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Rockwood
Review.



A Monthly Journal devoted to
Literature, Natural History and
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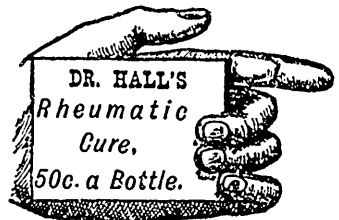
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VOL. 4.

KINGSTON, APRIL 1ST, 1898.

No. 2.

LOCAL ITEMS.

Phœbes were much in evidence on March 25th.

Mr. W. Moffat is to be valedictorian this Convocation. Billy has a pretty wit, and can be eloquent when occasion demands, so is certain to rise to the occasion.

The good old days of local Minstrel Shows seemed to have departed from Rockwood, when a revival suddenly took place, and on March the 29th a highly successful Entertainment was given, and the following programme was presented:—

ORCHESTRA.

Opening Chorus, Raise de Roof, Mr. McCammon; Song, Cant Bring him back, Mr. Woods; Song, Coming of de King, Mr. Davidson; Songs, Kentucky Babe, C. Clarke; How mach I love my Loo, A. Venasky; selected, Mr. J. Shea; Colored four Hundred, Mr. W. Shea; Happy Coons, Mr. J. Shea; Chorus, Good Night, Company.

1. Stump Speech (by special request), Mr. McCammon.

2. Speciality, Black Annie, two of the Willies.

3. Topical Song, There are things that Cannot be Explained, Mr. Cochrane.

Highland Fling, W. Wood.
Clarionet Solo, Mr. Madill.

FARCE.—Black Statue.

Jake, servant—Mr. W. Shea; Peto, Lover, Mr. J. Shea; Pill Garlic, Mr. Davidson; Squint'im, Mr. McCammon; Mrs. Squint'im, Mr. Gilmore; Rose, A. Venasky.

Perhaps the greatest feature of the evening was Mr. McCammon's Stump Speech, which proved a highly scientific study of the foibles of every official about Rockwood. These were so cleverly and good naturedly referred to, that no one's feelings were hurt, and all enjoyed the fun. The two Sheas were of course a whole team in themselves. Mr. Woods was very clever and entertaining, Messrs. Davidson and Gilmore, Venasky, Clarke and Lawless all that could be desired.

Mr. W. Cochrane's topical song was as usual a very clever and witty production, and would have been encored for hours if enough new verses could have been supplied.

Charlie Clarke as the Kentucky Babe, made a hit and sang very well indeed. W. Woods is one of the best of the lot.

The Black Statue should be called an "Evergreen"—it never grows old.

Mr. Madill's Clarionet Solo was a decided success.

The Orchestra received valuable assistance from Messrs. Foden and Kirkpatrick.

Hugh Lawson and J. Bateson must have been in the audience, judging by the number of pleasing references to them.

Bandoline is recommended for Mr. W. Shea's wig at future entertainments.

The ladies in the audience were nervous over the topical song and speech. It was an unnecessary dread.

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At Woodstone Cottage, on March 3rd, 1898, the wife of Samuel Stephenson of a daughter.

Congratulations Samuel, we wish it had been a Highlander, but the lassies are popular when they grow older.

Mrs. McIver was seriously ill at the beginning of March, but has made an excellent recovery.

It is getting a little late to talk of hockey, but it is on record that Rockwood "did up" the champions of the Quinte League to the tune of fifteen to one, and they played a Rockwood team too, not a thing of shreds and patches from the best teams in the east, as claimed by Napanee.

The Beechgroves went through the hockey season without a defeat. One game lost in three years is a record to be proud of.

Miss Sarah Hawkins had two severe operations performed on her eyes in Montreal. These were quite successful, and Miss H. has had her sight completely restored.

March 2nd—Flickers.
" 9th—Juncos.
" 10th—Chipmunks.
" 13th—Blackbirds.
" 13th—Song Sparrows.
" 13th—Ice disappears from Kingston Harbor.

The above are some of the events which characterize a remarkable season. Who before has heard of Flickers in Kingston on March 2nd

Robins were seen the whole winter long. Meadow Larks were here very early indeed, and the Geese have flown north. The year 1882 saw a spring almost as early as this, and the ice went out at about the same date.

If the Grit Government has a majority of five, and the Tory Government has a majority of two, and if each side wins a majority of the protests, as it is claimed they will, how are we going to find out where we are at? The really great question is, what is Beatty of Parry Sound? It looks as if he might be anything he pleases from Premier to Speaker.

