

A CANADIAN JOURNAL OF LITERATURE AND LIFE.

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Editor and Proprietor.

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Editorial Notes.

THE QUEBEC BUDGET.

QUEBEC financiers should take to heart the sublime yet practical maxims of Wilkins Micawber. Income £20; expenditure, £19 19s. 6d.; result happiness. Income £20, and expenditure £20 0s. 6d.; result misery. Yet the nearest approach to economy that the new finance minister can promise is a deficit of a million and three-quarters for the first year, another deficit of a million and a quarter for the next, and a probable balance between income and expenditure for the third. We fear that before three years have passed he will say with the late champion wit and stutterer of New York, "I've been b-b-burning the candle so long at b-both ends that I'm p-p-precious near the middle."

THE TONIC OF SUCCESS.

THE remarks made at such times as these on the health of our leading statesmen seem to point to the conclusion that their nerves and constitutions are strained by the responsibilities and toils of leadership to a point incompatible with robust health, and that only the stimulus of hope or the elation of success can keep them always strung up to concert pitch. They are overtrained, as a jockey would say. Sir John meets the House in great force and high spirits, but Mr. Blake has been complaining of ill-health ever since the elections left him with only a more respectable minority than before. Every one remembers how Sandfield Macdonald's defeat hastened his death, and how Mr. Mackenzie's health was entirely shattered by the disastrous general election of 1878 and the events which followed thereafter. Despite the disease that was fated to be the death of Sandfield Macdonald, and the overwork that had already told so heavily on Mr. Mackenzie's iron constitution, there is no doubt that either would have been physically benefited by the tonic of success that braces the nerves of jaded ambition like a draught of the elixir of life.

THE DUTY ON BOOKS.

THE publishers and the booksellers are at issue on the question of the proposed increase in the duty on imported stationery and cheap literature. The booksellers are not free-traders, but they plainly see that an increased duty means a reduction in the volume of their business. It would do little to increase the sale of books of Canadian publication, and would cut off a large supply of cheap literature of the purest and most wholesome kind. The public, who are buying largely of the stores of English classics now placed at their disposal, think that the present price, which is about 50 per cent. above that paid in England, is quite high enough, and the result of an increased duty will simply mean a curtailment of expenditure in that direction, not an increased demand for literature published here. English books are now sold so largely that it would not pay to publish in Canada. The taste which the reading of such works cultivates is distinctly in favour of the better class of books published here, and destroys all fondness for flashy and debasing fiction. We hope the Government may take the side of the booksellers, and do nothing that may encourage the sale of the worst class of Canadian publications.

THE REGISTRAR-GENERAL'S REPORTS.

SOME of our contemporaries are giving selections from the recently-issued volume of the Registrar-General. We are always grateful for valuable information, whencesoever it may be obtained; but are we really expected to accept seriously any remarks founded on these returns as if they were matters of fact? While a fact completely stated is valuable in proportion to its rarity, a selection of half-facts is as uncertain, and of about as much practical use, as a chameleon. Our vital statistics are half or even three-quarter facts, published with the pomp and circumstance of official authority to mislead unwary theorists. The ancient Larnspex who could pass another of the craft without a smile must find a parallel in the Deputy Registrar who can without a wink present to his official chief the statements that Canada's birth-rate is 22 in 1,000, and that of England 50 per cent. greater! Even poor Ireland, with her load of pauperism, landlordism, and the emigration that drains off the young and vigorous, has a better showing than Canada—24 in 1,000. The number of centenarians, 23 of whom died within the year, would be a most remarkable fact but for the significant limitation that only one was a native-born Canadian, and hence the other 22 were probably the only witnesses to the event of their own birth. Can any one suggest a means for bringing these (in more

than one sense) imposing collections of figures within at least a measurable distance of completeness?

THE SAULT STE. MARIE CANAL.

THE tongue-valiant politicians of the United States have been quieter since the passage of the Retaliation Bill, and the beard of the British lion has been hanging peacefully from his chin. President Cleveland's intimation that the subject will be treated in a manner consistent with the dignity of two great nations will tend to dampen still further the ardour of vote-hunting patriots, and the Canadian Parliament may be trusted to maintain the dignity of our own position as conservators of our undoubted rights. Blustering patriots on this side may make the most of the Government proposal to build a Canadian canal at the Sault Ste. Marie, as a means of rendering our lake navigation quite independent of any Retaliation Bill, but the Ministry will no doubt claim that it is also a sound commercial speculation, for the American canal is often overcrowded, and the growth of lake traffic will in a few years provide work for another great artery of trade. Only those who have seen the American locks in operation during the busy season can form any idea of the magnitude of the business between Superior and her sister lakes.

THE BOOM IN REAL ESTATE.

THE idea is gaining ground among certain staid and prudent people in our fair city that the real estate business in Toronto is being a little overdone. So far as the thickly-settled districts are concerned, it is difficult to believe that this idea has any solid foundation. The highest prices realized are indicative of a brisk, healthy demand, but there is no sign of inflation, and indeed there are few parts of the city where real property can be said to have reached a high level. In some of the remoter suburbs, perhaps, land is bringing its full value—probably more—but everything tends to prove that Toronto is destined to be a great city, and that at no distant date. There may now and then be a temporary lull in her prosperity, but, so far as human foresight extends, her future is assured, and her expansion will be rapid and far. It is certainly well that Torontonians should bear in mind the past history of Winnipeg and Portage la Prairie, but it is far from desirable that they should become imbued with want of confidence in the prospect ahead. What would they think if a state of things prevailed here correspondent to that in Kansas City? K. C. is of much more recent date than Toronto. Its history extends over less than four decades. It has an enterprising and rapidly-growing population, but its future can by no means be regarded as a matter of certainty. In hardly any material respect will it bear comparison with Toronto. Yet, marvellous to relate, land on the principal business street has within the last few days been sold at \$6,000 per foot—nearly three times the price of the costliest business sites in St. Louis and San Francisco. This certainly looks like inflation, and that of the wildest and most amazing kind. But we shall have abundant time for reflection before we reach any such conditions in Toronto.

AN IMPROVED METHOD OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

THERE are disadvantages attending the separate legislative powers of the American States and the Canadian Provinces, but there is at any rate one large and patent advantage—a wide range of experiment in domestic legislation. The relative values of prohibition, local option and high license will soon be tested with a completeness that can leave little to desire. The abolition of capital punishment has had at least a partial probation, and now comes the State of Pennsylvania with the first attempt to substitute death by electricity for modes of despatch more or less bloody or barbarous. Such a new mode of "shuffling off this mortal coil" will be quicker than even the guillotine, and unlike the other Happy Despatch, will be altogether painless. When Professor Tyndall received accidentally a dangerously powerful charge, he knew nothing, he tells us, till he recovered from its effects, and it required some little reflection to tell him what kind of experience he had gone through.

MR. PARNELL ON THE RAGGED EDGE.

SHOULD the horrible charge brought by the London *Times* against Mr. Parnell turn out to be well founded, the cause of Home Rule for Ireland—indeed the cause of Ireland generally—will have been thrown back for at least half a century. The English radicals have hitherto stood by their Irish allies through good and evil report, and have been held up to contumely among their own countrymen on the score of their association with traitors and murderers. But even the most advanced phase of English radicalism will stand aghast at this stupendous revelation—assuming it to be a genuine revelation—and will wash its hands of Irish patriotism for a generation to come. During the last year or two Mr. Gladstone has proved that he can swallow a good deal on the chance of regaining political power, but even the G.O.M. will be compelled to draw the line somewhere. His reputation, great as it is, would be irretrievably shattered were he to continue to maintain an alliance with a leader who deliberately and in writing sanctioned the programme of assassination and the resultant murder of Burke and Cavendish. All this, of course, runs upon the assumption of Mr. Parnell's guilt—an assumption which, in the present incomplete state of our knowledge on the subject, would be unjustifiable. Mr. Parnell himself denies the charge in the most explicit terms, seemingly with all the righteous indignation of a true man. It appears inconceivable, too, that one notoriously cautious and discreet by nature, and whose surroundings during the past ten years have been of a kind to develop those qualities to the fullest extent, should have been so foolhardy—to use no harsher term—as to put such diabolical sentiments in plain black and white. On the other hand, circumstances have an ugly look. The *Times* is not a paper given to working up fictitious sensations. It is on all hands acknowledged to be the leading journal of the world, and its reputation is of a kind which it cannot afford to imperil. Financially speaking, it represents millions, and such a charge as the one it has brought, if unfounded, would subject it to consequences hardly less formidable

than the charge itself. The charge, moreover, has been made in clear and explicit terms, and has been coupled with a series of other charges almost as grave. It cannot be pretended that there has been any mistake or misunderstanding. A fac simile of the letter itself has been given to the world, with Mr Parnell's signature appended thereto. If Mr. Parnell is innocent he has no option. He must indict the *Times*, and bring to bear upon it the utmost rigour of the criminal law. If he is guilty, it is high time for the world to know him for what he really is.

