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THE PROVINCIAL.

HALIFAX, MAY, 1852.

THE MONTH OF MAY.

May! the month of poetry and flowers, according to the old chroniclers, is here again; but we in the Provinces can say but little for its sunny skies and balmy air. It is, however, with all its disadvantages a pleasant month, after the frost and dreariness of winter. We have here the first sunshine that whispers of summer, the first flowers that tell of the lovely myriad yet to brighten the face of nature. The green grass springs up rapidly by the roadside, and the robin sings sweetly in the early light of morning. Everything speaks of brighter days, from the first tiny bud quivering on the rugged bough, to the denizens of the lower creation. The blue lake once more flows freely along, and its glad waves sparkle in the noon-day, and mirror limningly the rich hues of sunset far down in its bosom.

The alternate sunshine and showers of April have softened the sterility of nature, and vegetation wakes forth with renewed vigour. There is a chilliness in the east wind at times, but there are gentler breezes from the softer south, and the old trees sway playfully beneath its influence. March has gone by with its fury and tempest; winter like an angry child expended itself there in passion, and will slumber for a long time in the exhaustion that ensues. April has also passed away with its tearful clouds and smiling sunbeams—nature finding again her simile in the child, whose short lived griefs give place to bursts of joy equally evanescent. She like an exploring messenger, prepared the way, and now May has burst upon us in the first fair raiment of the spring, and promises us a treasury of the richest beauty that nature can bestow.

It is very pleasant even now to go forth into the old woods and mark the first foot-prints of spring—

"The pine wears a softer fringe of green,
And the moss looks bright where *its* step hath been."

The maple is donning its robe of crimson blossoms, and the Indian pear and wood cherry contrast beautifully in their snowy raiment. And there

under the protecting trees, how often in the embrace of a snow-wreath blooms Acadia's own cherished blossom, the beautiful Mayflower! Peeping up from its embrasure of dusky green leaves, amid the crusted snow and moist mosses, are those fragrant petals, some purely white, others dyed from the faintest to the deepest shade of rose. Dear little messengers of love and beauty! like the sun-tint on the thunder cloud, the rainbow through the shower, the whisper of hope when the heart is sorest tried do they seem, in the wide spread scene of dreariness and gloom. *May flowers though they are called, they are April's children still: her sun and showers have ushered them into life, but May is their season of plenty and perfection.* The garden and wood may have many a lovely flower, but give us this nursling of the storm and the forest above them all. Well and beautifully has Frances Browne sung of the first—

"The first! the first! oh nought like it our after years can bring,
For summer hath no flowers so sweet as those of early Spring."

And truly, there is not one in our land whose affections do not cling more warmly to the simple Mayflower, than to the proudest blossom in the rich man's *parterre*.

It is the emblem of our Country,—a wreath of these beautiful flowers the device on her banners, with the appropriate motto—

"We bloom amid the snow."

Long may the Mayflower be the type of a true-hearted and a loyal people, bold to face the storms of adversity as *it* is to meet those of winter; and when the growing West becomes the Empire of the world, may the land of the Mayflower be like the now proud land of the Rose—the first in freedom, art, science, and philanthropy, rallying her children around her standard, giving battle to the oppressor, but a home and protection to the oppressed!

May, with us, is distinguished by no peculiar observance, but in "merrie England," the first day of this month is a gala-time with the country people, or was till very recently. Poets and Romancers have written so much of the sports and observances of "May-day," that they are familiar to us all. The May-pole, the garlands, the queen, the troops of merry children, the *largesse*, and the festivities are all too widely known to require comment here. Nor will we attempt a single quotation from the mass of beautiful poetry on this ever fruitful subject, lest we should not know where to stop. We will but allude to Tennyson's most beautiful and expressive poem, "The Queen of the May," in which the highest attributes of poetry, with its most touching simplicity, is blended.

In these Provinces, however, our climate is too cold and backward to indulge in much out-door celebration on the advent of this month, as May-day has more frequently a wreath of snow than of flowers. Spring is but a *myth* in Nova Scotia, that is, the Spring of the Poets; even in England, in some

quaint stanzas, we have seen it recommended as the wiser plan to defer "Maying until June," and such a measure is adopted by us here.

May, by the voice of olden superstition, is decreed an unlucky month, especially for marriage. The population of Scotland are particularly prone to this belief. As an illustration the unfortunate nuptials of Mary Queen of Scots are often quoted, with those of others equally distinguished, whose "marriage in May weather," brought anything but happiness. By some of those singular coincidences difficult to account for, it may be that more striking instances of unhappy marriages have taken place in this month than any other, but believing marriage to be somewhat of a lottery, we put but little faith in any superstition touching the event.

The present is a busy season to our agricultural population. The manufacture of fences and sowing of crops occupy all the farmer's time, and his cheering whistle resounds merrily over the hills. The shining ploughshare turns up the green sod, and the well-fed team does hard duty in the fields.

Nature seems animated once more; there is a sound of life in every nook and corner. Here and there a butterfly spreads its adventurous wing, and a bee may be heard to hum by the window pane. The birds work patiently at their tiny nests, cheering their labours by a joyous song. The swallows build their earthy cabins under the eaves of the sheltering barn, while from every pond on the marshy roadside, "The Nova Scotia Band," yeapt *frogs*, pour out their evening serenade, straining their croaking throats to utter most discordant music, but which yet has a joyous sound, for it wakens old memories of childhood and happiness, when we stood in the rosy twilight and by a heavy tread or splashing stone, tried to still their voices. The dandelion lifts up its golden crest, and the little goslings of the same hue dabble in the brook and nip the tender blades of grass by its edges. Everything speaks of life and activity. Even while the housewife bustles about with her white-wash and her scrubbing brushes, making rout and disturbance in her efforts at cleanliness, there is freshness and life in earnest spirit. It is as the beginning of a new existence, and the heart leaps to the music of streamlet and bird.

We will not cloud this bright picture by the memories which come unbidden, of departed hopes and early lost friends, never again to find a second Spring on earth. We will rather rejoice with everything around us, and feel as children once more, while we sit on the mossy bank (if we can find a dry one) and gather the Mayflowers clustered there like groups of stars. Pleasant indeed it is to watch the swelling buds, and trace the growth of vegetation, tardy though it yet may be. We will disregard the chill of the east wind and look upon the season with a poet's eye, that of the bards of the olden time. Our May shall be a month of flowers and sunshine, the real veritable harbinger of Spring.

THE POETRY OF ANGLO-SAXON AMERICA.

(Concluded from page 125.)

It would seem then, that the *Past* of America affords but little material for the poet or the romance-writer to work upon. Speaking from the middle of the nineteenth century, it may be said—*the Past belongs to Europe*. But in Poetry, as in Art, Science, and all the great achievements of civilization, *the future belongs to America*. The Oriental may celebrate the victories of those tremendous conflicts where millions of men have met for mutual slaughter, upon the plains of Asia; or the brilliant but transient glories of those magnificent empires of that Continent, which have started into sudden existence like gigantic phantoms to awe and astonish the world, and have too vanished like phantoms, leaving scarce a vestige by which to trace their existence: or he may sing his requiem for the departed grandeur of those immense tracts over which the shadow of the Destroyer's wing hath passed, leaving them strewn with ruins and marked by desolation. The European may seek inspiration and frame his lay 'mid the magnificent ruins of the turreted keep and cloistered Abbey, the footprints of feudal grandeur and ecclesiastical dominion; he may assume the troubadour and transport himself back to the age of chivalry, that elysium of Poesy, when deeds of heroism were the object of man's life, and woman was adored as an angel; he may celebrate the long conflicts of empire against empire, race against race, and creed against creed, the fearful struggles between young and buoyant Freedom and old iron-handed Despotism, and the glorious resurrection of Art, Science, and Literature from the grave of the dark ages; or he may lament the clashing discord, the pandemonium of Anarchy, into which all things upon the European Continent now seem hastening. But the poet of America must look, not to the past, but to the future. The glorious *future*, and the *present* from its connection with that future, is his proper and peculiar field of thought. The triumphs of civilization should form the subject of his loftiest plans; the wonders, the glories, the blessings of civilization, should be reflected in his every theme.

In contemplating the present state of the various parts of the world, to what one does so thrilling an interest attach, as to the Anglo-Saxon portion of America? And upon whom are the eyes of the world so stedfastly fixed, as upon Anglo-Saxon Americans—that people which has so recently sprung into existence and to active life, taking up the Gordian knot of Science from where the most renowned Sages of Europe have laid it down, commencing the work of human enlightenment under the advantage of all the world's experience for ages, and carrying it on untrammelled by those gloomy remnants of past prejudice and tyranny which fetter the mind in almost every other part of the world? There is something sublime in the progress of civilization in Anglo-Saxon America, where every year may be said to herald the creation of a new

empire, where cities spring up, as if by magic, on wild and barbarous shores, and in the midst of boundless forests, where great institutions are formed, and flourish, and bestow their blessings upon man, where but yesterday, so to speak, the awful solitude of nature was never broken save by the wild yell of the bloody savage. Everything is, or promises to be, on the same grand and magnificent scale as the mountains and plains, the forests, lakes, and rivers, which characterise the natural scenery of this vast Continent.

Is there then, in the contemplation of such countries as these, nothing to be found fit theme for the poet's lay? We are aware, that a very large—perhaps the largest portion of the reading public, can see, in the transactions of enlightened modern times, no material for the epic and the other higher branches of poetic composition. These events are "too commonplace." Such persons are enamoured with gloom and mystery. The results of modern civilization tend so far to dissipate these requisites, that they are supposed to have left the enlightened world unfruitful in poetic themes. With all due admiration of the taste of such readers, we cannot but entertain the opinion, that, in the present age, although in our daily intercourse with the world, we may perceive less mystery, may encounter less wild adventure, than in the darker ages of the world's history, it is by no means true that we must necessarily meet with less of what tends to excite poetical emotions, and to suggest poetical ideas. We cannot but think further, that he who can see nothing grand, nothing sublime, nothing beautiful, nothing poetical, in short, in the great modern triumphs of Art and Science, in those gigantic achievements of the human mind which characterise the nineteenth century, can have no real conception of that which is poetical.

What, for instance, can have more of the sublime in its nature, than the act of man in chaining the lightning and making it subservient to his purposes; in making it an engine of conveying his thoughts and sending them leaping over the earth, outstripping time and annihilating space, by a speed which equals that of even thought itself? What more grand, more beautiful in its conception, its perfection, and its results, than that invention which enables the modern Artist literally to "dip his pencil in the sunbeams" that he may depict, in absolute perfection, the lineaments of Nature? The Steam-engine too, that great modern innovation in the material world, and which is so often blamed for banishing all that is poetical from the ideal, in the sphere in which it operates—we pity the man who can see nothing grand in its mighty power. As one out of innumerable instances, take that in which it is employed on railroads. Who has not admired the sublime description of the war-horse, as portrayed in the Book of Job? But the horse of life and muscle sinks into insignificance, in comparison with the *iron horse* which literally breathes fire and smoke, and whose voice is terrible as the thunder. What can be more sublime than the railway engine, with its long train of locomotive palaces

freighted with life and all which makes life dear; flying, shrieking, thundering over the plain, with a speed that almost equals that of the whirlwind, and with a terrible energy which threatens to crush whatever dares to oppose its progress, and which seems to set all nature at defiance? These are but a few of the innumerable items which compose the grand result of modern civilization. Yet the distinguishing trait of the age, particularly in Anglo-Saxon America, and that from which all the triumphs of civilization proceed, is the exaltation, as a moral and intellectual being, of man himself.