Dr. and Mrs. Clarke and Master Eric Clarke visited Toronto lately.

The goose question once more threatens to wreck some of the Councillors of Portsmouth. Ald. McCammon is spending his spare time in writing a stump speech for the next minstrel show, and making a draft of a new goose by-law. Beware Thomas, if you order the heads of the geese chopped off, a basket will be provided for your head in short order. We have had free geese for a century—we shall have them for a century more.

A local contemporary suggests that wedding bells will soon be ringing for the marriage of a Rockwood official. The item has excited a good deal of speculation, and rumor suggests that it may refer to any one of a dozen likely ones.

Miss Maude Stoness had a narrow escape from serious injury quite recently. While driving, the king-bolt of the vehicle dropped out, and Miss S. was drawn over the dashboard. She had one of the bones of her left hand fractured.

The Lyceum Club of Portsmouth gave an entertainment at Rockwood in March. This Club has a good deal of talent, which when properly developed will be able to do excellent work.

Miss Nona Graham has quite recovered from her recent illness.

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We have to acknowledge the receipt of a box of magnificent oranges, from Mr. Robert E. Gage, of Riverside, California. The fruit is the finest we have seen, and reached Kingston in perfect condition.

Mr. Crimmins, formerly of Rockwood Staff, has been dangerously ill, but is now improving.

The Viola and Iris are being prepared for a launch. It is a little early, but then the season is ahead of time.

Mr. T. McCammon is giving great attention to a stump speech for the next minstrel show. It is said to be the effort of his life, and full of clever hits—chiefly local.

The Jubilee Minstrels, of Kingston, gave a bright performance at Rockwood quite recently. This troupe is decidedly clever, and has some talent good enough for the professional stage.

A good farce was put on the Rockwood boards by Messrs. Ward, Jones and Lawless, about ten days ago. Some of the "old stagers" must look to their laurels.

Miss Alley, formerly of Rockwood Staff, visited here recently.

Our Business Manager has for some time been developing the poultry craze, and is now worrying with the mysteries of the "glass hen." Theoretically he has a large brood to handle, but there is an old proverb which applies to the subject.

Mr. Jas. Williamson is the first to get a new wheel this year. It is a "Bird"—a red one at that.

The Staff of the Review will journey westward at the end of the week.

Mr. Gage and Mr. Moffat are smiling over the examination papers, and it is whispered have purchased new silk hoods. This looks as if the new M.D.'s were likely to go forth. They have earned their coming honors, and we all wish them well.

Clarence Wheeler and C. M. Clarke describe a bird seen recently, and their description corresponds to that of the Magpie. These birds have been found in Ontario, and it is possible that they saw what they thought they saw, and what they never saw before.

The Granites are already beginning to talk football, and an Eastern League is now almost an assured fact. The sooner Kingston cuts loose from the selfish interests of Toronto in all sports the better. Year after year things have become worse and worse, and last season football matters became so bad, that a change was absolutely necessary. The Ontario Rugby Football Union is practically dead, and stands for nothing better than an institution for the benefit of a few young men who have nothing higher in view than their own selfish desires. The true interests of a grand game are the last things thought of—vide newspaper reports of the last annual meeting. The only business transacted was that of wire pulling for offices, and making regulations appointing professional referees, who will of course without exception hail from Toronto, and be selected from a little coterie already well known and understood. Football for sport is one thing, football for what you can make out of it is a very different game. Ontario has room for the first variety, no desire for the second.

Mrs. Dunstan and daughter, and Miss Marion Martin, were visitors at Rockwood lately.

What is Rockwood likely to do in Bicycle matters this year? There seems little probability of their joining the C. W. A. again, the benefits accruing therefrom not being apparently worth the expenditure. In the meanwhile several dark horses are being puffed up for their speedy qualities. Get on the track boys, and you will soon find out how fast you can go when some of the fast ones let themselves out.

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NATURAL HISTORY NOTES.

W. YATES.

The frequent remark on the first of February this year, "that Bruin will have to go back again to his winter den," as there was severe frost but bright sunshine at the date above indicated.

Are these assumptions founded on the theory that a tardy spring is to characterize 1898? The most inclement weather of the winter so far, was experienced about the beginning of the second month of the year.

But the days had visibly lengthened, and the snow Buntings appeared about the snow-covered fields, in seemingly unabated numbers, and lent a passing charm to the whitened landscape by their gleeful twitterings.

The bush-workers report noticing numerous Raccoon, Mink and Squirrel tracks, indicating that such quadrupeds are beginning to respond to vernal anticipations, and the dealers in raw furs are perambulating the rural districts.

