Technical and Bibliographic Notes/Notes techniques et bibliographiques

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

- ☐ Coloured covers/ Couverture de couleur
- ☐ Covers damaged/ Couverture endommagée
- ☐ Covers restored and/or laminated/ Couverture restaurée et/ou pelliculée
- ☐ Cover title missing/ Le titre de couverture manque
- ☐ Coloured maps/ Cartes géographiques en couleur
- ☐ Coloured ink (i.e. other than blue or black)/ Encre de couleur (i.e. autre que bleue ou noire)
- ☐ Coloured plates and/or illustrations/ Planches et/ou illustrations en couleur
- ☐ Bound with other material/ Relié avec d'autres documents
- ☐ Tight binding may cause shadows or distortion along interior margin/ La reliure serrée peut causer de l'ombre ou de la distorsion le long de la marge intérieure
- ☐ Blank leaves added during restoration may appear within the text. Whenever possible, these have been omitted from filming/ Il se peut que certaines pages blanches ajoutées lors d'une restauration apparaissent dans le texte, mais, lorsque cela était possible, ces pages n'ont pas été filmées.
- ☐ Additional comments:/ Commentaires supplémentaires:

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

- ☐ Coloured pages/ Pages de couleur
- ☐ Pages damaged/ Pages endommagées
- ☐ Pages restored and/or laminated/ Pages restaurées et/ou pelliculées
- ☑ Pages discoloured, stained or foxed/ Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées
- ☐ Pages detached/ Pages détachées
- ☑ Showthrough/ Transparence
- ☐ Quality of print varies/ Qualité inégale de l'impression
- ☐ Includes supplementary material/ Comprend du matériel supplémentaire
- ☐ Only edition available/ Seule édition disponible
- ☐ Pages wholly or partially obscured by errata slips, tissues, etc., have been refilmed to ensure the best possible image/ Les pages totalement ou partiellement obscurcies par un feuillet d'errata, une pelure, etc., ont été filmées à nouveau de façon à obtenir la meilleure image possible.

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

10X	12X	14X	16X	18X	20X	22X	24X	26X	28X	30X	32X
			✓								

"Thos," Main

A SIMPLE CANADIAN STORY.

BY

GEORGE GRAHAM.

Montreal:

PRINTED BY LOVELL PRINTING AND PUBLISHING COMPANY.

1878.

"THOS."

CHAPTER I.

"I HAD a letter from Thos to-day, Len, and he speaks of coming to spend his holidays with us, as usual. I am so glad, but I wonder he does not go for his trip to the States as he intended," said I, addressing my husband, who was seated with me on the veranda of an old house, fronting on a quiet street, near the foot of Mount Royal, in this good city of Montreal.

"Thos is a good fellow," replied Len. "I suppose he is coming to cheer us up. He does not say much, but I know he feels considerably cut up by our trouble."

Our trouble meant that Len had failed in business a short time before, and, having failed honestly, had left himself without means of paying our private debts. Our cosy home had been sold over our heads, and to-morrow our pretty furniture would go under the auctioneer's hammer, with the exception of the few articles allowed by law, which

we had that day removed to the old house, on whose veranda we now sat, solemnly discussing our future prospects, or, rather, want of prospects.

My mother, who was a widow, was coming to live with us, so that we might have the benefit of her furniture, and small income, until Len began to make his way in the world again, for both Len and I were determined that we should make our way, and neither of us would acknowledge to feeling at all disheartened by our late misfortune. Yet it did seem hard enough, after seven years of prosperous married life, to be obliged to start afresh with three small boys to maintain, and very little idea as to how we should do it. Nevertheless, the small boys, with their innocent and supreme indifference to our reverses, were our greatest comfort. They had been sent with their nurse to remain with their Grandmamma in the country, while we tried to settle up the old house and make it habitable.

The house had been chosen with a view to economy, the rent being very low for such a good locality. It had been empty all winter, and was dirty, dreary and dilapidated, but, like ourselves, it had seen better days.

Being light-hearted Irish we made the best of everything; and, had it not been that our purses were almost as light as our hearts, we could soon have made the old place charming again.

It was a long, low, wooden house, standing far back from the street, with a circular drive to the door, enclosing a large grass-bordered flower-bed. From one end a hedge of elderberry and Virginia creeper ran down to the fence. At the other lay the croquet ground, and beyond that stretched an old orchard, with grass enough to graze a cow. I had always believed in milk for babes, and, ever since I had babes of my own, had longed to keep a cow that they might have it pure and plentiful; so, when Grandmamma offered to bring her own cow with her, the field decided the matter and the old house was taken.

It had a veranda in front, and one dormer window over the door, a wing with two bedrooms jutted at one end, and a crazy-looking kitchen, flanked by rickety stables with sunken moss-grown roofs, added to its romantic appearance at the back. A picturesque, pleasant-enough looking-place viewed from the outside this lovely evening in May, when the apple trees are covered with snowy, rosy-tinged blossoms, breathing forth sweet perfume; while the lilacs, just bursting into bloom, fill the air with rich redolence.

But not so pleasant, picturesque, or sweet-smelling seems the old house within. The large square hall has doors, on either hand, leading into long, low, front rooms, and folding-doors dividing it from

a still larger and gloomier back hall, into the smallest corner of which is squeezed the narrowest, crookedest stairway, although there is room enough, and to spare, for half a dozen. Between the stairway and the pantry-cupboards there is a door into the dining-room, which, like the front parlor, has an immense old-fashioned grate at the further end; and various other doors lead out of this back-hall, from dark and mysterious corners, into crooked little passages, and down unexpected steps, landing the uninitiated explorer rather suddenly in the back kitchen, or dark cellar, as the case might be.

Upstairs abounds in closets, under the eaves and out over the back kitchen, large and numerous enough to conceal any number of burglars, and so dark and deep that for some time I dread to open the door of one, lest something uncanny should start up from its inmost recesses.

Every door and window in the house, and their name is legion, is crooked, and obstinately refuses to shut when open, or to open when shut. The dirty ceilings are embellished by various unfinished stove-pipe holes, betraying the fact that the house is very hard to heat, and that former occupants have differed as to the proper places to set up the stoves, and have consulted comfort before appearance in conveying the pipes to the upper floor. The walls have been papered and re-papered, till one

might almost trace the history of the house by examining the various layers from the gaudy shilling rolls, which first meet the eye, down, through the many tints and textures, to the beautiful rich brown ground with sheaves of golden wheat which comes next the plaster, and betrays the wealth and refinement of the first occupants.

Of course the house smells musty and unwholesome, with all these layers of mouldering paper, and I have already decreed that it must all be washed off, no matter how little we can afford to do afterwards. Alas! when the paper is washed off, I find that the plaster comes with it, leaving the bare laths exposed in great patches, and this seems to me the climax of all my woes, for I know what it costs to have plasterers come into a house, and that all the money we have in the world would not pay for having these old walls patched up.

Indeed all the money we have in the world is just the small sum voted to my husband by the inspectors of his estate; and on that we must manage to settle up the house and live, until Len finds some way of earning more. If I only had my dear old Steinway left, its sweet sounds would soon soothe my troubled heart, but, alas! this is the day of the sale, and long ere this my piano has been "knocked down," and is now probably rejoicing the heart of its new possessor. At this thought the tears

come into my eyes, and I have half a mind to relieve my feelings by having a good cry before Len comes home, when I perceive my little friend Mrs. Chatterton coming up the garden. Of course she has been to the sale, and has called to let me know how the things went. I do not know that I feel much obliged to her, but I ask her to sit with me on the veranda, as the house is full of charwomen, and dirty exceedingly.

"Oh, my dear Mrs. Dermot, I wish you could have heard how those wretched people talked about you," began my good-natured friend.

"I am sure I am very glad I did not hear them," I replied, hoping she might take the hint, for I felt my troubles hard enough to bear without hearing that other people found satisfaction in them. But my friend really felt annoyed by the unjust remarks that had been made, and must relieve her mind by repeating them to me.

"It made my blood boil," said she, "to hear them say it was no wonder you failed when you were so extravagant, and that 'people who could not pay their debts should not put up to such style.' I told several that you always had paid your debts, and could very well afford to live as you did, until Mr. Dermot met with such heavy losses; but they did not seem inclined to hear any excuses made for you."

"Ah, I know how people talk!" said I, "for I have heard them at other people's sales."

"But what vexed me most," continued Mrs. Chatterton, "was to hear your old friend, Mrs. Barmby, say that she always thought you were too extravagant, and that you need not have kept three girls when you could have done with two, by helping yourself, instead of wasting so much time practising. I explained to her, that it would not have made a bit of difference in the end. You could not be any poorer than you are, and it certainly would make very little difference to your creditors. But, she exclaimed, 'Oh, you need not tell me, pride must always have a fall, and I say it serves her right.'"

I expressed my indignation at Mrs. Barmby's remarks, and then asked how much the piano sold for.

"Four hundred and one dollars," replied Mrs. Chatterton. "Don't you think it was a good price?"

I did not think it a very good price, as Len had paid six hundred and fifty for it.

"There is a piano waggon going up the street now," said I, "perhaps it is my dear old piano going home;" but the waggon stops at the gate, and one of the men is shouting to us,—

"Is this No. 68?"

"Yes," I replied, "but the piano is not for us. You have made a mistake."

"I suppose," said my friend, "it is your piano, and they have got your name and number by mistake."

The men remain consulting together at the gate till a gentleman comes hastily up, speaks to them, and lifting his hat to me I see that it is Alex Malcolm, Thos' greatest friend, and that he is telling the men to drive in. My heart beat wildly, and all sorts of suppositions began surging through my brain, the most absurd of which being that Len's creditors, in consideration of our having given up the house and furniture, which we need not have done, as it was settled on me, had made us a present of the piano.

Alex having helped to open the rickety and refractory old gate, now comes up, and the mystery is solved. "I was commissioned by Thos to buy in your piano for you, Mrs. Dermot," said he.

Dear, kind, unselfish Thos, I wonder how he could spare so much, but I must have caught cold while moving, for a lump rises in my throat, and I am obliged to cough awkwardly, before I can express my thanks to Alex for the trouble he has taken.

Mrs. Chatterton kisses and congratulates me, and then goes off to tell the news to all my friends; and I have no doubt she will take especial pains to let Mrs. Barmby know, as that lady has always been rather jealous of my musical abilities.

The charwomen have just finished with the parlor, and while looking at the piano I quite forgot the ugly broken walls.

Alex explained to me that Thos had saved the money up for his intended trip to the States.

My father had left some property in Illinois to Thos, and he had intended going on to see if he could dispose of it.

"Dear Thos!" I exclaimed, "how unselfish and self-sacrificing he is, for I know he had set his heart on taking that trip."

"Yes, Thos is really the best hearted fellow I ever knew," said Alex; then bidding me good-bye, I was left alone with my recovered treasure. It was after six, and Len, who was helping his assignee to look over the accounts of his estate, might arrive at any minute; so I began playing softly, thinking I would let the piano announce its arrival in its own sweet tones. I had but played a few bars of Thalberg's "Home, Sweet Home," when I heard the click of the gate, and Len's step on the gravel, which quickened audibly as he heard the sound of the piano.

In a minute he was beside me, exclaiming,—"Why, Georgia! How is this?"

And then, with his arms around me, I told him all about it; and acknowledged how much I had grieved for the piano, although I had always said I

did not mind at all, as I would not have time to practise now. Len's eyes looked misty, while he kissed me, and called me his "brave little wife," for keeping my trouble to myself, then he added,—

"I hope it won't be long before we can pay Thos back the money; but we shall never be able to repay him for the happiness he has given us to-day. You will not be so lonely now when I am away, for I must leave you for a few weeks, Georgia, as I have got charge of a bankrupt estate in Ontario."

"I am glad you have found some employment, so soon, but I shall get down-hearted when you are away, I fear."

"No danger, you will have Grandmamma and the children home, of course, before I leave, and you will be so busy trying to make the old house look beautiful before I come back."

"Oh, yes, and I am sure you won't know it when you return. We must write for Mamma and the children at once. It does not matter how the house looks for them, as they will live in the field I am sure, and when I am tired working I can rest at the piano, thanks to dear kind Thos."

CHAPTER II.

LEN has gone West, and Mamma has arrived with nurse and children, who make strange echoes in the old house, with their pattering feet, gay laughter, and sweet shouts of childish merriment, while they play hide and seek through the long closets, and run races out of one door and in at another.

"I'm very glad that Papa's failed!" exclaimed Charlie, our eldest hope, "'cos we can have more fun in this house than a nice one."

"Dess, me, too, gad Papa's fayed, mo' fun in dis house," echoed Tommy, the four year old, named for his Uncle, and the *enfant terrible* of the family.

"My darlings!" I cried, kissing the innocent lips, "I hope you will never need to feel that Papa's failure affects you. Perhaps we shall be all right before you are old enough to know the difference."

Grandmamma declared that the place reminded her of her home in the country, and I replied that her old-fashioned furniture would just suit the house.

"Yes, it would look well enough," said she, "if

the walls weren't so bad; and the crooked doorways make me quite nervous. Whenever I look at the top of those double-doors in the hall, I fancy the house is coming down on my head."

"Oh, I shall manage the walls some way," I replied, "and I can easily make the doors all right, by draping them with chintz curtains and lambrequins. But when is the cow coming? I cannot afford to buy milk enough for these boys."

"I left the cow in good care until after she calves; and you will have her about the first week in June."

But, oh, those walls! what should I do with them? It was easy to say I should manage them some way, but how? That was the question that troubled me by day, and haunted me by night.

I had found a man who undertook to do whitewashing, tinting, and papering at the lowest rates; but even he confessed his inability to make "them walls look decent, unless they was plastered."

"But I can't afford to have them plastered," I exclaimed, "and I thought you could do something with them."

Then he proposed tacking strong strips of gray cotton across the broken plaster, and papering over it. I caught eagerly at this idea, and offered to get him nice tinted paper, but no,—

"There's nothing so 'ard to put on as them tints, ma'am," said he, "and they requires a very heven

wall, or else they shows every little spot through. What you wants is a large bold pattern, and then the honeveness won't be noticed."

A large bold pattern, indeed! That was just what I did not want. I hate patterns, except those in the expensive papers that are so lovely as almost to be works of art; and I am unfortunately possessed of a nervous inclination to trace patterns, and count them this way and that, from every possible point of view, in a manner that would become maddening, if I had the paper always before my eyes. Suddenly I had an inspiration.

"If I get you some very light pattern paper, couldn't you tint over it?"

"I can do that, ma'am, but the pattern may show through a little."

"Can't you put it on wrong side out?" I asked, "the back of light paper is always white."

"Yes," said he, "and then you might get hodd pieces of paper very cheap. You needn't 'ave it all the same when they's wrong side out."

"That is a good idea," I replied, "for I may get good, strong paper for the price of common. Here is plenty of grey cotton to cover up the holes, and some soft batting to put behind to support it."

As I walked down Beaver Hall Hill to purchase my paper I thought to myself that, after all, poverty has pleasures of its own. Here was I more elated

and excited about buying a few dollars' worth of cheap wall paper than I had ever been when giving orders to have our house renovated in the latest and most expensive style.

I had always been taught to believe that the best of everything is the cheapest; and the best stores the cheapest to buy in; but, knowing that I could not afford the best, I thought I would try the cheaper stores, and walked into one on Notre Dame street.

I first asked to see some neat patterns for my bedrooms, intending to get them so pale that they might be tinted over, when I grew tired of them; but I soon found that they were neither so tasteful, nor so cheap, as those I had often seen at De Zouche's.

The shopman evidently thought me hard to please, and told me that I must not expect to get the best paper and patterns for the price of common.

Being my first attempt at cheap shopping this disconcerted me greatly; but I could not think of buying paper that I did not like to please a shopman; so saying decidedly that it did not suit, I asked could he let me have some odd rolls of strong paper cheap. This seemed to surprise him greatly, and he must know what I could want with them. I told him, but he did not relish the idea, and seemed to think I was trying to cheat him in some way; so regretting that I had given him so much trouble, I very gladly left his store.

I felt like crying, when I came out, but knowing that they would at least treat me politely at De Zouche's, I soon found myself there.

How fresh and pretty everything looked after that dingy old store with its horrid staring patterns.

"Are you not going to have us do up your house for you this year?" asked the young man, who served me.

"No, you know we are very poor now, and you are too good for us. Indeed I was afraid to come here for this paper, till I found it was much dearer in the cheap stores."

"Yes, that is a mistake that many people make, but we keep all kinds of paper, and can afford to sell much cheaper than the smaller stores, that do a smaller trade."

Then I asked about the odd pieces of paper. The young man explained to me that they always managed to use up their odd pieces, and that I would be more likely to find them at stores where they only sold paper, and did not put it on; and then he kindly directed me to a little store on Bleury street, where they were selling out, and where I would most likely find lots of odd rolls.

Having selected my bedroom patterns, I soon found the store on Bleury street; and the old gentleman seemed very glad to find a purchaser for so

many odd pieces, which he let me have for the absurd price of five cents a roll.

I sent for a carriage and brought my cheap bargain home with me, and in a couple of days my rooms were neatly papered and tinted; and no one would know but that the tinting was done on the bare walls.

There had been only a small door between the dining-room and parlor, but I have had the partition knocked down, making a space large enough for folding doors. Of course, I could not afford to get doors, but I draped it with lace curtains, relieving the long blank wall.

On one side of the large fireplace, in the parlor, a door led into the wing bedrooms; and, as there was no door on the other side, it gave the room an unpleasant lob-sided appearance; so I hung long, dark crimson chintz curtains from the ceiling on each side; and mamma's old, square mantel mirror, just filling the space between, gave the room an odd, artistic look, which I heightened by draping the ugly high mantel-shelf and pillars with red cloth, covered with old black lace.

Then we covered an old sofa and some easy chairs with chintz to match the curtains, and draped the two front windows with unbleached cotton trimmed with turkey-red. A book-case was made of heavy rough shelves, covered with an old crimson piano

cover, the embroidered border being torn off in strips, and tacked on the front of the shelves with gilt tacks and braid.

A few low wooden tables, covered at home, a few ornaments scattered around, a few pictures on the walls, and what a pleasant even elegant looking room we have.

Ah, yes; poverty has its pleasures! Did I ever have such real pleasure in fitting up my fine parlors, when money was no object, and everything was merely ordered, not contrived?

The dining-room is easily disposed of, having already stationary glass-cases with cupboards below on each side of the chimney. Mamma's large sideboard just fits between the windows, and her old pictures brighten up the walls.

But it is in the ugly crooked old hall I have the greatest triumph of mind over matter. The doors on each side are draped with *portières* of dark chintz lined with crimson. The crooked top of the double door is hidden by a deep lambrequin of the same, falling over lace curtains, and the doors are taken away letting light into the gloomy back hall.

A partition is run across from the foot of the stairs, cutting off the dark corners, and mysterious doorways. A crimson carpet covers the floor, two divans are improvised out of wooden benches upholstered in carriage cloth, a few of mamma's spindle-legged

tables, and chairs set about, a few of her quaintest pictures on the walls, and, oh, what a change is wrought!

Len will not know the house, and even Thos, with his high artistic perceptions, will be satisfied. What will Len say when he comes home? Won't he vow that I am the dearest, cleverest little wife in the world? Ay, poverty hath its charms,—but ignorance is not one of them. It is ignorance rather than poverty that takes all the brightness and beauty out of too many lives.

