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VOL. I.

MAY, 1871.

No. 11

THE TWO NEIGHBOURS,
OR,
REVENGE REPAID BY KINDNESS.

Continued from page 197.

BY ROBERT RIDGWAY, TORONTO.

CHAPTER VI.

With gaping mouths, and great, wide, staring eyes,

The list'ning ignorant catch the news which flies;

Enlarge, extend, remodel, and retouch,
Here take away a little, there add much.

So simple facts, misunderstood at first,
Are blown like bubbles, till at length they burst,

Then ignorance laughs, and superstition smiles,
Dupes of their own imaginings and wiles.

The News Bag.

Wyatt and Jim Snarr left the "Red Bull," soon after the conversation we have given. As they went up the village, Wyatt noticed three men in the rough dress of day laborers, or more properly "stone getters," slouching along up the other side of the street. Fustian coats, with pockets of unusual dimensions, told Wyatt what their occupation, at night, very often was. The poacher, to Wyatt, was an object of suspicion; he might be said to possess a professional antipathy to

the class, which in return was repaid by hatred to him personally. On first noticing the men he thought they were all strangers, but closer examination showed him his mistake; he soon recognised one of them as an old acquaintance, and a most inveterate poacher. He asked Jim Snarr if he knew any one of the three men, but after eyeing them over pretty closely, Jim was quite sure he had never met one of them.

"Yond fellow with the red neckcloth," said Wyatt, addressing Jim, 'is Jake Welch, he was sent to Knutsford for three months, at hard labour, for an affair in "Hollingworth Wood;" to look at him one would imagine he had never seen me before."

Such was the fact, the man indicated, and his two companions, had looked across the road at Wyatt and Snarr, but, to all outward appearance, with the most complete indifference and absence of anything to imply recognition.

"If I am not very much mistaken those fellows intend mischief," said Wyatt, "and are looking out for a chance. I believe they are watching me now to see what way I'm going home."

"We can easily find out that," said Jim. "We'll stop talking just at the end of the bridge yonder, and see what they'll do. If they come forward and pass us, and turn up to the left in the field road, we'll go forward down the

turnpike, as though we were going home that way. But if they keep forward down the turnpike road, after talking awhile you take the field road we came by, and I'll follow them as far as the bend in the road, about half a mile down, where there is a foot road that crosses the fields and joins the other field road behind the hill, about two miles from here, I should say."

"I see," said Wyatt.

Wyatt and Snarr had stopped while thus talking at the end of the bridge farthest from the village.

The three men following them when they arrived at the bridge, paused in a sort of undecided, objectless way, and leaned over the parapet.

Wyatt saw the move and so did Jim.

"I told you those fellows were dogging me," said Wyatt, "but we can easily prove it; you keep forward down the road and I'll go up the hill by the field road, and we can make a pretence of parting at the stile. I'll wait for you on the hill, and you can keep a sharp watch whether they attempt to follow me or not."

By this time it was getting dusk, so that while objects could be seen in mass when moving, nothing very particular could be distinguished.

"If they are going to dog, we can dodge," said Jim. They walked on slowly to the stile, up which Wyatt mounted, and speaking to each other in louder tones, as though parting in earnest, Jim started at a sharp walk down the turnpike, while Wyatt began to ascend the hill on the left.

The men lounging on the bridge, the very personification of listlessness, suddenly became animated, the parting ruse had deceived them.

"That's Wyatt, lads," said the wearer of the red neckcloth.

"Ai, ai, that's him, sure enough," answered one of the others, whom they called Snap, "I have not seen him for a goodish while, but I canno' mistake that chap; watch him *heow* he climbs that hill."

"He's making pretty good time, sure enough," said the third, "but in place of standing here watching him, I'm thinking

we should be on the move, if we are to give him a drubbing."

"That's so," said Welch, "we have to catch the game before we cook it; but I wanted to see whether yond other fellow was going along with him or not."

"Well if we are to go, let's be going," said Snap, "I suppose we all understand what's to be done."

The three men now started, not in direct pursuit of Wyatt, but descending to the bank of the river, they started up beside the stream until they passed a bend round the foot of the hill, where they left the river and ascended a narrow ravine.

Jim Snarr did not go far down the turnpike; as soon as he was out of sight, from the bridge: he leapt the low wall and returned to a position where he could watch the movements of the three men. He could see they were on the alert, and no sooner did they descend to the river, than he started up the hill as fast as he could go.

Wyatt on reaching the brow of the hill, crept behind a low wall on the very edge of the almost precipitous descent; owing to the thin scattering of snow, he could see any dark object plainly, but nowhere could he discover the three men, he was expecting to see following him up the hill. There was one man, however, ascending rapidly, and as he clambered the wall and leapt into the foot-path, almost below him, he was certain it was Jim Snarr.

Wyatt walked along the brow of the hill to a place where the foot-path passed some thirty feet below him, and just as Jim reached this part of the road Wyatt called out "Snarr."

Jim paused, looked up, and answered, "Wyatt."

Clinging to the bushes, or any projecting object he could seize, Jim mounted to the edge of the cliff, where Wyatt's aiding hand assisted him to the top.

"How is this Jim?" was the first question.

Jim was out of breath; so with a sweep of his arm he pointed out the direction, and conveyed the idea of the *double* being practised upon him.

"That's it, is it," said Wyatt, "well what had we better do?"

"Come this way," said Jim; and the two moved away across the fields at a rapid pace.

Jim took the lead and Wyatt followed, quite satisfied that his guide knew what he was about. Suddenly, as they approached a low wall, Jim stopped, and motioned to Wyatt by raising his hand, then cautiously peered over the wall and pointed downward. Wyatt crept up and looked in the direction indicated. Where they stood, rather, where they were crouched, was on the very brink of a deep, narrow gully, up which three men were hurrying as fast as they could go without running. After watching them until their forms disappeared round a curve Jim said "now it will be best to try and cross this gully if we can, and give yond fellows the slip in a way 'at will astonish 'em."

"Very well," said Wyatt, "let us look out for the best place, and see what we can do."

After considerable trouble and some hazard they succeeded in descending to the bottom of the ravine, and with equal difficulty to scramble up its other side. At length they attained the summit, along which they pursued their homeward course.

The three poachers, who had meditated the attack upon Wyatt, emerged from the head of the gully, and, as well as the dusk would permit, scanned the field road above, but no Wyatt was to be seen; as they were quite certain he ought to be by that time.

"This is queer, lads," said red neckcloth, staring around.

"He canno' have past us an' given us t' slip surely," said Snap, "he must have stopped somewhere, or else he's turned back for something."

They waited for some time in expectation that every minute would bring their victim. Much disappointed, they slowly walked back across the fields to the brow of the hill, and looked over to the village, now lit up throughout its straggling extent.

They returned down the hill, and went straight to the Red Bull; but no Wyatt

had been there since he left in the evening. Much mystified by his disappearance, they drank their beer, and nodded significantly to each other, ashamed of confessing it; but strongly impressed with the belief, that he was aided in his movements by the great grand-father of prestiges,—and that they had very likely had a narrow escape from contact with so notable an individual, who, for anything they knew, could disappear like a puff of smoke, but by no means so harmlessly.

A few days after, these hints were so far elaborated, that a circumstantial report was being circulated, that three men had every one actually seen the great cornigerous apostate, or at the very least one of his representatives, flying over the hill, and leaving behind him a long stream of fire and sulphureous smoke.

While the men were wondering which way Wyatt was gone, he was making the best of his way across the moor pastures to regain the footpath.

"I'm afraid we shall be rather late to the meeting," said Wyatt to his companion, "however we cannot help it."

"I should like to know," said Jim Snarr, "who that farmer chap was that started from the Public House just before us. It keeps running in my head I've seen him before, but when or where I cannot recollect; but I cannot get his face out of my mind."

"I've often seen folks the same way," said Wyatt, "and I could not remember for certain, whether I had, or only imagined I had seen them before, but I think we shall have to come this way again, before long, and if we do, we can try to find out who he is."

"Yes," said Jim, "and whether he had anything to do with yond three we've tricked so nicely."

"Oh," said Wyatt, "that's it, is it? I never thought about anything of that sort."

"No, because you did not see him," said Jim, "but if ever I saw an ugly, vicious look on a fellow's face, it was on his as he sat listening to what was said; and I'm sure he was listening."

"Well, well," said Wyatt, "I cannot imagine who it could be. I suppose we shall have to wait till circumstances turn

up an explanation, or as your Tom would say, now, 'God's providence clears up the matter.'

Is it not strange to see the way things will work round, from such unlikely causes, and often in so short a time? When Wyatt and Jim arrived on "Holl Head" their attention was at once attracted to the farm-house below. This house was called the "Bank," and with the farm on which it stood, was owned by the Squire. It was this house the solitary traveller had a short time before avoided, when descending the hill. Wyatt and Jim could see that it was lit up in an unusual manner, for the light shone with singular glare through the snow laden branches of the trees which surrounded it. The man who avoided the house could see the lights, but could only conjecture the cause as he muttered to himself, "some of their prayer meetings."

"They are having their meeting sure enough," said Wyatt, as they paused to look down at the picturesque sight.

"Well, we propose to go," said Jim, "and if we are late, we cannot help it, we did our best."

They walked silently down to the house; stopped at the door and listened; some one was speaking; no mistaking that stentorian voice.

"Why that's our Tom," said Jim Snarr.