A six days thaw, which ended on the 13th, removed two-thirds of the heavy snowfall of latter January.

A number of residents about here who possess maple-sugar bushes, have been already cutting, hauling and storing supplies of firewood for the busy sap-boiling period, which usually sets in about the middle of March, but another moon of snow and freezing winds is to be expected.

There cannot be a doubt that the return of the Shore or February Lark, gives the first hint that the brunt of the winter has unmistakably passed by.

These welcomed feathered visitors now cheer the bare spots in the pastures and stubble fields, from which the snow has vanished during the past five days of thaw, which has also raised the waters in streams and ditches to flood level.

The Horned Lark, *O. Alpestris*, lends a comparative new feature to our Ontario winters, and was

first noticed in these parts about the year 1859, and has since that date been usually spoken of by old residents as the "February Lark." The increase in the acreage of pastures and grass lands has been put forward as a cause of the spread of this form of bird-life into districts to which it was aforesaid a stranger. Small parties of *O. Alpestris* appeared in many of the pasture fields about here on Friday last, the day was fine, and the mercury indicated 52 in the shade, and the incisive calls were pleasant to listen to as the shades of evening increased, and these animating influences will be present on all but the most inclement days from now until the complete chorus of spring arrivals.

The Shore Larks appeared here seven or eight years before the date mentioned by McIlwraith, and they are very variable in plumage. Age perhaps has influence in this matter, but they breed about here sometimes in April, and sometimes in May and June; they have been absent or unobserved around here since last October, until three or four days ago. They live principally during severe weather, on the oats or other seeds picked up from the regements of horses and cattle.

The genial bright mid-day skies of the March calends resound with first warblings of the adventurous Bluebird, to be quickly followed by the song Sparrow, Robin, etc.

A firm faith in the imminence of the plowing and seed sowing season is to be noted in the preparatory fittings and bartering of tenant farmers, furnishing of harness and other accessories of their calling, to "take time by the forelock" is supposed to be one of the essentials to success in the land tillers calling. Yet the advent of the Swallows migration is probably eight or nine weeks distant, ere that date arrives the Hepaticas and Sanguinarias will be shedding their petals, and the sugar making "thing of the past."

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We rarely hear the first seasonal swallow twitterings before the 20th of April, by about that date, or a week later, the *Ephemera* flies emerge from their chrysalis caddis cases in creeks and rivers, and a small shining black fly for a few days causes annoyance to farn and other animals, by persistently alighting near the margin of the eyes and nostrils, apparently attracted by the moist secretions from said organs, as the insects do not bite or sting. The annoyance is just sufficient to be noticeable, by the insects persistent attempts to enter the eyelids, and the brief period of their activity which lasts only one to three days.

It is not an uncommon occurrence when a chill atmospheric wave succeeds to a week of genial breezes, for the Swallows to return towards southern latitudes, to await the more decided time of expanding buds and blossoms; the exigencies of hirundine life seem to be that their food has to be taken on the wing, hence they are without the resources of the seed eating Finches, or grub or larvae feeding Robins, and black Grackles, whose food supplies are not much lessened by the transient spring frosts.

But during the occasional chill windy days that sometimes occur in May, when very few of the winged insects venture forth, the swallow flights are chiefly confined to the woodland shades, as a majority of the fly and moth tribes seek sheltering warmth therein.

A similar degree of warmth that the swallows delight in, is also seen to bring out the Bat tribes from their winter quarters. These latter like the Dormouse are believed to hibernate in the decaying hollows of forest trees, and mostly seek cosy situations beyond the reach of frost, under accumulations of rotten wood below the surface of the ground, or in the dense growing coniferous swarups, where cold winds are excluded, and in whose shades but few of the suns rays disturbing influences penetrate.

So that in the wood-cutters winter operations, the hybernaculums of the bat tribe are much more rarely broken into, than are those of the sleeping Mouse or the flying Squirrel.

The habits of the bat resemble those of the flying squirrel in being nocturnal, and both sometimes come to grief in the moonlit hours through their thirst for various liquids. The maple sugar makers not infrequently find drowned individuals, flying squirrels, in their tin sap pails hanging on the maple trees; and it is a not infrequent experience to find a bat struggling to regain liberty, and flopping on the surface of a pail of milk, that may have been placed on some outside shelf to cool during a sultry night.

When the swallows first return, late in the month of April, they are seen to come at once into the barns, and examine the condition of the nests of the previous year.

