto a mansion in another sphere  
A realm unknown.

By birth a Scot—  
My home Acadia—but apart from song  
Few variations from the common lot  
To me belong

In life I found  
That happy medium Agar pray'd to have,  
And tears are dropt upon the little mound  
That is my grave.

If few could blame—  
Still fewer praise upon me did bestow ;  
And to the special courtesy of fame  
I nothing owe.

Both joy and grief  
Have in my bosom had their ebb and flow ;  
And though my dreams of happiness were brief  
God willed them so.

No amulet  
I've left that shall my shadow's length proclaim,  
When dim oblivion should the signet set  
Upon my name.

This spot my choice—  
Here undisturbed let my dust remain  
Until the Angel with a trumpet voice  
'Wake me again.

The kindred soul  
That would hereafter o'er the poet mourn  
Shall be directed by this simple scroll  
Unto my urn."

In conclusion, we would thank most sincerely those kind friends who have aided us in our enterprise hitherto, and solicit a continuance of their favours. If we have erred in judgement during the past year, we plead in extenuation, that we have acted from conviction ; and with the commencement of a new volume, we shall continue to devote our energies to render 'The Provincial' worthy the patronage and approbation of those for whom we labour—our fellow Colonists.

---

'FORGET THEE.'

FORGET thee! would that Lethe's stream were now within my reach—  
Forget thee! would that some kind power forgetfulness would teach :  
Then might my soul forget the wounds which keen despair hath traced  
So deeply on my tortured heart, they ne'er may be effaced.

Bid the exile in a distant clime forget to yearn for home !  
The Patriot forget to mourn his sinking country's doom !  
Bid the heart of man forget the scenes, where its young childhood roved—  
But talk not of forgetfulness to him who once hath loved !

Bid the rivers to the ocean cease to roll their onward way,  
The Summer flowers forget to bloom, the Summer flocks to play ;  
Bid the Spring's sweet warblers cease to raise their notes within the grove,  
But think not that the heart can e'er forget its early love.

Yet, though within the hopeless breast may hover dark despair,  
No outward marks may tell the world the thought which passes there ;  
Full well the ready face is schooled to hide the soul's deep gloom—  
And smiles may rise from out the heart whose hopes are in the tomb.

C. H. F.

---

PASTIME.—(Continued from Fol. 438.)

ANSWER TO CHARADE No. 29.—In (n) fancy.

ANSWER TO CONENDRUM No. 30.—When they both have a lack (lac) of Rupees.

31.—Because it would have no M's (Ems.)

## EDITORIAL COLLOQUY.

(EDITOR'S SANCTUM.)

*Enter Mr. Snaffle and Mr. Badger.*

MR. SNAFFLE.—How do you do, Mr. Editor? I have just come to have a quiet, easy, social chat with you, this evening, if you are not better engaged. Allow me to introduce my friend Mr. Badger: Mr. Blank, Mr. Badger: Mr. Badger, Mr. Blank.

EDITOR.—I am delighted to see you, gentlemen, be seated. To-day I have had little company—beyond my own sad thoughts.

SN.—Yes, when we reflect on whose account the funeral bell tolled and the minute guns boomed sorrow from their deep throats this day (November 18th) the sadness in the heart of every Englishman must have amounted almost to a feeling of desolation; but what do you think were the leading characteristics of the great Duke?

ED.—His was a mind simple as it is rare, and may, I think, be easily analysed: Order in the highest degree,—foresight almost superhuman,—unshrinking firmness,—unbending honesty,—unwearied industry.

BADGER.—You are right; his mind was plain and practical; he had neither the dazzling genius of Napoleon, nor the impulsive, overwhelming enthusiasm of Nelson; he was the perfect type of an Englishman; his manner cold—almost repulsive—but a heart as warm as ever beat in a human bosom, though kept under the stern control of discretion and duty. His *morale* perhaps more nearly resembled that of Washington than any other man—only Washington was no General,—had little or no military talent,—was in fact ignorant and incapable, and only succeeded by prudence and perseverance, and from being opposed by the worst qualified officers that ever squandered the resources, or tarnished the honour, of the British name.

ED.—There seem to be two generations between these two illustrious men, and yet they were contemporaries. Wellington lived and his character was formed while Massachusetts was yet ruled by a British Governor, and the States possessed less than three millions of souls. Never in the history of mankind has the world advanced with such gigantic strides as during the era of Wellington.