Earlier in the evening the family of Mr. Purdee, were sitting in the great kitchen, enjoying that domestic intercourse of social chat, amusement, and individual pleasure, which relaxation from labour brought each day of the week around their social hearth.

The evening was cold, and the large fire-place was heaped full with peat, which, burning with a bright lurid glow, sent its heat to every part of the room accompanied by that penetrating, pungent odour, which accompanies the burning of that fuel in open fire grates. Stretched upon the hearth, in front of the large fender, lay Spot basking in the warm glow of the fire.

The circle around was pretty large, for, to sit in front of such a fire, unless at a suitable distance, was too much for ordin-

ary skin and clothing to stand without scorching.

Mrs. Purdee occupied her accustomed, well-known chair in the nook, on one side of the mantle-jamb; beside her stood a little oaken stand on which were her sewing and knitting materials with the candle, a home-make dip. Thus it might truly be said she took her ease in less laborious work, for with busy hands she—

In knitting or sewing her fingers employed,
She worked as she chatted, and richly enjoyed
The joke, and sly humour, the mirth, and the
glee,

Or listened if some graver theme there might be:

And such a theme was engaging her attention on this occasion. Mr. Purdee had been speaking about Tom Snarr, and was just telling her that he thought Tom could exhort in a very effective manner, and that he had been talking to him on the subject very seriously, as he believed it was Tom's duty to speak of his own remarkable experience, and bear personal testimony to the power of experimental religion, when there came a knock at the kitchen door, the latch was lifted and in walked the subject of their conversation.

The family gave Tom a hearty welcome, that kind of greeting which is seen in the countenance, as hearty good will, and sets the visitor at ease at once. A chair was placed in the circle, and when Tom was seated, Mr. Purdee asked him if he had got his *net* ready, in case the preacher should not come to his appointment.

"Do you think he will not come?" asked Tom.

"I'm inclined to think he will not," said Mr. Purdee, "but I have no positive information. Seven miles, and a hilly road, and a pretty rough night, is excuse sufficient for most folks, to neglect such appointments as to night; and really I think we could not blame him if he fails to fill this."

Tom mused for some time before he answered. At length he said, "I'm afraid I shall break down if I try to say anything."

"Well you'll never know what you can do unless you try," said Mrs. Purdee. "Never mind little notions about this thing and that, look at it as a question of

duty, keep that before your mind, do your best and fear nothing."

This totally unlooked for speech from Mrs. Purdee, astonished her husband more than it surprised Tom, but it so aroused his enthusiasm that after a little pause, as though waiting further comment, he answered.

"So I will, and may God help me to do what is my duty! and if the preacher does not come to-night I'll take it as a call in that direction."

Mr. Purdee put on an over coat, preparatory for their walk, and Spot who had hitherto been lying on the hearth, got up and shook himself evidently expecting to keep them company. Mr. Purdee thought Spot had better stop at home, but might come to meet them about nine o'clock.

Mrs. Purdee said she would send him about half past eight, and if he should happen to be early he would wait at the door. The dog seemed to know what was said, for he quietly resumed his place in front of the fender, but taking care to watch every movement, and no doubt listening to all that passed. The meeting to which they were going was of the kind called *house preaching*, which for a long time was a necessity among the dissenting portion of the population. In these out of the way valleys the attendance was usually limited to a few neighbours numbering perhaps twenty, but even in such places, on special occasions, the congregation would often be such that instead of the great kitchen the barn would be required to hold the assembly.

At these preachings the speaker was commonly of the class known as local preachers, but occasionally one of the regular stationed or itinerant preachers, would fill an appointment. On this occasion they were expecting a preacher from a town seven miles away, and when Mr. Purdee and Tom got there the house was full, many of those present having come miles to hear the simple truths of the gospel delivered in an earnest, energetic, extempore manner; totally different from the insipid, lifeless prelections of their parish churches.

Mr. Purdee was himself a lay preacher, a most fearless and uncompromising one

too, where principles, whether of christian liberty or doctrine, were in question.

After waiting for a short time he opened the meeting by singing and prayer, and proposed to the audience, that they should hear a few words from a man, who a short time before had never thought of attending such a meeting, much less of addressing them.

"Friends, I call upon Thomas Snarr, to give out a hymn, and then say a few words in honour of his master, in whose school for some months he has been studying a new language, and very different manners."

Thus introduced, Tom with trembling voice read from that beautiful production of one of the finest christian poets, "Let all men rejoice, by Jesus restored, &c." They sang four verses and Tom opened his remarks by saying, "I can personally vouch for the truth of what we have been singing. I have had no experience in schooling or book learning beyond plain reading and a very little writing, but by God's mercy I have been admitted, as a very unworthy pupil, into the school of religious experience, and I feel it an honour to be permitted before you, thus to testify that Christ has been a gracious master."

Tom's words were plain; his dialect was broad; but what he lacked in correctness of speech, he atoned for in earnestness; deficient indeed in doctrinal theories, but rich in experiential acquaintance, he told his hearers what his own experience justified, in homely but forcible language, which went home, like the well directed thrust, or blow of the gladiator. He had warmed to his work, encouraged by the hearty sympathetic responses of some of his hearers. There was no want of energy in voice or in manner; his descriptive power, so far as his limited vocabulary permitted, was good; while his simple sincerity of manner carried conviction.

Mr. Purdee listened to his remarks with evident pleasure, his judgment of Tom's character was correct. "There is more in that man, than he knows himself."

Tom was about concluding his remarks when he was slightly interrupted by the

sharp, peculiar bark of a dog; there was a scratching at the door, some one opened it and in ran Spot. The dog was known "far and wide" by reputation, but here he was also known in person; and, as he crossed the kitchen to his master, there were few who were not curious to ascertain what pressing, important errand had brought him thus importunate in manner. Mr. Purdee sat close to where Tom stood, and Spot went straight to him and took him by the coat.

Tom noticed the dog's entrance and peculiar gestures, and fully satisfied that something was amiss, he at once closed his address. He whispered to Mr. Purdee, who at once left the room, and in the porch found Wyatt and Jim Snarr.

"Is it you that sent Spot," he asked.

"No," said Wyatt, "we found we were very late, and were standing listening, when he came up smelt at my hand, before I saw him, barked, and scratched at the door for admission, and was in before I knew what to do."

"I'm afraid something has happened, come along with me," said Mr. Purdee, "he would not come for me this way unless there was something amiss."

The three men followed Spot at a rapid pace. He kept trotting along a little ahead, occasionally whining but never abating his speed, straight down to the foot bridge. Arrived there he barked!

(To be Continued.)

FERNS.

BY CANADENSIS

While I write Winter still contends with Spring, and now patchedly evinces the reluctance of King Frost to relax his despotic rule. But to the lover of nature and her floral gifts, there is already ample inducement to wander in the woods and search for treasures amid the remains of last year's vegetation. I have little respect for one who cannot admire the beauties of the wild flowers of the forest and the field. Yet mayhap this is a bold saying;—when I recollect how many there are who have no soul, in these days of scraping and grinding, for

any higher object than may be comprised in dollars and cents. For in good sooth there must be a goodly number amongst us, who, if their claims to reverence depend upon their love for the simplest and finest works of nature, are far outside the pale of consideration. To that large crowd I have on this occasion nothing to say; but to the smaller—shall I say the more select?—circle, where natural beauty is appreciated, a little chat about a few of my own personal friends may not be unreasonable, and be assured these last will not object. They know me too well, for during a long and intimate acquaintance of more than a quarter of a century I have never spoken of them but with praise.

I know few, if any, more pleasurable ways of whiling away a leisure hour, than by roaming in the early spring through the bye places and wild recesses of the country, to note the first forerunners of the summer vegetation. To me there is a wondrous claim in the tiny floweret that, piercing the snow, raises its little head towards the light and expands its bright petals as the banner of returning spring. And in all the woods of southern Canada these heralds are many and beautiful; too many indeed for me to notice now, and too beautiful to be imperfectly enumerated. For there is a family of another kind living in our wilds which carries with it perhaps even more of interest, and about which I would in affection write. I say of interest,—for as I grope about amongst the withered leaves, and in the tangled moss and root fibres that fill up the holes and recesses of some decaying tree that has fallen long since in death, can I forget the history of that little fern which is just beginning to unfold its fronds to the genial air of May? how it is the descendant of a tribe that lived upon the earth ages before man was first created; when a heavy, hot, still air enwrapt the world; when the garden bee first flitted through the luxuriant foliage, and when giant calamities and wondrous tree ferns lived and grew, to fall and be changed into the coal fields that were destined at that distant day to bring comfort and opulence to the busy races of the pres-

ent? The fern carries back the mind to a time when incalculable years of steady growth and change were necessary to fit the earth for man's occupation, and still they tell of the beautiful oneness of design, which in all primeval times, no less than now, pervaded every work of creation. True it may be, that in the vast interval which has elapsed since that remote period, when winged insects first came into being many species of ferns have perished. But the chain has never been broken, and some of the plants which still flourish amongst us are identical with those which we know must have abounded when huge lizards held sway both on the land and in the waters, and before any of the large animals with which we are now acquainted had made their appearance in the forests. It is difficult, too, perhaps to appreciate fully the extreme beauty of the vegetation in those very early ages; but those of us who have revelled in the rich and luxuriant treasures of leaf and flower which are to be found in moist places in the tropics, where art has not intruded, may be the best able to conceive an idea of that scenery which covered the land in times before the limestone ridges of the Andes or the white cliffs of Britain had been raised above the waters.