The birds seem restless, and fly from barn to barn all round the neighborhood, and as said before, sometimes absent themselves for a number of days, or even weeks, should the season prove an ungenial one; and people who work much in the woods tell that a number of individual swallows yet find habitations in hollow trees in the wild woods, and such insect food as is most relished by those birds, is there more abundant in early summer than in the fields and clearings.

The swifts are generally several weeks later in the time of their arrival here than are either of the three other species of hirundines, and only when the warmth of the season has become quite pronounced do the latter begin nest building.

But it is asserted that communistic instincts are very evident in the swifts method and proceedings. four or five individuals are sometimes seen to give aid, and to contribute materials to the basket like structure. The adhesive mat-

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erial made use of to glue the fabric to the perpendicular surface of the boarded barn gable, is doubtless a secretion of the birds masticatory processes, and not as some have asserted, a vegetable gum produced by herbs or trees. The substance has much the appearance of and seems to have many of the qualities of ising-glass.

In choosing the situation for the nests, the swifts seem to avoid a glare of light, and the dimmest and most inaccessible position is sought for, and there appears to be a dislike for the society of other species of swallows, and this repulsion seems to be reciprocated by the eave swallows. The swifts have some bat like characteristics, and their voicings are to most ears unmusical, and like diminutive shrieks.

Whether birds have power to transmit warnings to their posterity, is a question that has been asked by the inquisitive observer? There is some evidence in the affirmative to this query.

Swifts regularly built their nests and successfully bred their progeny for a number of years in a chimney of one of our buildings, in which there was no fire utilization during summer time, but during one excessively wet summer, the rains beat down, and during the incubation or sitting process, the glutinous material that held the twigs of the nest together, and also to the brickwork of the interior of the chimney was dissolved, and the nest with its contents of four nearly hatched eggs, fell ten or twelve feet down to the base of the chimney.

Yet the persevering birds soon built a second nest not far from the position of the first one, and this second effort met with a similar catastrophe to the first nest, the rains being excessive. The birds immediately reconstructed their wicker like nest convenience, but this time had the cuteness and sagacity to construct the same in a seemingly more sheltered position,

in the throat or under the coping formed below where the flue suddenly narrowed. This manouvre certainly deserved and seemed likely to attain success, but the rains came down in a worse down-pour than ever, and nest and eggs came a third time to everlasting smash, and the site and season both registering in the swift reminiscence as a blank. The chimney was abandoned in succeeding years as unlucky, and was never afterwards thought worthy of use in the way that for so many seasons had been the natal shelterhouse of dusky swifts.

On the first arrival here of these swifts, near sundown in the evening of early June, great numbers of them are sometimes seen to descend like a bird stream into the decayed hollow of some large chimney-like tree trunk. But after mating time they no longer congregate, but roost at nights clinging sideways on the upright board, near the nest; this is near the roof peak, usually not far from the under surface of the shingles, and must one would think, prove uncomfortably warm during the dog days. Possibly it is on this account that the nest is merely a shallow cup of open wicker-work, totally destitute of soft lining.

"One swallow doesn't make a summer, but one big 'swallow' may make a fall." I have had large hollow elm trees left standing in my fields, in which the swifts and also at times ordinary swallows, were seen to go and emerge frequently during the weeks of feeding their young. Some idea of the immense number of Gad flies and other bloodsucking insects, may be formed by noticing that the excretæ falling from the immature young in the nest of the barn swallow, is reddened in tint from the food above indicated. The myriads of stinging flies would, if unchecked by bird and spider victimization, render bovine and equine life almost an impossibility. A neighbor terms the gum whi-

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the swifts use in their nest masonry, "Birdlime."

Hunter boys are perambulating the woods, and frequently capture *Mephitis Mephitis*, as well as Raccoons. The mild spells that occur sometimes at the beginning of February, are the "mating" times of these quadrupeds, they wander much from their burrows, and as they are easily tracked on the snow, suffer death for their temerity.

The period of gestation of the Raccoon is probably the same as that of the Bear, say about ten weeks or more, that of *Mephitis* must be about eight weeks, as they frequently produce young about April 20th. This habit of sexual wandering, and the money value of their pelts, thin off the numbers greatly.

One of my acquaintances speaks of *Mephitis* as the "Woodart," a name perhaps of his own invention. Four of these were dug out of a burrow in the bush, less than a mile from here, last week. There were three females and one male, the latter an unusually big one, which had probably beaten off his weaker rivals. The trappers smother the Meph.'s in the holes, and remove them after several hours. The pets sell now readily at a dollar each.