SN.—The very idea that passed through my mind this morning: since the great Duke's early manhood, war has saturated with blood every country in Europe—from the Baltic to the Bosphorus. Every capital has been entered by an enemy, *except our own*. Britain has relinquished a Colony which has grown into an Empire larger than Russia, and second in power and intelligence only to herself. Spain has lost her Western dominions, and descended from her proud eminence to that of a tottering second rate power. From Cape

Comarin to Thibet—from the Cape of Good Hope to Algiers—from the St. Lawrence to the Mississippi—war has swept with its devastating terrors. Oh what a history of human suffering is there in the *glories* of Marengo, Austerlitz, Jena, Wagram, Eylau, Friedland, Leipsic, Waterloo, Aboukir, Trafalgar!

SN.—I have read somewhere that in this dreadful contest France sacrificed 4,000,000 of lives; Britain more than 400,000. Thank God, these things are over; and that we this day enjoy the sweets of civil and religious liberty, we owe, I believe, under providence, to the genius of the great man whose requiem was this day celebrated over the expanse of the British Empire.

BADGER.—Does the history of the past sixty years present nothing more engaging than human carnage?—surely something better and nobler these six decades can boast of! We have the discovery of Gas, Steamships and Railroads; Astronomy has shown us new Planets; Chemistry new wonders; Geology has entered itself as a new science; Literature and art have put on a treble glory.

SN.—Why the very names of those who have lived and died during the lifetime of our great Captain, strike the human heart almost as if with the power of a miracle: Watt, Davy, Herschel, Cuvier, Burke, Pitt, Fox, Sheridan, Peel, Scott, Campbell, Moore, Crabbe, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, Macintosh, Jeffry, Chalmers—what age could bring together such a galaxy of illustrious names?

BADGER.—And yet not half exhausted: Laplace, Lavousier, Goethe—the first in the first class. The beams of light have been made palpable by Daguerre; nay, the science of Newton has been eclipsed—for this century can boast of one perfect invention—a messenger doing our errands with the speed of thought: what can ever exceed in rapidity of action the Electric Telegraph—the work of the last fifteen years?

ED.—Yes, we can look back with pride and gratitude when the prospect embraces the wide circle of humanity. But do you not think that *we* have been lagging in the distance?

BADGER.—Whom do you mean by '*We*'? This barren waste—this stagnant marsh—this cess pool of darkest ignorance and profoundest conceit?

SN.—Stop, stop, Badger, you are growing scurrilous. I know we are not the high spirited people the newspapers sometimes talk about; but you have no charity!

BADGER.—I say it, like Hamlet's ghost, more in sorrow than in anger; but it is true as truth itself. What have we in the whole Province to indicate either life, spirit, or intelligence?

ED.—You cannot expect us to fight with weapons we have not got. The forest is not yet many miles from our doors.

BADGER.—But I say you have the weapons—and stout and manly weapons, too. I looked into your new Reading Room, the other day; I saw about

twenty in it. What were they about, think you? In one room were scattered around, Periodicals containing best thoughts of the best men of the age—English and American newspapers in abundance. The English newspaper table was vacant; the Periodicals were covered with dust, *uncut*. I took up one or two of the papers most in request: I saw nothing but reckless assertion and common-place abuse. Such terms as ‘scamp,’ ‘rascal,’ ‘pimp,’ ‘miscreant,’ &c. applied with a complacency which might have been amusing, had I not felt it so painfully degrading to the place that gave me birth.

ED.—What you say, sir, is an undeniable truth. The tastes and feelings of a respectable and most intelligent community are fast becoming vitiated by drinking from so foul a stream. Abuse is mistaken for power, and so general and disgusting has the practice become, that, though I believe there are two or three honourable exceptions, I seldom now-a-days look into a Nova Scotian newspaper.

BADGER.—True, we are little better than the wild Indians, in some respects; I went the other evening to hear a lecture on an interesting subject, by one of our most popular and distinguished scientific men. I found a meagre audience: not a person of mark or note was there! I went to Temperance Hall, to hear some itinerant singing women: I could scarcely find admission!

SN.—I say, Badger, you have a confoundedly unpleasant way of telling unpleasant truths! But enough of all this—it would be better were it otherwise—fashion is a more powerful arbiter than taste or propriety. I was at both places also: in the one I heard some of the most important principles of science enunciated in an interesting and most able manner; in the other I saw a great deal of empty buffoonery—exceedingly impudent and excessively vulgar. But what of that? The one flourished under the smile of distinguished patronage;—the other struggles on as it best can without patronage at all: that’s all the difference.

ED.—Well, instead of railing let us try rather to turn the current.

SN.—How goes the Magazine, Mr. Editor? Like Pope’s wounded snake, eh! dragging its slow length along?