“But,” it may be asked, “is the poet of America to restrict his effusions to the celebration of the triumphs of modern civilization?” Certainly not. But we aver, that to succeed, he must remember that his productions are intended for the edification and refinement of a people whose great, and almost exclusive, boast and glory consists in the triumph of civilization. His effusions must not be slavish imitations of those which were written for the approbation of people living in a totally different sphere. His works must, in subject and style, be wholly original—or, at least, quite different from anything we have hitherto had—redolent of the fresh fragrance of a new world, otherwise it can never be expected that they will meet with a response from the tastes and feelings of a people among whom it may be emphatically said, *everything is new*. Such has been the *modus operandi* in the early formation of every national school of poetry; and if ever the British Provinces of this Continent—if ever America, in its widest extent, should aspire to have a national poetry—may more, a national *literature*—the *literati* of the land must keep steadily in view the new and peculiar position of their country. It was not by a servile imitation of the classic models—the only models which they could have had to follow—that Chaucer, Spenser, and the other fathers of English song strung together their melodious and highly poetical verses; theirs were the productions unmistakably of an English clime, and appealed irresistably to the feelings and imaginations of a young nation living under a new order of things. Even in Italy, to which we are more particularly indebted for the revival and dissemination of ancient learning, those very distinguished poets who, we may suppose, were inspired by the perusal of the long buried classic page, marked out a new path for themselves. Petrarch, and Alfieri, and Dante, and Tasso, although their productions, in some respects, prove the familiarity of those Authors with the lofty classic verse, are, in the prominent features of their works, neither Grecian, nor Roman poets; they are decidedly Italian. We may adduce one other instance much more appropriate, as an example to those who aspire to the rank of American poets—that of Germany. The noble and profuse literature of that land, which may be said to have existed only for the last half century, and of which the poetic department is so great and so admirable, is neither Greek, Roman, nor Saracen; neither Italian, French, nor English; it is peculiarly German, and *modern* German. But turn to America—alas! the

few poetical works that are attempted to be palmed off upon us as American, are English, German, French, anything and everything, in fact, but American—that they are *not*. Indeed we conceive that this sweeping denunciation would apply, in a great measure, to every branch of what is styled American literature.

This would seem an almost hopeless state of things; but we cannot but hope that there is a better not far distant. We trust the literary reader will consider the matter seriously, and doubt not that he will find much in the subject to engross his deepest interest. It is of the greatest importance that every nation and people, on this Continent, should have a national literature, and—we say it in all seriousness—more particularly a national poetry. There is a vein of poetic feeling which permeates the mental constitution of every people, and which, if skilfully worked, may be made all powerful for good. That vein, in the people of Anglo-Saxon America, has never yet been touched: the lyre of the *first* American poet remains as yet unstrung. Whoever that distinguished title is in store for, his first step must be, to brush from the page of American literature, the scintillations which have alighted thereon, from foreign luminaries, to sparkle a moment and expire, and the airy gossamer lines of those native aspirants who have attempted to precede him in the race of fame, then, and not till then, as a true, native American Son of Song, he may hope to brighten that page with “words that burn,” and which will there leave their impress forever.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.

In consequence of the *Half Hour's* notice of John McPherson, which appeared in the March number of *THE PROVINCIAL*, some further recollections of the Poet and his literary remains have been furnished by a Correspondent under the caption of

MORE OF JOHN MCPHERSON.

JOHN McPherson had high opinions of his literary vocation, and high expectations of literary success,—or at least, and at most perhaps, of fame, when the poor author's ear should be beyond such reward.

He did not take up verse-making like most amateurs, as an elegant recreation, or the employment of an idle hour; but as a serious business, to be energetically and enthusiastically attended to, in consequence of its own nature, and the possible achievements in the department. He, therefore, with well selected thoughts, copious supply of appropriate language, good natural taste, and fine ear, set carefully to work to form a literary gem, and when produced he loved it, simply and unabashed, as a mental offspring worthy of a parent's pride. Poor fellow, he had much pleasure respecting such off-

spring;—the little world, also, which he addressed, gratefully commended,—but, meanwhile the poet, pined, and suffered, and died.

McPherson worked a little as an artisan as the former notice states,—but neither mind nor body was fit for success in such occupation. He became a schoolmaster;—and the irksome duties of that sphere, did not press as heavily as might have been expected, on the poet, because they were somewhat congenial to his tone of mind. He made himself capable as a schoolmaster; contracted rather a love for imparting the knowledge he had won, and could have gone on, very willingly,—teaching, in a rural situation, communing with his own mind and nature, and having little ambition beyond humble competence and poetic fame.

Those who are acquainted with such matters,—those who know the poor arrangements by which rural schools generally are kept in existence,—who are aware of the yet unremoved reproach that rests on our highly favoured Province, respecting want of adequate system for one of the most important interests,—such readers need not be told, that the way-side school was not the place for a poetic temperament to find competence. Some persons, of keen active dispositions, may, in such situations, manage to be of much use to others, and some to themselves; they busle along, so as to ensure a showy school, to scrape payments together carefully, and to acquire many of the minor appendages and aids to comfort. But McPherson was not one of these: he taught those who came; he compiled a little treatise on a branch of the Mathematics, he simplified some other branches;—he wrote poetry on afternoons and evenings,—and was not that enough? Should not adequate means result, without any additional plodding and planing and toiling? He found, poor fellow, that it was not enough,—and varied privations and cause of carking care ensued.

During one or two visits to Halifax, he evinced but slight interest, in matters that might be supposed novelties to a young man from the country. He felt some concern in the greater world, and those who occupied the public stage, but his inclination reverted to the lake, and the woodland,—the village school,—and to the poetizing, during the “forest walks,”—or by the humble ingle of his cottage. The world of rural life, and of his own imaginings, were enough for him.

One of his greatest and latest worldly efforts, was an endeavour to have a house of his own. He thought this a great object, and made progress in collecting materials and performing some of the handicraft. But the frail tenement of flesh was tottering to its base;—it soon went to the narrow dwelling place,—and the spirit to the House not built by hands.

There was much of pathos in McPherson's later circumstances, as exhibited in his conversations and his poems. He loved life and living things; he admired the bright and beautiful objects of the world about him;—home, and home friends and home scenes, were dear to his heart,—and yet he turned

from all to look at death with a painful placidity, to see its steady approach, to consider its grim chamber as a refuge from more frowning circumstances. Disappointment, and difficulty, and ill health, by slow and sad degrees, shut out bright objects, one by one,—and led, inexorably, to the last path of escape. Christian faith and hope, however, had been, happily, long cultivated;—they smoothed his dying pillow, and he passed away from the battle of life, in peace.

Among the few worldly directions which the dying man had to give, were some concerning an expected publication of his poems. Manuscript or printed copies had been preserved and collected, and frequent wishes and hopes were expressed concerning these. He had been called the Bard of Acadia,—the title was one of honour and pride, to his heart,—but he desired to have it more regularly and permanently confirmed, by a volume bearing his name. It would be a monument to his memory, a kind of compensation for suffering and disappointment. And who, that knows anything of his productions, would hesitate in affirming, that this presentation to the public would be a decided and important benefit: a boon as regards the pleasure arising from literary melody, the exaltation that noble thoughts impart, the teachings of morals, and the consolations of religion?

Efforts were made, to realise a list that would warrant their publication, with a view of realising some profit for the benefit of the Poet's then infant daughter. Obstacles interposed, and the work is yet to be accomplished. If pecuniary profit might not be expected, in consequence of the difficulties of our very limited market for poetic wares,—other profit would be sure; and it would be much for the Poet's child to have the volume, according to her dying father's hopes; a legacy which would, at least, be rich in the musical embodiment of valuable thoughts.

The effort should be made, and made successfully; it surely will be, if people think aright and act accordingly. Part of a country's wealth consists in her better minds; her statesmen, her philosophers, her christians, her poets. The thought of allowing the memory of such men to be lost with their earthly frames, should no more be tolerated, than the proposition would be, of burying their monied wealth, when the spirit's departed. Where the memory of genius is baneful, let it perish, except as a warning;—where it is of beneficial tendency, the light should, as it may, be handed down from generation to generation. Happily, McPherson's intellectual remains are of the purer kind.

Nova Scotia cannot afford to lose such property; honor and profit to herself would be the result of the liberality intimated. Within a brief time, several names have gone from the lists of busy life, whose spirits should, to some extent, be embalmed and remain. Where are the eloquent and beautiful extracts, from the speeches of the late Master of the Rolls? Where the simply wise and classic observations, of the philosopher of the Dutch Village?

and, where, again, the Poems of John McPherson? These, and several similar possible questions, may yet be satisfactorily answered. We will see;—but the delay proves the want of the right opportunity, and particularly, it would seem, of the right amount of appreciation and energy, respecting such products.

Beside McPherson's Volume,—we should have, in the little rural church-yard where his dust reposes, a slab inscribed and fixed to mark the place of rest. If this were so, surely, even in this unsentimental age and part of the world, we would have, occasionally, sentimental travellers, turning somewhat out of their road, to moralise on the bourne, which separated between the plaintive songs of the pilgrim, and the anthems of the better land.

To renew a mental pleasure, and to give a better tone to these observations, we may quote here, some of the verses of the departed Bard.

Before perusing, let the reader bring the writer before his mind's eye, and the treat will be enhanced. The Poet's physical frame was attenuated,—stature rather low,—countenance grave, mild, and expressive of sustained thoughtfulness. His manner was not that of a general observer, but rather of one abstracted from surrounding objects, and influenced by some reigning, solemn impression. His favorite vocation was similar to that of the ancient minstrel,—to compose verses, and, if opportunity offered, to repeat them for some social circle. Thus he appeared to most advantage. Seated by the friendly fireside, the seniors of the family sympathising with the enthusiast, the children mute observers,—McPherson gave charmingly unsophisticated play to the mood of minstrelsy. He would repeat, on slight suggestion, verse after verse, distinctly, slowly, musically, and with peculiarities of tone, which gave a pleasing quaintness to his recitation. The juniors of his audience, ready as children generally are, to mark peculiarities of manners and voice, would, subsequently, on repeating his melodies, fall in, oddly and sweetly to his tones and manner of pronunciation. On such occasion, he would, without effort or sophistry, make little illustrating or critical remarks on his verse,—and altogether, impart such an antique, romantic and free air, to modern conventionalities, as made the evening hour a rich treat.

Seeing and hearing the Poet thus, let us read one or two of his melodies. A letter to a friend in Halifax, dated May, 1845, says: "I have been sick these three months,—for some weeks past life has seemed ebbing rapidly to its close." "Hope, or something stronger clings to me yet, and I wish to make another effort for life. But I trust I may be more and more enabled to submit to the will of God, whose favour, whose pardoning mercy, and sustaining grace, I strive earnestly to implore." "I have no strength to copy poems now, and have no amanuensis. I send a corrected copy of 'Dying in Spring,' and will try hard to get more soon."

The melody mentioned here, is subjoined.

DYING IN SPRING.

"Bright skies are o'er thee shining,
Soft breezes fan thy brow;
Yet thou, the lov'd art pining,
With secret sorrow now.
Fair flowers are springing round thee,
In forest, field, and lower;
But Spring's bright hues have found thee,
Thyself a fading flower.

Where hearts have been the lightest,
Thine own has been most light;
Where smiles have shone the brightest,
Thine own has shone most bright.

But now a cloud lies o'er thee,
Thy young cheeks bloom hath flown,
And life may not restore thee,
The joys which thou hast known.