Two youths near here have not long since been substituting a Stoat, or Weasel, for a Ferret in Rabbit captures. They fasten a collar on the weasel's neck, to which a long string is attached, and when his mission is accomplished in the burrow, he is dragged forth to daylight. The weasel is said to be capable of a certain amount of training.

The period of gestation of small quadrupeds shows more or less "corretateon." What risks the Marmot escapes by his habit of long hibernation, without which it is probable he would long ere this have been exterminated. Gestation with them is, as in the Hare, about thirty days, and the young come

forth about 1st May, or a little later.

Arctomys has some squirrel-like capabilities, and can climb up a tree occasionally if hard put to it, especially a rough barked one, but has to descend racoon and bear-like—"rear-end" first. They can more easily ascend inside a hollow tree, and thus escape many enemies. They are usually too clumsily formed to ascend smooth barked trees, such as the beech, with facility, and their "up-going" is laborious, and clinging powers soon exhausted; and their sagacity in the choice of a subterranean winter residence is remarkable. Most of the other hybernants stay out a number of weeks longer than the groundhog.

THE MOON OF THE SUGAR-MAKING.

O Moon of the incompleteness,
When all the world is new,
Moon of the maple sweetness,
Moon of the honey-dew!
Thy unshod feet are glancing
Swift as the moonbeams steal,
And the waves where the light is
dancing
Are sealed with a silver seal.

But the doors of the crystal prison
Silently open again,
When the young spring sun uprisen
Looks on the glassy plain.
And a hundred camp-fires lighted
Gleam through the wilderness,
When the snow sinks back
affrighted,
And the cauldrons bubble and hiss.

And the blue smoke curling over,
And the mists of the morning meet;
And the shouts of the cattle drover,
And the slow-paced oxen's feet,
And the log-chain's jingle jangle,
And the blackbird's whistle shrill,
Mix in a musical tangle
In the sugar-camp over the hill.

K. S. McL.

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THE PASSING OF WINTER.

Long had the mighty winter o'er the earth
Held his unyielding sway ;
And decked with unseen hands, her sombre form,
In his fantastic way.

Fring'd with long crystal points, the tearful eaves
Flashed in the tardy sun ;
Chang'd to vague phantoms, gray distant trees
Faded as day begun.

Fill'd he to overflow the outstretch'd arms
Of fearless Evergreen,
With those white creatures of his fancy, whirling down,
From frigid heights unseen.

Others, who unlike these most loyal sons
Of summer's sovereign sweet,
Had strewn their orient robes across his path,
The King of Ice to greet.

Were by his magic breath transformed quite,
From dreary desolateness,
To dazzling forms of scintillating white,
Marvels of loveliness.

In pillared depths of some thick forest place
He shew'd his wondrous power :
With mystic lines the window panes did trace,
'Till one unlooked for hour.

From the great Head a changeless edict came,
Whisper'd by voices mild,
That he his kingship henceforth should disclaim,
And hail the Queen Spring child.

Quick roused to ire, that thus his power should fade
Without his regal will,
O'er all his world he wild commotion made,
And naught was still.

Tall trees, like striplings, quivered in his grasp,
Swayed by his wrathful power,
And tossing wild beneath the noiseful blast,
With inward fear did cower.

But soon it seemed how vainly thus he fought
The great Will to withstand ;
And bowed with grief, o'er this his lowered lot,
Slow passed he from the land.

Quick came the eager Spring, but wept to see
Her realm so drear and bare ;
Then smiled with joy its queen once more to be,
To hold it in her care.

Stirr'd by her smile and tears, the buds awoke,
Their homage sweet to bring ;
While bird and brook, freed from their erstwhile yoke,
A jubilate sing.

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GRANDFATHER'S CORNER.

HO FOR CURACAO!

A few weeks ago, two enterprising young Canadians left the home of Our Lady of the Snows, determined to make a new start in life in one of the Islands washed by the waters of the Caribbean Sea, and we have been permitted to make a few brief extracts from letters written home by one of these plucky Canucks. They have all the freshness of first impressions, and tersely tell an old tale, perhaps, but which is not the less interesting for all that. Speaking of New York, the writer says:

"I still dream of New York. What a city God is building there! Seen from the height of twenty maybe storeys in the St. Paul's Building, Broadway has narrowed in its furthest view to a tiny thread seemingly vibrating with insect life. Men and women are but ants: tram cars are their burdens. How incessantly they toil, how slowly they make progress. The buildings are some of great beauty, proving the term "sky scraper" all too vulgar. Above, they seem to approach each other across the street, and the sky line is a fringed ribbon of blue. Broadway is narrow. Its cable cars move at a snail's pace, never stopping for passengers, one would think, unless these are burdened with bundles. Horse cars of better speed traverse the city, and several electric lines have underground trolleys. There are no underground railways yet, but the elevated railways are a striking public undertaking which impresses the stranger to American ways with a vestige of the energy, prodigality and enterprise of the people. On them fast time is made, and there is little wonder that they are so freely patronized—utilized is probably a better term. But what an unearthly dim and gloomy boding beset us here, at an elevated crossing over this vast stream of living, rushing, ever restless humanity! Every street is refreshingly clean

and smooth. The residential portion is almost monstrous in its endless length of brown stone fronts, and wealth, to tiresomeness of railways and steps. There seems to be no individuality until Fifth Avenue is reached, with its distinction of palaces. Even here, Toronto can boast of yet finer residences, spite of the gorgeous homes of the Astors and the Vanderbilts. Central Park is delightful with its valleys, bridges, groves, lakes and public buildings. From here to the Battery Landing, the scene on Broadway is painful with its tireless life, yet beautiful and impressive in its immensity. New York's best buildings are of recent growth, and are of white marble and granite, decorated with brass, and with tessalated pavement, while beautiful in carving and design. Of these, the majority are bank structures, insurance, loan and office buildings, hotels and newspaper homes. Any building in Toronto would be forever lost on this street, if one excepts the new city hall. Other points of passing interest were Union Square, Madison Square and the Battery—all familiar enough to every sight-seer in New York. The Bowery we found quiet enough in daytime, but did not visit it at night, and so were not in a position to appreciate its most active life. So for Chinatown, for we merely skirted its precincts. But Wall street! Here was a revelation. Enter No. 3 Wall Street, Stock Exchange, and go up the stairs to the gallery. Look at the seething scene below. It beggars the trust you have in your own eyes. A room capable of holding fully two thousand people, is at this moment densely packed with sturdy, yet restless and excited people. What floor is visible is strewn with shreds of paper. Two hundred telegraph operators line the sides. Their machines are incessantly click, clicking, and you have the continuous chirp as of a million crickets in meadow and forest on a summer's

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day. The feet of hundreds of messengers, clad in uniform grey, chase the paper shreds across the floor, the voice of each outdoing the other in its wildest notes. On every hand you hear "Rock Island Stock, 94. New York Central, 106. Sugar, 102." and so on, as the exigencies or opportunities of the moment demand. A thousand silk-hatted, bald-headed, but nevertheless excited men, elbow each other, gather in knots, brandishing pencil and note-book, and yell with voices of demand or anguish, while bids are offered and taken, notes made, and the clumps of glowing humanity dispersed to reform elsewhere, and go through the same unending strife of wits and greed. Money! money! Here is thy very shrine. thy solid marble heart! Although there was no "panic" on that day, we left the gallery amidst one of the wildest scenes of excitement of which we ever could have dreamed, after reading Lamartine's "Girondists" or Zola's "Dabacle." New York's shop windows did not impress us as we had expected, Wanamaker's Departmental was not superior to Eaton's, although magnificent in exterior, and Delmonico's Restaurant seemed common-place. The river traffic however exceeded our fullest anticipations. Pictures, and in omitting the fleets of steamboats, ferries and countless crafts which fill the surface of two noble rivers. But it was when we left New York that we realized its immensity, wealth and power. Its palatial structures stand out in mountainous relief, making ten storey buildings level with the river. Nothing could have prevented a nation from building a home on these islands, at the confluence of these grand rivers. But even the Statue of Liberty, great perhaps because immense, and remarkable to us after all preceding wonders, fades at last from the sight. We pass the forts at the