It would perhaps be odd if a family of plants to which belongs such vast antiquity, and which has in its day taken such a noble part in contributing to the happiness and wealth of mankind, should have escaped from the superstition of the past and from the folk-lore of more ancient nations. And accordingly we find, both in the tradition of some peoples and the written records of others, many notices of ferns. In how many diseases they have at various times been declared useful it would be hazardous even to conjecture. It need not be forgotten that they still hold a place, and by no means an unimportant one, in the modern Pharmacopœia; but it is also true that to this day in some parts of the world, and especially of Europe, they are supposed to exercise a kind of supernatural power in effecting cures. Some species—I will not run the risk of alarming my readers by long scientific names—are believed to

exert a magic influence over wounds and bruises, and another was in much favor among the Alchemists of old on account of its supposed value in converting mercury into silver. Others have been found really useful in the manufacture of soap and glass, and the Chinese long ago used an oil made from ferns for some of the processes connected with the manufacture of the beautiful China-ware in which these people till lately excelled. In many parts ferns are received as a valuable article of food—and highly nutritious they certainly are, while in the north of Ava they form an important ingredient in the making of beer. But to enumerate all their applications,—some genuine, others imaginary,—would be impossible within my present limits; I will content myself with one little anecdote, which, if some have heard it before, may be new to others as an indication of the kind of belief which, in some places, goes with the ferns. In the east of Europe, especially among the Poles and Russians, is a belief that the fern plant sprang from a cloud which came down from Heaven long before man was created. This belief has led to many minor fancies, some of a directly opposite tendency. For example, the Polish peasants hold that whenever a piece of fern is gathered a thunderstorm follows; while in some parts of Russia and Hungary the people keep ferns about their houses as a safeguard against thunder, lightning, and the Devil.

Ferns, and especially fern "seed," were once, too, supposed—and are still in some places—to be made the special guardianship of spirits, and if procured at the right time and under the proper conditions they were thought to carry good fortune to their possessor. And lest anyone sceptical about the march of intelligence and the superiority of modern common sense over ancient superstition, should wish to test the point I will briefly enumerate some of the conditions. The seed is to be collected between twelve and one o'clock on Midsummer Eve. It must fall into a plate or other fitting receptacle of its own accord. The plant must not be shaken or touched. And even then it is said that in all pro-

bability the spirits who have the protectorate of the ferns will be apt to run away with the "seed" before you can reach home with it. A quaint old writer, one who lived, and wrote, and died, more than two centuries ago, says that the r members being told of one who went to gather fern "seed" on Midsummer Eve, "and the spirits whisk'd by his ears like bullets, and sometimes struck his hat and parts of his body; in fine, though he thought he had gotten a quantity of it, and secured it in paper, and a box beside, when he came home he found all empty." When, however, anyone did secure some he was supposed to have the evil one at his service. He could become invisible. For anything he might want he had only to express a wish and it was his,—he could pass in an instant to any part of the world, and if by any possibility he could keep the "seed" till after Christmas, he would all the next year be able to do the work of twenty people.

But to the story. A peasant in Westphalia once had the misfortune to lose a young colt. He sought for it far and wide; and at sunset finding himself a long distance from home he went into a cottage for some refreshment. Here the cordial and agreeable attentions of his host delayed him for some hours, and it was not till the moon had risen high in the heavens that he set out for home. It was Midsummer Eve. On his return journey he sought diligently for his horse, but in vain, and daylight had dawned before he reached his own home wearied and disappointed. His family had risen, and the several members were engaged in their morning labors, indeed I believe it is recorded in the traditions of Westphalia that some of them were at breakfast. He threw himself into a chair and began to explain to those about the failure of his efforts. But instead of meeting with the sympathy he had anticipated, his wife immediately set up a vigorous scream. His children—panic struck—upset the breakfast table, rushed wildly out of the door, took to their heels, and have never been seen or heard of since. We may easily imagine that the poor man must have been not a little disconcerted at this sudden tumult in

his household. He attempted to console his wife, but she screamed more loudly and refused consolation. He shouted to his children; but the louder he shouted the faster they ran. For his voice was audible, though he was invisible. At last after much confusion and tribulation the thought occurred to him that in traversing the meadows he might have got some fern "seed" upon his clothes, so he went outside, shook his coat, brushed his continuation, and finally disrobed. As soon, however, as he had taken off his stocking, the chain was broken. He became visible to his wife, and peace returned though not the children.

This tradition is to this moment implicitly believed by the peasantry in many parts of North Germany; and German folk-lore—and last, India, too, is full of similar fancies, which, to my thinking at least, add interest to the family of ferns. If space permitted I might repeat a few of those stories, but it behooves me rather to pass on to a more practical aspect of the subject.

All my friends in this country are what the world calls dumb. But, be these plants or animals, I like to have them about me, close at hand, where I can note their habits, watch their progress, and e'en sometimes hold converse with them. Each has its special attractions, but none, I think, surpass in beauty and quiet adornment, my little group of ferns, which, with but comparatively little care, are a permanent ornament in the study or the parlor. Ferns are so plentiful in our woods, and the different species most common, are so varied and readily found, that a considerable collection may easily be gathered together. And, probably, the most of May is as good a time as any to procure them, although some varieties will not be found till June, and a few I collected this year in the first week in April. It must be recollected that ferns are perennials, and most of them, under due management, will retain their foliage all the year round. They do best and are most effective when grown,—several together in common deal boxes. These may be made any shape to suit the particular place where they are to remain. I have a new one this spring, which is

three feet long, nine inches wide across the top, and six inches deep. I made it for a particular window, but it is larger than will generally be found convenient. The outside of the box is covered with various kinds of mosses and lichens, which I collect in the woods, and fasten on with common steel tacks, taking care to arrange the different classes and varieties, so as to produce the best effect. A box of this size should have a stand separate from itself. Mine is about fifteen inches high, adapted to the window. It consists of a piece of board, about half an inch larger in each direction than the bottom of the box, standing upon four rustic legs, made from pieces of the branch of a tree, about an inch and a half in diameter, with the bark left on. These are almost hidden, and ornamented with many additional small twigs—bent into arches, or forming crosses, and relieved at proper intervals with more lichens and moss. The edge of the pine board is concealed by a number of small pieces of twigs about two inches long and perhaps a quarter of an inch or less in diameter, nailed on perpendicularly, and the nails concealed by a little band of moss. About 300 of these pilchs are necessary to go round the front and two ends; for it would be found more convenient to leave the back open. Having then bored a few holes in the bottom of the box to secure a proper drainage, I place in it first a layer of small stones about an inch deep. Upon this about an inch and a half of common mould from the garden, and upon this again to within an inch of the top I fill it with the light soil composed of decaying wood fibre, and leaves in which the ferns grow in their native state. Some ferns prefer a stiffer, wet soil; for such I of course make special provision, always taking care to render their condition in my boxes as nearly as possible like that in which I find them in the woods. Having thus got my arrangements complete I go out with basket and trowel in quest of my friends, whom I take up with as much earth as is necessary to avoid interference with the fine root fibres, and transplant them to their new location. Those produced in April have to be looked for closely sometimes,

as the new fronds are not yet unfolded; but later in the season they are readily seen, and still with care may be removed without injury. In a box of sufficient size a good effect may be produced by introducing one or two of the pert-looking Arads (Jack in the Pulpit, as the New Englanders term them) which are to be found in several species in the woods, also the white and lilac anemones, the pretty yellow Trilliums, and the so called ground ivy with its bright red berries, or any other small wild flower which the fancy may dictate or the locality produced. Having all my plants duly arranged and planted I cover the soil with a layer of fresh moss, which may be found in many varieties, and which not only improves the appearance and adds to the interest of the whole, but serves a useful purpose in keeping the soil moist, by preventing evaporation.

It is well in the early part of the year to let the box remain in a cool room. The fronds then grow up stronger and thicker, which add much to the beauty of the collection; but by May or June they may be placed in any position that is most convenient. During the hottest part of the summer I sprinkled my ferns with water, morning and evening, thoroughly wetting the moss on each occasion; and about once a week I remove the boxes into the garden, and saturate the whole of the soil, leaving them there till the water has drained away through the bottom of the box. By this means my ferns grow and thrive more luxuriantly than in their native wildness, and I retain a group of beautiful fresh foliage all through the winter in my room.

The boxes may of course be made in any form. A very pretty one for the corner of a room is octagonal, the sides sloping outwards and rising to a joint. This may be about fifteen inches in diameter at the top, and it should stand upon one strong central leg—supported with smaller bent twigs which should be made to spread out at the bottom, and so give a secure foot. The decoration with moss and lichen will of course be the same as before.

My opportunities have not yet enabled me to say how many different varieties of

ferns may be within the reach of the ordinary collector—by whom I mean the person who does not hunt and seek with the enthusiasm of a Botanist,—in the settled parts of Canada.

In one box which I filled last year I had about fifty specimens, and these included some twenty-three varieties. In a collection I made the previous year I was a little more successful, but then I had had the advantage of a run among the hills of Vermont. Botanists however recognise about 192 genera of ferns, and these include rather more than 2,000 species, of which I doubt not a fair proportion are to be found in Canada, if only they are looked after.

IDYLS OF THE DOMINION.

BY ALEXANDER M'LACHLAN.

NO. V.

THE GIPSY BLOOD.

The spring is here, with her voice of cheer,
For th' winter winds are gone ;
And now with th' birds, and th' antler'd herds,
My roving fit comes on.
I long to be in th' forest glee
From civilization's chains ;
For there's surely a flood of the Gipsy blood
Still running in my veins !