Enlightened poverty may think as good thoughts, breathe as high aspirations, and indulge in the same philosophical reflections as the millionaire.

Montaigne says that "all moral philosophy is as applicable to an humble private life as to the most splendid. Every man carries the entire form of the human condition within him."

Ah, my beloved books! it is to you I turn when wearied and worried with toil and care. From you I can always derive comfort and encouragement, sweet thoughts to cheer, and bright fancies to enliven my lot.

CHAPTER III.

BUT it is time that I should properly introduce Thos to my readers.

Thos is my younger brother, and was, at the time of which I write, clerk in the Toronto Post Office; a tall, fair, handsome, warm-hearted young fellow, of about twenty-five, born in Canada, but educated in Ireland; which may perhaps account for his punning propensities, and being so full of funny stories. His ready wit, and sunny temperament won friends wherever he went, and we, of his own family, positively adored him for his kindness of heart and unselfish disposition.

Of course Thos was not the name in which his godfathers and godmothers renounced for him the "devil and all his works."

He had been christened by the good old-fashioned name of Thomas, and called Tom, or Tommy, until ten years of age; when the rich old uncle, after whom he was named, wrote, offering to adopt and educate him, and eventually make him his heir.

Ah! well do I remember the misery caused by that letter in our quiet, happy little family.

We then lived in a little village near Montreal,

where my father held a government appointment. He had come to America when first married, bringing with him Mamma's small fortune, which they expected would quickly multiply itself. They first went to the Southern States and settled in New Orleans, where Uncle James, Mamma's brother, had amassed a fortune in a short time; but shortly after their arrival Uncle was carried off by yellow fever. They then removed to Georgia, where I was born, and afterwards to Florida, my sister Florrie's birthplace.

Uncle James left all his property to his brother, who, having already a competency, now became very rich.

Uncle Thomas had never married, and the prospect for little Tom seemed too bright to be rejected. Papa was not at all a wealthy man. He had made money fast enough in the States, but finding the climate disagree with him, had come to Canada, just before Tom was born, and, after losing a good deal in various business speculations in Montreal, had settled down on a small salary, with little prospect of advancement.

However, we were all happy and contented enough before Uncle's letter came, and at first no one could think of parting with little Tom, the light and joy of the house, whose fun and mischief were always good-natured, whose wit already charmed

us, and whose blue eyes filled with tears while he vowed he would never leave Papa and Mamma and his dear sisters.

But when our parents talked it over, they began to think that it would be selfish to keep Tom from such a brilliant future.

Florrie and myself, then twelve and fifteen years of age, were about to enter as boarders at Mrs. Lay's Academy; and our school expenses would make a good hole in Papa's income. Tom had studied with us, at home, so far, and Papa shrank from sending him to mix with the rough boys at the village school. Finally it was decided that Tom should go to his uncle, and the dear child was consoled, by promises that Mamma would herself take him home, and when Papa sold his land in Illinois—out of which he still expected to make a fortune—we should all go and live together again. So Tom wiped away his childish tears, and began telling us all the fine things he would buy for us when he got Uncle's money.

For the next eight years all we knew of little Tom was through his letters. First loving, childish scrawls, longing for home and friends; then jolly, boyish epistles, full of fun and frolic; then manly, affectionate letters, wise and witty; but all, from first to last, signed "Your affectionate son or brother," as the case might be, "Thos." We thought it

strange he did not sign Tom, as he had always been called, but afterwards learned that Uncle, when showing him how to write his first letter, had signed it in this old-fashioned way, and little Tom had stuck to it all through, so we all got into the way of speaking of him as Thos, and to this day we are apt, when strangers are not present, to speak of him or address him as "Thos."

CHAPTER IV.

It was eight years since little Tom left us, and I, a happy bride of six weeks, was standing at the front window of the pretty parlor of my new home. My sister Florrie, a lovely fair-haired girl of nineteen, was seated at the piano in the back parlor, with Jack Mordaunt, her affianced lover, leaning over her, turning the music.

I am watching for Leonard Dermot, my husband, a young Irishman, who two years before had called on us with an introduction from Tom, having been a college chum of his at the Royal Academical Institution in Belfast. Len was just my own age, dark, and rather good-looking, and I had thought at first, with many a heart-ache, that he would surely fall in love with Florrie; but no, Florrie and he did not fancy each other at all, and I was now his happy wife, while Florrie would soon be the bride of Jack Mordaunt, a young merchant of Toronto.

I am thinking lovingly of Thos, and thanking him in my heart for being the means of sending my dear husband to me, when suddenly a tall, fair young man passed the window, glanced back enquiringly

at me, then up at the number over the door, and then bounding up the steps, and finding the door open, he walked straight into the parlor, and up to me, asking,—

"Don't you know me, Georgia?"

"Why, it must be Thos!" I exclaimed.

Giving me a hearty kiss, he asked,—

"Is that Florrie?" and in another moment he had her in his arms, kissing her, and exclaiming,—

"Why, Florrie, how beautiful you have grown!"

But Florrie shrank back in bewildered surprise, evidently not dreaming who the stranger could be; while Jack, seeing her annoyance, seized Tom roughly by the arm, demanding,—

"Who are you, sir?"

"I am her brother, who are you?" replied Thos, his Irish blood rising at Jack's rough manner.

Then we all laughed, and Jack and Tom shook hands, and begged each other's pardon, Jack adding that he hoped Tom would be his brother too, very soon, which made Florrie blush so deeply that she hid her face on Tom's shoulder, and made up for her first coldness by hugging and kissing him, to her and his heart's content, and Jack's evident envy.

Then we asked Thos more questions in five minutes than he could answer in an hour; and Len coming in exclaimed,—

"Why, Thos, my dear boy! How are you?

I am so glad to see you. Is the old gentleman dead, and have you got all the money?"

"Faith no;" said Thos, "he's not dead, but married—worse luck! as we say in Ireland."

"Married! at his age!" I exclaimed, indignantly.

"What a shame!" cried Florrie.

"But he promised to make you his heir," said Len. "Has he given you up?"

"Yes," replied Thos, "but it is my own fault, I suppose. Uncle told me he was about to marry a widow with two grown-up daughters who had fortunes of their own, and that it would make no difference to me, but when my new Aunt came home she soon let me see that she would prefer my taking the Irish half of the house, meaning the outside of it. Of course, she took care that Uncle never heard any of her disagreeable speeches, and I could not bear to carry complaints, so when I told him I was going back to Canada he thought I was very ungrateful, and we ended by having a row only."

"Uncle vowed that if I left he would never give me a shilling, and I told him that I did not care a fig for his money; so here I am, an able-bodied pauper; I cannot dig, to beg I am ashamed. That is, I don't mean to live on my father or friends, so what can you do with me?"

Jack and Len assured Thos that he could easily make a living, and, perhaps a fortune, in Canada;

and began asking what sort of a situation he would like; but it now became evident that Tom's Old Country education had given him high notions, and he did not relish the idea of taking any situation, except a government one.

Jack laughed at Thos' foolishness, telling him that it would be the worst thing he could get; but Len, being Old Country himself, could sympathize with him.

Len had money when he came to Montreal, and had purchased a partnership in a wholesale establishment; and, as they had need of a junior assistant just then, he coaxed Thos to try how he would like the business, which he agreed to do, if Papa approved.

Thos had not been home as yet, having found our address from the directory, and it was agreed that he should accompany Florrie home to-morrow. Jack, too, would be returning to Toronto by boat, which he would take at Lachine, so they would all go together on the cars.

Poor Thos rather dreaded to meet his parents, knowing that, however glad they might be to see him, they would also be disappointed about the way he had left Uncle; and he acknowledged to Len and me that he might have managed much better had he not been so hasty. He had first made up his mind to put up with everything his Aunt might

do, or say, for Uncle's sake, for he was very fond of Uncle, who had been very kind to him; but one day Aunt made some pointed remarks to her visitors about fortune-hunters, and, on the spur of the moment, Thos had gone to Uncle, and told him that he was going home. Uncle felt hurt by Thos' desire to leave him, not knowing of any cause. Thos was too proud to explain, so it had come to hot words between them.

Poor Thos, by a few hasty words, had thrown away a brilliant future. Had he gone quietly to Uncle, asking leave to visit his parents, it would no doubt have been granted, and he might easily have kept out of Aunt's way until older and better able to hold his own against a designing woman, who would now, doubtless, secure all Uncle's wealth for her own children.

Len and I could fully sympathize with Thos, for we felt we should probably have done the same; but we knew that Papa and Mamma would think that he had acted very foolishly, and Mamma especially would be apt to mourn over the sacrifice which she had made to no purpose; so we urged Thos to take the place in Len's store at once, and come to stay with us, to which he agreed, exclaiming,—"I knew you would stand by me, Georgia; you don't know how blue I felt coming out, although I made fun for everybody; but I do dread Mamma's disappointment."

Thos went home with Florrie, and, after a few days returned to us, rather downcast at Mamma's lamentations, although neither she nor Papa had blamed him at all, but only regretted that they had lost eight years of his love and companionship, while he had gained nothing by their self-denial.

Thos went at his new work with a will, and his light, boyish heart seemed as gay and happy as though he had never been taught to expect a better lot.

He soon became a favorite among his associates, but he could not easily overcome his old-country class-prejudices, and when he found that any one was closely related to a butcher, baker, or candlestick-maker, he was apt to show that he did not wish to be intimate; yet he was too good-natured and polite to ever hurt the feelings of any; and what surprised Thos most was to find that these *parvenu* fellows put on such airs themselves.

One day Thos was chatting with a number of young men, who were discussing a swell party given lately by Mrs. Raglin, at her elegant mansion on Sherbrooke street. Mrs. Raglin's father was a retired butcher, while her husband had made his fortune in a kind of "Heathen Chinee" fashion out of old clothes; naturally the guests of the Raglins were drawn from all classes of society, some of their old friends, who had kept pace with them in

the world, being still admitted, while the new friends, attracted by their great wealth and ostentatious style of living, were of course of a rather better class.

Young Elchin had been among the favored few who had graced the Raglin ball. His father was now very wealthy, although he had started in life at the shoemaker's bench, and young Elchin was very particular as to the company he kept, not even associating with his own cousins, whose father had been mean enough to remain a poor man.

Mr. Elchin's opinion of the ball being asked, he vowed that, "It was very mixed, all sorts of people that one would not care to know; very mixed, indeed."

"But, my dear fellow," cried Thos, "you know we can't all be shoemakers."

Of course, this created a laugh at Elchin's expense, for the others were glad to see him taken down, but he never forgave Thos, and as he was manager in Len's store he never let slip an opportunity of annoying him.

Thos was too manly to complain of these petty persecutions, so he fought his own battles as well as he could in a good-natured way, but I think it was owing to young Elchin that Thos took such a dislike to commercial life, and when Jack Mordaunt came down to marry Florrie, Thos begged that he

would get his father, who was a member of parliament, to use his influence in obtaining for him a government situation.

This Jack readily promised, but warned Thos that, although, in the civil service, the work might be light, the pay would certainly be; and the advancement so slow, that, if he chanced to be long-lived, he might possibly receive some appointment worth having in time to advertise in his obituary.

Thos was not to be dissuaded, but expressed himself satisfied with the prospect, and as he disliked his present employment he hoped he should not have long to wait.

CHAPTER V.

It was while awaiting this government appointment that Thos developed the taste for scribbling, which has stuck to him ever since. He began by sending comic rhymes to the daily papers, a part of the first of which I here transcribe, that my readers may know to what manner of production this young man of eighteen did incline:

CANADIAN NEWS.

FROM HALIFAX.

Repeal! Repeal! for woe, or weal,
Naught but repeal or annexation,
Yet Mr. Howe deserts them now,
His letter fills them with vexation.
The "Antis" say that go he may,
He'll find but few his steps to follow,
But, since they blurt, they must be hurt;
Ah, soon they'll find they're beaten hollow.

.....

FROM MONTREAL.

Nothing at all, except the haul
Brought up at court, fresh every morning,
In dirty lots of sans-culottes,
Or *Offisaws* the dock adorning;

The "Grecian Bend" its charms doth lend—
In latest styles none can outvie us;
Our churches new are not a few,
For, though we're fashionable, we're pious.
.....

FROM TORONTO.

We're holding now our great *pow-wow*,
Ontario's mighty chiefs here gather,
His Honor's there—but, oh! forbear,
To be *His Excellency* he'd rather.
Before our eyes is sure to rise,
(As an umbrella in a shower,)
The great Chief Boyd—brass unalloyed,
"He speaks on nothing by the hour."
.....
That's all the news, the latest news,
To make it longer were a pity,
For here you see all that can be
Said of each great Canadian city.

(Free Lance, 23 Nov., 1868.)

This rhyme was copied into several American papers, and led to Thos being engaged as correspondent for the *Wide World*, and *New York Mercury*. For these papers he soon began to write short stories and sketches; but, although we considered these productions quite clever and witty, the amount of compensation was so small that it never struck us that Thos might make for himself a place in the field of literature.

About this time, too, Thos elected to fall in love.

The "object"—as we were wont unfeelingly to refer to her—of his affections, being a young lady half-a-dozen years his senior, who lived next door to us. Thos being manly, and well-grown for his age, his attentions were very well received by Miss Rosina Brown. He took her out snow-shoeing and skating a good deal, which was very agreeable to Rosina, as she had lately had a little tiff with John Hardy, who had been her devoted slave for some years.

One evening while out snow-shoeing, with some young people, Hardy happened to be one of the party, and, strange to say, he had no special young lady to escort,—doubtless he knew that Rosina was coming, and thought it was a good opportunity to make-up. He was very amiable to Rosina, and did his best to get her separated from Thos, but she would not be rude, and Hardy, not knowing what age Thos might be, and seeing his devotion, probably became alarmed, at all events when Thos called next evening, he found Mr. Hardy and Rosina on very good terms, and was treated too much as a boy to suit his ideas.

He had carried with him a poetical effusion, which Rosina had requested him to write for her; but, finding how the land lay, he brought it back with him, and set to work to write another. It was leap year, and Thos feeling his pride, if not his heart, wounded produced the following:

"It is leap year, and I intend to propose,
For I am tired of living single, dear knows,
And seeing other girls walk off with the beaux—
Calling me an 'ugly old maid,' I suppose.

But I am going to propose,
I am going to propose.

I feel like a gambler whose last guinea he throws,
And sees it swiftly swept off from under his nose,
Then he jumps up, and swears round, and tears round, and blows—

Not his nose,
But at his foes,

Who have not a bit of regard for his woes.
Yes, I feel like all that, and more so, dear knows,
For it must be a *dreadful thing to propose*,
But then it's my only hope left, so here goes—
Still I can't yet lay siege to the heart of the beaux,
For, unluckily, last night I wet my poor toes,
Through going out in the deep and untrodden snows,
And, not being provided with warm-enough hose—
Which is apt to give me a cold in the dose—

I mean the snows,
Not the hose—

A complaint which you know, and every one knows,
Is likely to make that feature *couleur de rose*—
A very nice tint in one's cheeks and one's clothes,
But not apropos to the tip of one's nose!
So I must wait until this bright color goes,
And, in the meantime, try my mind to compose,
For it must be an *awful thing to propose*.
Just think if one's answer should always be 'noes',

But then a sweet 'yes' would be an *autre chose,*
And enough to console one for many past woes;
And now, hoping that those

To whom I may propose
Won't my wishes oppose,

I'll bring my long soliloquy to a close,
And sign myself, unwillingly, a single

ROSE."

When Thos had finished this rhyme he sent it to Rosina by one of my maids, telling her to say he had forgotten to leave it when in.

Poor Rosina, imagining that it would be something complimentary, opened it at once, and was then obliged to show it to Mr. Hardy, who resented the inference that Rosina was an old maid, and called Thos an impudent boy; but Rosina took his part, and finally Mr. Hardy begged that, should she propose to any one, it would be to him, and Rosina assured him that she would not propose to any one else, and the end of it was that Mr. Hardy went off an engaged man.

Rosina no longer felt any resentment about the rhyme, which had been the means of bringing about her happiness, and was disposed to be very friendly to Thos; but, evidently, the poor boy felt his first disappointment, and doubtless it was owing to this that Thos was so shy of young ladies' society for years after.

Len tried to laugh Thos out of his dejection, quoting Tom Hood's "Faithless Sally Brown:"

"But when he called on Rosie Brown,
To see how she got on
He found she'd got another Thos
Whose christian name was John.

"O, Rosie Brown! O, Rosie Brown!
How could you serve him so?
He's met with many a breeze before,
But never such a blow."

But I was always tender of Thos' feelings and coaxed Len to let him alone; and soon after this Thos received his appointment in the Toronto Post-Office, where he has remained ever since, always coming to spend his midsummer holidays with us, and often running down for a few days at Christmas. This year we had not expected him, as he intended taking a trip to Illinois to see about the property which our father had left to him, but that was now impossible, owing to his having spent all his money on my piano.

Dear, kind, loving Thos, never before had I looked forward so anxiously to his coming; not only that I might thank him for his generosity, but I had also heard a rumor that he was about to be married, and I wondered how he could do so on his small salary, unless the lady had a fortune of her own.

Thos had written once or twice to Uncle Thomas,

but had received no answer to his letters, so he could hope for nothing from that quarter. Indeed it was through no mercenary motives he had written, for Thos never seemed to waste a thought on the loss of his great expectations. His only regret had ever been that he had allowed himself to be betrayed into hasty words, and, apparently ungrateful conduct towards one who had been such a kind friend and gentle companion throughout the years of his happy boyhood.

Thanks to Uncle's good training, Thos was no shallow-pated youth, but a studious, thoughtful young man, full of light-hearted nonsense, it is true, but with many deep, noble thoughts and high aspirations. I knew that he devoted much of his spare time to good reading and study, and that he still scribbled occasionally; but literary abilities are not a paying commodity in this Canada of ours, and I had small hopes that Thos would ever materially improve his position by his pen. However, so long as he remained single, his poverty would not matter, for he lived with Florrie, who was surrounded by all the elegancies of life; but, should he marry, he must at once descend to a life of poverty; and how would a young girl, such as Thos would be likely to marry, endure the privations and self-denials which even my more mature mind found oft-times grievous to be borne. For not

always could I reconcile myself to the petty economies and prosaic occupations of my lot, and derive comfort from reading such aphorisms as—"It is not wealth that gives the true zest to life, but reflection, appreciation, taste, and culture."

"That is all very fine!" I would exclaim, to myself, "but how shall I find time for culture, when I must darn stockings, patch clothes, and contrive dinners?" Nevertheless, in my darkest hours, I felt that all these trials were good for my soul, and realized that "labor and toil may be associated with the highest thoughts and purest tastes;" but how would a young girl, who had probably never thought deeply on any subject except dress and fashion, be apt to look on such humble experiences? Alas! I feared for Thos' future should he marry an ordinary Canadian girl in his present circumstances.

CHAPTER VI.

It was the first week in June when Len returned. He had been properly surprised and delighted by the change in the old house, had given me the proper amount of praise and kisses for my good management, and I was a very happy although such a poor woman, as I ran off to the kitchen to see to Len's dinner, for Mary Ann, my maid-of-all-work, does not profess to be a good cook.

She is able, and willing to wash, she can milk, and will do what she is told, when she feels inclined, and what more can you expect at eight dollars a month? The nurse gets six, and, if she does not break the baby's neck at the price, I may be thankful, at least I was told as much by another nurse at the registry office when engaging Lizzie. I liked the appearance of the other girl better, and told her I was sorry that I could not afford her price.