Narrows, the pilot is sent ashore, we meet incoming ships of all the nations of the earth, the hills of New Jersey become dim and we are alone. We are at sea. Twenty-three first cabin passengers are aboard. There are Germans, Italians, Portuguese, Danes, Englishmen and Spaniards, and we speedily become more or less acquainted with all. Our state rooms are upper cabin, amidship, and amongst the finest on the steamer. They open an upper deck, so as to secure adequate ventilation in the tropics. Our ship is not large—only 380 feet in length, and slower than a New York street car. Our average speed in a storm is six miles an hour, while in a calm with a spurt on we can do twelve. Laden with light manufactured articles, horses and flour our ocean home rolls in the sea like a barrel. Our table is luxurious. A la carte. Nine courses, southern diet, spices, fruit, salads and wines. Coffee and roll at 7 a. m., breakfast at 12 noon, and dinner at 6 p. m. We might fancy ourselves in Paris. On Sunday night the wind blew a hurricane, and great seas lashed over the cabins, threatening the whole upper deck. For two days everybody had a going, going, gone sort of feeling, difficult to describe, and infinitely worse to realize, distress, discouragement, disgust followed each other in rapid succession, or became so mixed up with everything else, that life was temporarily a burden. The salty waters rolled over the skylights and into our berths, drenching us in our beds. In the morning, incrustured with the saline deposits of the waves, I looked more like Lot's Wife, or the Lady of the Snows, than a healthy and vigorous Canuck. But of the remainder of the voyage, the weather was a delight, and the sea seemed to ripple with pleasure as did we. After we had crossed the tepid waters of the Gulf Stream, a delightful calm fell upon everything. Off the Bahamas, the sky was gorgeous, and the sea every-

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where a deep, deep blue. As our course was out of the route of usual ocean traffic, we sighted only two vessels belonging to our line. And then we had opportunity to take in our surroundings. Talk of beauty! We are judges at last, we have been fascinated. The beautiful *Senoritas!* What delirious eyes, what depth of olive complexion, what wealth of expression, what charm of manners! I no longer wonder that Byron lost his head, when he described the affluence of Spanish charms. And yet I haven't altogether rid myself of admiration of "The Lady of the Snows." But that bevy of maidens bound from Parisian Schools at New York Colleges, for their homes in Curacao nearly made me traitor. A new scene opened up, for we sighted land at last. St. Domingo to the right, Puerto Rica to the left, and Nona to the front of us. Weather, July like, air balmy, invigorating. Sea a deep fathomless blue, sky clear, trade winds beginning to be felt. Nothing but excess could exceed this perfect peace. Every breath is laden with sweet life. The sea has embraced my spirit. I am wedded to its burnished blue. Does a tropical sun set? It slowly glides into the furthest heavens on our horizon, with a blaze of molten gold. Our thermometer showed 82 in the shade, 82 in the water. The negro deck-wenchs slopped about barefooted, shirtless, wearing little more than a picturesque grin. Passengers lolled in the sweet breeze, arrayed in clothing of spotless white. And as the sun sank like a brand of living flame, burning its way into the sea, I felt that I had experienced the beginning of a new life, if not an entrance to a better world. On Friday Curacao Island was sighted, and we regretted that the termination of our pleasant voyage had come all too soon. We land. What a change? Here is a street before us filled with burros, women, boys, dogs, ramshackle carriages, hens, goats,

naked girls, shirtless babies, vegetables, sacks, casks, barrels—all redolent with nauseating odors. Negresses bear on their heads loaves of black solid bread from the early morning ovens, while their hands are occupied in the manufacture of huge cigarettes for immediate home use. Children dart between your legs in chase of stray goats and chickens. Young and hideously pretty negresses ply their needles awkwardly as they sit upon the pavement, wearing a length of gaudy cotton wound around their heads, with much less upon their bodies. They smoke monstrous cigars continuously. A crowd of squalling Spanish, French and Holland speaking negroes and whites follow us as if we were a circus. The whole of the narrow street is occupied by a tramway. A car drawn by two jackasses, runs every half hour, and when it does everyone leaves the street to let it pass. The track is two feet wide, and the car which is covered, has a width of four feet, and accommodates a dozen passengers. We accept its service, and after making a good start are detained on a back street while the conductor takes his dinner. This consumes time, but gives opportunity for observation. We see that every tradesman plies his occupation on the street. The tailor is working at his cloth, the blacksmith at his forge, the watchmaker at his wares, and the baker at his oven. Filthy houses have driven them out of doors. But I must refrain, and leave to another letter a relation of my further experiences."

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THE MAGDALENE ISLANDS.

(CONCLUDED.)

The female rose from the wiry grass a little above tide mark in a dry place, and soon showed me by her restless movements that she had either eggs or young ones. I watched behind a low sandhill for some time, and after two or three failures, at length found the nest with its four beautiful eggs, the pointed ends being placed together, as is usual with this class of birds. They were about half incubated, the bird betraying her home by fluttering along the grass as though wounded. We spent the remainder of the day about the East Cape, among the boggy pools and fresh water ponds, where I found the nests of the horned Grebe and "Sora." A heavy shower set in during the afternoon, and before reaching our lodging I was wet through. Mosquitoes were a terrible annoyance.

On the following day I started for Bryon Island—some nine miles north from Grosse Isle—in a whale boat, along with the proprietor of that Island, who very kindly entertained us upon our arrival, at his comfortable house.