ED.—Now, between ourselves, what do you think is the general opinion of the Magazine among the reading community?

SN.—Would you like the plain, honest truth told you, Mr. Editor?

ED.—Most certainly—out with it—sweet or bitter truth is always profitable.

SN.—Well, I must refer to Badger: he is the best fellow I know for getting at a strong opinion.

BADGER.—In sober earnest, I don’t think you have come quite up to the mark—that is, you have scarcely made good your promises!

SN.—Now for it!

BADGER.—Your biography of illustrious Colonists is still *in nubibus*;—some

of your poetry was about as bad as possible;—and your early Reviews, particularly ill-natured; but yet the thing is well got up, well printed, and all that sort of thing. There is room for improvement.

ED.—No one is more sensible of that than myself. Many from whom better things might have been expected, have hung back—from sheer lethargy—and that lazy dog Snaffle among the rest.

SN.—I did intend to do something, and will do it if you will let me have my own way. I would like to work out an idea I have got in my brain.

ED.—I shall be delighted to have your assistance: what is the idea?

SN.—Why, give me large elbow room, and I will draw you Colonial Portraits.

ED.—Most certainly; a few good likenesses is the very thing wanted.

SN.—Well, you shall have them. Let me see: Cnnard, Sam Slick, Joseph Howe, Hincks, Sir Allan—

BADGER.—I must have Howe! I would have a real pleasure in limning the Provincial Secretary.

SN.—I should like the job myself—but take him and welcome.

ED.—Of course, gentlemen, you understand our rule: no party—no politics.

BADGER.—And what is Joseph, stript of his political wardrobe, which has been the breath of life to him for the last thirty years? No, no, it shall be all politics, nothing but politics!

ED.—Then I am sorry, Mr. Badger, I must decline the article.

BADGER.—No you shant, you'll have it, and you'll like it. Do you think I mean by politics, low scurrilous abuse, Colonial Politics? Not at all; I shall do the man justice! I shall hurt no one's feelings, nor forget the dignity of truth, nor the awards of justice.

ED.—Thank you, sir, I can trust your discretion: try and give us your article for January.

BADGER.—I wcn't promise, Snaffle has a prior claim.

ED.—Well, well, settle it between you, only let us have the articles as soon as possible: it is not too late yet to occupy vantage ground. With regard to the Reviews, I presume you allude to Judge Marshall's Book. I spoke severely of a man who evidently thinks ill of mankind in general;—who tried to put a bad construction upon every act of almost every public man in Great Britain. The book and the man were an inconsistency—a contradiction in fact. He employs a long chapter in denouncing pensions as public plunder—while he himself is a pensioner for having done less than nothing; as during the short time he was Judge, he certainly played such antics as would make school-boys laugh.

BADGER.—You were right, sir; I only wish you had cut a little deeper. Old Harriet Martineau had certainly more honesty than the Judge; for when



Government offered her a pension, she would none of it, as she considered pensions a kind of legal robbery—and intended to write them down. Now, had my friend Mr. Marshall, before he wrote his book, sent a short note to the Provincial Secretary, to the effect that his conscience would not allow him to pocket public money any longer, there would have been some sense and spirit in the thing. As it was, you applied the lash very properly.

SN.—What is your circulation, Mr. Editor?

ED.—(smiling.) Something less than a hundred thousand!

SN.—I believe you. Well, we must try at least and bring it a little nearer to that moderate amount—next year.

ED.—If we should not be drowned by the din of railways—

BADGER.—And the splutter of faction: hang the fools, would they only mind their own business the Province would rally and regain its ancient strength.

SN.—The true secret of success is patient industry and steady application: against them the most corrupt faction is powerless as a drop of water: without them the purest patriotism or the most exalted talent is like a rudder whose coil is broken—and the vessel drifts upon the rocks, helpless and hopeless. But it is late—and my wife's name is not Clemency—good night!

ED.—Come along, Badger, I believe you are half asleep.

BADGER.—Not at all; I only caught your own reflection. I wont forget the Portrait. Good night—and pleasant dreams? Take care of the steps, Snaffle! However, there is one comfort, we have not drank too much to see double.

SN.—The feast of reason—eh! (*Door closes.*)

EDITOR SOLUS.—Well—my colloquy with these gentlemen will supply the place of the usual Review of the Month. This is fortunate—there being nothing of importance to record, in the affairs of Europe, save the funeral of the Great Duke on the 18th, the opening of Parliament on the 4th, the Speech by Her Majesty on the 11th, and the proclamation of Louis Napolcon as Emperor of France, arranged to take place on the 2nd of December.