THE BEST KIND OF LIBERALISM.

THE munificent liberality of Sir Donald Smith and Sir George Stephen, in devoting half a million dollars each to the founding of an hospital for the sick in Montreal, is a matter deserving of hearty recognition on the part of the entire newspaper press of Canada. There are few citizens of our young Dominion who are financially in a position to emulate such a princely example as this, but the endowment can hardly fail to stir up some of our wealthy men to acts of charity and benevolence on a scale more commensurate with their means. It cannot truthfully be said that such an example was wholly unneeded. Most readers will remember the case of a very rich man who died in Toronto not many years since. He probably left behind him more wealth than either Sir Donald Smith or Sir George Stephen can call their own. Yet he was never known to do a really kind or generous deed. Nobody, not even himself, was the better for his great possessions, and hundreds were considerably the worse. He died and was buried, leaving dry eyes behind him. A grey granite mausoleum was erected over his remains, and there was an end to him. Nobody bears him in tearful remembrance. The widow, the orphan and the incurable invalid do not rise up and bless his name. Such an incarnation of utter greed and selfishness is not often met with, but he turns up sometimes, and when he does he makes us all the more ready to do justice to such truly princely benevolence as has been displayed by the two magnates of Montreal.

THE IRISH COERCION BILL.

It may pretty well be taken for granted that the Coercion Bill will be carried through the Imperial House of Commons, and that its provisions will be strictly enforced in Ireland for some time to come. It has already passed its second reading, and the black charges brought by the *Times* against Parnell and his coadjutors are not likely to decrease the majority by which it will be supported when it comes up for final consideration. For the present it would seem that Home Rule is doomed, and that Mr. Gladstone is not likely to re-ascend to power upon the shoulders of his Irish colleagues. All things, it is said, come to those who can afford to wait. Mr. Gladstone is old, and cannot afford to wait indefinitely; but Home Rule is a strong plant, and English Toryism may be sure that the world has not heard the last of it.

THE SHRIEVALTY OF YORK.

By the death of Sheriff Jarvis, Toronto has been deprived of one of her best known citizens, and the County of York has lost one of its most highly respected officials. The place thus left vacant is one of the most lucrative and in every way desirable of all the choice things at the disposal of the Ontario Government. The emoluments are large—being anywhere from \$10,000 to \$15,000 a year—and the duties, in so far as the sheriff is personally concerned, are not very onerous, being for the most part performed by deputy. It is therefore not strange that there should be a good many persons desirous of being installed in such an office, and if common rumour is to be trusted, the number of applicants is very large. The list, as currently discussed on the street, includes the names of at least half a score of people who have not commonly been regarded in the light of office-seekers. The fact is that the office is such a fat and easy one that it has attracted persons who are not in the ordinary sense of the term waiters upon Providence. The position, however, is about to be shorn of some of its pecuniary attractions. The shrievalty of York is to be separated from that of Toronto, and there will henceforth be a separate and distinct sheriff for the county and city respectively. The emoluments of each, however, will still be large, and the Government will simply have two fat offices at its disposal instead of one. This is better than leaving the matter as it stands, inasmuch as it tends towards equalization; but it does not strike at the root. There is no reason on earth why one man, with his subordinates, should not properly discharge the duties incidental to the position of Sheriff of York and Toronto. Nor is there any reason why he should be paid more than \$2,500 a year for so doing. There are scores of honourable and thoroughly competent men in Canada who would gladly undertake the duties for that sum, and who would discharge them at least as efficiently as a political appointee who will really do little or nothing himself, but leave all the real work to be done by his deputies. Mr. Mowat might do worse in his own interests, and in the interests of the province, than take this view of the matter; but we have no idea that he will do so.

DR. McCAUL.

DR. McCAUL has also been summoned to his rest. For some time past the doctor's figure has not been a familiar one on our streets, as, independently of his advanced years, he has been a confirmed invalid, and not in a condition to take his walks abroad, as he was so fond of doing in the days of his vigorous manhood. But he has not been forgotten during his seclusion, and his death will be regarded in the light of a bereavement by many persons unconnected with him by ties of blood. He will be held in remembrance by hundreds of somewhat university students to whom he was once a guide, philosopher and friend. His life's work may be said to have ended about ten or twelve years since, but he has left an abiding mark behind him, and his name is not likely to sink into oblivion for many a generation to come.

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JOHN CHARLES DENT,

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Room U, Arcade (Victoria St. entrance), Toronto.

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THE WAR-CLOUD IN EUROPE.

THE aspect of affairs in Europe changes from week to week, and almost from day to day. Whether the status quo is to be preserved, or whether we are to have a disastrous and desolating war before the advent of summer is a question which is just now exercising many minds, and which nobody on this continent is capable of satisfactorily answering. In western Europe the disturbing element is the untoward state of public feeling in Alsace and Lorraine. The discontent there is commonly attributed to the machinations of French sympathizers, though of course there are those who attribute it to the iron hand of Bismarck. The great Chancellor's methods of repression are beyond all doubt aggravating enough, but the element to be repressed is not one to be governed after the kid-glove fashion. The expulsion of a deputy who had been elected to the Reichstag was in itself a thing well calculated to arouse popular antagonism, and this expulsion has been followed by a rigid hunting out of alleged French agents and sympathizers. As a matter of course all France is indignant, and a considerable part of it is hysterical and clamorous for war. The rulers, however, are very far from desiring war, and this may probably be said of Germany as well as of France.

So much for the state of affairs in the west. In eastern Europe the pressing question is: Does Russia propose to descend upon Bulgaria at an early date? There are certain indications of an affirmative. For instance, there are some very significant utterances of the imperialist press, which will not admit of any other construction. Then there is the fact that the Russian war office has recently issued a call for tenders for large supplies of medical stores and munitions of war. Again, there has been an interview between M. Flourens and the correspondent of a prominent Russian journal in which there is a clear intimation of a prospective alliance between Russia and France.

In Bulgaria itself affairs are in a condition of great disorder, and the outlook is regarded as ominous. There is a constant succession of local conspiracies against the regents. These have all been quietly nipped in the bud, but the Bulgarians have not fixed upon any eligible candidate for the throne, and seem afraid to do so while Russia maintains her present aspect of menace. "On the whole," says the *London Times*, "it must be acknowledged that the aspect of affairs in Bulgaria is full of anxiety. The regents hold their own, and have so far been able to cope with the plots against

their authority. But the recurrence of these plots is a very disquieting symptom, whether we regard them as due to a foreign or to an indigenous origin. Even if they are all fomented by Russian agency, they point to the existence of a disaffected party in Bulgaria, since Russian intrigue would not be able to foment them unless the seed were sown in fertile soil."

The question of war or no war still waits for an answer.

ARTISTS AND CRITICS.