"Well, Ma'am," said she, "ye can't expeck to have yer baby tuk proper care of for less than nine dollars, and, if the girl at six, breaks his neck it won't be no saving."

I was startled at the suggestion, but, not seeing

that the difference in wages need have such dire results, I had risked engaging Lizzie.

During the seven happy years of my married life I had paid very little attention to practical cookery, but I was full of theories on the art, gleaned from scientific and hygienic books, and these I was now determined to put into practice.

Indeed I had already tried some of my pet theories, with varying success; and had come to the conclusion that "practice alone makes perfect," in cookery as in everything else. Still I had found that a knowledge of science and hygiene was oft-times a great help, and at least served to make my experiments more interesting.

I had purchased "Common Sense in the Household," and divided my spare time between it, and my latest scientific work—"The Earth and Man;" the result being a sad jumble of Miss Harland's "Rock Custards" and Dr. Dawson's "Rock Formations."

Unfortunately I found myself more deeply interested in the "thin crust of the earth in the Laurentian period" than in the proper thickness of a pie-crust of the present period; and the various theories for and against the probable evolution of man from a monkey were much more palatable to my mind than the evolution of a cake from the raw material,—a fact which would scarcely tend to make my cake more palatable when evolved.

Nevertheless, I had made up my mind to become a good poor man's wife, or rather, a good wife for a poor man, or both, so I tried faithfully to put far from me the Eozoic, Palæozoic, and Mesozoic times, and devote myself to the culinary formations of the top-crust, or modern period of the Neozoic time.

I am happy to state that my cooking experiments soon became culinary triumphs, and the dainty dishes which I evolved out of "next to nothing" afforded me great pride and pleasure.

When Len had been home a few days he met with an opportunity of again going into business. Mamma mortgaged her farm to raise the necessary funds, and the prospect began to look brighter.

One fine morning our cow arrived, accompanied by her pretty little calf; and the man who brought them told us we had better keep the calf for a few days, lest the cow should run away. The gate was very rickety, and Mary Ann received a great many directions about keeping the calf tied, which she promised to do.

The children were delighted. Now they could have plenty of "scorn-starch and cusserd"—and "strawbewies and cweam;" but their interest in the cow was suddenly abated, when Uncle Thos unexpectedly arrived.

We had just dined, and were sitting on the veranda reading the *Star* and *Witness*, when Thos drove

up, having come by boat. Of course we were delighted to see him, and he was deluged with questions as to "how he got away so early in the year"—"why he did not write to say he was coming," etc.

"Hold!" cried Thos, "not an answer, till you give me something to eat. I am starving. We had a scramble for dinner on the boat. It reminded me of Pip and Joe in 'Great Expectations.' They were all 'bolters,' and my next neighbor was, like Joe's wife, a 'regular buster.' She had an arm about a yard long, and reached all over the table, grabbing everything."

"And as you are always modest, I suppose you did not get much," said Len.

"It was no use trying to get anything," replied Thos, "so I went out to look at the Long-Salt? Is that what you call it? Soo? How can you make 'Soo' out of S-a-u-l-t? But I never could learn French. Is your dinner over?"

"Yes, but you shall have tea directly," said I. "Come to your room, and by the time you have freshened up, it will be ready."

"This is rather a picture-*askew* house from the outside," remarked Thos. "You called your last 'The Hut,' you might name this 'The Barn.' Are you going to put me on the hay-loft?"

"No, we shall give you a wing-bedroom," answered Len, opening the door which led down two steps.

Of these we forgot to warn Thos, who made a sudden dive forward, striking against the opposite door, which flew open, allowing him to rush head foremost into the bed.

Regaining his equilibrium, he turned smilingly to receive our apologies.

"Don't mention it," said he. "Only I have nothing to leave, I should have thought you were trying one of Miss Braddon's trap-door dodges."

"You will prefer this outside room, with the door to the orchard," said I.

"Yes, this is quite country like. I see the rain comes in over the bed. You can lend me an umbrella wet nights, I suppose."

I left Len explaining that the roof had been repaired, and went to see about Tom's tea, which was soon ready.

While at tea, Mamma, whose Irish idea of a welcome was "plenty to eat," kept explaining to Thos that had we known he was coming we should have had better fare.

"Don't apologize," cried Thos, "or I shall feel like the old gentleman in Ireland, who was persuaded by some friends to accompany them to a country wedding. He was well received, but felt rather put out when every now and then some one would exclaim,—"Here's yer very good health, Mr. O'Nale, and yer jist as welcome as if ye wur invoited."

"That is a very good story, Thos," said Len. "Did you make it yourself?"

"No, 'pon my word, it's a true fact. I heard it from the old gentleman himself."

"From whom?" cried Len. "Oh, Thos! That accounts for your having so many funny stories. Of course if you get them from that source—"

"Don't be so smart, you know I mean Mr. O'Neil. Where are you off to?"

"Back to work. You must excuse me, for you know we are in very 'indignant circumstances' just now, and we must work night and day."

"All right, I'll forgive you," said Thos, and then he was taken by Mamma and the children to see the beauties of the place, including the cow and calf, and "dem pitty ittle puppies" sent by Aunt Florrie.

At last nurse took the boys to bed, and Mamma soon after retired, leaving me to have the quiet chat with Thos for which I was longing.

After the piano episode had been duly discussed, I enquired if it were true that he was going to be married, but Thos laughingly denied the soft impeachment.

"Why," said he, "I can scarcely keep myself, how should I support a wife?"

"I know that," I replied, "but I was afraid you had fallen in love—"

"In love! Pshaw! People don't fall in love now-

a-days. Anyway I am not the sort of fellow that does. I shall try to get something more than a government salary to keep house on before I think of marrying."

"Why, Thos, I thought you would not take any but a government situation!"

"Yes, but that was when I was young and green, and full of high-toned notions. I have more sense now, and I know I might have got on faster in any other employment. What vexes me most is that I am sure had I remained with Len he would not have failed. At the time his senior partner sold out I could have disposed of that Illinois property for a good sum, and Mamma would have raised more for me, so I could have gone in instead of that Elchin, and you know he ruined the business by his reckless buying. Sometimes I feel quite discouraged when I think of all the mistakes I have made."

"Oh, we must all make mistakes," said I, "and it is well we can see that we have made them, instead of calling it our luck, or laying the blame on others; and sometimes what seem to be mistakes at first turn out for the best afterwards. I thought our failure a great misfortune, but already I find compensations even in that. I am learning to cook, and beginning to take a pleasure in it, although I have always detested the kitchen, and everything pertaining to it. I shall never again be so much at

the mercy of my servants. Besides Len and I have been accustomed to think too little of money, and to regard others as mean who were only properly economical. For the future we shall look at life from a fairer standpoint."

"Well, Georgia," said Thos, "I am glad you take your reverses so philosophically. I feared to find you quite cast down."

"Not while I have my dear old piano. That helps me greatly to look on the bright side."

"But some things have no bright side," said Thos, mournfully, "you don't know how badly I feel when I think of Uncle. He was so kind to me, and now he must think me so ungrateful. It is not his money that I care about,—had we only parted on good terms," and Tom's voice quivered with emotion, so to cheer him up I talked of other things asking,—

"But what can you do if you leave your situation now?"

"Oh, I am not going to leave at once. I like it well enough, so long as I have only myself to keep, and, thank goodness, I am not possessed of an insane desire to support somebody-else's daughter just yet."

Thus spoke Thos, who was still heart-whole, and believed himself likely to remain so.

CHAPTER VII.

"IF you plase, Mum, the cow's gone!"

A knock at my bedroom door had roused me rather early next morning, and it was Mary Ann's voice I heard, imparting this dire information. I jumped out of bed, and running to the door exclaimed,—

"The cow gone! It isn't possible! She would never leave her calf."

"Shure, she tuk the calf wid her!" replied Mary Ann, composedly.

"But how could she when it was tied?"

"Shure I ontied it, to get its brekfust, and whin I went back they wur both gone."

"Oh, Mary Ann! how could you be so stupid, after being told that you must not leave it untied?" Turning to my husband I exclaimed,—

"You must rise, Len, and go up to Fletcher's Field; and I shall get Thos to go down by Sherbrooke street."

"Don't fuss, Georgia, they will be sure to turn up all right," replied Len, who excels in a 'masterly inactivity.'

However he rose, and we were soon laughing over the sudden departure of our bovine treasure, not that we could afford to lose her, but Len felt certain that she could not be lost.

"Nobody is going to steal our cow," said he, "we can advertise, and whoever finds them will let us know."

Consoling ourselves thus, we made a hasty toilet, for, in spite of Len's assurances, I insisted on making some search.

"Wake up, Tom! the cow's gone, and you must help Len to look for her," I shouted through the door.

"Eh, what's the matter?" I'm awfully sleepy. It is too early to get up yet."

After a good deal of explanation, I got Tom fully aroused to the exigencies of the position, and, leaving him muttering maledictions on the cow, the calf, things in general, and Mary Ann in particular, I passed out to the veranda, where I was soon joined by Tom and Len, who went off chaffing each other about their novel expedition.

Mary Ann now came out, asking in lugubrious tones 'wud she git the brekfust riddy for the gintlemin?' and hoping, with the pious irreverence of her class, that they might find the cow 'wid the help of God;' but telling her that she had no right

to expect Heaven's aid in rectifying her stupid blunders I sent her off in a huff.

The children now came running downstairs, fresh from their bath, and overflowing with excitement about the lost cow and calf.

"Why didn't Papa take me with him to Fletcher's Field?" asked Charlie.

"Dess, and let me wide home on taff's back?" added Tommy.

"There, children, I hear Lizzie calling you to breakfast. Run away."

"Can't we take breckest with you to-day?" pleaded Charlie.

"Dess, me take buskit wif Onky Tom, and stawbewies, me seen dem on table," added Tommy.

"Very well, boys, you may this time. Here, Lizzie, let me kiss baby. He must breakfast alone to-day, poor boy."

"Here's papa!" shouted the boys, rushing to the gate, and swarming up to perch on his shoulders. Len had not heard anything of the cow and calf, (or as Mary Ann told Lizzie, had not seen "hilt or hair" of them), but Tom returned with the news that some men working on Sherbrooke street had seen them going east, turning down St. George street.

On hearing this Len felt sure we should soon find them, but Mamma, who had not so much faith in human nature, suggested that some one might find

and keep them; an idea which we all scouted, telling her that she should be more charitable; while Tom added that she was not of a "sanguinary" disposition, which execrable pun provoked the dear old lady; so, to change the subject, I asked Tom would he have some more strawberries.

"No, thank you," said he, "they are rather sour."

"No, dey amn't sour," said Tommy, who had deluged his with sugar, and judged them accordingly, "dey am sweet."

"Dey amn't sweet, dey am sour," replied Thos, mockingly.

"N-o-o-o-o!" shouted Tommy, who could not bear to be contradicted. "I say d'am sweet;" rolling his words together, in his haste.

"All right, old fellow, don't swear; d'am sweet, if you insist on it."

"Come now, Thos, we can't have any of your wretched punning with the children," said Len.

"Why, I only repeated his own words to please him," said Tom. "You should teach your children to speak better English. Say 'they are,' Tommy."

"I tan't say 'dey nar,' I say *dey am!*" replied the wilful child, emphasizing the last words till I begged Tom to stop.

"You know you should not argue with your Uncle, Tommy," said I.

"I didn't nagger, Mamma, 'twas Onky Tom wat naggered," and I saw by the tremble of poor Tommy's lip that he believed himself to be aggrieved.

He could not understand his Uncle's fun, and thought that he had been angry with him.

"I am off to the office," said Len, kissing Tommy good-bye; and I saw that he kissed him twice, and whispered that he knew Tommy did not mean to be naughty

He is a tender-hearted papa, this husband of mine.

"Well," said Thos, "I shall visit the pounds, police-stations, and toll-gates in quest of the cow."

"Oh, I wouldn't bother," said Len. "Come down town with me, and trust to the advertisement."

But Thos knew that I felt anxious about the cow, and was determined to hunt her up if possible.

"Well," said Len, "don't try any of your puns on our policemen, lest they arrest you for contempt."

"No danger, I always keep clear of brute force and ignorance. Come Tommy, you must make friends with me, I did not mean to vex you. Say, what shall I buy for you?"

"Oh, a blune!" cried Tommy, "one of dem blue blunes."

"Say, Georgia, what is a 'dem blue blune?'" asked Thos.

"He means one of those little colored gas balloons," I replied.

"All right, Tommy, you shall have a 'dem blue blune,'" said the incorrigible Thos, walking off with Len.

I spent the morning out under the apple trees, darning the children's stockings and telling them stories; introducing a little lecture to Tommy on arguing with people older than himself, which he received much more meekly than if it had been given when his small spirit of rebellion was up.

To me it seems this is the whole secret of training children properly: never scold them when they are angry, and never scold them when you are angry yourself. In no circumstances of life is a little "masterly inactivity" more valuable, if not carried too far.

Possess thy soul in patience, let the small storm of childish excitement pass, then gently, but firmly, point out the error, and you will find the tender little heart yield readily to a grieved look from Mamma.

While thinking these thoughts, and congratulating myself on my successful management of children, Charlie called to me,—

"Mamma! Tommy's been saying nawful, nawful naughty words."

"Why, what has he said?" I asked anxiously, for I have a great dread of naughty words.

"He called me a 'mean snake,'" replied Charlie, indignantly.

"A what? Where could he hear such an expression?" I exclaimed.

"He heard Mary Ann calling Lizzie a 'mane shnake' this morning 'cos she ate all the strawberries, and did not leave any for her."

"Oh!" I replied, and I could scarcely keep from laughing, for I knew that Mary Ann meant a 'mean sneak'; but it was just as well the children had not understood.

I hardly knew how to point out to Tommy the error of his ways in this case, so I said "Tommy don't you know it is very naughty to call names or use ugly words? If you do so any more you must not come near me. I won't allow a boy who says naughty words to come near me."

"Why, Mamma?" said he, looking up into my face, innocently; "is you faid dat I learn dem to you?"

This was such a novel view of the case that I was obliged to conceal my smiles with my handkerchief for some moments before answering, and I then contented myself by telling Tommy that he should say 'teach' instead of 'learn.'

CHAPTER VIII.

SIX o'clock brought Len, accompanied by Thos, with three blue 'blunes' floating over his shoulder.

"Oh, Tommy!" shouted Charlie, who was sitting on the steps; "It's come! It's come!"

"What's scum?" asked Thos, laughingly, "I hope you don't call dem fine blue blunes scum."

"That is not original, Thos, you got that out of the *Star!*" said Len.

"Well, I don't pretend to be always original," said Thos, "I'm original and selected, like the funny columns."

"Are you selected?" asked Len, "by whom pray?"

But Thos would not answer, and busied himself tying strings to the balloons which we then fastened to the boys' buttons.

"Oh!" cried Charlie, "Let's have a blune procession. Call Lizzie to bring Baby, and we'll all march round the middle bed with our blunes flying."

While at dinner Tom related his experiences with French and Irish police and tollmen. "I asked

one man had he seen a stray cow—'Naw thin,' says he, 'the divil a wan but two passed here the day, and they belang to'—I thought he said a man that had diphtheria, and that it was contagious to him. 'Faith,' said I, 'I think it is contagious to everybody;' and then I found that he had said a man named De Therien who lived contiguous to him, but he called it 'contagious.' I will take a little more of that extravagus—I mean asparagus; I was thinking how extravagant you were to have it at this season."

"It is on your account, Tom," said I, "we must give you all the delicacies, as you are such a stranger."

"Oh, don't make a prodigal son of me. Anyhow you can't kill your fatted calf till I find it; and if it has been running all day it won't be fatted much."

"First catch your calf, eh, Tom? but, Georgia, you should call in your friends to rejoice with us over Tom, instead of keeping him hunting cows."

"Oh, I mean to. I shall have a croquet party on Saturday."

"Please don't, as I should be expected to call on all the young ladies afterwards. Wait till Saturday week, and I shall be going back that night."

"Still shy of the fair sex, eh, Tom?" said Len.

"What is that?" we exclaimed in chorus, as a pitiful cry caused us to rush to the door. There we

found poor Tommy, running wildly along the path, reaching up his little hands to where the blue 'blune' sailed slowly away, far out of reach.

I ran to comfort my wee darling, and Len proposed that, as it was so warm, we should have our tea brought to the veranda. Tommy sat upon my knee, while Charlie climbed up beside his Uncle on the railing.

"I debar to sit beside Uncle," said he, "Uncle Tom, if I say, 'I went up one pair of stairs' will you say 'just like me'?"

"Why, certainly;" said Tom, but persisted in saying 'just like you'.

"Oh, that's not right!" cried Charlie, "you must say, 'just like me'—'me,' you know."

"Well, didn't I say 'just like you'?"

Charlie looked perplexed, tried again, but of course with no better success; then he appealed to Tommy,—

"How can I make him say it, Tommy?"

"Give him a kick," growled Tommy.

Poor Tommy had been ousted from my arms rather early in life, by the advent of baby Len, and being consigned to the care of a cross nurse, had imbibed the idea that all things must be enforced by harsh measures.

"That boy was born to be a schoolmaster," said Tom. "He has the old-fashioned ideas of imparting knowledge by brute force."

"Old-fashioned!" I exclaimed, "I fear the fashion still prevails. I don't know what I shall do when my boys are old enough for school. Why whipping would make my Charlie a timid, hypocritical boy, while Tommy would become fierce and revengeful. If I live my boys shall never have their education beaten into them."

"Let us hope this brutal whipping may go out of fashion before our boys are done with their kindergarten," said Len, adding, "you have the *Star* there, Thos, look if you see our advertisement."

Thos found it and read out—"'Lost a dun-colored cow—' was she dun-colored? I should think you would not want any thing like a dun around the place."

"My dear fellow, it is you government people who are generally troubled by duns," said Len.

"Not me!" cried Thos, hastily.

"Ah, you are too much in the objective," interrupted Len.

"Well that is better than being too much in the subjective, as I see you are," replied Tom.

"Why, you don't mean to say I am hen-pecked, do you? Georgia, I told you people would notice it if you were not careful."

"Indeed it is I who am in the subjective, and you know that very well. Here, carry Tommy upstairs, and I mean that in the imperative, for I have asked you two or three times before."

"My Angel!" cried Len, in mocking tones, "I never heard you. Is he sleeping, the wee pet?" "Come, Charlie, kiss your Uncle good night, and go to bed. Grandmamma will hear you say your prayers."

"I guess I can say that right now, Charlie," said Thos, when he kissed him, and good-naturedly said it to the climax, declaring that the monkey was 'just like him' to Charlie's great delight.

"Speaking of duns reminds me of a curious mistake I made once," said Thos, when Len had returned to the veranda. "Don't you remember, Georgia, those lines from 'Much Ado about Nothing' you taught me to spout when I was a youngster?"

"No, I don't, we taught you so many, we thought you had quite a talent for declamation at that time, but to which lines do you refer?"

"Oh, those where Claudia reads from a scroll—

'Done to death by slanderous tongues
Was the Hero that here lies.
Death, in guerdon of her wrongs,
Gives her fame that never dies,
So the life that died with shame
Lives in death with glorious fame.
Hang thou there upon the tomb
Praising her when I am dumb.'

Don't you remember teaching me that as practice of the rising scale of elocution, or inflection?"