Not now thy footstep boundeth,
Among the opening flowers;
Not now thy sweet voice soundeth,
As oft, in former hours.
Thy soul is sadly sighing,
Thy lov'd harp lies unstrung,
And thou, in Spring art dying.
Our beautiful and young."

The flow of sad sweet thought, and musical verse, in these lines, may well entitle them to the name of melody. The contrasts between the season's bright skies, and balmy airs, and fair flowers,—between the gay companionship, and gay habits of former years.—and the faded cheek, the burthened heart, the neglected harp, of the present, are touched with a masterly hand.

Another quotation may be allowed here, in reference to the same season; the allusions are timely, at the present period of our Nova Scotia year, and the verses bear their own recommendation.

LONGINGS AFTER SPRING.

"I long for Spring,—enchancing Spring,
Her sunshine and soft airs,—
That bless the fevered brow, and bring
Sweet thoughts, to soothe our cares.
I long for all her dear delights,
Her bright green forest bowers;
Her world of cheerful sounds, and sights,
Her song-birds and her flowers.

Even while the brumal king maintains
His reign of death and gloom,
How much of solid good remains
To mitigate his doom.
Sweet then, to taste the well-earned cheer
When Day's dull toil is o'er,
And sit among Our Own, and hear,
The elemental roar.

Then, when the snow drifts o'er the moor,
And drowns the traveller's cry,
The charities of poor to poor
Go sweetly up on high.
Then, while the mighty winds accord
With Mind's eternal Lyre,
Our trembling hearts confess the Lord,
Who touched our lips with fire.

Yet give me Spring, inspiring Spring,
The season of our trust,—
That comes like heavenly hope, to bring,
New life to slumbering dust;
Restore, from Winter's stormy shocks,
The singing of the birds,
The bleating of the yeased flocks,
The lowing of the herds.

I long to see the ice give way,
The streams begin to flow;—
And some benignant, vernal day,
Disperse the latest snow.
I long to see you lake resume
Its breeze-kiss'd azure crest,
And hear the lonely wild fowl boom
Along its moon-lit breast.

Oh, I remember one still night,
That bless'd the world of yore,—
A fair maid with an eye of light,
Was with me on that shore.
I look upon the same calm brow,
But sweeter feelings throng,—
She, wedded, sits beside me now,
And smiles upon my song.

The Robin has returned again,
And rests his wearied wing,
But makes no music in the glen,
Where he was wont to sing.
The Black-bird chaunts no jocund strain;
The tiny wild-wood throng,
Still of the searching blast complain,
But wake no joyful song.

The ploughman cheering on his team,
At morning's golden prime,—
The milk-maid singing of her dream,
At tranquil evening time,—
The shrill frog piping from the pool,—
The swallow's twittering cry,—
The teacher's pleasant walk from school,
Require a kinder sky.

I long to see the grass spring up, —
 The first green corn appear,—
 The violet ope its azure cup,
 And shed its glistening tear.
 My cheek is wan with stern disease,
 My soul oppressed with care ;
 And, anxious for a moment's ease,
 I sigh for sun and air.

Oh ! month of many smiles and tears,
 Return with those bright flowers,
 That come like light, from Astral spheres,
 To glad Acadia's bowers !
 Young children go not forth to play,—
 Life hath small voice of glee,
 'Till thy sweet smiles, oh genial May!
 Bring back the murmuring bee."

What a plaintive, mellifluous flow of thoughts, and words are here. What graphic touches of scenery,—what sweetly expressed sympathy with animated nature,—what fine allusions to varied features of spring. The delicate, social, personal intimations of, resting amid our own ; of the charities of the poor ; of the wife ; the teacher's walk,—and the wan cheek, are exquisite, as are many of the minor particulars of this poem.

McPherson's bitterest hours, seem to have had many merciful ameliorations. Beside the consolations of religion, and next to those best sources of support, he gratefully and loving, alludes, again and again, to the wife who nursed and solaced him ; who heard his poems with sweet approval, from his pale lips,—and who, when his hand was too weak for the task, wrote fondly from his dictation, some of his latest verses.

His noble ambition, and worthy hope was, that his collected and published poems should afford her some pleasure and aid, when he had departed. She has a refuge from the requirements of such aid ; but has frequently desired, faithfully, to see her late husband's wishes realised, and the volume presented to his child.

Nova Scotia has a duty in this respect ;—the poet's letters, and a sketch of his brief history, might accompany his poems, and form a volume of the Provincial Library, having varied interest and beneficial tendency. He was not altogether neglected, thank Providence, while he lived ; let his memory be honoured now, and let him still, according to his dying wishes, be, by means of the printing press, the "Bard of Acadia." T.

THE RUINE AND THE ALPS: OR, THE "BEATEN TRACK" IN 1851.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 131.

CHAPTER IV.

SCHAFFHAUSEN.—It not unfrequently happens that a fallacy runs through almost all the literature which treats of some particular subject. A fallacy once well started, appears indeed to be certain of re-appearing in print, and is most difficult to eradicate. This is particularly the case with regard to the

published accounts in general of the *climate* of many parts of Europe, and particularly of Switzerland, as compared with that of Great Britain; this is the more strange as so many *Autumn* as well as Summer tourists have contributed to this branch of literature, though as regards even the Summer tourists, we cannot agree with their conclusions on this subject. If we were to revisit Switzerland at any season, we should do so solely for the sake of the remarkable and unrivalled scenes which that country contains, but with a conviction that as to *health*, however well we might be at starting, we should stand a reasonable chance of being the worse for it before we returned to England. Even in Summer, and in fine weather, the sudden change from the hot stifling valley to the regions first of chill, and then of frost—or else the burning sun by day, immediately succeeded by damp cold after sun-set—afford a very unfavorable climate as compared with that of Wales, the lake country of Cumberland and Westmorland, or even the highlands of Scotland. "But," perhaps the reader may object, "think of the *wet weather* in those parts of Great Britain." Go and judge for yourself, my dear sir, or madam, go to Switzerland in July, and stay there till the end of September—we won't recommend a longer trial—and another season honour the mountain country of Great Britain with a similar visit—and then come to an independent opinion as to which country has afforded you the greatest number of fine days,—the least of drenching rain, cold, fog, snow and sleet, and possibly—we say possibly—the least amount of enduring colds and acute rheumatism.

We can only say for our own experience, that we fear not the winds of mountain and flood in Great Britain; that in England at least we have always derived very great benefit from our sojourn there, and returned therefrom brown and hardy, with a renewed stock of health. Of Switzerland, we must assert, the reverse of all this has been our experience. And we can also affirm of those persons whom we have known intimately, who have gone thither for their ramble of six weeks or two months, that the greater number have returned like ourselves—sufferers. One of these, a strong healthy person, was invalided for a long time afterwards with a severe tumour, attributed to walking when heated through snow, an unavoidable predicament for all persons who explore the great sights of the country and seek what the hand-books style the healthy air of the Swiss mountains. The immediate effect upon him was, the skin peeling from his legs: his companion—delicate when he started—instead of renovating his health, was detained for a long time by illness at Clavens, on the lake of Geneva: these are but two cases of several among our friends; and indeed if you do but look about you through the greater portion of Switzerland, what signs of health do you see in the population?

The hideous *goitre* which deforms more than half the female population of most of the Cantons—more or less in all of them—the wretched idiots,—the *cretins*, so frequently exhibiting human nature in a state of the most revolt-

ing moral and physical deformity,—screaming like insane wild beasts: are these to be taken as signs of a healthy climate? We have an attack of acute rheumatism; we have only to mention this, and are sure to be told by all the adult individuals that we address, that they are now, or have been, great sufferers from the same cause—whether their occupations are indoors or in the air—alas! not *open* air. Yet Dr. FORBES, in his “Physician’s Holiday”—a Summer holiday by the bye—recommends a pedestrian excursion in *Switzerland*, as a means of restoring health and vigour to dyspeptic or delicate persons; and INGLIS, in a book recommended to us, and for which we found a place in our portmanteau, after admitting that he generally met with bad weather in Switzerland, remarks, “but it is in Autumn that the climate of Switzerland is to be depended upon.”

We had never before passed an Autumn there, and were rather surprised when a travelled and intelligent German gentleman told us “make haste, if you are going to Switzerland; do not stay there after August—the fogs after that month are pernicious.” We had reason to regret that we did not take his advice. Fogs, rain, snow, a piercing cold were our portion in all the lower ground; the mountain excursions were only *impossible*, but we will not anticipate our “simple story.”

On the morning of the 24th of August we stood upon the bridge which spans the Rhine,—bright green, and perfectly clear,—and pure from the lake of Constance, far unlike the turbid waters of the lower river! Schaffhausen appears to advantage from this point, with its quaint old walls and towers, and fine old feudal castle above. It deserves more attention than we and most other English travellers have paid it.

Every one is impatient to see the celebrated Falls of the Rhine, which are about two miles below the town. We rejoiced, however, that we did not follow the example of nearly all our countrymen who, avoiding Schaffhausen, go at once to Weber’s Hotel, which is near the Falls. It is a huge building, upon a height, about a quarter of a mile north-west of the Falls, and at a considerable elevation above them, commanding a sort of bird’s eye view: altogether about the worst view of this really magnificent scene, that could be chosen. It is far better to follow the high road from Schaffhausen—not more than two miles—and to get your first impression when first in fact. The Falls will come completely in sight, immediately *below* the rush of waters, following a crescent-shaped promontory, which brings the spectator to a point *opposite* the whole breadth of the Falls.

At this point there is a little Inn, which is in the best situation to be found, though, alas! the windows are partially *paned* with a coloured glass, to induce the genuine cockney (who is, we beg to say, of all nations) to spoil the grand sight which nature has there placed before him. It is not the height of this Fall, which is not more than 60 or 70 feet, but the great body of water which

falls that entitle it to the first place among its fellows in Europe. It is divided into three unequal parts,—the vivid green of the falling water showing more or less through the immense *fountains* of white spray, constantly varying in height and density,—sometimes soaring most gracefully high above the Falls, then partially clearing and lessening to rise again with redoubled force—constituted to our apprehension the great charm of this scene, like all that is most beautiful in nature—ever changing yet ever the same! If near enough to see these things, and not in Weber's Hotel, the lover of such scenes will not soon tire of watching the Rhine-fall.

From the South side of the Rhine, there is *no possible view* of the Falls, except you enter a castle rented by an artist, who makes travellers pay for the privilege. We did not go there, because we disapprove of this kind of speculation, and because the castle and rocks make a fine back-ground, when seen from the north side, and must needs be better to look *at* than to look *from*; for the back-ground which would be seen from the south side, would be far from picturesque. The roar of the falls at a short distance is not at all deafening, and certainly is not so loud as we had anticipated it would be.

The programme for seeing the Falls in "Murray," is curiously complicated, considering the extreme simplicity of the actual process; nor is this the only case in which if the traveller consults common sense and his map, rather than the Hand-book, he will save time and money, and accomplish his object in a more satisfactory manner besides.

A VISIT TO THE ALBION MINES.

WHILE on a tour through the Province we came to Pictou, and being told that the Coal Mines situated about nine miles up the East River, were worth seeing, determined upon visiting them. We left in the morning, and crossed the harbour by the Steamer which is employed in towing vessels up and down the river, as well as carrying passengers. Twenty minutes sufficed to take us to the loading ground (about four miles) where there are seven berths where vessels and boats can be loaded, and at which we were told, upwards of eight hundred chaldrons of Coal have been shipped in a single day; but unfortunately it was not often that vessels came in such fleets as to require such exertions to be made. As the Locomotive Engine was ready to start for the Mines (five miles off) we had no time to examine this immense pile of timber, which is upwards of a quarter of a mile long.