JUST as it is not often the gift of an art critic to be able to use pencil and brush successfully, so it is not always Nature's intention to fit a painter with the reasoning qualities necessary for accurate art criticism. Reynolds, Hogarth, Walpole, Vasari and a host of writers, some of whom were also painters of the highest ability, have endeavoured to justify their personal impressions concerning the fine art of painting; but many of their speculations are utterly wrong and absurd, opposed to facts and inapplicable to practice. The greatest art critic of this day, and the most broadly seeing and deeply truthful of all art critics, has on more than one occasion proclaimed loudly against any formal set of critical rules. While the principles of art are as fundamentally fixed as the laws of nature, their application becomes a matter of constant mutation. Ruskin was denounced as an aesthetic lunatic by the majority of men, artists and others, when he started his crusade against all depravity in fine art. He has lived to witness the triumphs of the truths he enunciated. Not long ago he incurred the wrath of Mr. Whistler, one of the most original of living artists, who, with ten o'clock vigour and impulse, showed clearly that some artists, when aroused, can lay aside the palette and lash their most able assailants smartly in modest black and white. Mr. Whistler also clearly proved that mere cleverness of diction is not always convincing, and that close association with the practicalities of art does not of itself warrant the authority of a painter to pose as a capable and correct exponent of art-truths. In this regard, therefore, it may be possible that Mr. J. W. L. Forster, desirous of contributing to art-knowledge in papers on "Portrait-Painting," may not prove as capable a theorist as a colourist; nor may his deductions be as rightly drawn as his pictures. In differing from him on certain matters of abstract art, however, we take much pleasure in according our most cheerful tribute of praise to the good work he has done and is doing, with hopeful confidence that he has much greater and better work yet to do. In ranking portrait-painting next to the highest ideal painting, we think Mr. Forster has erred. With his preliminary canter over safe ground we cannot find much fault. The classification of painting into still-life, landscape, marine, animal and figure will be generally admitted. No argument is necessary to prove the degrees of art in producing the counterfeit presentment of a clothes basket, a prairie scene, a sea storm, lions at bay, or a group of children. These are self-evident to even the uneducated spectator, and most persons would naturally place them in correct order. But when we reach the higher forms of the art which Mr. Forster chooses to call portrait, historical and allegorical, the matter becomes more difficult, and more than a mere glance is required to find the true order.

Is Mr. Forster's placing of portraiture next to the heavenly allegory correct? Does it surpass the historic and dramatic schools? Let us first understand rightly what is portrait-paint-

ing, as now practised, and in comparison with what has been achieved. Is the portrait of a successful dry-goods merchant of Toronto done in the best (or worst) possible style for the best (or worst) possible price to be mentioned in the same breath as Titian's portrait of Lavinia, or admitted to the company of Rembrandt's portrait of himself? If this is the latest idea of portraiture, then we yield the argument at once, and advise that it be made a *fin* art of itself, and that portraits of all lunatics, criminals, sots and fools be recognized equally as specimens of human character, good and bad. Why are portraits required, and what class of men should they represent? Firstly, a portrait may be required by the family, by the nation, or by the world. The family portrait is of no value beyond the family circle and its visitors. Some of the most celebrated portraits by Vandyke, Reynolds and Gainsborough were painted for family requirements, and, if of value now, did not gain that value from any virtue of the original who sat for them, but from the virtue of the genius who painted them. However excellent they may be, mere family portraits are of the lowest order. Higher than these are portraits of great men, statesmen, warriors, lawyers, etc., which are (or should be) required for national remembrance, so that after they are dead and gone men who enjoy the fruit of their labours may look with love upon their faces. In such cases, portraiture is of a high order of painting, and should be done by the best possible artists, in the interests of the future. Thus the "scars of Cromwell" and the wart of Wolsey are of consummate interest, because of the men they adorned. They become marks of honourable distinction on such faces, whereas they would be marks of ridicule on others; for the red and pimpled nose of a boosing and hoodling alderman would be so unlikely to excite our admiration as an index of character that no artist would faithfully reproduce the blush of liquor on the outraged flesh.

HERE then we must draw the line. There are portraits and portraits—Vandykes and Vanduffers. Portraits of great and good men should be painted and preserved for the world; but the mere "likenesses" of persons whose only claim upon an artist's time and talent is their ability to pay for their "pictures," ought never to be drawn. Of the former, the world cannot have too many; of the latter it already has more than enough. It is disgusting to any true lover of art, who believes in the relation of art and soul in life, to see so many portraits of contemporary nobodies on the walls of our exhibitions and on the easels of our studios, and so little that is illustrative of Canadian somebodies. The history of Canada is full of noble and heroic subjects, waiting for the right soul to grasp and the strong hand to paint for our people. It is to be feared that it will wait long, since family pride and personal vanity cause so many portraits to be painted by our few artists annually that they, who could best devote time and energy to the commencement of a great historical school, cannot find time to labour in the higher direction. One thing, however, is certain—these mere portraits of contemporary nobodies will not live much longer than the originals, and will probably be sold by auction—not as works of art, but as pieces of wall furniture.

ALL who believe in simplicity, truth, goodness and spirituality must respect the Pre-Raphaelites of both ages. If the truth were thoroughly recognized it is unlikely such a sentence as the following would be penned:—

"Higher than action we esteem the actor."

Perhaps we do so; but it is nevertheless wrong; hence so many church-building swindlers, pot-boiling artists, rhyme-prating fools and bazaar beauties. The good Samaritan act is to be rejoiced in—we are not asked to admire the individual. "Greater than the actor is the action," rather let it be said. Hero-worship is often overdone, and virtues are forgotten in admiration of their possessor. In an act of charity is the giver to be esteemed above the deed? Men *are* the agents of divinity, or in other words, the creatures of circumstances. Let Mr. Forster prove the contrary, instead of pooh-poohing it away. Men as capable as Napoleon, Shakspeare or Michael Angelo have doubtless existed; and we esteem these only as types or representative creatures carrying out the Divine will. Do we esteem the sculpture, painting or literature which has lived down the ages less than the authors, who are not known? The origin of the Homeric works is not traceable; are the Homeric works of less value? Are the Grecian sculptures or the temples less admirable because we are ignorant of their designers? Men should be regarded as temporary agents, not as enduring heroes. Acts, rather than actors, should be esteemed. If we listen to a play—say "King Lear"—we are moved by the fleeting moods and passions of the human machine, and no portrait of Garrick, Kean or Irving can summon our emotion in like manner. What matters it if Shelley had a woman's beauty, so long as we can read his spirit in his verse? What if Savoriola looked sweetly sad and determinedly strong so long as his influence was stirring Italy for good? Does the "Transfiguration" improve on our souls after seeing Raphael's portrait of his own youthfulness? Mere portraiture, even of the greatest mortals, is not the first necessity. If history is to be illustrated, portraiture should be an accessory and not a prime factor. Let us have pictures by all means of as many great men as possible; but let them not be mere human photographs of flesh seen from the top of the clothes to the top of the forehead. Let them be brought to us in their most striking characters—in the great and signal accomplishments they have performed in the world's history—Cromwell turning out the Parliament, Cranmer at the stake, Milton in his blindness at work, Czar Peter knouting his nobles, Joan of Arc leading her troops, and others. Let them be true and faithful likenesses always, and in action; then the highest form of painting—the human-dramatic school—will be in its exalted place. If there is a good woman or a good man who has achieved some noble end in life, no matter how lowly, there is an excuse for the portraiture of that individual; but who can tell the character from the face alone? Recalling men and women we have known, how little reliance could be placed on their portraits as indices of their true natures. How many beauties on canvas are beautiful beyond the mere physical grace and skin-deep beauty? There is a woman, painted by a clever artist, wearing her most winning expression; amiable looking enough, but whose heart is filled with vanity and love of worldly things. Who can tell her by her portrait? Men of action should be painted in action, and in their greatest action. Women of beauty should be portrayed in their most beautiful undertakings. Mere facial portraits should be confined to mantelpieces and mausoleums, if artists will paint them. Great and good portraits should alone be recognized as fine art, and should be bought and paid for by the nation, when the true artist is found to paint them as a work of love and not of wages.

T. H. H.

Toronto.

Poetry.

THE OLD SUGAR CAMP.

(Concluded.)

THESE were the days of anxious toil and care,
When fashions changed not, and the same old coat
Came forth to honour many a gala day ;
And one stern bonnet, brown with sun and rain,
And years of service, still was counted new,
And safely guarded under lock and key
Till Sabbath morn, when forth at duty's call
The faithful wearer trudged o'er many a mile,
To join the songs that are in Zion sung,
And gather up the promises of rest
That faith had treasured in a better clime.