"Yes, but how could that remind you of duns? That was d-o-n-e, of course," I replied.

"Yes, I know, but for years I thought it was *dunned*, and it always suggested some poor devil being dunned to death by wretched people to whom he was in debt. I do believe the mistake had a wholesome effect on my mind, and to this day I always think of 'Done to Death,' in connection with duns. I laughed the first time I happened to read the lines. Of course I always thought the hero was masculine."

"What a lot of odd fancies you seem to have had, Thos," said Len.

"Yes," replied Thos, "I think it was owing to my going when so young among strangers, and not liking to ask questions; so I kept my childish ideas till they became fixtures."

"It must have been very lonely for you at first, poor boy," said I.

"Yes, I missed you all, very much; but Uncle was so kind, and seemed so grieved when I looked lonely, that I very soon became attached to him. It seems too bad that I can't let him know how grateful I am for all his goodness, but, if I should write, Aunt would say I only wanted his money."

Then we discussed Len's failure, and he, with his usual good-nature, took young Elchin's part, saying that his mistakes were natural to one of his san-

guine temperament, and of course he had lost heavily himself. "Poor fellow," added Len, "I heard to-day that he is married; and his father has disowned him for marrying beneath him."

"Beneath him!" I exclaimed, "why whom did he marry?"

"A very nice, sensible girl, I believe," replied Len, "but she was his sister's governess, so old Elchin will not allow any of his family to notice her."

"What a shame to treat a poor girl so, I must go to call on her."

"Yes, you had better," said Len, "but you must remember you are not in a position to patronize anybody just now, little woman. However, no doubt the Elchins will be glad to see you."

Then we discussed the odd ups and downs of life in Montreal till the Cathedral chimes rang out eleven, reminding us that we must to bed.

CHAPTER IX.

It was Tuesday morning that Bossy ran away, and when Friday found us still without tidings of her we began to think some might be dishonest enough to keep her.

We were seated on the veranda, our usual evening rendezvous, discussing this dire possibility. Thos, who spent most of the time in his fruitless search, declared that people began to look suspiciously at him.

"I do believe," said he, "they begin to think I am an escaped looneyiac. I mean lunatic, or monomaniac. Who is this coming in, Georgia?"

"It is some one who has found the cow!" I exclaimed at a venture, as I perceived that the gentleman was a stranger.

"Not much," said Len, who, from being the most sanguine, had become the most despondent. Poor fellow, no doubt he was puzzling his brain as to how he should spare the money to buy another.

Len rose to receive the stranger, who lifted his hat and bowed with a grace that proclaimed him to be a French man.

"*Vous avez perdu une vache*," (You have lost a cow) said he.

Len replied in French, while I explained to Thos, whose French was very defective.

The gentleman told us that a neighbor of his had found a cow and calf on Tuesday, and still had them in his yard. Having noticed our advertisement in the *Star*, he had come to tell us, fearing that his neighbor intended to keep them.

Having thanked him and conducted him to the gate Len returned radiant.

We had arranged to attend a concert in the Victoria Rink that evening, and Thos insisted that Len and I should go, saying that he would follow us after finding the cow and sending her home.

Len did not like to let Thos go alone, and said that when the man was so fond of them he might as well keep them another night; but Thos would not be persuaded, neither would he allow Len to miss the concert, so finally we went to the Rink, while Thos started once more in pursuit of Boss.

The Rink was crowded, we met with a great many friends, and did not feel the time passing until Len looked at his watch,—

"Why," said he, "it is almost ten o'clock. I wonder Thos has not come. It was a shame to let him go alone."

"He preferred going alone," said I. "He is in

hopes of having a row with the man for keeping them so long."

"I hope he may not forget the number, and go to the wrong house," said Len. "What a good fellow Thos is!"

"Thanks for your good opinion," replied Thos, who had just come up beside us.

"'Speak of angels and you hear the rustling of their wings'." said I.

"The old French woman did not think me an angel," said Thos. "Oh, I've been making an awful ass of myself. Come home till I tell you all about it."

"But did you get the cow?" I inquired.

"Yes, they are home by this time. Come on, havn't you had enough of this?"

"Oh, wait till we hear Tom Hurst sing 'Tommy make room for your Uncle.'"

It was the first time this absurd little song was heard in Montreal, and, sung in our favorite comic singer's inimitable style, it was of course applauded to the echo, and equally of course an encore was insisted on.

"What a shame to make him sing it over again," said Thos, as we passed out. "If I were he I wouldn't be imposed on."

"But what have you been doing, Thos?" asked Len, as we walked up Drummond street. "I

began to fear you had been arrested for assault and battery."

"No, I did not batter any one," replied Thos, "but I went to No. 260, instead of 216. I was surprised to find the house so large and handsome, but I felt sure it was the right number, and ready to be disagreeable if they gave me any trouble, I gave the bell a good pull. A cross-looking old woman came to the door— said I: 'You have a stray cow and calf here.'

"'Me no spik Engleese,' said she.

"'You're speaking very good English now,' said I. 'You know what a cow and a calf is, I suppose.'

"'Ah, you want for go on de cave. You gaz man, suppose,' said she.

"I knew that *cave* was French for cellar, and saw that she supposed I had come to look at the gas-meter; but feeling sure that she understood more English than she pretended, I spoke very crossly, saying I was not the gas man, but I knew my cow was there, and I must have her.

"'You no gaz man, you no go on de cave—you go way quick, me call poleese-man,' said she, trying to shut the door in my face.

"Then I waxed wroth, and putting my foot inside the door prevented her from shutting it.

"'Come,' said I, 'you shan't shut this door till I get my cow.' I spoke rather loudly, and the

woman seemed to be frightened, for she ran back into the hall shouting '*Mon Dieu*,' and I could hear her talking excitedly to some one inside.

"'Now,' thought I, 'she is telling them to get the cow away,' so I waxed more wroth, and followed her into the hall. She was standing at the parlor door, but, on hearing my step, she gave a wild shriek, shouted '*Mon Dieu*,' once more, and rushed back to the head of the kitchen stairs.

"The gas in the hall was lighted, but the parlor was dark, and I could not see who was inside; but I heard a sweet timid voice saying,—

"'What is it, please?'

"I knew that the owner of that voice must be a lady; so, taking off my hat and bowing, I tried to explain my intrusion. The lady seemed satisfied, for she came forward, asking me to come in, and calling the old woman to light the gas. When this was done, and I saw that the room was handsomely furnished, and the young lady elegant and refined, I began to feel I had made a stupid mistake and behaved very rudely. I tried to apologise, but the young lady put all the blame on her servant, saying,—'Angèle is very cross and very timid, and, as she did not understand you, she became alarmed, and indeed,' she added laughingly, 'she managed to alarm me by the description she gave of you.'

"You may be sure I felt ashamed" continued

Thos, "and stammering out some more apologies about my being a stranger and not speaking French, I said that I must not intrude longer. But she insisted that I should wait, saying that her father would soon return, and she knew he would help me in my search. She added that her mother was staying with her aunt on St. Denis street, who was very ill, and that her father had only gone over for a few minutes. The housemaid also had gone to carry a few things to her mother. 'Had Marie opened the door for you,' said she, 'you would have had no trouble, for she speaks English well.'

"Not knowing what else to say, I remarked that she spoke English very well herself, 'why shouldn't I?' asked she, laughingly, 'my mother is English, and my father only partly French.'

"Just then we heard the hall door open, and I did not feel quite comfortable when I heard the old woman jabbering away in the hall, but the young lady called out,—'Come in papa, and don't mind Angèle, this gentleman is not a burglar, he is only looking for his cow. He was told he would find her down this way, but mistook the number.'

"The father, a fine, handsome man, looked mystified; but asked could he assist me, to which the young lady replied,—

"'Yes papa, as the gentleman is a stranger, and does not speak French, I thought perhaps you would go with him.'

"Of course I protested against giving so much trouble, but the gentleman insisted on coming with me, so, with many thanks and apologies to the lady, I went off with her father. As we walked along, I told him that my name was Graham, that I lived in Toronto, and was here visiting my sister. Then he told me his name was Latour and that he had a married sister living in Toronto, whose name was Mrs. Moir. Don't you remember meeting her at Florrie's, Georgia?" asked Thos.

"Why, yes," I exclaimed, "what a coincidence! Mrs. Moir told me last summer that her name was Josephine Latour, but she said her family lived in Quebec."

"Yes," replied Thos, "Mr. Latour told me that they have been here but a short time. He seemed pleased when I told him that we were acquainted with his sister, and asked me to call before going back to Toronto. I said that you would call, Georgia, to apologize for the trouble I had given, was that right?"

"Oh, certainly, Thos, I think I ought to, especially as we are acquainted with Mrs. Moir. But did the man really mean to keep the cow?"

"Not at all, he had advertised them in the *Minerve* and had not seen the *Star*. I paid him all expenses, and he brought them home himself."

By the time Thos had finished his story we had

reached home; and, taking the stable lamp, we went out to visit the cow and her calf.

Then we sat down to have some supper, and Thos was obliged to tell his adventures over again for Mamma's benefit; and then we went off to bed, thankful that Bossy was home again.

CHAPTER X.

"SHALL I get a carriage this afternoon, and drive you over to call on the Latours?" asked Thos, on Saturday morning, while at breakfast.

"Hadn't we better wait till next week?" I replied. "It seems as though we were in such a hurry to get acquainted with them. Besides, when I come to think of it, I feel rather diffident about getting acquainted with strangers in our present circumstances."

Thos looked annoyed and answered,—

"I did not think you could be so silly, Georgia." If the Latours are people who will think less of you because you are down in the world, it does not matter much about their opinion."

"That is all very fine, Thos, but I have found that, even some of our old friends think less of us because we are down in the world, so what can we expect from strangers?"

"You might at least give the strangers an opportunity to prove themselves," replied Thos, in an aggrieved tone, which surprised me very much, for I

had not imagined that he would feel so deeply on the subject.

I hastened to assure him that I would go if he thought I should. Thos brightened up at once, and began explaining that Mrs. Moir would think it so strange if I did not call, when she was so intimate with Florrie, and I agreed to accompany him that afternoon.

I began to wonder could it be possible that Thos had fallen in love at first sight. He had been very shy of young ladies' society, since his disappointment about Rosina, and not at all inclined to boyish fancies; but why should he feel so anxious to get acquainted with the Latours? and I soon found myself quite as anxious to see Miss Latour as Thos could wish me to be, and three o'clock found me ready, awaiting the arrival of the carriage.

"Why, Georgia," said Thos, "no one would imagine that you had been working in the kitchen all morning. You look quite festive."

"Do I? Well, this is last year's bonnet I have on. Don't you think I may consider myself a strong-minded woman?"

"Mamma! Mamma!" and Charlie rushes in, in a disorderly manner, shouting, "Tommy's throwing stones at me 'cos I won't give him my ball."

"It's me ball, Mamma! me had it 'fore Charlie."

"I think so not, I had it 'fore you was borned," replied Charlie, disdainfully.

"Oh, you must not quarrel, boys," said Thos. "Come here till I tell you the sad fate of two brother magpies that quarrelled one day, and then Thos repeated the nursery rhyme:

"Two little magpies sat upon a rail,
As it might be on Wednesday week,
And one little magpie wagged its little tail
In the other little magpie's beak;
Then doubling, like a fist, its little claw hand,
Said the other: 'upon my word,
This is more than flesh and blood could stand
From magpie or any other bird.'
So they fought, and they clawed each other's eyes,
Till all that was left on that rail
Was the beak of one of the little magpies,
And the other little magpie's tail!"

"What's a beak, Uncle?" asked Charlie.

"A beak! Oh, a beak is a policeman," replied Thos, whose nonsense always got the better of him.

"Oh!" said Charlie, "I 'pose he got on the rail to stop them from fighting, eh?"

"Yes," replied Thos, gravely, "and the magpies flew away; but, if it were you and Tommy, he would be sure to arrest you, because you couldn't fly."

"Now, Thos, you really must not tell the children such stuff," I exclaimed. "Besides a 'beak' is such a vulgar name."

"Oh, but they must not call him a 'beak,' except in poetry. Poetical license you know. Now boys

you won't fight any more, will you, lest you should be arrested?"

"I'm not afraid to be tooken up," said Charlie.

"Me div pleeseman boc on no' sap in a mouf," cried Tommy, valiantly.

"Here comes the carriage, Georgia. Now if you are good boys till we come back, I'll take you for a drive," said Thos.

"Oh, we'll be good! we'll be good! hooray!" cried Charlie and Tommy, and we left them executing a dance of delight on the veranda.

As we drove along, Thos alluded to my croquet party next Saturday, saying, — "By-the-way, Georgia, why not invite the Latours? you might as well."

"I don't see how I could during a first call," I replied, but Thos saw no difficulty in it, so I promised to try.

A young girl opened the door, and to my enquiry for Mrs. Latour, replied,—

'No, that Madame was not at home, but Mademoiselle was. Would I come in?'

I was shown into the parlor, and sent up my name. I smiled to myself to think that Thos should have imagined people living in such style would wish to steal our cow.

The drawing room was not furnished after the stereotyped fashion of Montreal houses, denoting

that both back and front rooms are kept for show, like an oasis of magnificence in a desert of dreariness, while the family dining-room is hidden away somewhere in the bowels of the earth. It always seems to me that even in the most modern basement dining-room it is almost impossible that one should eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, and Mark Tapley, himself, might find it difficult to be jolly at an underground dinner party. Why will Montrealers persist in dedicating the whole of the best and brightest flat of their houses to the occasional guest or caller, while the family must live up in the attic or down in the cellar?—as in cottages they really do.

While thinking these thoughts Miss Latour, entered, and I saw at a glance that she was lovely a brilliant little brunette, with dark, sparkling eyes, a beautiful olive-tinted, oval face and small graceful figure.

No wonder if Thos had been smitten at last. She received me with easy cordiality, and I perceived that her manner and accent were charmingly French.

We chatted pleasantly over Tom's blunder. Miss Latour said that her mother was still remaining with her aunt, but would be much pleased to become acquainted with me, and that she would certainly call as soon as she returned home. Miss Latour informed me that she had met Florrie last

summer when she was visiting Mrs. Moir, and would probably be in Toronto again this summer. "So," thought I, "Thos will see her often, and fall deeply in love with her,"—then rising to leave I spoke of the croquet party, and said that I should be pleased if they would come. Miss Latour told me she had a younger sister who would be home next week. She had been left to finish her last term at the Ursuline Convent in Quebec. Of course, I included her in my invitation, and Miss Latour said they would be delighted to come, if her aunt were sufficiently recovered, and at all events they would call next week and let me know.

She came with me to the door, and blushed very prettily on seeing Thos, seated in the carriage. He jumped down, and came forward, lifting his hat.

"This is my brother, Mr. Graham, Miss Latour, your burglar of last night. I hope you have forgiven him."

Thos again expressed his regrets, and after a few more pleasant words we made our adieux.

Thos seemed delighted when I told him that the Latours would call next week, and possibly come to the party.

"But Thos," said I, "they are evidently wealthy, and may not care to associate with us, when they know how poor we are."

"Nonsense," replied Thos, "are you not just as good as you were six months ago?"

"Not when judged by the Montreal money-standard, Thos. By it we have gone down in the social scale very low."

But Thos would not be discouraged.

We then went back for the children, and with the two boys behind and baby on my knee we drove over the beautiful Mountain Park, which Thos had not been over before. Of course he was surprised by its magnificent views of the city, river, and opposite shores; and we both wondered that we found so few enjoying the pure air and lovely scenery.

"Why," exclaimed Thos, "if we had this Park in Toronto, it would be crowded every day."

"Yes, I always think you enjoy your home advantages more than we do. Our rich people prefer to seek amusement abroad."

As we turned town by Peel Street Thos remarked,—

"Sir Hugh's place looks rather squeezed in between the mountain and reservoir. Does it not? Such a large house requires more extensive grounds."

"Yes, every one thinks so," I replied, "and I don't see why people should fancy building near a reservoir any way. I love the water, and even a canal may be picturesque, but a reservoir seems too prosaic a piece of water altogether."

"That is so, and I am sure no one ever found poetry in a reservoir."

"No," I replied, "but they say you can find lots of frogs and polly-wogs and things in ours."

And so we two paupers drove along, gaily discussing the affairs of our rich townsfolk, who would not give a fig for our opinions,—and, as we had already proved that we could not manage our own affairs very well, it is not to be supposed that our opinions were worth very much.

CHAPTER XI.

DURING the next few days Len and I noticed that Tom had become dreamy and abstracted—no more puns or funny stories, and, no matter what we might begin to talk about, it was sure to turn to the Latours.

We often felt inclined to smile at his speculations as to when they would call, and whether they would come to the croquet party, but we found that we must not tease Tom about Miss Latour, as he always seemed annoyed.

He now spent every afternoon sitting with me on the veranda, and when one day I proposed that we should all go for a trip to Laprairie he would not hear of it, saying that Mrs. Latour might call, and it would be too bad to be out.

So we remained at home day after day, and Tom had the pleasure of seeing several young ladies, and their mammas, who had been in short dresses (I mean the young ladies) last time he saw them; but no Miss Latour.

On Friday I joined Tom on the veranda, bringing,

as usual, my basket of broken stockings and torn small pants.

"How do you find so many holes to mend Georgia?" asked Tom.

"The dear boys find them for me, Tom. See, Charlie tore a piece out of the knee of these pants climbing that apple tree last night; and I must say you encouraged him."

"Oh, I never thought of his pants. Those are what he calls his 'nigger-boggers,' eh? Can't you make them of something stronger?"

"No, Thos; there is no material of which they could be made that a small boy would not, or could not, put his knees through."

"I read three excellent recipes for preventing a boy from wearing the knees out of his pants," said Thos. "The first and surest is—'to kill the boy,' the next—'put no knees in his pants'—and the last—'get another boy to wear them out for him'."

"Such nonsense! Here comes an old friend of yours, Thos," as, hearing the gate, I looked up and saw Alec. Malcolm coming in. Thos went to meet him, exclaiming,—

"How are you Alec? so glad to see you!"

"Oh! that is all very fine, but you have been in town over a week, without letting me know. How do you do, Mrs. Dermot? I received your kind invitation for to-morrow, and that was the first intimation I had of Tom's being in town."

Tom tried to excuse himself by laying the blame on the cow; then, evidently, fearing that I might make some allusion to his adventures in search of her, he began talking of other things.

"How goes your singing now, Alec? Did you join the *Roar*-atorio society last winter?"

In bygone days, Thos and Alec had been shining lights in Professor Fowler's oratorio.

"Yes," said Alec, "I joined, but the attendance was small. The ambition of our amateurs, now-a-days, seems to be to squeak forth a feeble ballad, at a twenty-five cent charity concert, be *encored* by admiring friends, and then rest on their laurels, considering that, having sung a solo in public, it would be *infra dig* to sing in chorus afterwards."

"They would be in-for-a-dig if I were an editor," said Tom, who fondly imagined he could reconstruct the world, if only he were an editor.

Of course this conversation took place some years ago, since then our musical amateurs have to a certain extent redeemed their characters; but, much I fear, they will be obliged to return to the feeble ballads again if they wish to please a Montreal audience. When we remember the enthusiastic reception afforded the comic ballads, and notice the stern disapproval, expressed by silent contempt, with which the best efforts of the Philharmonic are sometimes greeted, we do not wonder that they who

know their ground best do not attempt anything high-toned.