The Locomotive Engine is thirty horse power, and, unlike those that we had previously seen, has all the three wheels on either side connected

together: this adds to the power of traction, but would not be suitable for Engines running express trains. Here they are only used for beasts of burden; and we travelled along the line at the sober pace of six miles an hour; dragging the usual tail of thirty two-chaldron waggons after us, which were seen to great advantage while going through the endless curves, of which the road is formed; and we fancied the Engineer must have been trying to lay down Hogarth's "Line of Beauty" on a large scale when he designed it; for though we were told the road was bad, yet these curves added much to the draft upon the engine; which was very evident by the increase of speed upon those few parts of the road that were straight. We passed another engine at the passing place, near New Glasgow, taking down its train of thirty loaded waggons.

New Glasgow appears to be a thriving and increasing village, where some large ships are built, though it is a wonder that they are ever launched safely; for the channel is so narrow that the vessels are launched *angle-ways* across the stream. Ship-building, but more especially, the vicinity of the Mines, has made this place to flourish more than similarly situated places in other parts of the province.

Near the Mines, the railroad branches off to the new, or Dalhousie pits, up a rather steep incline; here we met a third engine, having its separate duty to perform, of taking the empty waggons up to the coal pits; for the loaded waggons run down of themselves, checked as required, by two men at the breaks. We kept on to the old station house, where the engine got a fresh supply of coal and water, previous to running its next trip. In the engine house we saw a fourth, and a more powerful engine than the other three. This is kept as a reserve, ready to supply their place in case of accident.

Close to the railroad, is the Foundry establishment; but as we were anxious to see all that we could underground, we passed by this, as well as the Pumping Engine of seventy horse power, which draws the water from all the underground works, a depth of four hundred and fifty feet. We were directed to the office for a permit to go down into the Mines. We did not see the Manager, but the necessary document was at once given by an official, who, we should think, all on the establishment must *look up* to; for when this tall gentleman handed us the permit, it gave us a *kink* in the neck to look up to his face to thank him.

After passing the Church, which has just been erected, and is a neat building, placed in a conspicuous, and commanding position, we paused to look at the spot where so much labor and money are daily expended: we thought of the dangers and hardships to which so many human creatures are hourly exposed, from explosion; roof falling; breathing noxious vapors; or working in wet situations; and doubted if their extra rate of wages above that of

common laborers, was an equivalent for the risk they ran. Thinking also, how little we have considered these things, when we have grumbled at the price of our coals.

We observed that there were two shafts, from which coal was being drawn by the Winding Engine being placed between them, and it was also pumping water from a third pit. At a short distance to the south-east was a square wooden building, out of which were ascending large volumes of smoke; this we afterwards learned was the upcast shaft, with a furnace at the bottom for rarefying the air, and thus accelerating its circulation through the works: the air descends by the pumping shaft, and when the weather is warm, jets of water fall down, thus increasing the action of the air, which is directed through the workings by doors, or stoppings, and made to traverse round the face of the workings. Constant attention is required to the state of the ventilation; particularly in these Mines, where large quantities of gas are discharging from numerous fissures, or "blowers" as they are termed, at the face of the workings; and to keep sufficient atmospheric air passing through, so as to mix with the gas, and render it non-explosive, demands the most constant watchfulness of the underground viewers. On the Eastern side of the pits, was a large levelled space of ground, whereon an immense quantity of coal was piled, being the produce of the mining operations during the Winter months: for these Mines labor under the great disadvantage of having a market for their coal during only half of the year; the other half, the rivers being frozen up, vessels are prevented from taking the coal to the United States, which is their principal market, so that to give the colliers constant employment on the one hand, and to be able to supply the demand required in a few months on the other, the Company are forced to have a large stock of coal prepared every Spring, ready for the anticipated trade.

We were agreeably surprised to find that there was no occasion to run the risk of descending one of the shafts to view the Mines; but that there was a "level" entrance into the seam of coal, where it was exposed in the bank side, and where it had been worked by the first discoverers. We also observed the immense thickness of this seam of coal, as exposed in the brook near the mouth of the level.

A collier was just going into the Mine, to whom we showed our order, and he civilly offered to guide us to the part where we should most likely find the manager or one of his deputies. He was an intelligent and communicative fellow, and from him, more than by our own observation, we learned what we are now attempting to describe. After being in the dark for a short time, our eyes began to distinguish objects by the light of his lamp: for here the men have little lamps with a hooked handle which they hang in their caps, instead of the old country custom of a candle in a lump of clay. We found the excavations were from ten to twelve feet high, and some as much as eighteen

fect wide: as we descended along, we had some difficulty in preserving our footing, for the coal has an inclination like the roof of a house, or "dips" about one foot in three. After going some distance, we passed through a door, and within a few yards, a second one; this, our guide informed us, was to prevent the air taking a wrong course; for one door had to be shut before the second one was opened, and thus the current was never diverted from its designed road.

We now came into a part of the Mine where the men were at work, and the air felt much fresher and purer; we descended another steep *incline* where deep ruts were worn by the sleds of coal sliding down them; for the road is too steep for wheels. At the bottom of this incline, stables had been made in one of the old workings or "boards," for a dozen horses, and at the entrance a trough of water for them to drink from; which water was so clear and fresh, always running out of the solid coal, that you could see a pin at the bottom of the trough; and it pleased the taste as well as the eye: such a spring would have been invaluable in many places. The horses thrive by it and their *keep*, for we never saw finer, sleeker creatures, and their polished coats would have done credit to any gentleman's groom. We were told they were very healthy, and except from accidental causes, remained a long time in the pits.

We now proceeded on our journey, and soon reached the bottom of one of the shafts, up which the coal is raised: it was about two hundred and fifty feet deep, and lined all round from top to bottom with plank, to prevent accidents from the stone or slate falling out of the sides, and injuring the men while working below. We looked up, and although the day was fine and sky clear, we could not distinguish any stars; and therefore, doubt the report of their being visible from the bottom of a well or pit during daylight; or else conclude that there was not a star at the zenith, just at the time we were taking an observation.

We again descended by another steep incline, and passed near the engine-pit, down which we heard the water rushing. This stream is thus directed that it may assist in carrying the cool air down into the Mine; and after running its course round the works, passes over the furnace-fire, and by expansion, is ejected again into the upper air, where all the noxious gases it has absorbed are soon dissipated.

After reaching the bottom of the lowest pit, we turned off and walked along the railroad, by which the coals are conveyed to the shaft; again we passed through double doors; but here a black-faced, but cheerful looking little fellow of some twelve years old, opened the door for us; and we learned that he is called a "trapper;" that his sole duty is to open and shut these doors during the hours that the pits are at work. His rank is the lowest, or initiatory one in the scale of pit employment: this led us to inquire how

many divisions of labourers are employed in a Coal Mine, and were told as follows:—Trappers, Horse-drivers, Road-layers, Pit-bottomers, Bandsmen or Coal-fillers, Colliers, Ostler, Furnaceman, Watchmen, Deputies and Chief Viewer, underground; while on the surface there were Blacksmiths, Carpenters, Masons, Engineers for the Locomotive and Winding engines, Banksmen, Ostlers, Cart-drivers, Coal-fillers and other labourers, besides the clerks in the office and the Foundry establishment. The population was calculated at over one thousand persons, besides Tailors, Shoemakers and other tradesmen; all of whom were directly or indirectly deriving their subsistence through the employment given at the Mines. We also understood, that a doctor and two schools were supported by subscriptions from the workmen; so that both their health and education were attended to.

To return to the path, or rather railroad from which we had wandered, we walked along for some distance, until the rumbling noise of a pit waggon drawn by a horse trotting along, warned us to step on one side, and let it pass; the horse went along freely, guided only by the uncertain light of the lamp hanging in the driver's cap; we jumped on to the low waggon, and kept our places by clinging on to the bow of the Skip, and soon arrived at the end of the first stage, yecept the waggon hole.

The Skip is a wooden sled with runners rounded at both ends, and shod with iron, with an iron bow crossing the sled, and which serves to support a number of iron rings, among which the coals are built in; and thus the colliers are enabled to send larger coals to bank than they could do, if they had to fill them into boxes, while they also are much more easily unloaded, as they tumble to pieces as soon as they are upset.

This Skip, arrived at the waggon hole, is hauled off the waggon, and another horse drags it up an inclined plane. We followed it; but found the roads so deeply worn in ruts, and steep, that we wondered how the horses got up or down them. We passed six boards with their supporting ribs, and then turned off to the right; and soon reached the place where the colliers were working. We sat down on a lump of coal to rest, and watch the men working: there were three men working in this Board; one was loading a skip with coals, another was cutting a notch, or "shearing" the side; while the third was drilling a hole in the solid coal preparatory to blasting down the piece that his neighbour was hewing at. The men pay for the powder used, which is about one pound each daily: its cost makes a great reduction in their apparent earnings; but they said it saved their manual labor, though they admitted that the coal made more *slack*, or was more easily broken than what was wrought by wedges. Like most other productions in the colonies, quantity, not quality, was the great desideratum with the producer.

The colliers, who had commenced working at daylight, had finished their tasks; and were replaced by the collier (who had acted as our guide) and a fresh

set of cutters, who would work on through the night; thus forming two gangs called the "day and night shifts;" the horses, drivers and viewers were also changed, so that there was no cessation from the Monday morning to the Saturday night. A watchman went through the works at night, and also on Sundays.

We observed that stout trees supported the roof in many places; so that it appeared, every care and forethought were used to ensure the safety of the workmen. We understood that only one or two deaths had occurred in the last ten years, and very few accidents, which was surprising, considering that from two hundred to three hundred persons are employed in the Mines. Our informant could not tell how many accidents had occurred since the first opening of the Mines, his knowledge only extending back to the time of his coming to the works.

The deputy-viewer now came up, and after handing him the permit; he courteously offered to show us the other parts of the Mines; but as we understood that all the workings were carried on upon the same plan, and therefore, to the eye of a stranger, quite similar, we preferred remaining to see the effect of the "shot" or explosion of gunpowder, which we learned we could do with safety, by retreating round the corner of the gate-road or incline road, up which we had ascended. Having drilled the hole upwards of three feet, and charged it,—the viewer, ourselves and two colliers, retired down the gate-road, and the other one fired the match with his common lamp and then ran and joined us round the corner, occasionally peeping to see that the match was still burning; presently we heard a whiz, and then a loud report like a cannon immediately followed, causing a great concussion in the air. The ventilation being good, the smoke was quickly dissipated, and we went to examine the effect of the "shot;" it had done good execution, for it had blown down a block of coal about seven feet long, and between three and four feet square. This mass had to be broken into smaller lumps before it could be loaded on the Skips, and they estimated that it would yield about one and a half chaldrons of coals.

We now bade our subterranean Cicerone good bye, and accompanied the viewer as he continued his rounds through the upper Boards. He told us the strongest discharge of gas, was from "blowers" in the lowest Boards of the deepest pit, as they were the most in advance in the solid or unwrought coal; and that in them, the gas was continually forcing its way out through the fissures of the coal, and that where it came out under the water in the drain, the gas caused the water to bubble up, as if it were boiling in a pot. He, however, showed us how they detected the presence of the noxious gas, by lighting one of the Davy lamps; and with a depressed wick, and consequently small flame, he raised the lamp slowly up to the highest part of the roof of one of the workings, when instantly the whole of the lamp filled with a blue

flame, which again became yellow when the lamp was lowered into the purer air.