All this the passing years brought to an end.
The days of man and womanhood at length
O'ertook the toilers ; and, with new-born hopes,
New scenes were sought for, and new homes were found.
Caught in the world's wild busy feverish strife,
Beneath one roof-tree now they seldom met.
All but the youngest of the band had gone—
She still remained to grace the dear old home,
And through the calm of uneventful years,
Peace and content appear'd the destined lot.

The calls of want were now no longer known ;
For honest toil had to fruition turned,
And brought its simple harvest of repose.
Yet, as the seasons, in their stately round,
Brought back the flowing to the maple trees,
The old camp-fires rekindled once again—
Glowed with a milder and more chasten'd light.
The old keen busy bustle all was gone,
The feverish care to make the most of time ;
The noisy glee of happy girls and boys,
That toy'd with youth, and health, and laugh'd at toil.
All these were o'er. Yet with each waking year,
As caged swallows, feeling Autumn nigh,
Their wings beat wildly 'gainst their prison bars,
And struggle with their fellows to be free ;
So a strange longing to that household came,
To catch the spirit of the vanish'd years,
And catch the woodnotes of the dawning Spring
From songsters turning from their distant climes.
This, and a pride upon the festal board,
To place the treasure gather'd by her hand,
Brought forth the mother and the daughter, still
Beneath the shelter of her childhood's home,
That once again, when happy Christmas time
Brought all together to that dear old home,
And children's children sat upon her knee,
She might bring forth the harvest of her toil.

Thus, the old camp for ten successive springs
Became the miniature of former scenes,
Where just a little for that little's sake,
And for the sake of happy vanish'd hours,
And for the sake of Christmas yet to be,
Was gather'd in a thoughtful, thankful mood,
'Mid chasten'd memories of departed years.
But dark with sorrow rose the gathering gloom
That soon must o'er this calm contentment fall.
With poison'd breath, the scourge of Western homes,
Dread fire Consumption, with its certain close,
Had found a victim. Of that happy pair
The youngest soon had found a lasting rest.
A single year of painful hope and fear,
And hectic cheek, and bright enkindled eye,
Had left the fatal work of Death complete.
And in that month, and just on such a day
As both had often in the past repair'd
To the old camp, where half in work and play,
Their yearly happy holiday was spent,
Brothers and sisters to the loved old home—
Loved for the sake of one no longer there—
Had gather'd for that duty saddest, last,
To bear a sister to her narrow bed.

Sad and bereft, an aged mother stood,
Worn with the struggle of her three-score years,
The light and joy all vanished from her life,
And all the zeal in time's hard battle o'er.
The hands fell down that long were used to toil ;
The mind, elastic still at sixty years,
Turned from the present wholly to the past,
Amid the images beyond recall,

To live in mem'ry life's wild dream again.
One more decade still bound her to the earth—
Not of it, though remaining in the world—
To fill the destined measure of her days,
And ripen for the harvest of the tomb.

Oh what to her, to us, to any soul
In that great crisis which has no escape,
Is all the wealth of gold, of fame, of power,
Which life's long struggle gathers to our feet ?
When, standing out on time's extremest verge,
We gaze across the stream with longing eyes,
To catch one gleam of light break through the veil
That hides that ocean whose cold silent wave
No wreckage ever cast on shore of time ?
Here she must stand and wait ten weary years,
Her thoughts alone the bread on which she fed ;
Her zest in earth's enjoyments, hopes and cares,
Forever vanish'd from her stricken heart
That longed to reach the haven of its rest,
And hunger'd for a city that abides.
But time, that gathers in our Autumn stores,
And gathers in the fruitage of our lives,
Brought her at last the end that comes to all.
The worn-out heart stood still, to beat no more ;
The hands were folded o'er the silent breast ;
The eyes forever closed on things of time,
And all earth's glory vanish'd like a breath.

Out from our sight we bear our best belov'd ;
We may not linger by their house of clay ;
The bier fast follows on the fleeting breath.
She whom we loved was ready for the tomb.
Around stood pioneers with hardened hands,
And eyes but little used to shedding tears ;
Yet here with baréd heads they stood and wept,
For she who slept that silent dreamless sleep
Could not be number'd with the common herd ;
And they had loved her in that checker'd past
Which now the haze of time must soon obscure.
So reverently they bore her to her rest,
And turned in silence, leaving her to sleep.

What is there more to tell ? The story ends.
The old camp fires have slept for twenty years,
And, like their builders, never shall awake.
The curtain falls o'er one more lowly life,
And there is left but memory of the deeds
Of love and worth that filled three score and ten
Of busy years, along the humble walks
Where only hope was left to sweeten toil,
And only faith was left by buried hope,
To light the pilgrim to the rest of God.

Rockwood, Ont.

D. McCaig.

THE TRACK ON THE TABUSINTAC.

BREAKING with outstretched arms through the last tangle of underbrush, I came out upon the edge of a little sandy marsh, which soon transformed itself into a cranberry-bog and spread out for miles to the eastward to a low, dreary rim of grey-blue uplands. To my left the marsh was bounded by a wide, shallow stream, whose further shore was a dense forest of fir, and tamarack and cedar. Through the black tree-tops poured a warm glow from the sunset, which flushed the lonely levels of the bog, and brought out into sharp relief the sparse tufts of marsh-grass on the reddened sand. Here and there the sand was much trampled, as if by some heavy animal ; but in one smooth spot, a few inches aside, so clear and definite that it startled me like a sudden voice out of the stillness, I saw the print of a small and shapely shoe. My heart beating thickly, I crouched down on my knees to scrutinize the lonely footmark. Then I raised both hands to my mouth, and sent a long halloo vibrating through the forest.

It was answered from far up the stream. Not long afterwards a bittern appeared, flapping heavily to some remoter haunt. Then a bark canoe stole into sight, and my comrade H—, beaching his craft on a narrow spit of sand, rushed eagerly up to where I stood beside the solitary foot-print. I pointed to the ground. No explanations were needed. Presently H— took a worn little slipper from his pocket and applied it to the print in the sand. "On the right track at last !" he exclaimed, arising, and our hands met by a silent impulse

Though, as I said above, no explanations were needed by my companion, it is time for me to remember that my hearers are differently situated. The circumstances which I am about to relate are such that I might pain certain estimable families should I suffer myself to be too explicit. I shall refrain, therefore, from name and date, contenting myself with the statement that the events to be described are still very fresh in the minds of those dwelling in the neighbourhood of the Tabusintac, which is an unimportant river on the Gulf shore of the Province of New Brunswick. In this region there are several small towns, separated from each other by leagues of wilderness; and one of these, about two weeks before my story commences, had been thrown into a wild excitement by the disappearance of a refined young girl who had been something of a leader in the little society of the district. She had been showing of late some symptoms of mental trouble, and it soon became evident that she had fled to the woods in a sudden fit of insanity. It was the latter part of autumn, with boisterous weather, and few wild berries to be found. The idea of this delicate girl, wont to be surrounded by every devotion, wandering alone through the pitchy darkness or the more appallingly lonely moonlight of those ragged forests, starving slowly on such scant food as she could pick up, and in the midst of perpetual peril from bears and panthers, turned every man of us into a woodsman and a trail-seeker. The town divided itself into small hunting parties, which struck out in every direction, seeking a clue. And the neighbour settlements joined in the search. H—— and myself, who happened at the time to be visiting some friends in the town, had all our sympathies excited by the occurrence. Profiting by our experience in woodcraft and canoeing, we had come many miles in pursuit of an almost impalpable clue; and now, at last, our guesses were become a certainty.

As we traced up the small foot-prints there was elation in our hearts, at thought of the rescue we were bringing for the unfortunate girl; but at the same time crept over us a half-confessed thrill of weird terror, lest we should find her in some way dreadfully changed, or dying pitifully in that unspeakably desolate place. But these dim fears were speedily changed to a real and immediate apprehension, as we observed that the foot-prints which we were pursuing were followed also by the track of a huge bear. That the trappings in the sand, before spoken of, had been made by a bear, we had of course seen from the first. Bear-tracks were in this region too numerous to excite any comment. But when we noticed that, inexorably as the wake follows the boat, the girl's feet were tracked by those of the beast, we were filled with horror. Wherever she had swerved aimlessly to this side or to that, thither went the bear's feet also, often obliterating for yards at a time the delicate traces which were our guide. Deviously the girl's steps wandered among the cranberry tangles, where she seemed to have been eating of the fruit abundantly; and at last they led back into the woods whence I had just emerged. Here we might easily have lost them, but for the dreadful footmarks of their pursuer, which made a clear trail through underbrush and thicket. Wheresoever this trail crossed a bit of naked soil or boggy sward, there were we sure to detect the little print.