"Let us have some oratorio music now," said Alec, and forthwith we adjourned to the parlor.

"Shall we try 'Be Propitious'?" asked Tom, picking out Haydn's "Seasons."

"I fear I shall make a feeble 'Jane,'" said I, and, sure enough, when I came to "with power of produce" I failed on the upper B flat. Tom tried a pun about my B-ing too flat, but, failing to turn it properly, remarked that Haydn must have been an Irishman.

"Don't you see," said he, "he wants a power of produce, and only an Irishman speaks of a 'power' of anything."

Alec suggested that Haydn was not an Irish name, but Tom replied that probably it had been Hay, and when asked his name, the great composer had replied,—"Shure, its Hay, thin." Hence had grown its present form.

"Oh, that will do!" said Alec, "let us go on with the trio."

While singing "The hopes of man shall then be crowned" the parlor door was opened by Mary Ann, and a lady entered, followed by Miss Latour.

After the necessary introductions, and a little general conversation, Mrs. Latour expressed her pleasure in accepting our invitation for to-morrow,

saying that her sister, Mrs. Baker, had quite recovered.

Tom proposed showing Miss Latour the croquet ground, and Alec accompanied them, leaving Mrs. Latour and myself to get acquainted. After discussing Florrie and Mrs. Moir, and our mutual friends in Toronto, Mrs. Latour informed me that she was born and reared in Montreal, but had lived in Quebec since her marriage. About a year ago her father had died, leaving his property to his two daughters, Mrs. Baker and herself, consequently, they had found it necessary to remove to Montreal.

"Has your youngest daughter arrived from school yet?" I asked.

"Yes, her father was down for the Distribution yesterday, and brought Josie home this morning; but the dear child was too tired to come with us. However, she will be very happy to attend your garden party to-morrow."

Then having expressed our mutual pleasure in making each other's acquaintance, we went to look for the young people whom we found seated under the apple trees.

"Come, my dear Geraldine, we have remained very long, and I fear Josephine will be lonely."

"I was waiting for you, *ma mère*," she replied, in her charming French manner.

Having made their adieux to me, Thos and Alec

escorted them to the gate, where their carriage awaited them.

When the young men returned to me, I found that Thos was not at all in good-humor, while Alec was in raptures about Miss Latour's beauty, and I feared this was the cause of Tom's annoyance.

Alec declined my invitation to stay to dinner, and Thos, instead of remaining to have a chat with me, went off to play with the children in the field.

I sat on the veranda, awaiting Len's return from the office, and wondering how this new complication would turn out. Thos and Alec had met on the steamer coming across from Liverpool. They had become fast friends, and remained constant companions till Thos left for Toronto.

I was sorry to see a cloud come between them, and I feared that should Alec take a fancy to Miss Latour there would be small hope for Thos; but Alec was noted for his fickle fancies.

He was a Scotchman, tall and handsome, with dark eyes, and an earnest devoted manner that caused many a heartache. He was a good fellow in many ways, but rather prided himself on being a lady-killer—a character that I never could endure, although, for Tom's sake, I had always treated him kindly, and he, knowing my ideas, kept his flirtations far from me. He was several years older than Thos, a member of a flourishing hardware firm, and

in every way more eligible than Thos, so shy, and proud, and poor.

Dear Thos! I heartily wished that we had never seen Bossy again, rather than he should lose his heart so hopelessly. Thus we change from day to day: a week ago I thought the loss of Boss a great evil; to-day I feared the finding of her might prove a greater.

After dinner my friend, Miss Willis, called, and we had a game of croquet, Thos and Mary playing against Len and me; and, although Len was a very good player, the young people won.

"How is it you play so well, Thos? Do you play very often?" asked Len.

"Ah, yes, we play at Mrs. Moir's two or three times a week," replied Thos.

"Ah, that accounts," said Len, then seeing Tommy running up with the rim of his hat half torn off, he added, "Georgia, why do you let the children destroy their hats that way?"

"Let them!" I exclaimed, reproachfully, "why, do you suppose I allow them?" adding in my most severe tone, "Tommy, how did you tear your hat? you know Mamma cannot afford to buy you another."

"'Twasn't me tored it," replied Tommy, "a boy kicked it, and I told 'im you toudn't buy annozer 'cos we was awful, awful poor."

"Oh, why did you tell him that?" said Charlie who was standing by, "It will only make people think less of you."

"Ah, have you found that out already, my boy?" asked Len, "It is not so long since you were always telling that your papa was a 'solvent, and, although you did not state the fact fairly, your playmates seem to have understood, and given you to understand that it did not add to your dignity."

"Poor wee darling!" I cried, kissing Charlie, "I hope we may some day be able to pay off all those wretched debts, and then you may truly say your 'papa is a solvent.'"

CHAPTER XII.

Tom entered the dining-room on Saturday morning, whistling, "Be Propitious."

"If you mean the weather, Tom, I fear it won't be propitious to-day," said I.

"Nonsense," he replied, "don't you see Mount Royal has doffed its cap of clouds, and that is a sure sign it is going to clear up."

He proved a true prophet, for soon old father Sol burst through the threatening clouds, scattering them in every direction with his genial rays, and leaving the clear blue sky, with only a few light fleecy clouds, which lay low around the horizon like the ravelled fringe of a silken canopy.

It was the month of roses, and our bushes by the veranda were covered with bloom. Their sweet, faint scent wafted softly in through the open windows, wooing us out to sunshine, happiness and hope.

Down by the gate the magnolias were in blossom, their heavy perfume seemed to wander forth to meet and welcome our guests; while the elder-berry

hedge waited to receive them with its quaint odoriferous embrace.

Glorious sun, fair flowers, soft summer air, filled with sweet redolence—surely all bade fair for a pleasant day, and I hoped Thos would enjoy it.

By five o'clock all our guests had arrived, and several games were in progress. Mrs. Latour and Josie, who declined to play, were walking about with Mamma.

Josephine was not so lovely as her sister, but a fair, pretty girl with quantities of light brown, fluffy hair, and such eyes! bewildering, indescribable eyes: blue, gray, black, by turns;—shy, mischievous, malicious, loving, coquettish, wicked. To be sure her nose was a little bit *retroussé*—"tip-tilted like the petal of a flower—" but it suited well the saucy, sunny face. When I saw her I thought she would suit Alec so much better than the brunette, but, no, he remained devoted to Geraldine; while poor Thos looked disgusted and distressed.

We were about to start a game.

"Let us play married against single," said Mr. Latour.

We all agreed, and Len called our colors.

"Miss Latour plays first, red; Mr. Latour, white; Alec, blue; you Georgia, yellow; Thos, green, of course, Paddy; and myself, orange.

Miss Latour had never played much, and sent her

ball through the first hoop, but past the second, then back to position, leaving it in the way of the next ball; but her father good-naturedly passed it, and went on his way.

Then came Alec, who was a brilliant player. Going through the first hoop, and roquetting Miss Latour's ball, he sent it through the second hoop with a tight croquet, in an oblique direction, which left it in front of the side hoop; then following he roquetted again, carried it through with his own ball; again, roquetted, and, leaving red in position for centre hoop, he proceeded to roquet Mr. Latour's ball; but, when about to give it a tight croquet, he missed the ball and brought down the mallet with great force on his foot, causing him to utter some indistinct exclamations, which led Thos to remark that he hoped Alec was not muttering 'mallet-dictions.'

Miss Latour had followed her ball with great interest, making little Frenchy exclamations of delight, at every good stroke, and seeming greatly pleased with Alec's cleverness.

She had that fresh, childish charm of manner which convent-reared girls often possess. To them all amusements are new, and they enter into everything with unconcealed zest and enjoyment. They are easily pleased, and, after all, the art of pleasing lies greatly in the art, or the artlessness, of being pleased.

Alec was particular to ask Miss Latour's advice as to every stroke, although he always found some excuse for taking his own way afterwards.

These little consultations seemed very aggravating to Thos, who stood apart with me.

"Never mind, Thos," I whispered, "I shall leave my ball in the way, so you can take two off, and get up to them."

"Don't be a little goose, Georgia," said he, nevertheless, I left my ball, but Thos did not take advantage of it. At the first stroke he sent his ball through two hoops, giving him two for next, which he went through, then roquetted red and carried it with him through centre, roquetted again, and again carried red along. In this way he went on going through hoops, and coming back for red; roquetting and croquetting, until he had carried both balls to the turning post and back to side hoop.

"Bravo! that was a splendid run," cried Mr. Latour.

Miss Latour had now deserted Alec, following the fortunes of her ball closely, and applauding every stroke; but not making herself disagreeable after the usual manner of croquet players, by giving unlimited advice.

Alec had tried to draw off her attention once or twice, but failed, as she was, I am sure, much more

interested in the success of her ball than in either of the gentlemen; and, as Thos managed to keep red and green together, she remained by his side, until both balls were out.

Thos very shabbily declining to be a rover, and leaving Alec to be knocked about among the Philistines, till finally 'married' won; and Alec went to find and chide his recreant partners, who had wandered off into the orchard to watch the other players.

Len and Mr. Latour now had a cigar, and I went to see about the tea. My refreshments being light did not weigh heavily on my mind. Tea, bread and butter, and some plain cakes are not difficult to serve, nor expensive to pay for. Strawberries were cheap, and thanks to Bossy we had plenty of rich cream.

I knew that some of my guests had been to a garden party last week where the entertainment had been lavish, but this did not disturb my serenity in the least. I had the satisfaction of knowing that, should my party be discussed, the refreshments would not be deemed worthy of mention; while the bright, beautiful day, the sweet summer air, the glorious sunshine, those blessings which come to us without money, would be remembered, and the memory not blurred by any straining after style or sumptuousness. Neither would my guests be troubled by any after anxiety as to how I could

afford it, an anxiety about one's hostess that often seems to be painfully apparent in Montreal society.

Some of the young ladies helped me in pouring out tea and coffee, and several young gentlemen volunteered to carry the refreshments from the dining-room windows to the field, and soon it would be difficult to say whether more fun and flirtation were going on in the grounds, or around the windows.

Finding that the young people could manage very well without me, I went out to see that all my guests had attention. Presently I came on a merry party in the children's play house, a platform laid across the wide spreading limbs of a gnarled old apple-tree, and, to my surprise, I found Tom and Alec on the best of terms. I soon saw that it was the fair Josie who had restored harmony, for Alec was devoting himself to her with surprised admiration in his eyes.

"Come and have tea with us, Georgia," cried Tom, catching sight of me.

"Why do they call you Georgia, Mrs. Dermot?" asked Josie, as I mounted the rough steps.

"Oh, it was a whim of poor Papa's to name us for the States in which we were born. My sister's name is Florida."

"Then why didn't they name you after some State, Mr. Graham?" she asked.

"Because I was not born in any but a state of sin and misery. I am a Canuck. But," said he, dropping into a rich brogue, "shure I was rared in Oirland."

"Dear me how strange! How did that happen?"

"Well I had a rich old bachelor uncle, a brother of Mamma, for whom I was named, and he promised that if I were sent to him to be educated he would make me his heir. So they packed me off. I had good times with Uncle, but when I was eighteen he married and I soon found that my new Aunt did not want me, so I came back to Canada."

"But of course your Uncle will leave you his property, as he promised," said Miss Latour.

"Not likely," said Thos, "he was not pleased with me for leaving him, and he has never written to me since, but that's why I am so Irish."

"I do like the Irish," said Miss Latour, who evidently thought that as a rule they were not liked.

"You mean you like Mr. Graham, eh, Gerrie?" said Josie with girlish audacity.

Poor Geraldine gave Josie a reproachful look, and blushed crimson; but relieving her of any necessity for reply, the children at this moment rushed up,—shouting "Mamma! may we croque?"

"Croak!" cried Thos, "aren't you always croaking?"

"But croque wis balls, that young lady wat's sun-tickled says she'll teach us."

"Sun-tickled! what does the child mean?" cried Josie, laughingly.

"Oh, he means freckled," I replied. "That pretty girl, with golden hair, is so fair that freckles show on her very much. Yes, go and croque, but mind you don't tease Miss St. John."

Our croquet party was quite a success. Everyone had enjoyed it, and, best of all, Thos was his own merry self again.

Alec stayed to dinner and went with us to the station to see Thos off.

"Good-bye, old fellow!" — "Write often!" "Come down at Christmas!" The train is off, bearing Thos back to Toronto minus his heart, and all through that little advertisement in the *Star*: "Lost, a dun-colored cow."

CHAPTER XIII.

It is the morning of Dominion Day, and mingling with my dreams come the strains from a band, which float in through the window of our room at the Queen's.

"Wake up, Len! It must be late. Where is that band playing?"

"Oh, it is early enough yet. I suppose it is the band on one of the excursion boats that is going off."

"But you must hurry, and hunt up Thos, lest he should go off somewhere for the day. Won't he be surprised to see us?"

We had arrived by a late train the night before. Len, having some business to transact in Toronto, had taken advantage of the cheap excursion and brought me along. Florrie was out of town, so we went to the Queen's, Len's favorite hotel.

Mr. Latour and Geraldine have come by the same train, and Alec Malcolm, who had happened to be at our house a few days before and heard that Miss Latour was going to Toronto, had decided to accompany us. I was not too well pleased with him for doing so, for I saw that his pretended fancy for Josie

had been for the purpose of fooling poor Thos; and it was Geraldine that he really admired.

Alec was in the hotel with us, and Mr. Latour had arranged that we should all go for a drive in the morning, and then make our arrangements for the afternoon.

I was very anxious that Thos should go with us to drive, and be included in our day's engagements; so, after breakfast, I hurried Len off to the Post Office, knowing that Thos would be there for an hour or two in the morning.

Len soon returned, having seen Thos, who would join us about ten o'clock.

Our rooms were immediately over the ladies' entrance, and I sat at one of the windows, watching for our friends, while Len awaited them down stairs, redeeming the time with a cigar.

First came Thos, who stopped to speak with Len. I would have called him up, but several gentlemen were standing, or sitting round the door; and very soon a carriage drove up, containing Mr. and Miss Latour, Mrs. Moir and Alec, and then another with Mr. Moir.

Of course, I did not like this arrangement, and was glad to see they were all coming in; as I hoped some change might be made, so that Thos might be in the carriage with Miss Latour.

I ran down to the reception room, and Mrs. Moir

met me with cordial French *empressement;* expressing great pleasure that we should have arrived so opportunely, as she was to have a large garden party in the afternoon, and in the evening we should all go to see the fire works in the Horticultural Gardens; returning to supper and a dance at her house.

This arrangement seemed delightful, and Alec Malcolm was evidently in his glory; while Thos as evidently wished him somewhere else.

As we went out to the carriage Mr. Moir, who was much older than his wife, and evidently deferred to her in everything, asked how she would arrange her party.

"I know," said he, "you would prefer having us all in the carriage with you, so that you might talk to us all at once; but as that cannot be, whom will you have?"

"Well, of course, I don't want you, *cela va sans dire;*" she replied, "so I shall choose Mr. Dermot and Mr. Malcolm."

"And, of course, Mrs. Dermot will come with me," he replied, handing me into the carriage.

"Will you come with us, Miss Latour?" I asked, anxiously, and to my great delight she took her place beside me; while Thos jumped hastily in, and sat opposite.

Alec Malcolm seemed dreadfully disappointed, and even exclaimed :—

"Your Aunt is calling you, Miss Latour; I think she expects you to drive with her."

"But I am not going to leave Mrs. Dermot," replied Geraldine. "It is you she is calling, Papa," and Mr. Latour, who was busily covering my dress from the dust, lifted his hat, and disappeared.

Thos was almost too happy, and kept us all amused with his jokes and witty remarks.

After driving through the park and visiting the public buildings the two carriages were brought together to consult as to where we should go next.

"Would you like to visit the cemeteries, Mrs. Dermot?" asked Mrs. Moir.

"Not particularly," I replied, "but I don't mind going wherever the others prefer."

"The Protestant cemeteries are not so fine as yours in Montreal, because—"

"Because they haven't so many bodies," interposed Thos.

"Oh, no, you wicked boy, it is not that at all," replied Mrs. Moir, laughingly, "but they do not all bury together."

"Well, is not that just what I said?" cried Thos. "If they all buried together, there would be more bodies; consequently more monuments and fixins. To make a fine cemetery, the first requisite is plenty of bodies; and Montreal provides more bodies for its size than any other city in the world."

"Oh, you shocking boy!" cried Mrs. Moir, who, having known Thos since he was twenty, would persist in calling him a boy, although she was not half a dozen years older herself. Indeed, I had often suspected Thos of being half in love with Florrie's friend, from his talking about her so much; and now, seeing that Geraldine resembled her charming Aunt, I fancied that might have been the cause of Thos' sudden fancy.

We drove to the Necropolis, and then Mrs. Moir insisted that we should go home with her to luncheon, and remain, instead of going back to the Queen's.

Mrs. Moir's guests soon began to drop in, and went immediately to the lawn, which was well shaded, and had also two large marquees, where claret and champagne-cup, ice-cream and strawberries, with all the other delicacies of the season, were liberally dispensed.

To me the whole interest of the day centred in Tom, and "Gerrie"—as her Aunt called her. Thos had requested me to call him "Tom" in future, for he thought Miss Latour seemed inclined to laugh at the odd nick-name. I felt sorry to drop "Thos," for I do love odd abbreviations and pet names,—Dio Lewis to the contrary notwithstanding.

Alec Malcolm would not leave Gerrie for a moment, but I fancied she turned a more willing ear to Tom's remarks.

It soon became evident that Mrs. Moir had discovered that Alec would be a much more eligible suitor for her niece than poor Thos, and she took every opportunity of calling Tom away, and keeping him in attendance on herself. It seemed, too, that Mrs. Moir had known her power over Tom, and did not quite like to see him change his allegiance. The charming French-woman had made a *mariage de convenance*, and although well satisfied with her indulgent husband, and brilliant position, did not object to the innocent devotion of younger and handsomer men. Thos made a gentlemanly and distinguished-looking escort, and Mrs. Moir loved to relate instances where he had been mistaken for her husband, and Mr. Moir for her father. The brilliant little lady shared the weakness of Mrs. Hubble in "Great Expectations," and having married a man much older than herself considered that she had claims to a "conventionally juvenile position." However, she still looked both young and beautiful, a delightful hostess, and altogether charming woman. Her entertainment was perfect, and made me almost ashamed to think of my own simple little croquet party; till better sense came to my aid, and I reflected that it would be quite as ridiculous for me to attempt anything of this sort in my circumstances, as for Mrs. Moir to pretend to simplicity and plainness in hers.

Mrs. Moir had wisely substituted a high tea for the usual seven o'clock dinner; and we all found the cold viands more palatable than the steaming hot courses, besides being more quickly disposed of, so that we got away to the gardens in good season and took seats in front of the pavillion; but from this we were presently routed in a most disorderly manner by the sudden advent among us of one of those hissing fiery serpents, which rushed along a wire in our midst, "scattering sparks in every direction," as Thos remarked when Alec fell down the steps, while Gerrie rushed straight into Tom's arms.

We now went over among the trees, but could not find seats for all. Mrs. Moir and I found places on a bench, which was partly occupied by a young gentleman and two ladies. Gerrie stood beside us talking to Thos and Alec, and presently the strange gentleman, who was seated next to me, got up, and offered Gerrie his place. She thankfully accepted it, and Mrs. Moir remarked,—

"You would not find one of your Lower Canadians do that, Mr. Graham."