My soul is sick, of this smoke and brick,
I long for a breath that's free ;
The desert air, and the hunter's fare,
The woods, the woods for me !
Where things unbroke by curb, or yoke,
Bound through the green domains ;
For there's surely a flood of th' Gipsy blood,
Still running in my veins !

I'm sick of trade, for its ways have made
These artificial men ;
I long to be with the wild and free,
In the trackless savage glen.
For all my life has been a strife
With their bridles, curbs, and chains ;
For there's a flood of the Gipsy blood,
Still running in my veins !

O why should I moil, and strain and toil
For the lifeless things of art ?
While th' greenwood bowers, and th' wild-
wood flowers

Are springing in my heart—
Yes deep in my heart, devoid of art
A savage spot remains,
For there's a flood of the Gipsy blood,
Still running in my veins.

Let who may dwell, to buy and sell,
I'm off with the roving clan ;
For what are your gains, but curbs and chains
To the freeborn soul of man ?
I'm off and away with the joyous May,
To freedom's glorious fanes ;
For there's a flood of the Gipsy blood,
Still running in my veins !

NO. VI.

THE PINES.

I'm free at last, from the city vast,
Away with the running brooks,
Mong th' savage woods, and th' roaring floods,
And nature's glorious nooks,
The branches spread above my head,
At my feet the woodbine twines ;
All hail again ! in your blue domain,
Great Brotherhood of pines !

Untouch'd by time, ye tower sublime,
Aloft on your rocky steep,
Ye are seated there like lords of air,
In your council chambers deep ;
On your burnish'd breasts and your gleaming
crests,
A quiet halo shines,
While the torrents sweep and roar and leap,
Great Brotherhood of pines !

When morn awakes from out the lakes,
Ye pour your holy hymn,
And when dying day in her mantle gray,
With her phantoms round you swim,
No harp has the ring, and no sounding string
Such a flood of song combines ;
Old Minstrels ye of the greenwood be !
Great Brotherhood of pines !

When storms are high in the midnight sky,
And the wild waves lash the shore ;
Afar up there with your harps of air,
Ye join in the wild uproar
With the groaning woods, and the moaning
floods,
Your awful voice combines,
And the deep refrain of the thunder's strain,
Great Brotherhood of pines !

By the torrent's brim, on the rainbow's rim
 I cling to your magic hall ;
 To hear you join in the song divine,
 Of the thund'ring waterfall.
 While through the screen of your golden green
 A mystic spirit shines,
 Hail one and all ! in your magic hall,
 Great Brotherhood of pines.

ANTIPODEAN REMINISCENCES.

BY "GRAPH."

Continued from page. 000

MELBOURNE TO MOUNT ALEXANDER.

It was about four o'clock on Saturday afternoon the 10th of September, that we arrived, thoroughly worn out with our tramp, at the foot of Mount Macedon. As the weather which had hitherto been persistently raining, began to show signs of clearing up, and as we had abundance of wood and water about us for camp purposes, we came to the conclusion to rest over until Monday morning, thus showing in some small measure our reverence for the Sabbath day, while our physical powers, which had been sorely tried, would have the advantage of a long rest. Having thus decided, we pitched our tents with more regard to comfort than we had previously done, such as, trenching them on the outside, and laying down beds inside composed of leaves and branches of the gum trees around, which in our then exhausted state were a positive luxury. More attention was also devoted to the dietetic arrangements of the next two days, and as we had thus far subsisted on the food brought with us from Melbourne, supplemented by an occasional loaf purchased at the very fine places on the road where bread could be obtained, it was with considerable pleasure that we looked forward to the enjoyment of something like properly cooked meals.

While some were pitching the tents, and others cutting wood and making fires, several of our number were sent to the nearest "Station" or squatters homestead, about a mile and a half off, for the purpose of purchasing sufficient meat for

the use of the whole party, and as at that time the only meat to be obtained at those places and under those circumstances was mutton, of which any amount could be bought at two shillings the fore-quarter, and half a crown the hind quarter, we had not much choice in the matter, but as we used to say at the time, varied our diet by having "damper" and mutton for one meal, and mutton and "damper" the next. What a busy scene our camp presented that afternoon and evening, for though all were much exhausted with the journey so far and the heavy burden each was obliged to carry, yet we unanimously determined to make a great effort to have as good and as well cooked meals as it was possible to obtain and prepare, while enjoying the grateful and much needed rest of the ensuing sabbath-day. It was now that we began to reap some benefit from the experience of our guide whose services we had the forethought of securing for the trip, before leaving Melbourne, as previously mentioned. We were in want of something or other to serve the purpose of tables on which to lay out our meals, and George, to our astonishment, soon supplied the deficiency by stripping from the trees around large sheets of bark, which, after cutting the required size, he placed on four stakes driven into the ground, and thus very expeditiously furnished us with the much needed dining-table.

Again, while cooking our supper, a shower came on, threatening the comparative destruction of the edibles while in process of preparation, the consumption of which we were anticipating with eager pleasure. This would have been a grand misfortune, but George came to the rescue and literally "barked" away the chance of its occurring by erecting a *gunyah* or bark shed over, or rather on the weather side of each fire, giving ample protection to the unfortunate cook and the various combinations he was preparing.

This facility of stripping the bark from the trees is peculiar to Australia and the neighboring islands, and is of inestimable service to the aboriginal natives who being mentally as well as morally in the very lowest scale of humanity, are to speak in a comparative sense, utterly de-

void of any constructive skill whatever, and make up that deficiency in a great degree by the many purposes to which the easily procurable bark can be applied. Not only in geographical position but in almost every aspect of nature this island continent is the complete antithesis of the rest of the earth, and not the least shirking of the numerous contracts is the fact that that the trees do not cast their leaves but shed the bark instead, thus accounting for the ease with which that covering can be removed.

It was on this very occasion that I made my own debut in the novel character of cook to our own immediate party of six, and my first essay in the agreeable occupation proved eminently satisfactory, save in the two particulars, first the quality of my preparations, proved to be so exceedingly good as to receive the united commendation of the other five hungry fellows to such an extent, that the quantity turned out sadly deficient, in as far as I was personally concerned, leaving me to content myself with a crust of bread and cup of tea, and secondly the valuable leather medallion so cordially voted to me on that occasion, has never come to hand to this day. In one respect, however, my culinary skill did not meet with the cordial appreciation due to modest merit, and that was on laying my first "damper" or loaf of colonial unleavened bread before my ravenous confederates. This specimen of high art was most ungratfully declared to be literally a damper to the appetite and the other members of our party, with rare ingratitude asserted that the cook was the only proper person to eat it. In spite, however, of all mishaps and difficulties we enjoyed a good rest from Saturday afternoon until Monday morning, while pausing beneath the shadow of Mount Macedon.

On Monday morning all was bustle and excitement making ready to continue our weary journey. Tents were struck, "Swags" repacked and a hearty breakfast prepared and dispensed by nine o'clock, at which hour we were ready to resume the pilgrimage, we had completed thus far. About an hour after leaving our last camping place, we entered upon

a tract of country locally known as the "Black Forrest" and if our travelling had hitherto been attended with great difficulty from the almost impassable state of the roads, that difficulty was much increased here from the more broken and uneven formation of this part of the country. It was a constant succession of deep hollows and sharp elevations, and as the only known track to Mount Alexander passed through this forrest, every solid foot of the surface had been positively ploughed up by the enormous traffic passing between Melbourne and the diggings. This was a most miserable day's walk, and it was with the greatest exertion possible that we were able to make the distance of eight miles arriving just at dusk in sight of the "Bush Inn" the site of the present thriving town of Gisborne. Before reaching this point our party had become very much scattered, several being almost a mile behind, but as we came in sight of the snug looking little tavern and comprehended at a glance the incapacity of the building to accommodate so large a number, a most exciting race ensued: each striving with might and main to arrive there first so as to secure sleeping room of some kind or other beneath its roof. On arriving breathless and tired out at the Inn we found that every available space on the floors had been already secured by those who had as it were out-ran us in the race and no other course appeared open to us than going out in the fast falling darkness and hastily set up our tent as best we could. This certainly was not an agreeable prospect, but one of our number—that is our own immediate party of six—was quite equal to the emergency, for while endeavouring to come to some arrangement with the tavern keeper he noticed that the dining table was a fine large one and without more ado engaged the use of it for the night, subject to the modest charge of thirty shillings sterling or seven dollars and a half. Upon this extraordinary bedstead the whole six of us slept that night the deep unbroken sleep of worn out nature, completely surrounded by others whose forms were laid out on the floor with mathematical preci-

sion in order that the slightest space should not be wasted.

The following morning (Tuesday,) we rose from our novel bed, feeling much refreshed with the night's rest, and after a hearty breakfast obtained in the Inn we again started forth on our way, arriving late in the evening at Woodend, on the further side of the Black Forest, where we camped for the night, and where in consequence of our nearer approach to that part of the country more especially infested by Bushrangers, we placed and relieved the sentries with greater precision than had hitherto been done. On Wednesday morning we made an early start, but were not able to get beyond Saw-pit Gully, the site of the present village of Elphinstone, which we reached shortly after dark. This place had acquired a dreadful notoriety from the number of robberies and murders committed in its vicinity. From the fact of the country here being very uneven, composed of deep ravines, separated from each other by sharply defined ridges, covered by a heavy frost, and also from the fact that at this particular point, the roads to Forest Creek and Bendigo diverged, this locality had long been a favorite ambuscade for the Bushrangers, and for years after bore a fearful reputation in connection with these gentlemen.