Breathless, and with beating hearts, our guns ready for action, we hastened on, over fallen trees, through swamp and covert, till suddenly we were brought to an amazed standstill by the sound of a woman's voice singing near at hand. As we listened the singing stopped; and we heard her, as we fancied, talking to herself in a caressing tone. Then the clear voice was raised again, in a familiar old song that rang sweetly and strangely through that wild place. Evidently, she was still safe; and curiosity, not unmixed with a sort of awe, led us to approach as noiselessly as possible. A light evening breeze had arisen, which set the branches swaying gently, and prevented the occasional snapping of a twig beneath our feet from being markedly noticeable. Presently, through a screen of small spruce which kept us concealed, we looked out upon a little glade, and on the further edge of it beheld a sight which for a moment held us speechless. A huge tree had been blown down, and lay with its mass of roots and soil high in the air. In the hollow beneath was a sort of den or lair; and beside it, on a stone, sat the object of our search. In the lap of her torn and muddied gown she had cranberries, and

every now and then she would stop to eat a few, daintily; at the same time stretching out an idle hand to caress a great black bear, which lay at her feet and watched her like a spaniel. At first view of the strange scene H—— had instinctively raised his gun to the shoulder, but had lowered it again even before I could grasp his arm. Here was a state of affairs which put to rout all our calculations.

Mutely we gazed at each other, and our eyes asked what was to be done. To have shot the animal in cold blood would have seemed to me almost like murder, or at least heartless treachery and ingratitude. But it was growing dusk, and something had to be done at once. Just then H——, in pushing aside some boughs for a better view of the prodigy, made a movement which caught the girl's attention. She gave a startled cry and sprang to her feet; and straightway, with a roar of anger, the bear came plunging across the glade to our insufficient hiding-place. There was no time for deliberation. H—— raised his gun and fired. The shot plainly took effect—it was a heavy charge of buckshot—and the brute staggered; but he came on again instantly, so I lifted my own weapon. As I did so there was a cry of terror from the girl, and the bear stopped in uncertainty. Then he ran back to see what new peril was threatening his mistress. H—— seized me by the arm, and said "I haven't the heart to kill that creature! Let us clear out before he comes at us again!" This agreed well with my own feelings, from which the hunter's instinct had been effectually banished at sight of the monster's devotion to his unhappy charge. We ran back a few rods, whither we felt that the animal would not leave his mistress to pursue us. And then we paused to review the situation.

The more we reviewed it, the more unsatisfactory did it appear. It was evident that we could not recover the girl that night, if indeed we could do so at any time, without first destroying the animal which had befriended her. And that she was to be recovered that same night was our fixed resolve. At last we planned that we should encourage the brute to pursue us, and should thus avoid giving her the shock of seeing him killed under her eyes. Considering also that H——'s shot had taken effect in the animal's body, we reflected that in all probability that one wound would in the end prove fatal; in which case to finish the work at once would be no more than an act of compassion. Nevertheless, it was with most unpleasant feelings that we returned to the charge.

As we again drew near we heard a sound of sobbing. The girl, kneeling on the moss, was tearing her skirt into fragments, and trying to staunch a wound in the animal's neck. As we re-appeared he struggled half onto his feet with a menacing growl, but immediately fell over again, and lay on his side, bleeding profusely. The girl came towards us, wringing her hands, and prayed us piteously that we would not kill her dog. We led her back to the creature's side, and humoured her by trying to stop the bleeding. Then we put her hand upon his heart, and showed her that he was already dead. At first she refused to leave him, but obeyed when we spoke firmly, and came with us, weeping and frightened. It was moonlight when we regained our canoe. The sight of this seemed to make her more rational, and her fears vanished. But she continued to talk about her poor dog, which had taken care of her when such terrible things were howling about the dark woods. Even as she spoke, the strange cry of our northern panther, or "Indian Devil," came trembling towards us from a cedar swamp far off under the moonlight; and her eyes dilated with terror. Wrapping her up warmly in coats and blankets, we fixed her a snug place amidships of the canoe; and soon she fell asleep, quieted by the soft motion, as we glided down the current toward the settlement at the river's mouth.

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A WOMAN was seated in a buggy in front of a store on Yonge Street the other day when the horse began to kick, and a pedestrian caught him by the bridle and observed, "Seems as if he was frightened at something." "Perhaps he is," replied the woman as she tumbled out, "but I always thought the front of a horse got scared first."

THE STORM-LIGHTS OF ANZASCA.

THE main road from the Lago Maggiore to the western parts of Switzerland at one time ran through the valley of Anzasca; and it was once my fortune to be detained all night at a cottage in one of its wildest defiles, by a storm which rendered my horses ungovernable. While leaning upon a bench, and looking with drowsy curiosity towards the window—for there was no bed except my host's, of which I did not choose to deprive him—I saw a small, faint light among the rocks in the distance. I at first conceived that it might proceed from a cottage-window; but remembering that that part of the mountain was wholly uninhabited, and indeed uninhabitable, I roused myself, and calling one of the family, inquired what it meant. While I spoke the light suddenly vanished; but in about a minute re-appeared in another place, as if the bearer had gone round some intervening rock. The storm at that time raged with a fury which threatened to blow our hut, with its men and horses, over the mountains; and the night was so intensely dark that the edges of the horizon were wholly undistinguishable from the sky.

"There it is again!" said I. "What is that, in the name of God?"

"It is Lelia's lamp!" cried the young man eagerly, who was a son of our host. "Awake, father! Ho, Batista!—Vittorio! Lelia is on the mountains!" At these cries the whole family sprung up from their lair at once, and, crowding round the window, fixed their eyes upon the light, which continued to appear, although at long intervals, for a considerable part of the night. When interrogated as to the nature of this mystic lamp, the cottagers made no scruple of telling me all they knew, on the sole condition that I should be silent when it appeared, and leave them to mark uninterruptedly the spot where it rested.

To render my story intelligible, it is necessary to say that the *minerali* and farmers form two distinct classes in the valley of Anzasca. The occupation of the former, when pursued as a profession, is reckoned disreputable by the other inhabitants, who obtain their living by regular industry; and indeed the manners of the *minerali* offer some excuse for what might otherwise be reckoned an illiberal prejudice. They are addicted to drinking, quarrelsome, overbearing—at one moment rich and at another starving; and in short they are subject to all the calamities, both moral and physical, which beset men who can have no dependence on the product of their labour; ranking in this respect with gamesters, authors, and other vagabonds.

They are, notwithstanding, a fine race of men—brave, hardy, and often handsome. They spend freely what they win lightly; and if one day they sleep off their hunger, lying like wild animals basking in the sun, the next, if fortune has been propitious, they swagger about, gallant and gay, the lords of the valley. Like the sons of God, the *minerali* sometimes make love to the daughters of men; and, although they seldom possess the hand, they occasionally touch the heart, of the gentle maidens of Anzasca. If their wooing is unsuccessful, there are comrades still wilder than their own, whose arms are always open to receive the desperate and the brave. They change the scene, and betake themselves to the highways when nights are dark and travellers unwary; or they enlist under the banners of those regular banditti who rob in thousands, and whose booty is a province or a kingdom.

Francesco Martelli was the handsomest gold-seeker in the valley. He was wild, it is true, but that was the badge of his tribe; and he made up for this by so many good qualities, that the farmers themselves—at least such of them as had not marriageable daughters—delighted in his company. Francesco could sing ballads so sweetly and mournfully, that the old dames leaned back in the chimney-corner to weep while he sung. He had that deep and melancholy voice which, when once heard, lingers in the ear, and when heard again, however unexpectedly, seems like a longing realized.