"No," replied Thos, "it requires a higher Canadian to do such things."

Mrs. Moir, who always enjoyed Tom's jokes, thought this very good, and repeated it over and over again when we were joined by the rest of the party.

Mrs. Moir had a good deal of wit herself, and could make a very clever repartee, if allowed to do so in French, but, unfortunately, the translation generally spoiled it, and I fancy it was for this reason Thos had lately set himself diligently to study French; which his too indulgent uncle had allowed him to slight,—Uncle Thomas holding that "every gentleman should know Latin and Greek, while any mountebank might parlez-vous."

Mrs. Moir's house was on a corner of the Crescent, so we had not far to walk from the gardens, and the young people soon declared themselves sufficiently rested to have a dance. I volunteered to play a waltz, and noticed that Thos was polite enough to ask his hostess, although he looked longingly towards Gerrie, who stood by the piano picking out a set of quadrilles.

I fancy Thos at this moment derived some satisfaction from the knowledge that Alec did not dance —that accomplishment having been neglected in his early Scotch education. But to my astonishment Alec, after watching the dancers for a few moments, turned to Gerrie, and asked her did she waltz. Possibly he judged from her convent education that she did not, for he seemed surprised when she promptly answered "yes," and turned as though expecting to be led out.

Alec was evidently nonplussed, but, following

the example of Lord Dufferin at the Norse Ball he "cast reflection to the winds and his arm around, her waist," and dashed, or rather pranced off down the room. I say pranced advisedly, for I have observed that men who begin to dance late in life always seem to consider that the whole art consists in lifting their feet very high, and keeping them as much as possible off the floor.

Alec was no exception to this rule, for, as I was playing from memory, I got an occasional glimpse of the dancers, and as he returned up the room I was greatly amused by his strenuous efforts to dance in mid air.

Gerrie evidently did not appreciate these aspiring efforts, and would have preferred that her partner should be content to execute his steps on terra-firma, for, as they approached the piano, she declined to continue, and again bent over the music, with a flushed face, and a surprised, annoyed expression of countenance.

Poor Gerrie, she felt that she had made an exhibition of herself with her clumsy partner, but not so Alec, who considered that he had acquitted himself admirably, and longed to again display his newly acquired accomplishment. He begged that Miss Latour would take another turn, but at this moment Thos came up, asking Gerrie to dance with him, and as she turned quickly to take his arm, he added with a wicked twinkle in his eyes,—

"If you dance, Alec, you know you'll have to get another dip," referring to Alec's being a Baptist, and it seems reasonable that if a man requires to be immersed before he can become a Christian, he should really have another dip every time he transgresses any rule of his faith, but in that case I fear some Baptists would spend much time in the tank.

But the happiest day must have an end, and we returned to the Queen's in the wee sma' hours, promising ourselves a late sleep in the morning.

Mrs. Moir tried to persuade me to stay with her for a week, as Len was obliged to return next day, but duty, in the shape of three small boys, called me home, so home we hied.

I was sorry to find that Alec would remain to spend his holidays in Toronto, but I consoled myself with the reflection that man proposes but woman disposes, and I fancied Gerrie was disposed to favor Thos.

CHAPTER XIV.

It is the month of August, and the apples are ripening in the orchard. From morning till night the children go about with apples in their hands, and bites in their mouths. At first I felt disposed to make restrictions, fearing the consequences; but the restrictions being rather difficult to make, and no unpleasant consequences seeming to result, the boys continued to eat apples and grow fat.

But baby had the measles just after we returned from Toronto, and you cannot expect any mother to omit giving a detailed account of how her baby got through the measles. In this case baby got through so easily that I was disposed to quarrel with dear good Dr. Oneless. Oh, the stupidity of women! and how did the good doctor have patience with me? But I must tell you all about it.

Baby, who had just learned to walk, was running about in perfect health, when suddenly he woke up one morning very feverish, and soon a slight eruption came out over his face and neck; of course we sent for Dr. Oneless. (My readers may think the name an ominous one for a doctor; but I assure

you his visits do not often result in leaving "one less" in the family; on the contrary, in a great number of instances, we find they result in leaving "one more.") The doctor at once pronounced that my baby had the measles. I was greatly alarmed, but followed his directions implicitly, and administered the medicines carefully; and next morning, behold, the baby was so much better that he wanted to run about as usual. Then, in the pride of my ignorance, I declared that baby had not the measles at all; and when the doctor came I told him so. I do believe I am a favorite with Dr. Oneless, else he would certainly have quarrelled with me on this occasion; but, instead of getting angry, he smiled at my stupidity; and began telling me the different symptoms by which I might assure myself of the nature of baby's disease; and warning me that, should I neglect any of his directions, I might soon have baby quite sick enough to satisfy me, he went off, leaving me in no enviable frame of mind. I saw that, instead of grumbling that baby was not sick, I should be thankful he was so much better. Next time the doctor called I made the *amende honorable*, and the good doctor and I have been better friends than ever, owing to this difference of opinion.

Baby got over it very quickly, and, as we kept him away from the other two, they did not catch the disease.

As I said before, it was the month of August, and I was sitting under the apple trees, reading "Daniel Deronda" with one eye, and keeping the other on baby—a feat which I can accomplish more easily than most people, as I have one near-sighted and one far-sighted eye. This I have only lately discovered through consulting Dr. Rellub, who has procurred me glasses which make practising easy, reading delightful, and walking the streets without cutting my friends a possibility.

But at this time of writing the spectacles were not, and I, with my book very close to my nose, have just arrived at the exciting chapter where Gwendolen's husband has been drowned, and we are kept in suspense as to whether she pushed him in, or wouldn't pull him out; when I perceive Lizzie rushing towards me like a peripatetic wind-mill.

Lizzie is tall and long of limb, and makes great use of her arms when running; she also greatly affects the prevailing fashion of pull-back skirts, which she pulls back so far that one might imagine she had on none at all, but was attired in a bag open at the end. But here she stands, panting, before me.

"There's two ladies want to see you, ma'am, and them's their cards," reaching me two, with narrow black borders, on which I find the names of Mrs. and Miss Latour.

"You remain with baby, Lizzie," said I, and returned to the house. Of course the first question was, "When did you get home from Toronto, Miss Latour ?"

"Only last week," she replied.

"Did you know Josie and I were also up for two weeks ?" said Mrs. Latour.

"No, I did not, and I was wondering that I had not seen any of you. I have not made any calls myself for the last six weeks, because baby had measles, and, although he was only one day sick, and the boys did not take it, I would not go anywhere lest people should be afraid."

"Quite right, one can't be too cautious, but there can be no danger now, and you must come to spend an evening with us this week."

"Oh, thanks ! we shall be much pleased to do so."

"Well, what evening shall we say ? I wish to invite Mr. Malcolm, and a few others."

"Oh, any evening that suits you," I replied.

"Then, shall we say Friday ?"

"Thanks !" then I find an opportunity of asking the question that has been in my mind all the time,—

"When did Mr. Malcolm leave Toronto ? We have not seen him since Dominion Day."

"Oh, he came down with us," replied Mrs. Latour, while Gerrie flushed visibly, and my heart sank within me, for I feared he would not have stayed so long without encouragement from Gerrie,

Friday evening found us in Mrs. Latour's pleasant parlors, and I was pleased to find that more than half the company were French. I had always longed to be acquainted with French people—their society is so bright, and sparkling, their good humour so contagious, their conversation so free from envy and all uncharitableness. How delightful to meet people who are willing to be polite, civil, and even complimentary without knowing the exact length of your purse.

We had very fine music, and I should have enjoyed the evening greatly were it not that Alec paid such devoted attention to Geraldine; but then so did several other gentlemen, and she showed no preference for any.

From one little incident I derived great, though perhaps unwarranted, comfort. Gerrie had been singing some charming little French *chansons*, and Alec, who was leaning over the piano begged that she would sing "Sweethearts."

"Oh, I do not know it without the music," replied Miss Latour, "and I left my 'Sweethearts' in Toronto."

"Oh!" exclaimed a young man, standing near, adding, in French, that he hoped she had left no sweethearts in Toronto whom she preferred to those of Montreal. Gerrie glanced round suddenly at me, and I fancied she was not pleased to discover that I was watching her, and heard the remark. She blushed too, and seemed confused, but Gerrie had

a pretty trick of blushing. Although over twenty years, she was no cold-blooded young woman of the world, but a fresh pure-hearted girl, unaccustomed to compliments and flattery. Oh! that dear Thos, might win her for his wife! But, how absurd to hope for anything so impossible, he a poor government clerk, with no prospects, while she is the daughter of wealthy parents, beautiful, accomplished, charming, and every day meeting with men of wealth and good position.

"And what good can it do for you to worry about it, anyhow?" exclaimed Len, that night, when I had tired him out with my speculations as to whether Gerrie would have Thos, and whether Thos would break his heart if she didn't.

"Break his heart, indeed!" added Len, "'Men have died and worms have eaten them, but not for love!'"

"Do you mean the worms did not eat them for love?" I asked, inconsequently. It is generally in some such absurd fashion Len's arguments and mine are ended.

Before falling asleep, however, I made up my mind to have a croquet party next week, when I could watch Alec and Gerrie more closely, and, should I discover any signs of growing affection on Gerrie's part, I would write and warn Thos not to go on deluding himself with false hopes, for I knew by Tom's letters that he still had hopes.

CHAPTER XV.

"WHY, Mrs. Dermot, I thought you believed altogether in homœopathy, and yet I see you have an allopathic doctor here," said Gerrie, coming up to me, on the afternoon of my croquet party.

"Oh, I believe in allopathy for croquet. Allow me to make you acquainted with Dr. Ornum, also allopathic," I added, introducing a young gentleman, who stood near, and had heard all we said. Of course poor Gerrie was covered with confusion, for she had not thought of the possibility of my having another allopath.

However Dr. Ornum is a charming young man, and Gerrie and he were soon on such good terms that I began to upbraid myself for introducing them, remembering that, although Dr. Ornum was beginning his practice, he was already in a position to choose a wife, as his father was a wealthy man. Then I remembered that I had determined not to borrow trouble, but trust to time to bring all things right—"Time," who, in the words of fair Rosalind, "travels in divers paces with divers persons. I, too, might tell "who time ambles withal, who time trots

withal, and who time gallops withal, and who he stands still withal." It trots with my little boys, between the hour when they are invited to a party, and the day when it takes place. It ambles with me, when I have plenty of work and no worry. It gallops with poor Len, when he has a note coming due, and knows not how to meet it; and, doubtless, it seems to stand still with Thos, from the hour he parts with Gerrie till he meets her again. But, away with moralizing,—Len is calling me to play with him against Josie and Alec.

Airy, fairy Josephine becomes a puzzle to me about this time, for she seems determined to attract Alec's attention to herself. I cannot understand it. Sometimes I hope it is at Gerrie's request she is trying to draw off his attentions; then I wonder can it be possible that she really fancies our solemn-faced friend. Whatever her motive, Alec evidently feels flattered by her childish preference, and, when he cannot keep Gerrie to himself, is quite willing to be entertained by Josie.

We are all enthusiastic croquetists—if I may coin a word—and the game is a very interesting one, although Alec looks anxiously towards the merry set where Gerrie and Dr. Ornum are playing a lively game, against Miss Willis and Dr. Hutchins.

I soon find that it is useless trying to divine Josie's tactics, for, although three years younger

than her sister, she is already an accomplished flirt. I afterwards discover that Josie has, for some years, spent her holidays in Boston, with Mrs. Baker, and it is doubtless from associating with those independent American girls, that she has learnt her saucy, audacious ways and self-possessed demeanor. Truly she is a bewitching little creature, yet Alec still looks longingly towards the next set, and, when our game is ended, he proposes that we shall go over and see how they are getting along.

"Well, which side is winning?" I asked.

"Oh, we are all winning, of course, especially the young ladies," replied Dr. Ornum.

"That is an evasive answer, Doctor," said I.

"I know we are ahead any way," cried Miss Willis, an enthusiastic player.

"Oh, you're not so much ahead of us," replied the doctor, "besides we are in good position, and position is everything in this world."

"I don't know that," said Len, "sometimes *im*-position is better than *in* position."

Meantime Miss Willis had taken "two off" her partner's ball, and rushed back on her opponents, sending them flying down the field.

"There," she exclaimed, "being in position did not do you much good that time."

"Oh, but I call that imposition," cried Dr. Ornum, as he went to hunt up his ball.

This raid settled the fortune of the game, Miss Willis and her partner winning in the next round; and then Alec proposed that Dr. Ornum and Gerrie should play a game against Josie and himself, while Len and I should oppose Miss Willis and Dr. Hutchins.

A six game was in progress on the front ground—made up by Mr. and Mrs. Latour, Captain and Mrs. Baker, Miss St. John—the sun-tickled young lady, and Mr. Ryde—a popular young gentleman. As the days were already getting short, and my party was small, I had arranged to play until dusk, and have tea in the house, and all remain for the evening.

Oh, how often I wished that Thos could be with us!

We had finished our game, and were consulting together as to whether it would be dark before we could play another, when a carriage drove up to the gate, and a gentleman jumped out.

"Why, that looks like Thos!" cried Len, running to the gate. I glanced at Gerrie—yes, surely her face had brightened up with a look of glad expectation, that gave me a renewal of hopes for Tom.

"Why, that is aunt Moir!" cried Josie, as Len handed a lady out of the carriage; and then we all trooped to the gate, and amid a deluge of hand shakings, and kisses, and questions, we elicited that Mrs. Moir and Tom had just arrived by boat, and

had driven first to Mr. Latour's, but, finding that they were all with us, Mrs. Moir had elected to leave her trunks and come over with Thos.

"But how did you get holidays again, Thos?" asked Len.

"Oh, another fellow let me have his turn, and now don't ask any more questions till you give us some supper."

"You are just in time," said I, "for we were about going in to tea."

"But I shall look such a fright in my dusty travelling dress, among all your dainty fresh muslins," cried Mrs. Moir.

"No danger," I replied, "I have no doubt when you remove that long duster you will look as fresh as a flower," and so she did, for the pretty little French woman was always armed *cap-à-pie* for conquest.

"Now," said Len, when the ladies returned from the dressing room, "as this is not a formal dinner-party, I suppose we may go in as we please, and not stand on the order of our going," and offering his arm to Mrs. Moir, he led the way. Alec rushed towards Gerrie, but she was already turning away with Thos; then he stooped to offer his arm to Josie, who was seated on a divan in the hall, and Dr. Ornum coming up at the same moment the two gentleman knocked their heads together, and Josie, laughingly, took the doctor's arm. Alec turned

away disconsolately, but brightened up on finding the "sun-tickled" young lady still disengaged, and I noticed that during tea he paid her the most devoted attention.

Thos was in high spirits, and kept us immensely amused by his description of the trip down, and especially the rush for dinner, which he said was quite equal to that described by Dickens when Martin Chuzzlewit was returning from Eden.

"Is this what you call a high tea, Georgia?" asked Tom.

"Hardly," I replied, "you see yourself it is a very plain tea, and I wish you wouldn't draw attention to it."

"Why I never enjoyed anything so much," cried Mrs. Moir, "everything tastes delicious."

"But there are so few things," I replied. "Don't you think I am a strong-minded woman to invite people when I can only give them bread and butter and cold meat?"

"And what more do we want?" asked Dr. Ornum, "a lot of cakes and sweet stuff are only waste, and fit for a children's party."

"That is true," replied Mrs. Moir, "I have been reading Dio Lewis lately, and I do think it is useless to have a great variety of eatables, just as though our guests could not have anything at home and only came to eat."

"But it is different with you, Mrs. Moir," said I, "you have only to give your orders and have plenty of servants to carry them out, while the expense makes no difference."

"But it does make a difference," cried Mrs. Moir, "for no one has a right to waste money on a lot of indigestible stuff, when so many poor children would be glad of a good piece of bread and butter; while a drink of pure milk would be nectar to them."

We were all surprised to hear the brilliant little beauty express so much good feeling, and I held a more loving regard for her ever after.

Then we discussed Dio Lewis a little further and adjourned to the parlor. Miss St. John was asked to play, but declined with the usual excuse, that she could not play without her music, an apology which is generally supposed to imply that the performer does not execute anything under fourteen pages of classical music, which could not possibly be learned off, and that her musical abilities are such that it would be utterly impossible for her to play a simple piece.

But in this case the excuse was not given through affectation, as I know now that Miss St. John, although a good player, has not much ear for music and cannot learn anything off, but I did not know this at the time, and, as I could not sit down to play

myself so early in the evening, I felt annoyed, for I did not wish to disturb Gerrie who was sitting in the hall with Thos.

But little Josie came to my relief, saying: "I don't play anything difficult Mrs. Dermot, but I can give you some dance music," and sitting down she glided into a pretty waltz and soon Tom and Gerrie were floating down the hall to the pleasant measure. Then Mr. Ryde, whose dancing is simply perfection, took Mrs. Moir out, and soon everybody was in motion, gliding down the parlor, out through the hall into the dining-room and back to the parlor. Even Alec might be seen executing very high steps, and making a great display of his heels around the sun-tickled young lady, who soon became tired of being bumped about—for Alec gave all his attention to his steps and never looked where he was going—and went out to the veranda, where they were soon joined by Tom and Gerrie and the others. Then suddenly the moon burst from under a cloud or rather the cloud passed from between us and the moon and its silvery rays poured down, bathing the scene in its pure calm, light.

"How lovely!" we all exclaimed.

"Let us play a game of croquet by moonlight," cried Alec.

"But the grass is wet," I exclaimed, "and you will all catch diphtheria or something."

"Oh, Alec has had the *dip* theory already," replied Tom.

Alec who is never quick at repartee smiled inanely—this being his usual mode of reply to any joke at his expense.

The evening passed quickly and pleasantly and, before breaking up, the gentlemen arranged a driving party for next day. Miss Willis and Miss St. John agreed to join us, and Mrs. Baker invited us all to take tea with her on our return.

After our friends left we had a long talk with Thos, and found that he felt very downhearted about Gerrie. While in Toronto she had a great many admirers, but had been equally courteous to all, but both mother and aunt had shown that they would not allow Thos to pay her any particular attention, and coming down on the boat Mrs. Moir had told him plainly that he need not think of her niece, for she knew her brother would never allow Gerrie to marry a poor man.

This was a depressing view of the case.

"Well what are you going to do about it?" asked Len.

"Well," replied Tom "it is said that all things come to those who wait, and I am going to wait."

"That is, Tom, so long as we live in hope we can't die in despair. Time works wonders and perhaps Uncle may leave you something yet."

"But I am not going to wait for dead men's shoes," replied Thos. "I am working hard now at something that will eventually pay me, but I can't tell you what it is yet."

"Oh, Tom," I cried, regretfully, "it is too bad you spent all your money on my piano. If you had gone to Illinois you might have sold your ground for a good sum."

"And then perhaps I should never have seen Gerrie, for I had half a mind to remain if I went, so it is all for the best, Georgia," and kissing me good night he went off to bed.

CHAPTER XVI.

"I SUPPOSE I won't be allowed to entrap Gerrie into our carriage to-day, Tom," said I, while we awaited the arrival of the others.

"No, I guess not. I fear she will have her instructions beforehand this time," he replied. "I don't know how we shall manage. Captain Baker said we need only get two carriages, as he has a large one, and so has Mr. Latour. Dr. Hutchins and Mr. Ryde will bring one, and call for Miss St. John and Miss Willis, and Alec and Dr. Ornum will bring another. They will all meet here, but I don't know who will arrange the party."