After reaching the highest working place, he took us along the current way pursued by the air in its return to the upcast pit; at the bottom of which, burned a large open fire to expand the air, and thus cause an increase to the draught or ventilation: this open fire was only a temporary substitute for a brick furnace which they were preparing to build; but which answered the purpose very well at the present time; when the excavations had not covered any great area of ground, nor had the air any great distance to travel during its short sojourn underground. After leaving the fire and making two or three turns up and down, we again perceived daylight; and found that we had been conducted back to the place at which we had entered. Pleased with all we had seen, and the civility with which we had been treated, we were glad to see the light of heaven again, and to breathe its fresh air.

This caused us to reflect how much it would increase the charity of man towards his fellow man, if the world were more generally acquainted, by personal inspection, with the dangers and privations undergone in the procuring of so many articles of daily use; and which have now become so necessary to our comfort; and of which the article of coal is an example so familiar to us all.

We have, therefore, given an imperfect sketch of what we saw in a coal pit, in hopes that it may cause some more able hand "currente calamo" to describe other branches of manufacture in this neighbourhood, or other parts of the Province; which may prove instructive, and of general interest to the readers of the Provincial Magazine; besides carrying out one of the important designs of the Prospectus, that of letting Nova Scotians know what Nova Scotians are doing!

TYRO.

THE FATAL CROSSING.

A BALLAD.

"An owre true tale," from the mouth of the Shubenacadie.

"Who now with anxious wonder scan
And sharper glance, the dark grey man;
Till whispers rose among the throng,
That heart so free, and hand so strong,
Must to the Douglas blood belong."—SCOTT.

On a sultry summer morning, they told it to me there where it happened, standing at the door of the cottage, the river rushing madly before it with the returning tide, while the unconscious hero of the narrative was slowly pacing with his heavy manly step, to the Lumber Mill not two hundred yards from us;—they described it to me vividly—the seeming security of the Ice,—the reckless spirit of the men,—the fearful peril from the sudden turning of the

tide, and their floating far out upon the Basin, facing a terrific death with human homes and human beings in sight. And they told how gazing at their danger, he could bear it no longer, but dared in his strong might alone to rescue them,—how he had seized a plank and making it the bridge from one drifting fragment to another, after hours of unceasing toil he at last had the happiness to restore one hapless victim to be again for a while, a sojourner in the “place of hope.” He endeavoured to reach the other, but a mightier Will had decreed his doom; and the wretched being had drifted beyond all succour, and was fast nearing, on his speeding ice-raft, the madly curling breakers, to meet face to face amid their angry whirl and commotion the eye of that Almighty Being, he had so recently defied.

The river that rose in the mountain,
Thence flowing a feeble rill,
Till it swept in a fierce broad current—
Lay frozen, staunch, and still:

On the bridge of its icy spanning,
Might passengers fearless tread:
Tho’ tides rushed deep beneath it,
As rest of Ocean’s dead.

But over the angry eddies
That frigid mask it threw,
Bright in the Sun’s warm glances,
Flushed with its parting hue.

The scowling night storms crushed it,
With groans, and shrieks and roars:
With fissures and chasms rent it
From the arms of protecting shores.

Yet when daylight again beheld it,
No trace of the havoc made
Announced that in treacherous seeming
Its glancing brilliance laid:—

There came two reckless beings
To the lonely landing spot;
Fiercely they swore that ice to dare,
Cautioned or cautioned not.

They were spirits of sense benighted,
Mad with excess of wine;
No voice had weight, in their frenzied mood,
Nor human, nor yet divine.

Each sprang on the fatal crossing,
With laughter at fears so vain,—
With blasphemous lips, and reeling step,
And wild excited brain.

They sped on their onward travel,
With jest and ribald song,—
And in triumph waved their arms aloft,
As they press’d the path along:—

But e’er they reached the centre,
Their courage began to fail;
The glances they gave each other,
Shewed both were deadly pale.

Alas! there was no returning,
 The tide turned rapidly ;
 And soon on the ice-flakes parting,
 They drifted out to sea.

'There were eyes, that marked a peril
 Which palsied hearts with fear ;
 Voices, that shrieked directions
 Never to reach the ear:—

And woman's tones imploring,
 Each on a bended knee,
 That the God of all earth's mercies,
 Would help right speedily.

One, only thought of succour,
 And sought for comrade aid ;
 The task seemed too terrific,
 And all shrank back afraid :

So he nerved his manly spirit ;
 He shouldered a plank alone ;
 And e'er they could chide his daring,
 His stalwart form was gone.

He bridged each fragment calmly :
 He leaped o'er crack and space ;
 And when his strength seemed failing,
 He summoned heart of grace.

At last, o'er the heaving bosom
 Of the mass on the crowded bay,
 He reached where one fainting victim,
 On his icy island lay.

Back, back, on the path of peril
 He urged the weak one on ;
 'Till life, and hope for coming time,
 With earth's firm hold, were won.

Then again on his loving errand
 He sprang in his vigor yet ;
 But by power unseen, to mercy's will,
 Is inscrutable limit set.

That spirit bereft was facing
 Immensity in awe ;
 While Eternal Truths came bursting,
 Voicing the breakers' roar ;

And the shrinking soul was gazing
 With struggling, choking breath,
 From the frozen raft that bore him,
 To the colder gates of Death.

Oh! ye that hold that heroes
 Must spring of chivalric line,—
 That glory crowns her children
 Alone where lances shine :

Believe that the mighty actions
 Performed by the nameless brave,
 Though unsung by earthly praises,
 Find annals beyond the grave.

THE WALTON CLUB.

FRANK LINDSAY'S FIRST ATTEMPT AT FLY FISHING.

(Continued from page 157.)

THE poor animal looked round, but could see no landing place, and swam at once towards the paddle-wheel, up which he endeavoured to climb. The villanous captain, pretending not to notice the circumstance, ordered the engineer to turn the vessel a little nearer to the land—his object evidently being to tear the brute to pieces. Without a moment's hesitation Randolph Maitland leaped into the water, to the rescue of his dog—determined to save him at all hazards—and Frank Lindsay seeing the engineer apparently about to put the engine in motion, threw himself upon him, and putting in operation the act in which he was so well skilled, tripped up his heels and left him lying on his back, on the deck. The cry of "a boy and dog overboard," now engaged every one's attention—and the engineer, who was a good natured fellow, gathered himself up, laughing at the dexterity with which he had been turned over, and actually was the party who dragged Nelson upon deck, pulling him up by the tail. Randolph was a good swimmer, so that his only inconvenience was a ducking.

The Doctor accompanied him on board the other steamer, recommended him to the good offices of the steward, and with a hearty laugh advised him never to go fishing again with an English mastiff. He promised to take the advice, but said he would risk his life any day for Nelson, for he had saved his sister's life. "Indeed," said the Doctor, looking with fresh interest upon the noble animal—"how, how?" "Rosa, that is my sister," said Randolph, "was galloping down the park upon a pet pony, with Nelson after her; there is a small stream running through it, which at that time was very much swollen by rain—she had often jumped across—but this time she was thrown, fell into the stream and was carried down like a feather. Nelson jumped after her, but so strong was the current that he was carried past her three times, as we learned afterwards, before he succeeded in getting hold of her clothes; and the most extraordinary thing is that after he had got her ashore, the pony examined her, and when he found she did not move, took her up gently with his mouth and carried her homewards, while Nelson here, alarmed the household with his cries and dismal howlings." "And did your sister recover?" "Oh, yes, she was able to sit up in less than half an hour!" "Why," said the Doctor, "the poney is by a thousand times a more extraordinary animal than even the dog—you must prize him highly." "We do, sir. My father would not give him for a thousand guineas." The bell rung—the Doctor hastened ashore—and once more our young heroes were steaming towards Inverary; landed at Gareloch, and, to complete the incidents of the day, were

obliged to walk seven miles under a perfect deluge of rain, which never abated for an instant. But though their bodies might be damped by the inclemency of the weather, their spirits were as elastic and buoyant as if they had been travelling under an Italian sky; and when the vast sweep of Loch Fine, so famous for its herring fishery, burst upon their sight, they welcomed it with an echoing cheer, which without intending it, brought along an old fisherman with his boat, who offered to take them across to Inverary—just the thing they wanted. “Now for Loch Awe,” cried Charley, “the shortest road to Loch Awe!” “If your honours pe for the loch,” said the old Highlander, “you’ll petter set oot the night, and pegin the fishin in the morning.” “Could we start to-night, this afternoon?” asked Frank. “Hoot, aye—Shone Campbell will tak ye oot in the drosky for twa shillin, and ye can sleep at my cousin Donald’s hoose at the Sannox!” “Capital! peat smoke, and a fire in the middle of the floor, I hope?” cried Ran. “To be shure,” said the Highlander, with perfect simplicity—“you’ll get plenty o’ fire—but what a praw doug that is! I’ll warrant your faither’s a great, gran shentleman in the Lowlands.” This was intended as a leading question by the crafty old Celt—and it is needless to say that the information he received was somewhat wide of the mark.

In the meantime they had landed in Inverary, the county town of Argyle, and the residence of the great Duke of that name. The village itself is one of the tidiest and prettiest to be seen anywhere. All the houses are covered with slate, and built with great regularity. Inverary Castle, the mansion of the Duke of Argyle, is a beautiful specimen of the Grecian style of architecture, designed by the celebrated Adams. Behind the Castle rises the steep and abrupt hill called Duniquaich, crowned by a watch-tower of other days; and how the stones of which it is built were got there, it would almost puzzle an Engineer of modern times to say; before it lay the ample waters of Loch Fine, and beyond stretched an almost boundless extent of wooded mountain, forming altogether a magnificent landscape of forest scenery. Of all this our young friends took but a passing glance. Remaining altogether about two hours in Inverary, they dined and walked about a little, and at five o’clock found themselves mounted in a car with the redoubted John Campbell, who assured them that trout were to be got in Loch Awe, as big as salmon, and pike longer than themselves. This was brave news to the young sportsmen; and though the road through which they were passing was every step becoming more wild and picturesque, they had neither eyes nor ears for any thing but John Campbell and his wonderful stories about the fish in Loch Awe.

John was an obliging, talkative, little bullet-headed Highlandman, particularly pleased with his mission, and proud to set forth the resources of the Argyle County. About seven o’clock all arrived in the most jovial good humour at the Sannox, and were kindly received by a staid old Highlander and his better half, which latter personage in the most motherly manner, set about

getting a cup of warm tea for the tired travellers, while the goodman insisted that they should take a "wee drap" out of a certain brown jar, which was taken from beneath the bed in a very careful manner. The toils of the day had jaded them a good deal, and they accepted the good man's hospitality, though with due precaution. In the meantime the old lady was getting along with the tea-pot—which looked as if it had been a long time since it had seen active service. It was, in fact, an old tin coffee-pot, minus the spout. It was filled with a most miscellaneous stock of articles enveloped in dust and cobwebs. This excellent housewife did not seem to think it evident that anything in the way of cleansing was requisite, before infusing her tea. Frank noticed the operation, and with as much delicacy as he could, requested to be allowed to try his hand at making tea for once—but the jealous old lady suspected his motive in a moment, and with true Highland pride kindled up and began muttering to herself in Gaelic, to what purpose was not very evident, though it had the desired effect of introducing a little warm water, sufficient to clear away the peat dust of many months. In a short time, however, all was well again. Indeed, it would have been difficult to resist the bonhomie of these boy sportsmen for any length of time.