There was only one young lass in the valley who had never heard the songs of Francesco. All the others, seen or unseen, on some pretext or other, had gratified their curiosity. The exception was Lelia, the daughter of one of the richest farmers in

Anzasca. Lelia was very young, being scarcely sixteen; but in her quality of an only daughter, with a dowry in expectancy equal to more than one thousand Austrian liras, she attracted considerable observation. Her face, on minute inspection, was beautiful to absolute perfection; but her figure, although symmetrical, was so *petite*, and her manner so shy and girlish, that she was thought of more as a child than a young woman. The "heirress of old Niccoli" was the designation made use of when parents would endeavour to awaken the ambition of their sons, as they looked forward to what *might* be some years hence; but Lelia, in her own person, was a nonentity.

Her mother had died in giving her birth; and for many a year the life of the child had been preserved, or rather her death prevented, by what seemed a miracle. Even after the disease, whatever it might have been, had yielded to the sleepless care of her father, she remained in that state which is described in the expression "not unwell" rather than in perfect health; although the most troublesome memento that remained of her illness was nothing more than a nervous timidity, which in a more civilized part of the country might have passed for delicacy of feeling.

Besides being in some degree shut out from the society of her equals by this peculiarity of her situation, she was prevented from enjoying it by another. While her body languished, the cultivation of her mind had advanced. Music, to which she was passionately attached, paved the way for poetry; and poetry, in spite of the doctrines of a certain school you have in England, unfitted her for association with the ignorant and unrefined. That Lelia, therefore, had never sought to hear the ballads of Francesco was occasioned, it may readily be believed, by nothing more than an instinctive terror, mingled with the dislike with which the name of one of the ruffian *minerali* inspired her, and, in truth, she listened to the tales that from time to time reached her ear of the young gold-seeker, with somewhat of the vague and distant interest with which we attend to descriptions of a beautiful but wild and cruel animal of another hemisphere.

There came one at last, however, to whom poor Lelia listened. She was sitting alone, according to her usual custom, at the bottom of her father's garden, singing, while she plied her knitting-needle, in the soft, low tone peculiar to her voice, and beyond which it had no compass. The only fence of the garden at this place was a belt of shrubs, which enriched the border of the deep ravine it overlooked. At the bottom of this ravine flowed the river, rapid and yet sullen; and beyond, scarcely distant two hundred yards, a range of precipitous cliffs shut in the horizon. The wild and desolate aspect of the scene was overshadowed and controlled, as it were, by the stern grandeur of these ramparts of nature; and the whole contributed to form such a picture as artists travel a thousand miles to contemplate. Lelia, however, had looked upon it from childhood. It had never been forced upon her imagination by contrast, for she had never travelled five miles from her father's house, and she continued to knit, and sing, and dream, without even raising her eyes.

Her voice was rarely loud enough to be caught by the echoes of the opposite rocks; although sometimes it did happen that, carried away by enthusiasm, she produced a tone which was repeated by the fairy minstrels of the glen. On the present occasion she listened with surprise to a similar effect, for her voice had died almost in a whisper. She sang another stanza in a louder key. The challenge was accepted; and a rich sweet voice took up the strain of her favourite ballad where she had dropped it. Lelia's first impulse was to flee; her second, to sit still and watch for a renewal of the music; and her third, which she obeyed, to steal on tiptoe to the edge of the ravine, and look down into the abyss from whence the voice seemed to proceed. The echo, she discovered, was a young man, engaged in navigating a raft down the river—such as is used by the peasantry of the Alps to float themselves and their wares to market, and which at this moment was stranded on the shore, at the foot of the garden. He leaned upon an oar, as if in the act of pushing off his clumsy boat; but his face was upturned, like one watching for the appearance of a star; and Lelia felt a sudden conviction, she knew not why, that he had seen her through the trees while she sat singing, and had adopted this method of attracting her attention without alarming her. If

such had been his purpose, he seemed to have no ulterior view; for, after gazing for an instant, he withdrew his eyes in confusion, and, pushing off the raft, dropped rapidly down the river, and was soon out of sight.

Lelia's life was as calm as a sleeping lake, which a cloud will blacken and the wing of an insect disturb. Even this little incident was matter for thought, and entered into the soft reveries of sixteen. She felt her cheeks tingle as she wondered *how* long the young man had gazed at her through the trees, and *why* he had floated away without speaking, when he had succeeded in attracting her attention. There was *delicacy* in his little contrivance, to save her the surprise, perhaps the terror, of seeing a stranger in such a situation; there was *modesty* in the confusion with which he turned away his head; and what perhaps was as valuable as either even to the gentle Lelia, there was *admiration*, deep and devout, in those brilliant eyes that had quailed beneath hers. The youth was as beautiful as a dream; and his voice!—it was so clear, and yet so soft—so powerful, yet so melodious! It haunted her ear like a prediction.

It was a week before she again saw this Apollo of her girlish imagination. It seemed as if in the interval they had had time to get acquainted! They exchanged salutations—the next time they spoke—and the next time they conversed. There was nothing mysterious in their communications. He was probably a farmer's son of the upper valley, who had been attracted, like others, by the fame of the heiress of old Niccoli. He, indeed, knew nothing of books, and he loved poetry more for the sake of music than its own: but what of that?—the writings of God were around and within them; and these, if they did not understand, they at least felt. He was bold and vigorous of mind; and this is beauty to the fair and timid. He skimmed along the edge of the precipice, and sprang from rock to rock in the torrent, as fearless as the chamois. He was beautiful, and brave, and proud; and this glorious creature, with radiant eyes and glowing cheeks, laid himself down at *her* feet, to gaze upon her face, as poets worship the moon!

The world, before so monotonous, so blank, so drear, was now a heaven to poor Lelia. One thing only perplexed her: they were sufficiently long—according to the calculations of sixteen—and sufficiently well acquainted; their sentiments had been avowed without disguise; their faith plighted beyond recall; and as yet her lover had never mentioned his name! Lelia, reflecting on this circumstance, condemned, for the moment, her precipitation; but there was now no help for it, and she could only resolve to extort the secret—if secret it was—at the next meeting.

"My name!" said the lover, in reply to her frank and sudden question; "you will know it soon enough." "But I will not be said nay. You must tell me now—or at all events to-morrow night."

"Why to-morrow night?" "Because a young rich suitor, on whom my father's heart is set, is then to propose, in proper form, for this poor hand; and, let the confession cost what it may, I will not overthrow the dearest plans of my only parent without giving a reason which will satisfy even him. Oh, you do not know him! Wealth weighs as nothing in the scale against his daughter's happiness. You may be poor for aught I know; but you are good, and honourable, and therefore, in his eyes, no unfitting match for Lelia." It was almost dark; but Lelia thought she perceived a smile on her lover's face while she spoke, and a gay suspicion flashed through her mind, which made her heart beat and her cheeks tingle. He did not answer for many minutes; a struggle of some kind seemed to agitate him; but at length, in a suppressed voice, he said—"To-morrow night, then." "Here?" "No, in your father's house; in the presence of—my rival."

The morrow night arrived; and, with a ceremonious formality practised on such occasions in the valley, the lover of whom Lelia had spoken was presented to his mistress, to ask permission to pay his addresses; or, in other words—for there is but short shrift for an Anzascan maid—to demand her hand in marriage. This was indeed a match on which old Niccoli had set his heart; for the offer was by far the best that could have been found from the Val d'Ossola to Monte Rosa. The youth was rich, well-looking, and prudent even to coldness;—what more could a father desire?

Lelia had put off the minute of appearing in the porch, where the elders of both families had assembled, as long as possible. While mechanically arranging her dress, she continued to gaze out of the lattice, which commanded a view of the road and of the parties below, in expectation that increased to agony. Bitter were her reflections during that interval! She was almost tempted to believe that what had passed was nothing more than a dream—a figment of her imagination, disordered by poetry and solitude, and perhaps in some measure warped by disease. Had she been made the sport of an idle moment?—and was the smile she had observed on her lover's face only the herald of the laugh which perhaps at this moment testified his enjoyment of her perplexity and disappointment! His conduct presented itself in the double light of folly and ingratitude; and at length, in obedience to the repeated summons of her father, she descended to the porch with a trembling step and a fevered cheek.