However, when the carriages arrived it soon appeared that Mrs. Latour intended to arrange one of them any way, for when Alec went up to shake hands she asked him to take the vacant place next Mr. Latour. Gerrie was beside her mother, and did not look too well pleased. At this moment Mrs. Moir's kind heart relented, she liked Tom, and could not bear to see him disappointed, so, getting out of Captain Baker's carriage, she went over to her brother's, saying, "Come, Gerrie, you know you

promised to go with me. Miss St. John will perhaps take your place."

Gerrie did not wait for a second invitation, and Miss St. John, who had been chatting with her, was handed in by Mr. Malcolm. Then Mrs. Moir and Gerrie drove off with Tom and Mr. Ryde, Dr. Hutchins went in Captain Baker's carriage with Josie, while Miss Willis and myself, with Dr. Ornum and Len, filled the last carriage.

After all, our party was well arranged, and every one was pleased, for even Alec would not mind his disappointment much while the golden-haired Miss St. John sat opposite. It was part of his creed,

> "That when we're far from the lips we love,
> We've but to make love to the lips we are near;"

and the sun-tickled young lady was sweet and lovable enough to please any one, and much admired by more mundane sons than the one which left so many traces of his admiration on her pretty face.

After a good deal of discussion it is decided that we shall not do the mountains to-day. Mrs. Moir has not been in Montreal for some years, and wishes to see the principal public and private streets, so we shall drive west along Sherbrooke street first, but just as we are driving off I hear a wild shout, "Mamma! Mamma! wait for us, we're tummin wif you," and the two boys came rushing round the house, followed by Lizzie with arms and skirts

flying wildly. "Oh, Len! what shall I do?" I asked in dismay, for now that they had seen us it would be hard to leave them.

"Let them come," said Miss Willis, who is a great friend of the boys.

By this time they have reached the gate, and Lizzie has caught Tommy, who gives a howl of dismay.

"Let him go, Lizzie," said I. "Why didn't you watch them till we got away?"

"So I did, ma'am, but baby fell asleep, and when I went to put him down they ran away."

"Well, take good care of baby, and they will go with us."

Then the delighted boys climbed in. Charlie sat between Miss Willis and me, and Tommy on his Papa's knee.

"Oh," pants Tommy, "I was so 'faid Issie would cash us 'fore we got to gate, and dey cadge would be gone."

"So was I," said Charlie. "I was' fraid Mamma wouldn't see us." Then Tommy proceeded to unburden his pockets, producing a spool of thread, a piece of cord, and a large brass thimble.

"See, Tarlie, wont Issie be mad wen she tant find she's sings?"

"Oh, Miss Willis, let's play cat's cadle wif zat string," cries Charlie.

"No, indeed, I'm not going to play cat's cradle with my gloves on."

"Charlie," said I, "you must sit still, and be good, else I shall be sorry I brought you."

"Yes, Mamma," and he is quiet for half a minute, then shouts,—

"Oh, Tommy! here's the place wif the lions and deers," and Tommy scrambles to his feet and cries,

"Oh, Tarlie, if we lived dere we'd wide on line's backs, eh?"

"Yes, and slide down hill on dey grass."

"You would indeed," said Len. "You would change the trim appearance of things very quickly."

"And I think that would improve it," said the doctor. "Its only fault is that it looks rather stiff."

"Yes, it is one of the most beautiful sites in Montreal," said Len, "but the lions and deer are scarcely appropriate. Art should always be true to nature, Ruskin says—'when we use contrast it should be natural,' and such figures require larger grounds, where one might come upon them unexpectedly, amid a wild tangle of shrubbery, such as they would be likely to inhabit in the flesh."

And now we are nearing the toll-gate, and the others are waiting to consult whether we shall drive on.

"I think we had better go on," said Mr. Latour, "the air is so pure, and we get such charming glimpses of beautiful homesteads up the avenues, and above the St. Antoine road."

As we drive along Dr. Ornum, who is a newspaper correspondent and of course knows everything —tells us all about the different places, and their proprietors, pointing out Captain Raynes' place as one of the oldest on this side of the mountain, and said to be the most English-looking home on the island.

We drive on to Côte St. Luc, and back by the new Western avenue and St. Catherine street, which was a quiet private street last time Mrs. Moir saw it, but is now mixed up with shops among its best terraces. The tinsmith placidly plies his trade next door to the fine lady, who feels not placid, but badly placed, while she lists to the *tin-tin*-abulation of the tins.

Then we turn down to Dorchester street, which is still undisturbed by trade, and where the houses, though less imposing than those of Sherbrooke street, are generally surrounded by extensive grounds, and have a look of solid comfort about them. Then down to St. Antoine street, where the new and old styles of architecture are comically mixed, and again trade elbows gentility off to the western end of the street. Now through Victoria square and St. James street to Place d'Armes, where the noble cathedral of Notre Dame rears its fair towers in stately pride; down Notre Dame street to the court house, and then Mrs. Moir stops to say that we must take her

to see the old Bonsecours market and church. We drive round by the river front first, and, old Montrealers as we are, we feel surprised to notice how large and massive the building is. When we come round to the church Mrs. Moir insists on going in to see it. She tells us that she was in it fifteen years ago, when she passed through Montreal a bride, and so she disappears within its ancient portals.

It is, I think, the oldest church in Montreal, and I am sure my readers will thank me for quoting a beautiful poem, written by a Montreal lady, on the Church of Notre Dame de Bonsecours.

CHURCH OF NOTRE DAME DE BONSECOURS,

BUILT 1773.

"Dear relic of a fruitful past!
Not yet thy work is done,
Though ninety years have o'er thee cast
Their shadow and their sun;
Thou wearest yet, secure and free,—
The ancient stately grace,
And strangers come to look on thee
And know thee in thy place!

"The autumn breeze, in tenderest mood,—
Its magic on thee lays;
And ever o'er thee seems to brood
The light of other days.
The mart is close; more swiftly on
Rushes the living tide!
On all, methinks, those cycles gone,
Breathe as they pass thy side.

"What tales thy stones could tell of power,
Of promise and decay,—
The glorious visions of an hour
That rose and passed away!
What scenes those silent walls might see—
Vain suppliance,—mad regret,
Whose memory in those days may be
A troubled darkness yet!

"Thy aisles the swelling strains have known
Of victory's days of pride;
A radiance through their gloom has shone
On bridegroom and on bride.
And then—those other seasons grew,—
When plague was in the air,—
When myriads saw their doom, and knew
Nothing was left—but prayer.

"Those days are o'er! still to the skies
Thou lookest, full and free;
Firm, as we hope, thou yet may'st rise
For many a year to be.
All round thee altered; landmarks flown,
The ways, the looks of yore;
But the man's nature thou hast known,
That changes— nevermore!"

These lines were re-printed in the *Star* during the autumn of which I write, and have lately been published, together with other poems, by the same gifted lady; but, owing to the great wealth and retiring disposition of the writer, the book has not been offered to the public, but such light should not be hidden under a bushel. We have few Canadian

poets, and none whose verses have so true a ring of the genuine metal.

But I must leave the realms of poetry, and return to more prosaic things. Mrs. Moir comes forth from the old church, with a subdued but happy expression on her face, and again we drive down to the water side, "Bord de l'eau," how much prettier it sounds than Water street. How quaint and even pretty the old French houses would be were it not that almost every door is a tavern. Then we come to the long stone wall enclosing the large grounds of the old family residence of the Molsons.—"What a lovely spot this must have been in old times!" I exclaim, "see the little summer houses on the wall. How beautiful the view of the river and island. If I could afford it I should like to live in that old place now."

"Oh, you wouldn't like this end of the city, Georgia," said Len.

"What difference could it make, when there is so much ground around the house, and such good air from the river?"

But we have reached the end of Water street which runs into a private avenue in front of Molson's Terrace,—a handsome row of houses, which no doubt once ranked high among first class dwellings. Even yet it looks picturesque and romantic, or is it old father St. Lawrence that casts a spell

o'er me, and a glamour o'er all things that stand upon his beauteous shores?

Then we turn into St. Mary street, and drive on past Molson's breweries and church, till we reach the jail; and I wish we had turned back sooner. It is so sad to look upon those massive walls, and iron-barred windows, and think of all the misery they contain.

The children, too, are mournfully affected by the jail, and Tommy exclaims,—

"Oh, Tarlie, I see a poor man looking out of dey bars!"

"Yes," said Charlie, "and praps he didn't do nuffin and big cross pleese-man locked him up."—"A beak one—eh, Tarlie? Praps 'twas a beak."

"A what?" cried Len, "Georgia, how did the boys learn such a word.

"Oh, from Thos, of course," I replied, and then told how he twisted the magpie rhyme, and everybody laughed at Tom's poetical license.

And now we are driving up St. Denis street, and soon reach Mrs. Baker's house.

"Oh, Len, what shall we do about the boys?"

"I shall drive home with them and be back in a short time," he replied.

The boys murmured something about wishing to stay with Mamma, but, finding it would not do, kissed me good-bye in the most resigned manner, and Len

drove off, leaving Mrs. Baker gesticulating wildly with her parasol; for she had hoped the boys would stay to tea with her children, but I explained that they were too tired and weary.

CHAPTER XVII.

MRS. BAKER'S large, cool room is delightful after our dusty drive, and some of us plash the cool water recklessly over our faces, forgetting our front frizzles, till the ripple is quite taken out of them, and we are obliged to assume a more demure style. Some of us who are wise have dainty laces folded up in our pockets, to replace our dusty collars, and one young lady, on removing her hat, reveals a neat little clump of crimping pins, from which she unrolls bright golden tresses, and with a few waves of the brush she is transformed into what some one poetically describes as a "golden cloud-capped goddess," and somebody else not to be outdone says she is a "wavy winning witch;" but when a third attempt at alliteration is made by calling her a "crimped calla-lily" we all cry—"Hold! enough!" while Golden-hair herself declares that she is a "frizzled, freckled fright," and we all troop laughingly down stairs, to find the gentlemen have been awaiting us for some time, and are already making jokes about "feminine devotion to toilet-glasses," and some one retorts that it is not so bad as "masculine

devotion to other glasses not toilet," and then Mrs. Baker appears, calling us to tea.

This time it is a high tea *par excellence*, and daintily served with many pretty American decorative devices. Our drive is discussed, and Mrs. Moir expresses great admiration of the stately homes of our wealthy people.

"But," she adds, "is it not strange that we saw so few ladies and children in the grounds or on the verandas?"

"Some may not yet have returned from the country," said Captain Baker, "but I have always noticed in Montreal that there is a great absence of life about your finest homes. It seems almost as though the people did not enjoy them themselves, but merely keep them for show. Now in Boston you will find groups of ladies on every veranda, and troops of gaily-dressed children playing in the grounds."

"Yes, and in Toronto," cried Mrs. Moir, "and how much pleasanter it seems. Whenever I see beautiful grounds and lovely flowers I long to see some one enjoying them. We are all sympathetic by nature, and love to see happiness far more than we enjoy cold, lifeless beauty."

"And I think it does good to see happiness," added Mr. Latour, who is a deep thinker. "When I say happiness I don't mean the selfish pursuit of pleasure, but the pure home happiness that loves

its own fireside in winter, and its own doorstep in summer,—the happiness that makes home gay and charming to the young ones as they grow up, that loves its own home circle best, yet is enhanced by being shared with neighbors—exchanging firesides and doorsteps occasionally, exchanging ideas and opinions too, which are apt to become narrow and dogmatic if always looked at from our own point of view."

As we pass into the front room after tea I pick up a book, exclaiming—

"Oh, you have 'The Bastonnais'! Captain Baker, and you are a Bastonnais yourself. How do you like reading how your countrymen were worsted one hundred years ago?"

"Oh, I don't mind; the story is so cleverly told, and the book so free from prejudice or bigotry, that none can take offence."

"You are discussing 'The Bastonnais,'" said Mr. Latour, coming up at this moment. "It is truly a charming story, and a credit to our Canadian literature."

"They used to tell me in Boston that you had no Canadian literature," said Captain Baker. "I was agreeably surprised when I picked up this."

"But you need not expect to find a number of others equally good," I exclaimed, "for it is the first and only good Canadian story I have ever read."

"Oh, then, you do not read the French books," said Mr. Latour. "We have some very good French Canadian works, and it seems strange that what you allow to be the best English Canadian novel is written by a Frenchman!"

"Oh, was 'The Bastonnais' written by a Frenchman?" cried Mrs. Moir. "I was so interested in the story that I did not look to see by whom; but I am so glad, for they are always twitting me in Toronto about our 'ignorant French Canadians.'"

"Nevertheless the French Canadians of Quebec have given more proofs of their culture than the whole population of the Dominion," said Mr. Latour.

"Oh," I exclaimed, "you are forgetting our English Scientists,—Dr. Dawson, Professor Sterry Hunt, and others."

"No, I am not. I acknowledge their superiority, but I do say we can show a greater quantity of French works, and on the average of a better quality, than your English ones."

But while we older people have been discussing literature, the younger ones have been putting their heads together to get up some sort of entertainment for us. The folding doors have been closed, and Miss Willis, who is very clever at getting up tableaux, etc., has disappeared: soon followed by Miss St. John and Gerrie, then Tom and Alec are called out, and, after a good deal of suppressed laughing and

talking, Mrs. Baker asks us to excuse the gas, the Captain turns it very low, and the doors are opened, displaying the white drapery, which foretells a pantomime shadow scene.

Miss Willis, being a good elocutionist, begins the reading. It tells of a young lady who has two lovers, one poor and beloved by her, the other rich and favored by her father. So far as I can judge by the shadow profiles, Gerrie is the young lady, Thos the poor young man, and Alec the rich one; but the stern parent I cannot guess at for he has a nose that was never human. After a great deal of gesticulation—during which Gerrie weeps "great weeps" of big dark tears—the poor young man becomes rich, the stern parent gives his blessing, and Tom folds Gerrie in his arms, with, I fear, more fervor than is required by a stage embrace, for that young lady displays unseemly haste in leaving the lover she has made so much fuss about.

Two or three laughable scenes follow this, in which Mrs. Baker's little daughters take a part very cleverly, and then we have some music and refreshments, and our pleasant evening is over.

As we walk home through the clear moonlit streets we find Thos is not in good spirits, and presently it all comes out. Gerrie had seemed annoyed by his ardent manner of clasping her in his arms, and when he several times sought an oppor-

tunity of apologizing, he had always found Alec in close attendance on her.

"I know he intends to propose to her, if he has not already done so," said Thos, "and if I get an opportunity to-morrow I'll speak plainly myself."

"Oh, I fear that will be foolish," said I, "better wait."

But Tom was determined to put his fortune to the touch, and win or lose it all. However when we reached home he found a telegram awaiting him, "Come back at once, Brown is sick," and poor Tom was obliged to leave by the morning train.

Gentle reader, if ever you have been torn from your loved one under such circumstances, you will understand Tom's feelings better than I could portray them.

CHAPTER XVIII.

It is Christmas morning, calm and clear, the beautiful fresh-fallen snow covers the ground like the pure mantle of charity, which should this morning envelope our hearts.

The house resounds with the happy voices of children, for Santa Claus has brought many wonderful treasures.

"Oh, yes; a merry Christmas surely, when we are all spared to see it," said Grandmamma, after we had exchanged greetings, and taken our places at the breakfast table.

"What a pity Tom could not get away," said I.

"Yes, we should be jollier if he were here," said Len.

"I think my 'man swallowing the goose' is nicer than Tommy's soldiers," remarked Charlie.

"No, me sholders am nicer," cried Tommy.

"No, they nar not," replied Charlie.

"Yes, I say *dey am nicer*," shouted Tommy, who still inclined to assert himself.

"You are surely not going to quarrel on Christmas, children," said I.

"Who can that be ringing the bell so early?"

exclaimed Len, and then the dining-room door opened.

"Why, Thos!"—"Uncle Tom!"—"Onkey Tom!"—"Merry Christmas!"—"So glad you've come!"

"There, have I kissed everybody? Hallo! has the baby been promoted to the breakfast table?"

"Only for to-day, Tom. How long can you stay?"

"Can't say just yet," replied Tom, "I guess I have some things in my trunk for you boys. I met an old gentleman on the cars named Santa Claus."—

"Why he has been here!" cried Charlie.

"Dess, tummed down timney, binged lots of sings." added Tommy.

"You don't say so. He got here before me after all. Well, he sent some things by me also."

"We are to have a little dinner to-night, Tom," said I. "You will see some friends."

"Yes, who's coming?"

"Say 'who are' coming," said Len. "We shall have more than one, although you may be interested in one only."

"Don't be so smart," said Tom flushing, but looking very happy.

"You have had Miss Latour in Toronto again, I believe," said I.

"Yes, she was up for a month. Florrie had them over to dinner very often, and as Mrs. Moir was away part of the time, I had the pleasure of escort-

ing them to evening entertainments. But there was another conceited ass of a fellow—"

"Another one!" exclaimed Len.

"Oh, bother! I didn't mean that. This fellow was awfully conceited, but I took him down once. He is a little bit of a fellow, very rich, and, like all small men, very pompous. He is always smoking, and generally has a cigar almost as big as himself. Gerrie made fun of him, but Mrs. Moir took his part because he was rich. She always sent him with Gerrie, and appropriated me to herself. Of course I did not like that very well, and one night when he was boasting about how much money he spent, and that his cigars alone cost him over a dollar a day, even Mrs. Moir was disgusted, and exclaimed,—

"'Oh, you wretched man! How can you waste money like that? Might I ask at what age you began to smoke?'

"'Oh, I wasn't more than fourteen!' he replied.

"'That is probably the reason that you did not grow any more,'" said I.

"Oh, Thos! how could you say it?" I asked, laughing heartily.

"Well, don't you think he deserved it?" said Tom, "and you know smoking when young will stop a boy's growth."

"Yes, but what did he say?"

"What could he say? He talked about something else, but Mrs. Moir gave him up after that. She was ashamed to encourage such a conceited little fool; so I had both Gerrie and her to escort afterwards."

"Then Mrs. Moir has given you her blessing, I suppose," said Len.

"No, indeed; she was all the time talking about people who were foolish enough to marry on small salaries; and saying that a girl ought to marry a man much older than herself. Gerrie very coolly told her one day that she would not marry a man older than Mr. Graham."

"That looks well for you, Thos," said Len.

"Oh, no; she only said it to tease her aunt."

"I saw her yesterday," said I, "and she did not know you were coming down."

"No, I did not know myself until last week." Then turning to Mamma, he said quietly,

"I had a letter from Uncle Thomas the other day."

"It isn't possible!" cried Mamma. "I sent your address last summer, but he never answered my letter."

"He writes very kindly," said Tom. "His wife is dead, and both her daughters are married,—one of them to an English nobleman, the other to a French count. I guess Aunt played her cards well with

Uncle's money. Took the girls to Dublin every winter, and all the fashionable watering places in summer."

"But has he given them the property and all?" I asked, anxiously.

"No," replied Tom. "He says he did not give them anything except costly wedding presents. He let them spend as much as they pleased, flying about and took them to Paris himself; where he says they very much resembled the 'Dodd Family Abroad,' and finally the two girls, who were really very handsome, married last summer; and their mother, as though she thought her mission in life accomplished, laid her down and died."