Having pitched our tents as well as possible by the light of the fires we had made, and having disposed of a hurriedly prepared supper, special precautions, by the advice of our guide, the ex-policeman, were taken for the night. The guard was doubled, two being on watch at the fires, while the other two were stationed one on each side of the camp, at such a distance in the bush, that the lights of the fires would not betray their presence to any one approaching from the outside. Notwithstanding these precautions however, a short time before midnight a man suddenly presented himself before me at the fire, near which I was then on guard, and requested permission to stay by until morning, as he had lost his mates or companions while coming through the bush. I was completely thunderstruck as much at the coolness of the fellow, as at the fact that he had actually

entered our camp without giving the slightest alarm to the watch we had so carefully placed, so without loss of time summoned my fellow sentinel from the other fire, to keep watch over our new friend, while I went to the tent in which our guide was sleeping and informed him of the event. As soon as he understood the state of the case, he woke up two more of our party, and sent them off to strengthen the other two outside the camp, with instructions to fire on anyone approaching from the bush beyond, if he did not answer promptly to the first challenge. We maintained a very close watch upon our visitor who tried to look as unconcerned as he possibly could, but failed most miserably. Just as daylight dawned upon the scene, our unwelcome friend rose up from the fire he had been dozing over, and without saying a word to any one walked straight out of the camp, crossed the gully and as he reached the crest of the hill beyond, drew a revolver from his breast pocket and fired a charge in the air, disappearing himself immediately after on the other side of the ridge. This evidently intended signal met with a quick response from two sides of our camp, showing that we had been surrounded by dangerous characters during the darkness, who only waited for, and indeed expected the signal from our strange visitor to attack us in the night.

LITERARY BRIEFLETS.

The publication of the *Civiltà Cattolica*, of Rome, lately suspended, has been resumed.

A novel is said to be forthcoming from Mr. Swinburne's pen.

Mr. C. Gibbon, the author of *Robin Gray*, is engaged in another novel.

Philip Bourke Marston is preparing for the press a volume of poems and sonnets.

Mr. W. C. Hazlitt is compiling a jest-book for a London publisher.

Professor Seeley, author of *Ecc Homo* is to write a volume on *Sir Thomas Moore and his Times*.

THE LUCKY LEG.

"What unaccountable things people do in the way of marrying!" I said to four or five of the ladies belonging to our chapel, who had met at the minister's house, to form a sort of supplementary Dorcas meeting; and as there were so few of us, we considered it unnecessary to attend to the rule for appointing a reader, and forbidding gossip; a rule which considerably lessened the interest and popularity of our meetings.

The only single lady among us looked up on hearing my remark, and dropping her work, as if for a long speech, began:

"What you say is very true: I do think the conduct of people at other times really sensible, during their engagements, and in their choice of husbands or wives, to be the most incomprehensible and contradictory of all human actions. If a woman had a decided prejudice, she is certain to act in direct opposition to it. Last spring I was at a wedding of one of my cousins—you remember her, Mrs Turner, she was over here two or three autumns ago—and, being a High Church woman, she would not so much as put her foot in our chapel. She is a fine majestic looking girl, and has taken lessons in deportment, so that it is quite imposing to see her enter a room or sail down the street; she used to vow she would never marry a little man, a draper, or a dissenter; and now she has just married a very small abject looking draper, who is such a rabid Methodist, that he will preach, though he has to stand on two bosses to raise his head sufficiently above the panels of the pulpit."

"Marriages are quite beyond our own management and contrivance," said Mrs Turner musingly: "my mother was very romantic. In travelling from her father's house to her grandmother's, where she was going to live with the old lady, she had to stay a night in Hereford—it was in the time of coaches, you know—and her father wrote to a glover there, to meet her at the coach-office, and recommend her to an inn. He invited her to stay with her sister instead; and she was so smitten with his manners and appearance, that she said to herself, 'if I ever

marry, I hope it may be to Mr. Harper.'" She went on the next morning, to her grandmother's, and lived with her fourteen years, never seeing or hearing anything of Mr. Harper of Hereford; and she actually refused several good offers during that time. At last her grandmother died; and Mr. Harper being connected with the family, he was invited to the funeral; and an acquaintance followed, which ended in their marriage.

"I am afraid," chimed in Mrs. Hyde, a lady who was a comparative stranger to all of us, "that if I confess the singular circumstances of my marriage, you will none of you think so well of me as I should wish you; but as we are talking of extraordinary matches, I am sure you will be amused at mine. When I was five-and-thirty, I had not had a single offer; partly, I fancy, because I had a twin sister so like me, that no one was sure which he was in love with. Well, I was one of the few women who give up the idea of being married after they have turned thirty, and I settled myself down into a comfortable old-maidism. One afternoon, I was out on some errand or other, when a tradesman, whom I had known all my life, a confirmed bachelor, over forty years of age, overtook me in the street. Before we reached the end of it, he had said, 'Miss Mary, I've had you in my eye a long time: do you think you could be happy as my wife?' and I had answered, 'Yes I really think I should.'" 'Well, then,' he added, 'let us be married without any fuss: and if you want lots of clothes and things as women do, let them come out of my pocket, instead of your poor mother's.' And we were married in three weeks, though, I assure you, I had not the remotest notion of such a thing before that afternoon."

"I will tell you the most marvellous occurrence that ever came under my observation," said our minister's wife, who is a little, merry talkative woman. "My husband and I were, next to the parties themselves, chief actors in it; so I know all the circumstances well. It was in the town where my husband first entered the ministry, and where we had what is called a very united people, which often means," she said shrewdly, "that

everybody knows and deprecates everybody else's failings and inconsistencies. Some years after our call there, a young lady came with her mother to establish, if they could, a millinery business. They belonged to us, and before they arrived a sister of the elder lady called upon us, to announce their intention, and to prepare us for the reception of new members. She told us quite a melancholy story of losses and misfortunes: and, amongst other things, that of the amputation of Miss Wigley's leg. You know my husband is not an unfeeling man; but he had had a very fatiguing sabbath the day before, and his spirits were in that state of reaction which made him inclined to laugh at anything, and he so completely puzzled poor Mrs. James with allusions to Miss Kilmansegg and the merchant of Rotterdam, that the worthy old lady began seriously to recapitulate their pedigree, to prove there was no connection between their families, unless it were on Mr. Wigley's side. For a long time we called Mary Wigley Miss Kilmansegg, when talking to each other. She was a pretty sweet-looking girl, and so long as she sat still she looked unusually attractive; but when she walked, and you saw her obvious limp, or heard the stump of her wooden leg, you no longer wondered that she was unmarried, for she was poor as well, and very far above her present situation. She was altogether unsuited for the business they had commenced, for she had lived in a kind of elegant seclusion until her father's death; indeed he impoverished himself to surround her with recreations and luxuries, to prevent her feeling her deprivation. Excepting that she had quite an artistic appreciation of the harmonies and contrasts of colours, which enabled her to arrange the windows and showrooms with great skill, she had not a single qualification for her work. I have noticed her face flush painfully at the too openly expressed pity of their customers; and their whims and caprices in dress used to surprise and annoy her. Mrs. Wigley, however, was a thorough, clever business woman. She had been a tradesman's daughter, and the fluctuations and anxieties of business were like a game of chance to her. She soon estab-

lished herself in the good graces of the ladies of our town; and, though my husband preached a very powerful sermon on dress (which I made him put off for some months, lest it should injure the strangers), it had no chance against Mrs. Wigley's taste, and the pews in our chapel looked like the gorgeous flowerbeds in a summer garden.

"Mary Wigley soon became one of my dearest friends; she knew a great deal more than I did, and was very accomplished in music and painting, and it really was an incongruity to think of her sitting behind a counter all her life. I remember her coming to sit with me one evening after my little Mary was born, when my husband had an appointment at a missionary meeting. I suppose we were in an unusually happy frame of mind that evening, for my husband was glad to see me up again, and he paid me some of those quiet tender attentions which we who are married, understand so well, and being few and far between, prize so highly. We made no stranger of Mary, and she sat smiling at our affectionate expressions to one another. But when he was gone, and I returned to the study after seeing the children in bed, I found her burying her face in her hands, and crying. Of course I insisted on knowing the cause, and among other things she said, I distinctly remember this:

"If any human influence would make me great or good as a woman, it would be the guardianship of a child of my own—a woman's nature is only half developed till she is a mother."

"What a beautiful remark, and so true," interrupted Mrs. Turner, with tears in her eyes. (She was notorious for neglecting her children.)

"I said it was true," resumed our minister's wife, "and I told her that all my powers of mind and body were doubled by it. 'My husband's love,' I said, 'and my children's dependence make me precious to myself.'"

"And you ask me why I cry," she answered, "when I feel how I could rejoice in these domestic ties, and know I shall never have them. Life is very mono-

tonous and wearisome when one has no interest in the future."

"She should have had more independence and self-respect," murmured our spinster friend.

Without noticing her, the minister's wife continued :

"She looked dreamily into the fire, and with a pretty tremulous motion shook the tears from her dark eyelashes. I could not tell her I thought she would ever be married, because men marry to be helped, or to be amused, or to have some one to be proud of ; and she was a cripple without money. Even my husband said that a wooden leg would be a serious obstacle to any one falling in love.