The sight of the company that awaited her awed and depressed her. She shrank from them with more than morbid timidity; while their stony eyes, fixed upon her in all the rigidity of form and transmitted custom, seemed to freeze her very heart. There was one there, however, whose ideas of "propriety," strict as they were, could never prevent his eyes from glistening, and his arms from extending, at the approach of Lelia. Her father, after holding her for a moment at arm's-length, as with a doating look his eyes wandered over the bravery of her new white dress, drew her close to his bosom, and blessed her. "My child," said he, smiling gaily through a gathering tear, "it is hard for an old man to think of parting with all he loves in the world: but the laws of nature must be respected. Young men will love, and young ladies will like, to the end of time; and new families will spring up out of their union. It is the way, girl—it is the fate of maids, and there's an end. For sixteen years have I watched over you, even like a miser watching his gold; and now, treasure of my life, I give you away! All I ask, on your part, is obedience—aye, and cheerful obedience—after the manner of our ancestors, and according to the laws of God. After this is over, let the old man stand aside, or pass away, when it pleases Heaven; he has left his child happy, and his child's children will bless his memory. He has drunk of the cup of life—sweet and bitter—bitter and sweet—even to the bottom; but with honey, Lelia—thanks to his blessed darling!—with honey in the dregs!"

Lelia fell on her father's neck, and sobbed aloud. So long and bitter was her sobbing that the formality of the party was broken, and the circle narrowed anxiously around her. When at last she raised her head, it was seen that her cheeks were dry, and her face as white as the marble of Cordaglia.

A murmur of compassion ran through the by-standers; and the words "poor thing!—still so delicate!—old hysterics!" were whisperingly repeated from one to the other. The father was alarmed, and hastened to cut short a ceremony which seemed so appalling to the nervous timidity of his daughter. "It is enough," said he, "all will be over in a moment. Lelia, do you accept of this young man for your suitor?—come, one little word, and it is done." Lelia tried in vain to speak, and she bowed her acquiescence. "Sirs," continued Niccoli, "my daughter accepts of the suitor you offer. It is enough; salute your mistress, my son, and let us go in, and pass round the cup of alliance." "The maiden hath not answered," observed a cold, cautious voice among the relations of the suitor. "Speak, then," said Niccoli, casting an angry and disdainful look at the formalist,—"it is but a word—a sound. Speak!" Lelia's dry, white lips had unclosed to obey, when the gate of the little court was wrenched open by one who was apparently too much in haste to find the latch, and a man rushed into the midst of the circle. "Speak *not*!" he shouted, "I forbid!" Lelia sprang towards him with a stifled cry, and would have thrown herself into his arms, had she not been suddenly caught midway by her father. "What is this?" demanded he sternly, but in rising alarm; "ruffian—drunkard—madman!—what would you here?" "You *cannot* provoke me, Niccoli," said the intruder, "were you to spit upon me! I come to demand your daughter in marriage." "You!" shouted the enraged father. "You!" repeated the relations, in tones of wonder, scorn, rage or ridicule, according to the temperament of the individual. "There

needeth no more of this," said the same cold, cautious voice that had spoken before; "a wedding begun in a brawl will never end in a bedding. To demand a girl in legitimate marriage is neither sin nor shame; let the young man be answered even by the maiden herself, and then depart in peace." "He hath spoken well," said the more cautious among the old men; "speak, daughter; answer, and let the man be gone!" Lelia grew pale, and then red. She made a step forward—hesitated—looked at her father timidly—and then stood as still as a statue, pressing her clasped hands upon her bosom, as if to silence the throbbings that disturbed her reason. "Girl," said old Niccoli, in a voice of suppressed passion, as he seized her by the arm, "do you know that man?—did you ever see him before? Answer, can you tell me his name?" "No!" "No!"—"No!—the insolent ruffian! Go, girl, present your cheek to your future husband, that the customs of our ancestors may be fulfilled, and leave me to clear my doorway of vagabonds!" She stepped forward mechanically; but when the legitimate suitor, extending his arms, ran forward to meet her, she eluded him with a sudden shriek, and staggered towards the intruder. "Hold—hold!" cried the relations, "you are mad—you know not what you do—it is Francesco, the mineralo!" She had reached the stranger, who did not move from where he stood; and, as the ill-omened name met her ear, she fainted in his arms.

The confusion that ensued was indescribable. Lelia was carried senseless into the house; and it required the efforts of half the party to hold back her father, who would have grappled with the mineralo upon the spot. Francesco stood for some time with folded arms, in mournful and moody silence; but when at length the voice of cursing, which Niccoli continued to pour forth against him, had sunk in exhaustion, he advanced and confronted him. "I can bear those names," said he, "from you. Some of them, you know well, are undeserved; and if others fit, it is more my misfortune than my fault. If to chastise insults, and render back scorn for scorn, is to be a ruffian, I am one; but no man can be called a vagabond who resides in the habitation and follows the trade of his ancestors. These things, however, are trifles—at best they are only words. Your real objection to me is that I am poor. It is a strong one. If I chose to take your daughter without a dowry, I would take her in spite of you all; but I will leave her—even to that thing without a soul—rather than subject so gentle and fragile a being to the privations and vicissitudes of a life like mine. I demand, therefore, not simply your daughter, but a dowry, if only a small one; and you have the right to require that on my part I shall not be empty-handed. She is young, and there can be, and ought to be, no hurry with her marriage: but give me only a year—a single year; name a reasonable sum; and if by the appointed time I cannot tell the money into your hand, I hereby engage to relinquish every claim, which her generous preference has given me, upon your daughter's hand." "It is well put," replied the cold and cautious voice in the assembly. "A year, at any rate, would have elapsed between the present betrothing and the damsel's marriage. If the young man before the bells of twelve, on this night twelvemonth, layeth down upon the table, either in coined money, or in gold, or golden ore, the same sum which we were here ready to guarantee on the part of my grandson, why I, for one, shall not object to the maiden's whim—*provided it continues so long*—being consulted, in the disposal of her hand, in preference to her father's judgment and desires. The sum is only three thousand livras!" A laugh of scorn and derision arose among the relations. "Yes, yes," said they, "it is but just. Let the mineralo produce three thousand livras, and he shall have his bride. Neighbour Niccoli, it is a fair proposal; allow us to intercede for Francesco, and beg your assent!" "Sirs," said Francesco, in perplexity mingled with anger, "the sum of three thousand livras"—He was interrupted by another forced laugh of derision. "It is a fair proposal," repeated the relations; "agree, neighbour Niccoli, agree!" "I agree," said Niccoli, disdainfully. "It is agreed!" replied Francesco, in a burst of haughty indignation; and with a swelling heart he withdrew.

A very remarkable change appeared to take place from that moment in the character and habits of the mineralo. He not only deserted the company of his riotous associates, but even that

of the few respectable persons to whose houses he had obtained admission, either by his talents for singing, or the comparative propriety of his conduct. Day after day he laboured in his precarious avocation. The changes of the seasons were not now admitted as excuses. The storm did not drive him to the wine-shed, and the rain did not confine him to his hut. Day after day, and often night after night, he was to be found in the field—on the mountains—by the sides of the rain-courses—on the shores of the torrent.

He rarely indulged himself even in the recreation of meeting his mistress, for whom all this labour was submitted to. Gold, not as a means but as an end, seemed to be his thought by day and his dream by night, the object and end of his existence. When they did meet in darkness, and loneliness, and mystery, it was but to exchange a few hurried sentences of hope and comfort, and affected reliance upon fortune. On these occasions tears, and tremblings, and hysterical sobbings, sometimes told, on her part, at once the hollowness of her words and the weakness of her constitution; but on his all was, or seemed to be, enthusiasm and steadfast expectation.

Days and weeks, however, passed by—moons rolled away—the year was drawing to its wane, and a great part of the enormous sun was still in the womb of the mountains. Day by day, week by week, and month by month, the hopes of the mineralo became fainter. He could no longer bestow the comfort which did not cheer even his dreams. Gloomy and sad, he could only strain his mistress in his arms, without uttering a word when she ventured an inquiry respecting his progress, and then hurry away to resume, mechanically, his hopeless task.