For the first time in their lives they lay down to sleep upon beds of heather, and so anxious were they, that though much worn out, they could, like the youth in the poem,

"have wept with downright sorrow
To think the night should pass before the morrow."

But day did at length dawn, and with their eyes half open, but their spirits in first rate order, they set out fully armed to this long wished for Loch. They had not far to go. The morning was calm; a thick mist lay upon the water; not a living thing was to be seen as far as the eye could reach, so that there was a kind of desolate feeling mingled with their happiness. Each seated himself upon the ground, and following as closely as possible, the directions of Peter White; they put up their rods, tied on their lines and hooks, and set to work with all the enthusiasm of novices. But their success was slight indeed; their lines were for ever getting tangled among the bushes, their hooks catching upon stones and stumps—so that in the course of about half an hour, their stock was more than half exhausted and two of their rods broken. They were heartily out of temper. Peter and the flies, and above all, the bushes were soundly abused—and they were fast becoming disgusted with the morning's work, when Charley who had slipped a worm upon his hook, and whose rod still maintained its integrity, felt a tug at his line which made him throw it up in desperate haste. A small trout performed a somerset high in the air, and hung dangling from the branch of a tree. The excited angler shouted for assistance, and Frank, Rauldolph and Nelson, were immediately by his side. Frank looked up and exclaimed:—"hic summa piscem deprendit in ulmo."

The branch hung right over the lake, and the poor trout struggled to the best of its ability to regain its native element. But what will not a boy dare, even to secure a trifle. Frank threw off his jacket and boots, so that he might be prepared to keep company with the fish, should he descend with it into the lake, and with the agility of a wild cat mounted the tree and happily secured the prize.

This restored them to good humour, and while Charley again set to work with fresh eagerness,—Frank and Randolph taking the trout, which was not very large, used it as a bait, and fixing it upon one of the large pike hooks, committed the strong line to the dark deep water, and returned to see how Charley was getting on. He threw and threw and waited with the most praise-worthy patience for a long time, but to no purpose. Not a fish would bite, and the boys concluded that “Shone Campbel” had been gammoning them, and again began to be rather out of spirits. They returned to their pike line with but slender hopes of success; but, the moment Randolph touched it he called out in a kind of shouting whisper, “a fish, by George, a tremendous fellow!” All three seized hold of the line at once, each one remonstrating and pulling with might and main, “don’t Frank,” “take care, Charley,” “take care man, you’ll break the line; I would not lose him for fifty pounds”—“I see him, I see him,” roared Charley, “gad, he’s six feet long! pull, Frank! haul away, Ran!” “No fear, here he is, huzza!” And sure enough, there he was struggling and gasping upon the beach, terrible to look at, grinding his teeth in agony.

The pike has, with great propriety, been called the fresh water shark; what a fierce, gloomy, vindictive look he has. This one was at least twenty pounds in weight. The hook was fixed firmly in the jaw, and held him in despite of the most desperate struggles. Possessed of great strength, activity and tenacity of life, he was a most formidable looking enemy, and the boys did not know very well how to despatch him. Even Nelson looked on with suspicion, and when requested to take him by the throat, positively declined the complement. He kept, however, capering round him, till his tail coming in reach of the monster’s mouth, he fiercely dashed at it, and held it like grim death. Nelson flew as if a thousand fiends were in pursuit of him, howling for mercy, and dragging fish and line after him at the rate of twelve miles an hour.

THE WILLOW BY THE RIVER.

There grew a willow on a river’s brim
Which stretched its slender arms to reach the tide;
And, waving gently, let its branches swim
Upon the wave, and in its eddies glide,
And in the wind it whispered to the stream
A wooing song of love’s delightful dream.

The river flowed disdainfully along,
 And dashed aside the willow's bending boughs;
 Nor stayed to listen to the plaintive song,
 Nor heard the murmur of its trembling vows;
 But hurried onward thro' the verdant mead
 With scornful, proud, and unabated speed.

And yet, the streamlet had its favourite spots,
 Where it would linger murmuring 'mid the trees;
 Creeping through banks of pale forget-me-nots,
 And flower-beds thronged by honey seeking bees;
 Here it would tarry through long sunny hours,
 Kissing the bending boughs and budding flowers.

This was in summer;—but the winter came:
 The beauties of the sylvan haunts were lost;
 The flowery beds no longer gleamed the same;
 The stream was bound in one hard chain of frost;
 The constant willow breathed its song again—
 The ice-bound river heard and knew the strain.

And when the streamlet listened to the tree,
 It felt the power of the magic song,
 And sought no longer from the place to flee,—
 And knew its former slight was proud and wrong;
 It gave the love it had refused before,
 And tree and stream were true for evermore. D. S.

LETTERS FROM LINDEN HILL.

To _____ ACROSS THE WATER :

My Dear and Superlative Correspondent,—All praise be unto you for your pleasant gift of letter-writing—and many thanks for the last proof of your abilities.

With respect to my answer, I told you lately nearly all my news—and have not the faintest conception how I am to fill another sheet of paper, unless I adopt the mode Mr. G. P. R. James finds so successful in writing Romances. His plan, you are aware, is very simple when he wants to make a new book, and consists merely in writing over again one of the old stories backwards.

Now, for such talk as I have. You remember my Hibernian favorite "Maurice." Well, he insanely entered the bonds of wedlock the other day with a servant maid of ours—not the inebriated Julia, whose sudden incompetency in connection with the coffee-urn, doubtless still holds "a place in your memory,"—and appears to be in the enjoyment of great piece of mind. Send him your congratulations when you write again, and I will deliver them, and he will be your sworn friend and eloquent advocate for the rest of his life.

Among other things, you ask me for the gossip of Halifax. The "gossip of Halifax!" Truly, you are a reasonable man. You have abundant consideration for my poor faculties, not to mention my fingers, when you make such a request. How could my unhappy ears collect, or my burdened brains manufacture it into any possible or portable shape for transit? Where, do you imagine, I could get paper to write it upon, or even were I a share-holder in a paper-mill, by what means could I lengthen my allotted span, until it was written? And with respect to yourself in this matter, you are quite as regardless of consequences. Have you any conception of Mr. Cunard's freight-rates for unwieldy packages, or are you sufficiently wild to expect the Mail-bags to accommodate such a Brobdignagian?

I have great expectations of your visit to the modern Babylon, and hope you will describe to me anything that particularly pleases you. I hope sincerely too, that as regards your most important errand, the result will be satisfactory. I was delighted, as any woman would be, to hear of your sister positively appropriating Prince Albert's bow; I think I understand and entirely approve the spirit in which she asserts her claim to it; and have no doubt that he possesses sufficient taste and gallantry, to justify her belief.

You inquire, how we amuse ourselves now in Halifax. Don't ask me that again. We don't amuse ourselves—we don't even make believe,—and your questions about Jenny Lind, sir, are not agreeable. We didn't have her because we are poor spiritless creatures and couldn't afford to listen to her. But what do you mean by getting in a passion at the Yankees, as you call them, because they could; they are, as they themselves announce, a great nation. You are only jealous of them, and I don't at all believe that the fair Jenny was disgusted with the admiration she received; women, even geniuses, very rarely are disgusted with anything of the sort. A year or two ago, we had "Tom Thumb," the poor little wretch, and a Giant seven or eight feet high, to look at—and what can poor savages like us want more. "We take the good the gods provide us," and are thankful. We occasionally diversify our miseries, by going out to tea. The other evening we went to what well disposed people would call, a pleasant party, at Mrs. Gordon's; you remember her, and her lovely and most loveable daughter. The daughter is bewitching as ever, and I am puzzled to understand how you escaped heart-whole from her brow and smile; but you've no taste, or, to say the best of you, a perverse one. Sometimes we have a snow-storm and then the world goes out sleighing, and if we don't go, we regale ourselves with the spectacle,—and sometimes we have six-pence worth of shopping to do,—and sometimes we have concerts, whereat the performers rival Paganini and silence Catharine Hayes,—and public meetings, and orators, in whose presence Sheridan is forgotten like any other "clod of the valley," and Demosthenes entirely superseded as a "model man."

A while ago—everybody here, thought it a point of duty to go crazy upon

the great Railroad. I, being "given over to a reprobate mind," didn't care much about it, and was consequently regarded by the majority of the household, with a patriotic and virtuous disgust; and at times, when the great enterprise was more or less surrounded by perilous conjunctions, my evil dispositions were surveyed through an aggravated medium, and my corrupting society eschewed by all right minded people.

You ask me of the "Martins"—"Fanny and Nora"—I went to see them, the other day, having been considerably in visiting arrears there lately, and it struck me all at once how exactly Fanny realizes that clever line of Willis's—Did you ever think of it when you saw her,—

"One, whose sex, has spoiled a midshipman."

She is one of those gentlemanlike young ladies with manners neither gentlemanlike, nor ladylike, who practise "speaking their mind" upon all occasions, convenient or otherwise. You say, your acquaintance with them was so short before leaving Halifax, that anything I can tell you of them, will be news, and I suppose it would—if I had anything particular to tell. The "Middy," when an opportunity occurs, still pokes her keen, saucy, pretty little face into yours, and asks questions respecting your most private affairs and feelings, with a sudden, ruthless vigour, rather startling to persons of different habits. The inconvenience of this, is, that she can't be cured, because she never knows when she is put down decently, and civilized people can scarcely resort to the use of her weapons. So she goes on scalping others indiscriminately, with an admirable pretence of unconsciousness, while she tosses her own shining locks in triumphant freedom from avenging hands.

Nora, too, the graceful and pensive Nora, with the soft curls, that look more like the amber feathers on a "bird of Paradise," or the little gold-haze clouds we sometimes see at sunset, than the hair of an ordinary mortal; is "domestic and affectionate," as of old—and in confirmation of these latter qualities, wears an apron and pets the baby, at home,—and declines her delicate head toward one shoulder—and looks mournfully out of her beautiful, brown, foolish eyes (in conformity with the grace and pensiveness), abroad. To be sure, the baby is a cherub in white embroidery, and a blue sash; and the apron, made of fawn-colored Gros-de-Naple, exquisitely frilled; but still the cherub is a live baby, and the fawn-color an undeniable apron, and we are bound to take both in proof of the "domesticity."

As usual, they are both in love—and love, in their "Webster," is defined to be, "the process of getting a husband." They are always 'engaged,' and have apparently but one drawback upon their beatified condition, which is, that they never get past the announcement of the 'Bridal Dresses': we hear of them often, but mortal eye hath never beheld them. If a man is acquainted with them, (the girls, not the dresses you know) for a fortnight, they see inevitable matrimony ahead, and engage, without a shadow of misgiving, in an imaginative

selection of the Wedding-robcs; sometimes even inviting their particular friends to witness the forthcoming ceremony, all the while blissfully exempted from the "common lot" in such matters, seeing that they never experience, "the pang, the agony, the doubt,"—until the unconscious Bridegroom disappears, and then nothing daunted—not even ashamed—they begin again.

The lady mother, I conclude, you are not much interested in, and indeed, I can give her to you exactly in Mary Howitt's "Dame of the old German Castle,"—

"She is a good old lady, and all may have their will,"

"So that the chaplain readeth prayers, and that her room be still."

With this small difference, that Mrs. Martin reads prayers for herself.