"The morning after this conversation, Mary went with her mother to Manchester to purchase goods for the spring fashions ; it was quite a painful ordeal to Mary, for she could not endure traversing warehouse after warehouse, and ascending and descending the innumerable flights of stairs, with the stump of her wooden leg upon the bare boards everywhere announcing her approach ; it annoyed her to see people look round to see who was coming, and it really seemed as if she never could reconcile herself to the duties imposed upon her.

The last day has passed, and she was walking wearily homewards, congratulating herself in having finished the business that brought them from their quiet country town ; she lingered for a minute to look at an engraving which had caught her artistic eye, when a gentleman, standing behind her, placing a letter in her hand, said hurriedly, "let me beg of you to grant my request ;" and, before she could recover her self-possession, was lost in the crowd, passing and repassing in the thronged street.

"Mary hastened on her way to the lodging where she expected to find her mother ; and briefly recounting her adventure, opened the letter with curiosity. It contained the following lines :

"If the young lady who receives this note will kindly send her address in the enclosed envelope, that which may have appeared an obstacle to her settling in life, may eventually prove to her advantage."

"The astonishment of both Mrs. Wigley and Mary were indescribable ; Mrs. Wigley poured forth a torrent of questions which Mary was unable to answer ; she had not seen the stranger, and all she knew was, that he had a pleasant voice. Of course, with the becoming bashfulness and sense of propriety of a young lady, she wished the matter to be passed over in silent contempt ; but to this her mother, who was a widow, would by no means consent.

"You do not know what it may lead to," she said : "however hoax or no hoax I shall follow it up ; I hate a thing dropping through and hearing no more of it."

"Accordingly soon after they returned home, Mrs. Wigley sent her address and her daughter's name in the directed envelope, and the next post brought a letter written to the mother. It was not long, and I remember the substance of it.

"DEAR MADAM,—Let me apologise for my presumption in seeking to form your acquaintance and that of your daughter, whose appearance arrested my attention the first moment I saw her. If she would honour me by a correspondence, under your sanction, we should learn something of each other's character. Do not imagine me to be trifling ; I desire to be a sincere friend to her ; and farther acquaintance may greatly conduce to our mutual happiness. Believe me to be, with the most profound respect, dear Madam,

"Yours very truly,
FREDERICK WILLIAMS."

"Mrs. Wigley persisted in making Mary write ; and, though it was no easy matter to compose a fitting answer to such a letter, she wrote with a charming measure of good sense and reserve. Mr. Williams prosecuted the correspondence with great earnestness and his letters manifested a well-educated and intellectual mind.

"So long as Mary was acting against her own inclination and judgment, she did not choose to mention the matter to me ; but as her interest in her unknown correspondent increased, she could not conceal from me her frequent pre-occupation of mind, and in the course of a month she fully confided in me. My husband regarded it in a very different

light to what we did, and he urged Mary not to be entangled in any affair so indefinite and uncertain.

"Let me write to Mr Williams," he said, "and he will see you have a friend able and willing to protect you. I will tell him I shall advise you not to continue a correspondence so calculated to unsettle you."

"Do you think this stranger is trying to impose upon Mary?" I asked, when she was gone; and my husband was writing his letter.

"I think he may have been misled by her appearance," he answered. "In those days there is no judging a person's position by her dress: and Mary might be a countess. It is an unaccountable affair altogether; but this letter will effect something, for I have made it very strong."

"Mr. Williams promptly answered my husband's letter, and requested some information respecting Miss Wigley's family position and character. My husband replied something to this effect.

"Miss Wigley is the daughter of a surgeon, who left her and her mother in very reduced circumstances; they have maintained themselves by a respectable millinery business. Her education was that of a lady, and her character is such as to make her the chosen and intimate friend of my wife. So strong an interest I feel in her welfare, that I should carefully investigate the principles and circumstances of any one paying his addresses to her. You may not be aware that the limp, observable in her gait, is owing to the total loss of a limb; this circumstance has materially militated against her settlement in life.

"The next Sunday Mary and I had scarcely taken our usual seats (she sat with me, as our pew was near the door, and she avoided attracting the notice of the congregation), when the chapel-keeper showed a stranger into our pew. He was a tall military-looking man, with dark hair and moustache, which marked him of a different stamp to the usual frequenters of a chapel, for who can associate the ideas of unworldliness and moustaches! A beard is more patriarchal and even Scriptural. The stranger bowed to

us, and then composed himself into an attitude of profound attention. He presented himself again at evening service, and my husband remarked to me, as we walked home: "I imagine he is a Polish or Hungarian refugee, and to-morrow he will call with a petition."

"But the next morning early there came a note, inviting my husband to dine with Mr. Williams at six that evening, at the principal hotel in our town. He threw the note to me with a comical mixture of consideration and fun.

"This is really getting a serious affair," he said. "I will go out and see if I can meet this stranger somewhere, and take my measure of him."

"I remained at home on thorns of curiosity and suspense till my husband returned; he was already delighted with Mr. Williams's intelligence, information, &c., and said so much about them, that I thought they had forgotten Mary.

"By no means," he said, "I have invited Mr. Williams to meet her here to-morrow evening, and we must invite a few friends, who are not in the secret, to take off the awkwardness,"

"With the first dawn of morning I was up, and before Mary had left her bed-room, I was there announcing to her mother the actual impending interview with their unknown correspondent. Mary's agitation was extreme, quite hysterical in fact, but Mrs. Wigley most judiciously entered into a discussion upon her dress, and I left her tolerably composed.

"It was a busy and anxious morning to us all; my husband passed it with his new friend, and, at the appointed hour, when I had engaged to be ready to receive him, and wonderful to say not before, he brought him, and introduced him to me. Nothing could surpass the suavity and easy politeness of his manner and in a few minutes I felt as if I had known him all my life. I watched him when we heard Mary's step in the passage, and his eyes lighted up with a pleasant smile; she looked really beautiful after the first awkwardness of meeting him; her dress was the most elegant and becoming her mother's taste could advise, while her heightened colour and eyes cast

down till the long lashes rested on her glowing cheeks, sufficiently betrayed her agitation. The evening passed pleasantly in social unconstrained conversation, in which the stranger took an animated part, and when we separated he asked permission to escort Mary and her mother home. I ran up-stairs and watched them with intense interest till they turned the corner of the street.

"Not to lengthen my story, I will tell you at once that he soon proposed and was accepted, after having satisfied my husband that he was neither an impostor nor a papist; indeed, notwithstanding his worldly appearance, he had really very proper sentiments.

"Mary and Mr. Williams were very happy for a few lovely summer days, and then it became necessary for him to return to Manchester; when this necessity was forced upon him he came to us to beg that I would aid him in persuading Mary to accompany her mother and me on a visit to his house, where, he said we might find some alterations to propose; he had waited to obtain our sanction and acceptance of his invitation before he had named it to Mary. My husband was highly pleased with the plan, and we had little difficulty in inducing Mary to acquiesce to it.

Mr. Williams preceded us by a few days, and then he met us at the Bank Top station. To our astonishment our humble luggage—and how humble it did look I cannot describe—was consigned to the care of two livery servants, while he conducted us, with great empressement to an elegant carriage which was waiting in the station-yard. In silence and astonishment we were conveyed rapidly through the thronged streets to one of the pleasant suburbs about four miles from town, where we alighted at a magnificent residence surrounded with pleasure-grounds and numerous tokens of wealth. Within everything was on a fitting scale, and I who had noticed Mary's increasing paleness, as she had leaned back in the carriage silent and wondering, was not surprised to see her burst into a flood of tears when Mr. Williams welcomed her to her future home. How he soothed her and manifested love-like concern and

attention, of course I need not describe; but, at last, she grew calm enough to bear with equanimity the sight of a charming little room fitted up expressly for herself.

"One soon accustoms one's-self to pleasant things; in a few hours the elegancies surrounding us, instead of oppressing, elevated our spirits. Mrs. Wigley and I enjoyed them thoroughly; the stately housekeeper, the obsequious servants, the conservatories, the elegant equipages belonged to us, and were part of our pomp and state; while Mary was so engrossed with Mr. Williams as to be almost oblivious of her grandeur. I like to see lovers, and those two were love-like enough to satisfy me.

"We had been three or four days in Manchester, when Mr. Williams proposed to drive us to Durham Park: Mrs. Wigley cared little for rural pleasures, and preferred the enjoyment of the consequence about her; so Mary and I went alone with Mr. Williams. If ever mortal enjoyed perfect worldly happiness it was Mrs. Wigley when she watched her daughter driving out in the carriage of the man she was going to marry. She re-entered the house with a full blown delight. In great benignity of spirit she entered into conversation with the stately housekeeper, and naturally introduced Mr. Williams' name.

"I do not know any Mr. Williams', said the housekeeper.

"Goodness gracious!" cried Mrs. Wigley, "who then is the owner of these domains—of this mansion, these carriages, this grandeur? Who is the gentleman who is driving out my daughter and friend?"

"That is Mr. Gordon," replied the housekeeper, "the servants have noticed madam, that you all called him by another name, and some said it was Mr. Williams, but I did not think so; his name is Frederick William Gordon, and if he is deceiving you, ma'am, I think it is only just to put you on your guard. To be sure he is the owner of this property, but there is never any good in hiding one's proper name."

"In this Mrs. Wigley so heartily agreed, that she immediately wrote to my

husband in much perplexity and tribulation: and after a long deliberation, she decided upon not disturbing us with the discovery till she received his answer.