This Island, though small—four miles long and a mile wide—is quite fertile, and better stock are raised than elsewhere on the Magdalenes. Where cleared of spruce there are almost luxuriant fields of grass, and oats looked promising. Mr. Dingwall, the owner, has two canning factories, and numbers of fine lobsters are caught here. During my short stay I found several nests of the black Guillemot, the Puffin and Leache's Petrel. This latter is a peculiar bird; it lays a single egg in a burrow excavated by itself; commonly on this island among the roots of scrubby spruce, and forty or fifty feet from the edge of the cliffs. A rank smell of oil pervades the nest and ground where they frequent, and by this smell the eggs are located. Each bird lays one egg,

and the nest consists of roots, chips, feathers or any loose material at hand. I caught two of the birds in their burrows.

On the 25th I in company with the Rev. Mr. Dixon, two French boatmen, and my acquaintance from Grosse Isle made an attempt to reach the Bird Rocks in a whale boat. They are twelve miles distant from Bryon Island, but the sea between the two is often very rough. The morning was fine, but towards noon a dense fog settled on the sea, and losing our reckoning we beat about all day without seeing land. Towards evening we fortunately heard the surf breaking on what turned out to be the east point of Grosse Isle, and a little later landed at the settlement, after a very hazardous experience.

A day or two later I returned to Grindstone Island, and spent the remaining days of my stay very pleasantly, observing a few more birds, and fishing for brook trout in the small creek, that at first sight seemed hardly large enough for minnows. One day I caught twenty, three of them together weighing a pound.

I met with a few more nests on the 30th June, one of the Hudsonian Titmouse, in a stump about two feet high. It contained seven young birds, that could just fly, and the nest, a scanty affair, was entered from the top, not from a hole in the side.

A day or two later, on a promontory jutting out into the sea, I took a nest of four large sized sparrow's eggs, and after watching the bird, decided them to belong to that rare species the Ipswich Sparrow, known to breed chiefly on Sable Island, off the coast of Nova Scotia.

July 6th brought my visit at the the Islands to a close. I took the steamer in the morning and sailed to Grand Entry; in the afternoon we returned to Grindstone Island, and left Amherst in the eve, for Pictou, N. S., which we reached

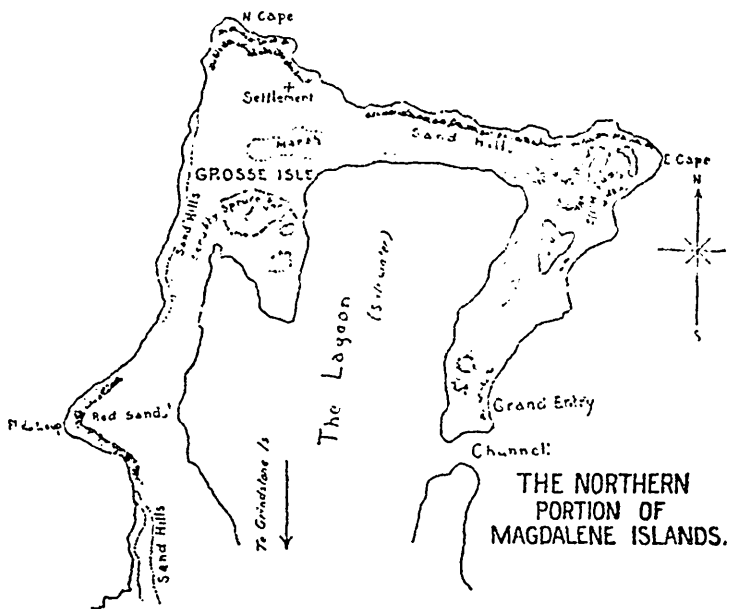
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the following day, leaving a cool, perhaps too cool a climate, for the excessive heat, which at this time prevailed everywhere in Eastern Canada. Of birds, I met with 61 species on the Islands, but could only locate the nests of twenty-three of them. In all probability, 43 out of the 61 breed regularly, as well as the Pigeon Hawk, the Red-poll, a few other warblers and one sparrow which I did not identify. The flora of the Magdalenes, as previously mentioned, is scanty and uninteresting. With

the exception of beach plants, some of the others are common in Ontario.

A visit to these Islands is very pleasant and beautiful summer outing; the beaches in many places consist of a hard and firm sand, and when the weather becomes warm in July and August, the bathing must be excellent. In the spring months, however, the weather is often cold and foggy, and some years is very wet.

C. J. Y.



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