The girls, like the "Dalrymples" in "Charles O'Malley," never interfere with each others conquests, and keep up their respective styles almost as well did those forlorn and misused damsels: but I have seen the "Midshipman" upon occasions, as artful and malicious as an evil-minded Fairy; and the "domestic" a perfectly delirious Nora, when she had succeeded in capturing a cavalier for the space of ten minutes.

And now—I must make mention, that one piece of your news, was very pleasant to me, indeed to everybody at Linden Hill, namely, that we are likely to see soon again that most delightful and eccentric Mariner, Captain D——s. I think, although you knew him so well by report, you were not personally intimate with him, and your loss was great: with rare and beautiful talents, he was simple, versatile and frolicsome as a child. His eyes could fill with tears at Tennyson's "Queen of the May," and his hard face soften into almost beauty while he sung his own translations of the lovely Italian songs in which his scrap-book abounded; meanwhile apologising to less enlightened eyes and ears for his accomplishments, by saying that he "spoke Italian, because he had been twelve years in the Mediterranean and couldnt help it."

He could tell "Deep Sea Yarns" as well as Coleridge, and recount with perfect appreciation and delight the clever tricks played off upon himself and officers by their own sailors, when they came into port.

He carried about "high treason," in that marvellous "scrap-book," in the shape of that rebellious and splendid song,—

"Who fears to speak of ninety-eight?
Who blushes at the name?"

(for the mere quoting of which, O'Connell was once threatened with Government prosecution) and said, and did a hundred things that his stately first Lieutenant thought highly incompatible with the dignity of a commander in the Navy.

That same handsome Lieutenant got a ship of his own afterwards, and lost her on an "African reef," was duly exonerated from all blame, and got another. Better fortune to him say I, for he was a gallant officer, who had "done

the state some service," among the "Celestials," and a manly man, and had an Irishman's heart for the ladies.

To reply to another of your "spearings" (as your countrymen would say) Apollo—as we usually designate your very handsome friend Mr. Hallan—did come up, and take a cup of coffee with us one evening after you left, bringing a young friend with him, who was a favorite of yours, I believe, called "Mooly." I have no doubt, you remember this Mr. Mooly to be in possession of the most superb eyes ever bestowed on a human being. I never, in man or woman saw eyes at all comparable to them for shape, lustre, and expression. I shall never forget them, and expect to be perpetually haunted with a vision of their wonderful beauty. I beg to say, however, that I am not the least in love with the owner of these miracles, though he probably thought so from the intensity with which, I am told, I stared at him, but you know I often told you that "falling in love," was not a frequent recreation of mine. His manner too was pleasant and natural, and contrasted very agreeably with Apollo's refined stupidities.

The above mentioned deity, complained that he had not been well,—that his washerwoman would not air his linen, and observed, that in consequence of these evils, he was desirous of going to a better world. In the course of conversation, he benignly informed us that Bermuda was a place where Arrow-root grew, and that the Supplement to a Newspaper, was an extra sheet. He also entertained a conviction, that farmers invariably administered a substantial supper of hay and oats to young calves, under three months old—before "putting them to bed;" and delivered himself of numerous remarks equally brilliant and instructive, with a most serious aspect. He spoke of you, however, warmly and kindly, and his friend joined him, and on that subject we agreed well, and altogether, spent a very pleasant evening—notwithstanding Appolo did ask us, if we had ever heard of Sir Robert Peel; and persisted—after repeated explanations—in calling plums, *cherries*, and the beautiful Mrs. Elliott—good looking.

Since you left us, some, whom you knew, are dead and some are married, and your friend—Mr. Parktons—beautiful Lily, is neither as yet, but may be seen any fine day, walking through the streets of this "wooden city," looking as fair and sweet, as a veritable Lily of the Valley. It is believed that there are persons in the world—exclusive of the gentleman before mentioned, who would'nt take a whole bunch of lilies in exchange for her—and I am not surprised at it.

I must not omit from this record, a notice of the tragic fate of two of your Nova Scotian friends, and as Wordsworth, Byron, Burns, Scott, and other great characters, have bestowed, epitaph, eulogium, elegy and immortality upon dogs of various kind and degree, I expect that you will not fail to honor with tear and requiem, the bones and memory of your departed canine acquaintance.

I know it will grieve you to hear, that our big black "Boz" upon suspicion of madness, and proof of malice, was lately hurried from the stage of life, through the instrumentality of a strong rope and a heavy stone; and poor "Fury"—that unhappy little salamander, who lived under the kitchen-grate, in a perpetual sprinkling of red-hot ashes, and scalding water, and upon the whole, relished his accommodations—disappeared one day, unaccountably, and has not since been heard of. It is not likely that he was stolen, for his personal advantages were triflingly diminished, by his eccentric mode of life; and at his best, he was not tempting as a lap-dog. I incline to think, that he acquired a sudden taste for travel, and emigrated somewhere. Possibly, at some future period, the prodigal may return; but be that as it will, the "blue waters of Chebucto," roll over "Boz," and the "black tide of oblivion" has swallowed up "Fury," and we are—dogless.

Send me your opinions upon these matters, one and all, and as—on the authority of the great "Samuel Weller," the art and mystery of successful letter-writing, is to break off in a hurry, that the recipient may "vish there vos more," I shall even guide myself by his experience, and command you to consider me

ONE OF YOUR BEST FRIENDS.

REVIEW.

REPORT on the SCHOOLS OF NOVA SCOTIA, for the year 1851. BY THE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION.

WE will endeavour, in the very limited space at our command, to lay before our readers the leading facts bearing upon the important subject of Education, in the Report, now before us. Great credit is due to Mr. Dawson, the active and able Superintendent, for the diligence and enthusiasm he has displayed, not only in collecting and systematising a valuable mass of statistical information, but for disseminating throughout the Province, correct and enlightened views of the great principle of universal education, and endeavouring to arouse the people to a sense of its real worth, by lectures and the various other means which are always within the reach of a man who is really in earnest, in the performance of a great duty.

We gather from the first table of the Report, that there are about 1000 schools in operation, receiving support, private and Provincial, to the extent of about £35,000, per annum; that about £24,000 comes directly from the people, the balance from the public chest. Another table informs us that the number of children attending these schools, is nearly 30,000, and that the

number in the Province, may be about 50,000. A third table tells us that the average attendance is a little over 30 pupils; that the number of teachers is about 900, and their average income, £36 7s. 1½d.

It is obvious from the above figures, that education is far from being in a healthy condition amongst us—that there is not only great destitution in the means, but that the quality must, as a necessary consequence, be of a very inferior character.

In the first place, there are nearly 20,000 children, or 40 per cent of the whole juvenile population, entirely without education. This is an evil of appalling magnitude, and cries aloud for instant and active remedy. Every hour that it is allowed to remain, is deepening a stain upon the character of the Province. There is another of almost equal importance staring us in the face; the wretched remuneration of teachers, rendering as a matter of course, the quality of the instruction imparted, uncertain and unsatisfactory.

The appointment of Superintendent, if it had effected nothing else, would have been of lasting benefit, as being the means of bringing prominently before the public eye, the serious deprivations, in an educational point of view, which a very large proportion of our fellow colonists is at this moment suffering. We would earnestly appeal to every enlightened and patriotic mind, to make a great and united effort to arrest this downward tendency. The subject is surrounded with difficulties—but for that very reason we should grapple with it the more resolutely.

Nova Scotia will owe, even should it never pay, an everlasting debt of gratitude to the man who secures for her a cheap and efficient system of education for every child within her borders. But he would have a higher and far holier reward—the proud consciousness in his own mind, of having lifted up his country to a level with those around her; of having infused into her the true spirit of progress, the spirit of a virtuous and enlightened mind, guiding and animating an entire people.

The Superintendent has already done something in the way of preparation. He has visited several hundred schools; he has lectured in every important town and village in the Province; he has established Teachers' Institutes, with greater or less success; he has introduced small libraries into many of the schools, and has indeed, considering his means and opportunities, effected more than his warmest friends contemplated. But after all, he has done little more than make the evil known. The remedy still remains to be applied.

We are sorry we can only glance, as it were, at the proposals made by Mr. Dawson, for bringing an efficient education within the reach of every one, viz.: the establishment of a Normal School for education, and the principle of Assessment for supporting it. The plan is sufficient, if properly carried out, but we cannot by any means agree with many of the details of it. He proposes £900—for site, building and furniture for a Normal School, a sum

miserably inadequate for such a purpose. Upper Canada has just finished a building of the same description, at a public cost of £15,000.

Again, he proposes to have it in the country, on the ground of living being cheaper, and temptation less than in the city. The first we would question, and as to the second, would say, that the young person who had not firmness of moral purpose, sufficient to withstand the seductions of such a place as Halifax, possesses few of the qualifications to fit him for becoming an instructor of youth. In our opinion, it is almost a necessity—that such an Institution should be in a place possessing a considerable population, as it ought not only to be a Seminary of pupil teachers, but of pupils also. Say that the Normal School contained from 80 to 100 embryo teachers, it would be absolutely necessary, in order to give them the practical knowledge of handling and managing children in large numbers, that there should be an attendance of from 300 to 400 pupils. This cannot be expected in the country. Therefore, we would not for the sake of Halifax, but for the cause itself, strongly advocate its location in the capital. Halifax no doubt, would reap advantages, and ought also to pay for them.

The principle of Assessment is surrounded with many difficulties, but that it is *the* principle there can be no doubt. We have long thought that the best plan for a common school education, would be to divide the Province into a certain number of districts, say 1200, giving a school to each, and that each teacher should be secured a regular salary, £50 being the minimum, with £10 for incidental expenses; that his pay should be certain, and his appointment during good behaviour, for it is the precarious character of the occupation rather than the slender remuneration, which prevents properly qualified persons from turning their attention to it. In populous districts, of course, it would be expected that the income should be much larger. In Halifax it ought to be from £150 to £200. According to this calculation, the amount required, would be £72,000; add 50 Grammar Schools, averaging £150 each, £800 a year for the Normal School, and £400 for a Superintendent; and for about £80,000, an efficient system of instruction would be obtained, sufficient to overtake the wants of the whole Province, and not requiring an additional outlay of more than £40,000, or about ten shillings a year to each family (not person). The advantages are great; they are magnificent; the sacrifice even to the poor, is trifling; indeed, less than three pence a week.

We have contented ourselves with stating a few simple facts, and we leave our readers to draw their own conclusions. The difficulty after all, if fully looked at, exists rather in appearance than in reality, and we have strong hopes that active measures will speedily be taken for eradicating an evil, overwhelming in its consequences, and deadening in its effects. We would urge the Superintendent to persevere in the course he has so ably and zealously begun; and we would entreat men of station and influence to disregard the clamours of faction.

and the selfishness of prejudice and ignorance, and serve their country and honour themselves, by securing for the former, what ought to be the birthright of every christian child—a liberal education.

OUR CORRESPONDENTS.

WE have to thank a numerous list of Correspondents, for the prompt manner in which they have responded to the call on their literary leisure, by furnishing contributions to the pages of "The Provincial."

Since its commencement we have received a number of well written and useful articles; several of which have already appeared, while others will follow in future numbers. We are glad to see that our countrymen are alive to the importance of sustaining a purely original Magazine; and from the amount of success we have already met with, confidently anticipate the best results for the future. A home or native literature is a thing most earnestly to be desired by every country, as it tends to the elevation of its inhabitants, and gives them a position in the intellectual world. We were always assured there was ability enough in these Provinces to sustain an original periodical, were the proper means taken to draw it forth, and enlist it in the undertaking. We made the attempt in all confidence, providing the mode, and trusting to the public spirit and literary taste of our countrymen to sustain it with credit to the Provinces, and themselves. The support hitherto has been adequate to our expectations; and thus far assured of success, we have small fears for its future continuance.