"Then perhaps Uncle will leave you his money after all, now that that wretched woman is dead," I exclaimed.

"Hush, Georgia!" cried Tom. "Don't say a word against the poor woman. Uncle tells me she felt very bad about the way she had treated me, and soon after I left told him all about it, and begged that I might be brought back; but Uncle thought it might do me good to be left to my own resources for a while, and so time passed on; and of late years his wife being delicate all his thoughts were given to her. He says she was really a fine, good-hearted woman, although she confessed she had married him in hopes of getting all his wealth for her children; but she had soon grown really to care for

him, and, seeing how badly he felt when I left, she had become ashamed of her mercenary designs, and relinquished them entirely. Her frank acknowledgment of her faults only made Uncle think more of her, and they lived very happily together. Uncle says that he never changed his will, and that we might have known that he would keep the promises he made when I was sent to him, no matter what he had said when angry."

"I wish you joy, old fellow!" exclaimed Len, but a lump of something—it must have been happiness—rose up in my throat, and prevented me from saying anything.

Mamma sat quietly crying tears of pure joy. After all, her unselfish sacrifice in parting with Tom was to be repaid, and the dear mother's heart was filled with gratitude.

"Come, don't be lachrymose, Mamma," said Tom. "Shall I take you home with me?"

Mamma was kissing Tom, and before she had time to answer, Charlie cried,—

"I'll go, Uncle Tom! take me!"

"Me too, me do wif 'ou, Onkey!" shouted Tommy.

"Not much! I think I see myself travelling with a couple of imps like you. Come till we see what Santa Claus has sent."

"Bless me, what a lot of luggage!" I cried, finding the hall crowded with trunks.

"Don't be frightened, Georgia. I am not going back at all. I've cut the letter trade. Uncle sent me a cheque for five hundred pounds, and of course I shall go home next summer."

"Will you take any one with you, Tom?" asked Len, slyly.

"Yes, if she'll come," replied Tom, in a soft, wistful tone.

I kissed Tom lovingly, whispering, "I know she will," then added aloud—

"You will come to church with us, and return thanks for your good fortune."

"Oh, yes; if you don't take the children with you."

"No, indeed; I don't believe in church nurseries. It would be cruel to make children of their age sit still, and if they don't they must distract other people."

As we walked home from church I said to Tom—"I am glad the sun shines, I always think it is a good omen."

But Tom smiled as though he thought that, whatever the sun might do, Gerrie would be sure to smile upon him.

After the children's dinner, Tom went off to his wooing: Len and I called "good luck," after him from the door, and the boys taking up the chorus, shouted—"good luck!" "good luck!" till he was out of sight.

CHAPTER XIX.

LEN had promised the children a drive, and Mamma went with them, while I remained at home to congratulate Tom, or comfort him, as the case might be.

A box of lovely hot house flowers, which Tom had contrived to order, arrived, and kept me pleasantly employed for some time in arranging them.

Then I sat by the parlor window, watching the sleighs flashing gaily by, and listening to the merry music of their bells. Our fortunes had somewhat improved since summer. Mary Ann had been promoted to be cook, while Lizzie had become housemaid, and a young French girl reigned in her stead over the nursery.

Mary Ann had taken her Christmas outing from early morning, but would be home to cook dinner, Lizzie had been allowed to have her young man and two other friends to dine with her, while the nurse was quite satisfied to go for the drive with the children. Every one had been remembered by Santa Claus, and, knowing that all my household were happy and contented, I sat wondering if there could be many women in Montreal so blessed as I this happy Christmas day.

The gathering shadows of the short winter day began to creep across the room, lighted only by the flickering fire in the old-fashioned grate. The unusual stillness, unbroken by merry, childish voices and pattering little feet, began to be oppressive, and I was glad to hear Lizzie's shrill laugh, accompanied by the deep bass guffaw of her young man, from the kitchen.

Suddenly I heard the jingle of sleigh bells turning in at the gate. Who could it be? Not the children, for they had gone out to Côte St. Antoine, and could not be back so soon. Not Tom, for there were two in the sleigh. I am near-sighted, and it was only when the sleigh stopped at the door that I recognised Tom jumping out, and—yes, it is Gerrie Latour who is jumping down into his arms.

Running to the door, I exclaim,—

"Oh, I am so glad! I suppose I need not ask any questions."

"No," said Tom, proudly, throwing his arm around Gerrie "here is my answer to all questions."

Gerrie drew shyly away, smiling and blushing in the dim twilight.

"Have I come too early, Georgia? May I call you Georgia, now?"

"You *must* call me Georgia, and love me very much, to make up for my brother's love that you have stolen," said I. "Now if you are warmed,

come into the dressing-room. Tom call Lizzie to light the lamps."

"Not in the parlor yet," said Tom, "I shall stir up the fire and we shall sit by it."

We placed Gerrie in front of the grate, and sat one on each side, admiring her. How lovely she looked in her pretty dinner dress of salmon-pink silk trimmed with black velvet, her bright expressive face was flushed with happiness, her dark eyes now sparkled with joy, now filled with tears of loving tenderness.

"Gerrie says she took a fancy to me the night I went after that blessed cow," said Tom.

"But I did not say you might tell it," she replied.

"What would you have done, if Tom had not come in for uncle's money?" I asked.

"I would have waited for him," said she, proudly, "Tom was sure to get along in the world anyway. Besides don't you know I have money myself. When Grandpapa left his property to Mamma, he willed certain portions to Josie and me, which we are to have when we ma-marry," stumbling shyly over the last word—"and, of course, it will all come to us eventually."

"Why Tom would not have dared to think of you had he known that," I exclaimed.

"Yes, I would," cried Tom, "and I would have won her anyhow, eh, Gerrie? Why Georgia I have

been making more than my salary by writing magazine articles lately."

"Oh, Tom; why didn't you tell us?" I asked, reproachfully.

"Well I waited till my success was assured," he replied. "I know that I can do very well now if I go to the States, but, if Uncle will help me along, I would rather remain and start a journal of some kind in Toronto."

"But are you not afraid that Uncle will want you to remain with him?" I asked.

"No, for I would not stay," replied Tom, "I shall never become a dependent again. Uncle is a good fellow, and I have no doubt always meant to do what was right, but I can carve my own fortune now. I like my work, and will not give it up, even for Uncle's ready-made fortune."

"I am sure you are right, Tom, and Uncle will like you all the better for your independence."

"Yes, I don't think he will throw me over again after what he has said; and, if he does, it cannot be helped. I did not tell Gerrie's father anything about Uncle, until he had given his consent to my speaking to Gerrie. It seems this young lady" added Tom, looking fondly at Gerrie, "has refused some eligible offers lately, and they began to think it best to let her have her own way."

"And," said Gerrie, "Aunt Moir has been writ-

ing very kindly about Tom to Papa, lately, saying that he is such a good fellow, and so clever, and sure to get along in the world."

"Mrs. Moir is the best little woman in the world," said Tom, "I do believe she intended all the time that I should have Gerrie, and only wanted to try me, and see if I were worthy of her, willing to work, and wait for my prize."

"And now I hope you may not have long to wait," said I, but evidently this had not yet been discussed between Tom and Gerrie, and as the clock chimed six, I exclaimed,—"I must run and dress!" leaving them to discuss the momentous question of the wedding-day.

I had just finished my toilet when I heard sleigh bells at the door, and the boys' merry voices shouting,—

"Mamma! Mamma, open the door!" for they saw me peeping through the curtains.

"Who are in the parlor?" asked Len.

"Tom and Gerrie," I replied, and then Len began to laugh.

"What is so funny?" I asked.

"Why, Tom and Gerrie, to be sure," said Len, going in to shake hands with Miss Latour. Mr. and Mrs. Latour, and Josie came next, and were soon followed by Alec Malcolm, who, after Gerrie's refusal, of which I was not aware until afterwards, had transferred his allegiance to Josie.

Then came Captain and Mrs. Baker, bringing their two little girls to take tea with our boys in the nursery.

Captain Baker was a large stout man whose face seemed wreathed in perpetual smiles, and I heard Tom whisper to Gerrie, that her Uncle seemed to "fat and grow laugh," and I knew then that even love would not extinguish Tom's propensity for punning.

The dinner was duly announced, and proved to be a very plain one; as I do not believe in attempting anything beyond the capacity of my cuisine. I consider it a fraud upon our friends, if we attempt to entertain them in a style far beyond our income and usual manner of living, besides being unfair to expect our servants to get creditably through a task to which they are unaccustomed. As a rule our friends live in about the same style as ourselves,—if so, how absurd to try to dazzle them by our unwonted splendor, and, should they happen to live in better style, we may be sure they will not think more highly of us for our unusual exertions in their behalf. Perhaps should we give them a comfortable plain little dinner they would enjoy the change, and certainly they would enjoy the absence of pretence and its attendant bustle, and too evident anxiety. However, our dinner table was made beautiful by Tom's lovely flowers, not piled in huge

pyramids forming a rampart down the middle of the table, but arranged in low dishes, from which they smiled up at us in modest beauty.

"Why didn't you give us dinner *à la russe*, Georgia?" asked Tom, when the heavy dishes had been removed.

"Because I could not do it in proper style, not having a butler, or a number of well trained maids," I replied.

"I agree with you, Mrs. Dermot," said Mrs. Latour. "Nothing can be more uncomfortable than a badly served dinner, and without waiters accustomed to serve in the same way every day, there must be delays and mistakes."

"We took dinner with a stylish neighbor last week," said Mrs. Baker, "and had ten courses, served to eight persons, by the girl who had cooked and dished the dinner."

"Impossible!"—"How could she?"—"Do tell us all about it!" cried several voices.

"Well the lady received us in orthodox style, seated in her tiny drawing-room, but, although she tried to look smilingly unconcerned, I fancied she was somewhat worried, when her husband asked her was not dinner very late. There was a sound of hurrying feet on the stairs and finally dinner was announced. Now the running up and down became more painfully evident for the stairs were

just outside the dining-room door. After several luke-warm courses had been served, accompanied by cold vegetables, and interspersed by long periods of waiting,—enlivened by hurrying to and fro—the sweets came on; and now I hoped the poor girl would have a rest, but no, again we had course after course, and finally after changing our plates, etc., eight or nine times, she brought us each a plate, on which was a lace doyley, a finger bowl, and two glasses with crossed stems in the water. Now I had not the slightest idea what to do with these things. The finger bowl I was familiar with, but the glasses in the water and the doyley—what could they be for?

"A wild idea struck me that perhaps the poor girl had become tired out, and had brought them to us to wash for ourselves;—then I glanced at my next neighbor to see how he managed, but evidently he was quite as nonplussed as myself. I tried to peer across at my husband, knowing that he would be equal to the occasion,—alas! there was but a dim religious light cast by the shaded wax candles, and I could only see that he was smiling back at me.

"At last I turned to our host—again I was defeated. The champagne had gone to his head, and lifting the two slender stemmed glasses from the bowl he dashed them upon the table so roughly

that they were shivered to pieces. I knew that this could not possibly be the correct thing to do, so I gave up in despair."

"Now, Mrs. Baker;" said Tom, "it was really too bad of you to tell us that story just so as to bring in a temperance moral at the end."

"It is all true, I assure you, and I know the lady thought she was teaching those ignorant Americans what style meant."

"I used to think," said Tom, "that a *diner à la russe* meant that when one had not much to offer they dressed up the table with flowers, and brought the dinner in piecemeal as a *ruse* to prevent folks from noticing the poverty of the fare."

"Oh, I think it is very nice to have only the fruit and flowers on the table," said Mrs. Baker, "but unless there is a very good carver, and a sufficient number of attendants, the dinner cannot be very enjoyable;—when the cook attempts to serve of course it is only a farce. We would not think of attempting such a thing in the States."

"Oh, you have become thoroughly American, I see;" said Len.

"No, I have not," replied Mrs. Baker; "but although there has been so much said, and written about shoddy gentility in the States, I find a great deal more of it here. There is one thing to be said for the Americans, whatever they attempt they

carry through properly, while here you pinch in one corner of the house, and lavish in another."

And now the children came trooping in to dessert, How charming they looked!

Mrs. Baker's two little girls in white merino and pale blue ribbons, Charlie in black velvet "nigger-boggers," Tommy in a kilt suit, and Baby Len looking like a gorgeous butterfly, in a beautiful little dress covered with Oriental embroidery—Aunt Florrie's Christmas gift, sent by Tom.

What a merry time we had after the advent of the children! No seats were provided for them, each gentleman taking a little prattler on his knee, and soon the room was filled with clear childish voices, and rippling peals of joyous laughter. Tom had taken his namesake, but must have regretted his choice when Tommy told Miss Latour that, 'Onkey Tom was going to take her to Ireland wif him,' a piece of information which he had, in an unwary moment, elicited from me, when demanding why Uncle could not take him.

Sissy Baker, who sat on Alec's knee, did not add much to his peace of mind by informing him that she liked him very much herself, but "Aunt Josie says she hates you."

We had no wines to detain the gentlemen, so all adjourned to the parlor together.

"That is real mistletoe from McGibbon's over the

door," said I, and as Tom and Gerrie passed through, they duly honored it.

"Indeed!" said Alec, pausing as though to look at it, but watching covertly for Josie to pass.

Josie, who had just caught Baby in her arms, perceived his intention, and laying her finger on her lips, passed swiftly out by the other door, through the hall and into the parlor, appearing suddenly before Alec, and asking him quietly,

"What are you looking at Mr. Malcolm?"

"Yes, what are you glowering at?" added Tom.

We all had a good laugh at Alec's discomfiture, but he declared he would catch Miss Josie under the mistletoe yet.

And now the door bell begins to ring, announcing the arrival of our evening guests. First come Mr. Ryde and our two allopaths. Dr. Ornum has been badly hit by Gerrie, for he turns pale when I give him a hint of her engagement. As to Dr. Hutchins, there can be no doubt that his admiration of Josie is growing deeper every day, but no one can divine that young lady's inclinations; and I fear she is destined to cause many a heart to ache before she yields her own.

Next comes Miss Willis, then Miss St. John and her sister, who is of the dainty waxen American type of prettiness, with rich chestnut hair, delicate features and *petite* figure. She has just returned

from a long visit to the States, where she is said to have left scores of admirers, and now evidently intends to add a few Canadian victims to her list. How is it that these American young ladies do so much execution among our Canadian young men? There goes the bell again!

This time it is Mr. Nottarts, and his charming sunny-tempered wife. Mr. Nottarts is a member of the Mozart Club, which means that he plays the violin divinely, and as he has brought it this evening we shall have a musical treat. Mrs. Nottarts is one of those loving young mothers that one never can be sure of for an evening, for she seems to keep a perpetual young baby as an excuse for staying at home. I am so glad to hear that she has come that I follow her to the dressing room, exclaiming—"Carrie, dear, I am so glad to see you! How is baby?"

"Oh, baby is nicely," she answers; "but our second best baby is rather feverish from teething."

Bless her dear motherly heart! she has five children—the eldest only the age of my Charlie, and there she stands talking about her "second-best baby" as contentedly as though no family should be without one. In these hard times, too, when one superfine and only best baby is all that one can afford. Ah, those cunning babies! How well they know where to find a welcome! The only one on

record that was ever known to make a mistake being the immortal "Ginx's Baby."

The bell again! and this time it is Mr. Archie and his dove-eyed little wife, who could not be persuaded to leave baby long enough to come to dinner. Mr. Archie is a young and rising lawyer, and it is to his kindness and assistance Thos is indebted in a great measure for his literary success.

Need I describe that merry Christmas evening? Given a number of young people and young married people, one engaged couple and two or three couples who would like to be engaged, and cannot my readers imagine for themselves what sort of an evening we spent?

CHAPTER XX.

Ah, that was a merry Christmas! and yet I don't know that it was any happier than our last, for we had Tom and Gerrie and the baby—yes, they have a baby now—from Toronto, and the Latours, *père* and *mère* and *sœur*, and Alec, who still drags the chain of his enthralment after Josie. They have had a stormy courtship during the past year, and no one can foretell how that love affair is going to turn out.

Perhaps at some future day, when things have arranged themselves as all things in this world eventually must—I may write "The fate of the Flirt," as a warning to all young men who begin life by a series of flirtations.

Tom and Gerrie were married soon after New Year. On their wedding tour they went to see Uncle Thomas, whose heart was so won by the bonny bride that he settled a handsome annuity on them at once; and accompanied them on their return to Canada. He made us a visit, during which a pretty widowed friend of ours "set her cap at him" so perseveringly, that we began to fear that Tom's interests were again in danger. I think Uncle himself thought his only safety would be in

flight, and taking Mr. Weller's advice to "bevare of the vidders" he left for his native shores.

Tom has not yet overcome his propensity for punning. When they arrived the day before Christmas, Master Baby was carried up-stairs by his nurse, accompanied by my admiring boys; but while at breakfast we heard piteous cries from the nursery. Gerrie ran to her darling, and having quieted him returned, when Thos remarked—

"Gerrie treats the baby homœopathically. She gives him *agonite* for his agonies and *bray-on-ye-à*, when he cries straight ahead."

"Such nonsense, Tom, I only give aconite when he is feverish and bryonia when he has a cold. Don't you believe in homœopathy for children, Georgia?"

"Yes, and for grown persons also," I replied; "but we never could convert Tom."

"Oh, I believe in homœpathy as much as any other pathy; you know I never take medicine myself, but, if Baby must have some, I think the smaller his doses the better," then he added: "By-the-bye, Georgia, I hear they are 'striking ile' very near that Illinois property of mine, and I am told that there are certainly oil wells on my land."

"Then you had better go West, young man, and become a millionaire," said Len.

"No, I don't care to go West myself," said Thos;

but I have decided to make a Christmas present to Georgia of that land, so, if you choose to go out there, you may perhaps become a millionaire yourself."

"Oh, Thos, you are too generous!" I exclaimed.

"No, I am only just, not generous," said he. "Father told me that he always meant that land for you and Florrie, but, when he found that uncle had dropped me, and you were both so well married, he decided to leave it to me. Now I know that, if he were living, he would give it to you, Georgia. Of course Florrie is well enough off. I told her what I was doing, and she is quite pleased, so here are the title deeds as a Christmas present."

"You seem to be our good angel, Tom," said Len. "I was just beginning to despair of ever getting on in Montreal. Business is very dull, and the worry is killing me."

"Well I suppose you can get some one to buy out your share in the concern, and, if you need a little ready money, I guess I can let you have it."

"Thanks, I won't need it, and, as good luck would have it, Mr. Elchin was in the other day, wanting to buy a share for his son. It seems they have become quite reconciled to his wife. She must be a fine woman, for Bob Elchin is wonderfully improved."

"Oh, yes, we all improve when we marry. Don't you see a great change in me?"

"No, indeed, you are just the same old sixpence," said Len.

"But you couldn't be improved, Tom," said I.

"Do you mean I'm past redemption?" asked Thos, laughingly.

"No, indeed, you are the very best brother in the world!" I exclaim.

"And the best husband!" said Gerrie.

"And the best son!" exclaimed Mamma.

"Hold! hold, don't smother me with compliments!"

Len has disposed of his business, and we are all packed up, ready to start

"To the West! To the West!
To the land of the free,"

and I trust all my readers will join in wishing us good luck.

Thos has gained the height of his ambition, and become an editor. He is now hard at work trying to reconstruct the world in the fair Queen City of the West, and perhaps some of his *confrère* may in this sketch recognize my hero "Thos."