"We had a delightful day at Durham. I do not make a bad third, and so often found objects of interest to engage my attention, that the others really grew unconscious of my presence. We returned late in the afternoon and found Mrs. Wigley moody and taciturn. Mr. Williams and Mary sat apart and conversed in low tones throughout the evening, while I lounged luxuriously in an easy-chair, and mentally reviewed the events which had domiciled us amidst so much magnificence.

"The next morning Mr. Williams met us with a grave and pre-occupied air, and addressed Mary with a kind of tender melancholy; Mrs. Wigley was constrained and rather fretful, and we others falling into their mood, the breakfast was a dull and brief meal. Then, with the unconscious ceremony that one uses when ill at ease, Mr. Williams invited us into the library, and opening a drawer, took out numerous bunches of keys.

"Ladies," he said, "you have done me the honour of visiting me with the intention—at least on my part—of having such alterations made in my house and establishment as may seem desirable to you. These keys will open every lock in the house, and you will oblige me by devoting this day to making such inspection as you please. There is no key you may not use, and no paper which you, Mary, may not read; but you will make discoveries that will surprise you, and perhaps influence you against me. I shall leave home for the day, to give you an opportunity for an investigation, but I shall most impatiently wait your decision on my return."

"He was gone before any of us could answer, and we were left gazing at one another in profound astonishment. The atmosphere of mystery in which we had been living was thickening to a dense fog, and we were half afraid to grope to the light that was offered to us. Mary positively refused to avail herself of Mr. Williams's absence.

"Let us do nothing," she said, "and

leave it to him to explain himself when he comes home. It is so noble and honourable in him to act so, that I could not bear to abuse his generosity."

"But an intense curiosity was devouring Mrs. Wigley and me, and human nature could not endure such a disappointment.

"It is your duty to yourself, my child," said the mother, "to take every justifiable means for learning Mr. Williams' character and circumstances; he has put the means in your power, and it is unjust to your own common sense and to mine not to use them."

"My dear Mary," I urged, "you certainly should reflect that little more than a month ago none of us knew this gentleman; and it is evidently his wish that you should discover for yourself some secret, and spare him the pain of a verbal explanation."

"Do as you please," replied Mary weeping, "but let me at least trust to his honour and affection. There can be nothing to conceal where there is such open frankness."

"We certainly shall do nothing against your wish," said Mrs. Wigley crossly, "but I must say you are very foolish, and you quite forget that you have no father to act for you in these affairs. It will be a very long tiresome day with nothing in the world to do. You are too scrupulous, or sentimental."

"O mother!" Mary answered, "I know you ought to be allowed to do what your judgment dictates; so pray take the keys and use them on my account; only do not ask me to join you."

"Mrs. Wigley and I rose with alacrity, and proceeded to get the aid of the housekeeper; how we tried keys and wearied over refractory locks; how we turned over drawers and long-unopened boxes which were filled with dresses and articles of feminine adornment; how we ransacked the china-closets and plate-chest, and rummaged through the stores of linen; how we went back to the library from time to time to report progress. All the fatigues, and labour, and excitement of that morning I cannot describe to you. At luncheon refreshed and strengthened, my spirits rose to my circumstances:

"This is quite a Blue Beard affair Mary," I remarked to my languid friend. "Mr. Williams has always had something of a suspicious and ferocious aspect. I shall not be surprised if we come upon a closet of skeletons, or bodies of deceased wives preserved in large bottles of spirits of wine."

"Horrible," she interrupted; "you forgot, too, that he has left us all his keys, and not forbidden us the use of any."

"There is something to be concealed, however," said her mother. "He has paid his addresses to you under an assumed name, and that has a suspicious look."

"Are you sure of it, mother?" exclaimed Mary, her face colouring with excitement. "How did you find it out?"

"Mrs. Wigley then recounted to us the discovery of the preceding day, which she had intended to keep secret till she heard from my husband; instead of the weeping and hysterics I expected, Mary displayed great energy of character.

"Nay then mother," she cried, "it is time for me to open my eyes; I will work with you now."

"So the search re-commenced with ardour, it was no longer in linen-chests and china-closets. We rifled desks and cabinets, and curiously constructed drawers, of their contents, and poured bundles upon bundles of letters and papers into Mary's lap; we found banking accounts and cheque-books, and indications of wealth; deeds and wills, and rolls of yellow parchment tied up with red tape; but still nothing to satisfy our curiosity. Our labour continued unintermitting, for the evening was drawing on, and we began to regret the wasted minutes of the morning. The mystery, like an ignis fatuus, appeared to fly before us.

"At last all seemed to have been passed under our scrutiny, and nothing was discovered. Then Mrs. Wigley and I left Mary to replace the documents strewn about the library, and proceeded once again on our explorations, with the housekeeper for a pioneer.

"In a few minutes we stood before a mysterious-looking door in Mr. Gordon's dressing-room:

"I never saw that open," said the

housekeeper; "it is two years since I was engaged by Mr. Gordon to officiate as the superintendent of his household, but no one has ever passed through that door except himself. I do not think you will find any key for it, ladies."

"We tried every key on the bunch, but the door yielded to none. I flew down stairs to Mary.

"We have found Blue Beard's closet," I cried, "and there is no key for it; — come, come, we must not waste a moment."

"Every nerve I had quivered with impatience while Mary slowly ascended the stairs. How slowly and sluggish all the movements were. But, in time, she stood with us before the low, narrow door, and with hands trembling from eagerness, she shook it till the handle rattled noisily, but yielded nothing to her grasp.

"Here then," she said, turning and facing us with a gastly smile; "here is the secret we seek."

"At this moment we heard the loud ringing of a bell, and the sound of a man's step and voice in the entrance-hall.

"Blue Beard is come back!" I cried with a vague feeling of apprehension, mingled with a keen sense of the absurdity of our position. I stole quietly into the gallery, and with jealous caution peered into the lobby below. There stood my husband. With an exclamation of relief, I again flew down the stairs and threw my arms around him, crying, "O, I am glad your are come!" His face was stern and grave, and he looked prepared for storms. I drew him into the library and hastily explained our position. As I spoke his eye rested upon a heap of papers on the sofa, and instantly detected a ring containing three keys. I seized them joyfully, and ran up-stairs, closely followed by my husband. Mary was leaning against the locked door in the quietness of sheer exhaustion, and large tears were falling slowly from her eyes upon the floor. With irrepressible eagerness she snatched the keys from me; and at once fitted the largest into the lock; but, before she could turn it, my hus-

band's restraining hand was laid upon her arm.

"Mary," he said, "I advise you as your friend not to open this closet, but wait and ask Mr. Gordon for an explanation of his very mysterious conduct. What there may be to affect your future happiness we can none of us conjecture, but at present it is his secret. Let it remain so."

"It is too late to wait now," answered Mrs. Wigley impatiently, "they have roused our curiosity, and it shall be satisfied at any cost. I wish to know the worst."

"To own the truth, I was heartily glad of the old lady's decision, though it was opposed to my husband's judgment. I, too, was consumed by an inextinguishable curiosity to fathom our enigma. Behind the door lay the mysteries that had been all the day arranging themselves into numberless forms within our busy brains, and now to wait for Mr. Gordon's return, and then perhaps to be denied an explanation, was a moral impossibility. Mary slowly but resolutely opened the door, and we all, even my husband, looked into the unlighted closet with an intense gaze; but there was manifested no scene of horror or mechanism for future purposes. In the darkness there was shaped out only two small mahogany boxes, something like violin-cases; here, then, lay the very core and kernel of our haunting mystery—the solving of the problem on which Mary's future life depended.

"Nothing could have stayed us now. Mary rapidly detached one of the keys from me, and we knelt down to fit them into the minute locks of the mahogany cases. We raised the lids simultaneously, and our eager, earnest eyes fell upon two wooden legs.

"I scarcely know what we felt the first few minutes. It was a relief; for though our suspense was over, our astonishment was not lessened. We had not the dignity of being horror-stricken, nor the indignation of being hoaxed: we were passively astonished. Mary silently relocked the cases and the closet, and we adjourned quietly to the library. A spirit of deep musing had fallen upon us

all. Out of the profound abyss of contemplation, suggestion after suggestion was summoned; but none could satisfy us, or explain all the circumstances of the case.

"We felt great excitement when the return of the master of the house was heard. Mary threw herself back into her chair, and my husband and Mrs. Wigley rose to meet him as he entered the room. Glancing keenly round on our attitudes of expectations, and on the littered room, he advanced and placed himself behind Mary's chair.

"Permit me," he said, "to give you an intelligible explanation of my conduct before you reproach me for my secrecy. My father made a match for me when I was very young, with a relative who possessed much wealth, but who had suffered an amputation. She died about two years after our marriage, and bequeathed her property to me, on condition that if I married again it should be to a woman similarly afflicted. A few years after, I met with a lady possessing the necessary qualification, and gifted with so much sweetness and amiability of temper, that I loved her truly. It suited me to watch over and protect her, and we were very happy, but for a few months only. Thus it happened that, while quite a young man, I was a widower for the second time. My last wife, with a caprice at variance with her usual character, had made a similar will to my first wife's; and though I would have given up their united fortunes had I found any one whom I could love, these circumstances tended to invest a cripple with peculiar interest in my eyes, and I have made it a rule to seek the acquaintance of those I met. As my position and presumed object became known, I was made the victim of several unworthy artifices, so that I determined to make all future advances under an assumed name,—as I did to you Mary. At first I was pleased with the notion that you loved me for myself; but when I came to know your excellencies, your cultivated intellect, your delicate sense of honour, and your modest reserve, I did not dare to confess I had deceived you, until I had called to my aid the adventitious influences of position and for-

tune, and by them won over your friends to my side. Yet when you were here, I had not courage to tell you personally, and I suffered you to find it out for yourself."