The correspondence which now lies before us, is of a varied and desultory nature. We must bring our Editorial judgment to bear upon the contents, trusting to satisfy both writers and readers of its impartiality. Some communications are too lengthy to be inserted entire,—others are of a detached and fragmentary nature, and seem to require an introduction on our part, while a few we regret to say, are too defective in many points, to appear in our journal.

We have first some "Lines on seeing a human skull in a churchyard, in the city of Halifax, N. S., in April, 1850." The subject is certainly a *grave* one, and the author has treated it in a solemn, but by no means original, manner. It is an imitation (designedly or otherwise we cannot say) of Gray's *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*, both in metre and ideas. A few lines might have been appropriate and pointed, although the subject is so hackneyed; but as this composition amounts to some seventy lines, we can only give an extract from it:

"For whether it had been a sage's crown,
Or top't the fool, the tyrant or the slave;
Whether 'twas decked with laurels of renown,
Or trembling, floated down on sorrow's wave—

'Tis all the same, a wreck of human clay,
 A mouldering relic of man's noblest part,
 Which seems in silent eloquence to say,
 "Presumptuous man, how frail, how weak thou art."

We would, in passing give a word of advice to this Correspondent, to one of whose productions we have given insertion in a previous number: to endeavor to condense and classify his ideas;—a thought reflected in several verses, weakens the force of the sentiment, and detracts from the merit of the stanza. He should bear in mind that pointed sententious writing is the best style to employ, both in prose and poetry, for the pages of a Magazine, or indeed in any literary work.

Our next contributor has sent us several pages of manuscript, from which it is difficult to select anything in an entire form. Fragments of verse from detached poems, with here and there a sentence in prose, is but an unsuitable medley to present to our readers; nor can we from the whole select anything that would convey the meaning of the writer, with the exception of the following, entitled—

EXTRACT FROM "THE LAMP OF THE MARKET SLIP."

"The dark and dreary pine forest, is the only perspective; piles on piles of wildly drifting snow, surround the traveller; and the appalling silence is alone broken by the low roar of the tempest, gathering new strength in 'mid air, and the heart-chilling howl of forest animals. Cries for succour would be here useless,—and the hazardous attempt to repossess the trail of the day, the only alternative, in despair; in a last effort to preserve the life so useful to his fellow-beings. It is tried; and it fails. And not until the long winter months had been succeeded by the tardy Spring,—not till the young cranberry vines and clustering mosses looked out from their nooks upon the hill sides, did the sheep find the lost shepherd, sleeping beneath the tall pine trees, protected by the cold garment that had been his death shroud. The remembrance of the just is blessed; and his soul hath received the recompense, "Well done good and faithful servant." They laid him to sleep in the valley where the Mayflower sheds its first odour, and the twining *Linna* greets the laurel shrub. They laid him there to rest, and bitter was the grieving: for one of Faith's guardians had gone; and where was there another so truthful, so earnest? But good springs from evil; and he who works as he will, with the aid of his feeble creatures, or without it, has caused the seed scattered by Nova Scotia's first missionaries, to bear fruit abundantly; and the memory of the Reverend Henry Lloyd, does not yet cease to win young competitors for their Master's honour,—in drawing new flocks into the fold. E. A.

If our Correspondent would pay more attention to the rules of composition, and moreover, instead of giving extracts from a variety of subjects, favour us with an entire article—we would feel obliged.

"Albyn" has transmitted a lengthy manuscript, entitled "The Amateurs," in verse. While returning our Correspondent all due thanks for his attention and labour in our service, we would respectfully remind him that short articles, particularly when poetical, are most acceptable. A glance at the space at our

command, will convince "Albyn" how unsuitable is a communication in verse, extending over many pages, for the columns of a Magazine like "The Provincial" The various tastes of our readers, require as great a variety of matter as we can procure, and we would never willingly give insertion to a poem of more than two pages in length. The people of our provinces are more practical than poetical, and though we would gladly bring out, and gratify every literary taste among them, we feel convinced that concise and sententious articles, and especially those in prose will be more likely to claim the public attention.

We have received above the signature of F., a brief description of "One of the Natural Curiosities of Nova Scotia," the insertion of which, must be deferred till our next number.

REVIEW OF THE PAST MONTH.

SINCE the issue of "The Provincial" for April, the Legislatures of the lower Provinces—Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, have been prorogued. That of the first named, by Sir Alex. Bannerman, on the 3rd; of the second, by Sir Edward Head, on the 7th; of Nova Scotia, by Lt. Col. J. Bazalgette, Administrator of the Government, on the 8th of April. New Railway Bills have been passed in the two last named Provinces, to suit the contemplated change of route, by the valley of the St. John River, and a delegate (Hon. Mr. Chandler) has been sent by the Government of New Brunswick, to join the Hon. Mr. Hincks in London, in negotiating for the necessary loan and assistance from the British Government for the inter-colonial railway.

The Legislative Council of Nova Scotia have addressed Her Majesty on the subject of, and in advocacy of the principle of an Elective Council. This body having refused their assent to the appropriation clause for the payment of members of the lower House as usual, the Executive Government assumed the responsibility of advancing the necessary sum from the Provincial Treasury.

The Census of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick has been published, and we furnish it on the next page, as a means of reference hereafter. There is little else to record for April of interest to the Provincial public, except it may be the extension by the Nova Scotia Electric Telegraph Company, of their lines to the Western districts of the Province, by which Windsor, Kentville, Bridgetown, Yarmouth, &c., have been placed in communication with Halifax, the Upper Provinces—and the United States. The intelligence from this neighbouring country, tells us of a continued influx of gold to the Atlantic Cities, from California, by returned emigrants and otherwise. Louis Kossuth, ex-governor of Hungary, having visited the principal Cities of the Western and Southern States, and returned to New York, has accepted the invitation of the authorities of Boston, to a grand entertainment on the 20th.

The public affairs of Britain continue without material change. A general election is anticipated to take place during the ensuing summer. The government having announced that the Crystal Palace would be given up to the

contractors, preparatory to removal in May, several large meetings have been held to petition for its retention. An offer had been made for the purchase of the building to be transferred to Paris.

Accounts from Australia were favorable. The harvest reported good, but farm labour scarce, from the continued emigration to the gold fields. At the Queen's recent levee, Sir John Pakington presented Mr. John C. King, a delegate from the colony of Victoria, bearing an address to Her Majesty, expressive of loyalty by the inhabitants of that place, with their sincere thanks for the erection of the Province into a colony, under the royal name of Victoria.

The Steamer Birkenhead is reported to be lost at Simon's Bay, Cape Colony, together with 450 lives.

CENSUS OF NOVA SCOTIA.

Counties.	Population, 1838.	Population, 1851.	Increase.
Annapolis,	11,999	14,286	2,297
Colchester,	11,225	15,469	4,244
Cumberland,	9,685	14,339	4,654
Cape Breton,	14,111	18,000	3,889
Digby,	9,260	12,252	2,992
Guvshoro',	7,447	10,838	3,391
Halifax,	28,570	40,000	11,430
Hants,	11,399	14,330	2,931
Inverness,	13,652	16,917	3,265
Kings,	11,596	14,136	2,542
Lunenburg,	12,058	16,395	4,337
Pictou,	21,449	25,633	4,244
Queens,	5,798	7,256	1,458
Richmond,	7,667	10,381	2,714
Shelburne,	6,801	10,622	3,821
Sydney,	10,436	13,467	3,031
Victoria,	9,580	9,580
Yarmouth,	9,189	13,142	3,953

Nova Scotia Total...277,105

Of religious Denominations there are—Roman Catholics, 69,634; Baptists, 42,243; Church of England, 36,482; Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia, 28,767; Free Church, 25,280; Methodists, 23,596; Church of Scotland, 18,867; Lutherans, 4,067; Congregationalists, 2,639; Universalists, 580; Quakers, 188.

CENSUS OF NEW BRUNSWICK, 1851.

	No. of Families.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Albert,	1,017	3,241	3,072	6,313
Carlton,	1,556	5,853	5,255	11,108
Charlotte,	3,422	10,267	9,671	19,938
Gloucester,	1,855	6,014	5,690	11,704
Kent,	1,739	5,910	5,500	11,410
Kings,	3,646	9,757	9,085	18,842
Northumberland,	2,285	7,723	7,341	15,064
Queens,	1,726	5,539	5,095	10,634
Restigouche,	628	2,353	1,808	4,161
St. John,	7,058	18,874	19,601	38,475
Sunbury,	846	2,777	2,524	5,301
Victoria,	871	2,831	2,577	5,408
Westmoreland,	2,706	9,312	8,502	17,814
York,	2,830	9,075	8,533	17,628

New Brunswick Total...193,730

The immense iron Steamship Great Britain, had been refitted at Liverpool, and was announced as preparing to sail for America on the first May.

In the East, the Burmese are in hostile attitude toward the British authorities. The court of Ava had at first consented to make the prescribed, *amende* for aggression on British subjects—but this being followed by acts of deliberate insult by the Governor of Ragoon, the place had been destroyed by the British Ships of war, when 300 of the Burmese perished. A force of 6000 men from Calcutta and Madras, had set out for Burmah, and a squadron of war Steamers have been despatched from Bombay for Ragoon, to compel a compliance with the terms previously dictated.

The postal treaty between England and Austria has been extended. A seizure of 900 Bibles belonging to the British and Foreign Bible Society, had been made by the Austrian government, and their two printing offices forcibly closed.

In France, Louis Napoleon continues his despotic rule. His sham parliament met on the 29th March. Five of the members elect, declined to take the required oath. The President's dotation has been fixed at ten millions of francs, per annum, with an increase in the event of marriage.

In literary intelligence, we have to record the issue of some important works from the English and American press. First in importance and interest, is Mr. Allison's continuation of the History of Europe from the fall of Napoleon, to the present period. Mr. McGregor is preparing a History of the British Empire, from the accession of James I. to the Protectorate—the point at which Mr. Macauley commences. Macauley's third and fourth volumes were on the eve of publication, but delayed in consequence of new and interesting matter since obtained, relative to William III. The new volumes of Lord Mahon's History, embrace the first years of the American War, and apart from the charming style of the writer, must contain much that is interesting to the reader on this side of the Atlantic. Mr. Roebuck has written "a history of the Whigs, from 1830," abounding in that terse, lively and waspish gossip for which the writer has always been remarkable. Mr. Dickens' new serial "Bleak House" is out; it opens with a monster grievance, "Chancery." As it will be perused universally, we leave our readers to form their own opinion of it. Lord Cockburn's Life of Lord Jeffery has been published, and is a most-interesting piece of biography. The life of the greatest critic that ever lived; the accomplished advocate; the learned and upright judge; the wit and man of the world,—moving for half a century amid what Byron has termed the *stone* of Society; written by one of the ablest men of the day, cannot be otherwise than deeply interesting. Jeffrey, like Watt, Scott and Chalmers, has left his impress upon the age in which he lived. We must mention, in conclusion, a new work on Canada, "Roughing it in the Bush," by Mrs. Moodie, a sister of Miss Strickland, author of the "Lives of the Queens of England." It is full of lively and amusing incident, and may be read with pleasure and profit by the colonist, as well as those who intend to become colonists. Other works of interest remain to be noticed.

It is a pleasing feature of the present day, that History and Biography occupy so large a proportion of the ablest pens—a circumstance which augurs well for the rising generation.