"Sir," interrupted Mary, rising, "I am ashamed to say that I have been guilty of contemptible curiosity this day; but I have not read your papers. Forgive me, this is the last time I shall ever doubt you."

"But what caused your very belligerent aspect?" said Mr. Gordon to my husband, after he and Mary had settled the question of forgiveness. "I thought you and Mrs. Wigley were both going to attack me; and if you did not know I had been twice a widower, what occasioned your solemn manner of reception?"

"The two wooden legs!" I replied.

"In four months after their first meeting, we had the grandest wedding that was ever seen in our chapel; which was registered for the celebration of marriages. Mary and Mr. Gordon left the town in great glory.

"Since then we have often visited them: and my own little Mary is now being educated with their children.

"I believe the two wooden legs still remain in the dark little closet; but there is no apparent probability of a third defunct limb at present."

"We ought to be more patient under deprivations," added our minister's wife; "for who knows all the advantages of disadvantages?"

The writings of Herbert Spencer have found a Russian translator, though no version of them has yet been made in French or German.

Mr. Garrett, Director of Public Instruction in Mysore, is preparing a classical dictionary of all the Indian deities and mythical personages.

The British and Foreign Unitarian Association will publish at an early date a new edition of *The History of the Corruptions of Christianity*.

The first part of Prof. Seeley's edition of Livy will appear shortly, with a preface and long dissertation.

(For the Canadian Literary Journal.)

THE RETURN OF SPRING.

BY J. G. MANDY, JR.

Now Spring with smiles and whisp'rings low,
Breathes on the pulses of the land;
The streamlets softly stealing flow,
The breezes pipe their music; and
The earth once bare is over spread
With emerald-woven carpeting:
A softer grace o'er all is shed,
The groves with choirs of thrushes ring.

Blue is the sky, and bright the sun;
His broadening influence is felt,
His rays already have begun
To wake what through wide Nature slept.

Now wakes the heart to joy and hope,
Now bounds the soul with throbs of love;
No more in shadow-land we grope,
We smile as smiles the sky above.

We walk through Nature, and we feel,
On plain and hill, or through the dale,
Delicious dreamings o'er us steal,
Sweet phantasies of hope prevail.

We cast away the weight of cares,
We feel the joy, which Spring-time makes;
When Winter his rude rule forbears,
And Spring comes smiling o'er our lakes.

Now when sweet Hope steals fondly o'er
Our hearts, let us adore the good,
And teach ourselves to evermore,
Do less we should not, more we should.

Then in each flower, and each blade
Of grass, and in all Nature, we
Shall more distinctly see conveyed
The teachings of Divinity.

Two short treatises on Pennsylvania German are in course of compilation, a grammar by Prof. Notz, and a vocabulary by Mr. Rauch.

M. Louis Blanc is preparing a history of the siege of Paris, the incidents of which he follows with the closest attention.

Boucicault is reported to have written, translated, and adapted more than 200 plays, and to have realized upon them over \$1,000,000.

The Canadian Literary Journal

CONTEMPORARY PERIODICALS.

MAY, 1871.

NEW SERIES, CHANGE OF NAME.

As intimated in the April number of the "JOURNAL," we are determined to make our new issue one which will in every way compare favorably with the best English Periodicals.

By consulting the Prospectus enclosed, some idea of the changes and improvements about to be made, can be formed. Owing to the rather unwieldy character of the name "CANADIAN LITERARY JOURNAL," we have concluded to discard it and to call the publication beginning with the second volume, simply "THE CANADIAN MAGAZINE;" and we have determined that such experience and enterprise will be brought to bear as will make it truly the Magazine of Canada. We have been fortunate in securing as Editor, the services of Robert Ridgway, Esq., an able and experienced Journalist, who has during the space of over twenty years contributed extensively to different English Periodicals. We have also concluded arrangements with Mrs. Craik, (Miss Mulock,) Author of "John Halifax, Gentleman, &c.," for the copyright of her new serial, now in course of preparation. It is our intention to illustrate both this and the Canadian serial, "Royalists and Loyalists," the illustrations for which are now being prepared by Mr. Damoureaux, of Toronto. Mr. Irving the new member of the firm, will at once proceed to the appointment of agents to whom liberal inducements are offered.

The fact of this being the second extension the proprietors have made within the space of one year, and that they are even now supplying a "JOURNAL" to their subscribers much larger than was contemplated when the subscriptions were taken, must convince the people of Canada, that the publishers are persistent in their resolve of furnishing a periodical which will in every respect be a credit to the Dominion. Editors will oblige by noticing briefly the above changes.

On our table we have the May numbers of the leading American and Canadian periodicals. Harper's Monthly is as usual replete with its Monthly store of good literature. The various papers are interesting and while this Magazine ranks foremost in circulation, it is one of the best repositories of periodical literature on this continent. SCRIBNER'S MONTHLY for May is excellent. Under the careful attention of Dr. Holland, its pages are brilliant with a pleasing variety of literature, and this well conducted Monthly bids fair to rank amongst the foremost periodicals of the day. One particular attraction in the present issue is a pleasing paper on "Reminiscences of Charlotte Bronte." Anything relating to this talented Authoress is always read with avidity by her thousands of admirers, and we would commend to them the present article written by a school-mate of the Haworth genius. The late numbers of the Canadian Illustrated News are very acceptable. The elaborate and truthful pictures of the Marriage of the Marquis of Lorne and the Princess Louise, are worthy of note, and the enterprise of the publisher is deserving of the support of every true Canadian. PETERSON'S LADIES' MAGAZINE is as usual a perfect treasure. It has the largest circulation of any Ladies Magazine in America, and is deserving of it, both in the choice of its literary selections and its profuse illustration. Peterson is well known. The WAVERLEY MAGAZINE, known in almost every household, is regularly received, embodying a quantity of literature which for variety and cheapness cannot be excelled. We would commend each of our readers who has a taste for music, to subscribe for PETERS MUSICAL MONTHLY. The May number is to hand, full of choice music. S. R. Wells' Monthly, the PHRENOLOGICAL JOURNAL for May is before us. The present number presents unusual attractions, and particularly worthy of notice is THE TRAVELLER, Goldsmith's great poem, which is now being published in it, with profuse illustrations. APPLETON'S JOURNAL, comes weekly, maintaining fully its high standard among the periodical publications. The Appletons are doing much for the literature of America, in their Monthly, and we doubt not but they receive an appreciative support from the thousands who welcome a Journal of the highest literary class.

Ballous Monthly comes to us with its usual quota of pleasing articles while the wide circulation it enjoys, tells plainly how well it is appreciated. Agriculturists and Horticulturists, in fact every one who takes any interest directly or indirectly in these two branches of industry would do well to subscribe for "The American Agriculturist." The interesting amount of matter and the large number of beautiful illustrations in this periodical make it a desirable luxury, nay necessity to thousands. ARTHUR'S LADIES' HOME MAGAZINE and CHILDREN'S HOUR, as usual present a pleasant variety of interesting and instructive reading matter.

We have received the Prospectus of a new weekly paper about to be published in Toronto, entitled "PURE GOLD." Should the proprietors effect all they promise, and we hope they will, they will issue a Journal well worthy the support of everyone who wishes to see a healthy, moral, and elevating class of literature take the place of the great amount of trash stuff that seem to be hailed with so much pleasure by many readers. We earnestly hope the enterprise will be a great success, and that PURE GOLD will continue long to shine undimmed in literature as in metal, for all time. Mr. Geo. H. Flint of this City is the publisher of the Journal for the proprietors.

We beg briefly to refer to the "CANADIAN MAGAZINE," which is dealt with it, at length in our Editorial elsewhere. Volume two, will witness the change of name in our Magazine. The cover will be quite a new design, the size of the Journal greatly increased, and the Magazine illustrated, while the articles will be from the pens of some of the best living writers. We promise our many readers something of superior merit, during the coming year of our publication.

The publishers urgently request that all subscribers who are as yet in arrears with their

subscription, will remit the amount to them at once, as they are desirous of having everything settled before the issue of the new volume. Our friends will be good enough we trust to remit the \$1 cts. by return post.

Fifty-five hundred copies of Hans Anderson's latest story, *Lykke Peer*, were printed for the first edition in Denmark; a remarkable large venture for that little country.

Victor Hugo was a quiet spectator of the siege of Paris, but far from an unobservant or passive looker-on; and he now sends forth to the nations a valuable lesson in the form of an allegory.

George Sand, though in her 67th year, contemplates a long journey through the Orient the coming spring, for the purpose of collecting materials for a new work, *Religions of the East*.

In the British Museum are a number of cases bequeathed by Francis Douce, the well-known literary antiquary, on condition that they are not to be opened until the year 1900. No one is aware of their contents.

Geo. Augustus Sala has a book about France in preparation. Mr. Sala has sued the publishers of Mr. Friswell's work, *Modern Men of Letters Honestly Criticised*, a book in which his personal peculiarities and private habits are handled in the most offensive manner.

Prof. Weber, of Berlin, is printing a romanized edition of the *Samhita of the Black Yajur Veda*. This is the only *Samhita* now remaining unprinted. The Bengal Asiatic Society are publishing an edition with *Sayana's Commentary*, in their *Bibliotheca Indica*, two volumes of which have already appeared.

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