It is a strange, sometimes an awful thing, to look into the mystery of the female mind. Lelia's health had received a shock from circumstances we have recorded, which left her cheek pale, and her limbs weak, for many months; and to this physical infirmity was now added the effect of those dumb, but too eloquent, interviews with her lover. The lower he sunk in despondency, however, and the more desperate grew their affairs, the higher her spirits rose, as if to quell and control their fortune. Her hopes seemed to grow in proportion with his fears, and the strength which deserted him went over as an ally and supporter to her weakness. Even her bodily health received its direction from her mind. Her nerves seemed to recover their tone, her cheek its hue, and her eye its brilliancy. The cold and sluggish imagination of a man is unacquainted with half the resources of a woman in such circumstances. Disappointed in her dependence on fortune and casualty, Lelia betook herself to the altars and gods of her people! Saints and martyrs were by turns invoked; vows were offered up, and pilgrimages and religious watchings performed. Then came dreams and prodigies into play, and omens, and auguries. *Sortes* were wrested from the pages of Dante, and warnings and commands translated from the mystic writings of the sky—

"The stars which are the poetry of heaven:"

The year touched upon its close; and the sum which the gold-seeker had amassed, although great almost to a miracle, was still far—very far, from sufficient. The last day of the year arrived, ushered in by storm, and thunderings, and lightnings; and the evening fell cold and dark upon the despairing labours of Francesco. He was on the side of the mountain opposite Niccoli's house; and, as daylight died in the valley, he saw, with inexpressible bitterness of soul, by the number of lights in the windows, that the fete was not forgotten. Some trifling success, however, induced him, like a drowning man grasping at a straw, to continue his search. He was on the spot indicated by a dream of his enthusiastic mistress; and she had conjured him not to abandon the attempt till the bell of the distant church should silence their hopes for ever.

His success continued. He was working with the pickaxe, and had discovered a very small perpendicular vein; and it was just possible that this, although altogether inadequate in itself, might be crossed at a greater depth by a horizontal one, and thus form one of the *gruppi* or nests, in which the ore is plentiful and easily extracted. To work, however, was difficult, and to work long, impossible. His strength was almost exhausted; the storm beat

fiercely in his face; and the darkness increased every moment. His heart wholly failed him; his limbs trembled; a cold perspiration bedewed his brow; and as the last rays of daylight departed from the mountain-side he fell senseless upon the ground.

How long he remained in this state he did not know; but he was recalled to life by a sound resembling, as he imagined, a human cry. The storm howled more wildly than ever along the side of the mountain. and it was now pitch-dark; but on turning round his head he saw, at a little distance above where he lay, a small, steady light. Francesco's heart began to quake. The light advanced towards him, and he perceived that it was borne by a figure arrayed in white from head to foot. "Lelia!" cried he in amazement, mingled with superstitious terror, as he recognized the features of his young fair mistress. "Waste not time in words," said she, "much may yet be done, and I have the most perfect assurance that now at least I am not deceived. Up, and be of good heart! Work, for here is light. I will sit down in the shelter, bleak though it be, of the cliff, and aid you with my prayers, since I cannot with my hands." Francesco seized the axe, and stirred, half with shame, half with admiration, by the courage of the generous girl, resumed his labour with new vigour. "Be of good heart," continued Lelia, "and all will yet be well. Bravely—bravely done—be sure the saints have heard us!" Only once she uttered anything resembling a complaint—"It is so cold!" said she, "make haste, dearest, for I cannot find my way home, if I would, without the light." By-and-by she repeated more frequently the injunction to "make haste." Francesco's heart bled while he thought of the sufferings of the sick and delicate girl on such a night, in such a place; and his blows fell desperately on the stubborn rock. He was now at a little distance from the spot where she sat, and was just about to beg her to bring the light nearer, when she spoke again. "Make haste—make haste!" she said, "the time is almost come—I shall be wanted—I am wanted—I can stay no longer—farewell!" Francesco looked up, but the light was already gone.

It was so strange, this sudden desertion! If determined to go, why did she go alone?—aware, as she must have been, that *his* remaining in the dark could be of no use. Could it be that her heart had changed, the moment her hopes had vanished? It was a bitter and ungenerous thought; nevertheless it served to bridle the speed with which Francesco at first sprung forward to overtake his mistress. He had not gone far, however, when a sudden thrill arrested his progress. His heart ceased to beat, he grew faint, and would have fallen to the ground, but for the support of a rock against which he staggered. When he recovered he retraced his steps as accurately as it was possible to do in utter darkness. He knew not whether he found the exact spot on which Lelia had sat, but he was sure of the surrounding localities; and, if she was still there, her white dress would no doubt gleam even through the thick night which surrounded her.

With a lightened heart—for, compared with the phantom of the mind which had presented itself, all things seemed enduring—he began again to descend the mountain. In a place so singularly wild, where the rocks were piled around in combinations at once fantastic and sublime, it was not wonderful that the light carried by his mistress should be wholly invisible to him, even had it been much nearer than was by this time probable. Far less was it surprising that the shouts which ever and anon he uttered should not reach her ear; for he was on the lee-side of the storm, which raved among the cliffs with a fury that might have drowned the thunder.

Even to the practised feet of Francesco the route, without the smallest light to guide his steps, was dangerous in the extreme; and to the occupation thus afforded to his thoughts it was perhaps owing that he reached Niccoli's house in a state of mind to enable him to acquit himself in a manner not derogatory to the dignity of manhood. "Niccoli," said he, on entering the room, "I have come to return you thanks for the trial you have allowed me. I have failed, and, in terms of the engagement between us, I relinquish my claims to your daughter's hand." He would then have retired as suddenly as he had entered; but old Niccoli caught hold of his arm:—"Bid us farewell," said he, in a tremulous voice; "go not in anger. Forgive me for the harsh words I

used when we last met. I have watched you, Francesco, from that day—and—" He wiped away a tear as he looked upon the soiled and neglected apparel, and the haggard and ghastly face, of the young man—"No matter—my word is plighted—farewell.—Now call my daughter," added he, "and I pray God that the business of this night end in no ill!"

Francesco lingered at the door. He would fain have seen but the skirt of Lelia's mantle before departing! "She is not in her room!" cried a voice of alarm. Francesco's heart quaked. Presently the whole house was astir. The sound of feet running here and there was heard, and agitated voices called out her name. The next moment the old man rushed out of the room, and, laying both his hands upon Francesco's shoulders, looked wildly in his face. "Know you aught of my daughter?" said he: "Speak, I conjure you, in the name of the blessed Saviour! Tell me that you have married her, and I will forgive and bless you! Speak!—will you not speak? A single word! Where is my daughter? Where is my Lelia?—my life—my light—my hope—my child—my child!" The mineralo started, as if from a dream, and looked round, apparently without comprehending what had passed. A strong shudder then shook his frame for an instant. "Lights!" said he, "torches!—every one of you! Follow me!" and he rushed out into the night. He was speedily overtaken by the whole of the company, amounting to more than twelve men, with lighted torches, that flared like meteors in the storm. As for the leader himself, he seemed scarcely able to drag one limb after the other, and he staggered to and fro, like one who is drunken with wine.

They at length reached the place he sought; and, by the light of the torches, something white was seen at the base of the cliff. It was Lelia. She leaned her back against the rock; one hand was pressed upon her heart, like a person who shrinks with cold; and in the other she held the lamp, the flame of which had expired in the socket. Francesco threw himself on his knees at one side, and the old man at the other, while a light, as strong as day, was shed by the torches upon the spot. She was dead—dead—stone dead!

After a time the childless old man went to seek out the object of his daughter's love; but Francesco was never seen from that fatal night. A wailing sound is sometimes heard to this day upon the hills, and the peasants say that it is the voice of the mineralo seeking his mistress among the rocks; and every dark and stormy night the lamp of Lelia is still seen upon the mountain, as she lights her phantom-lover in his search for gold.

"TALKING about druggists' mistakes," said a druggist, "I'll tell you a funny mistake I made about three years ago. A young German came into the store one morning and said he wanted fifty cents worth of arsenic to feed some rats. I sold him what I supposed was the poison, and would have thought no more of the sale if the fellow had not come round the next day and berated me for selling him quinine for arsenic. I learned later that the German, who had become despondent over some money matters, bought the 'arsenic' with the intention of committing suicide. He took the quinine to his lodgings, put on his grave clothes, shaved himself with a dull razor, and then lay down upon the bed with a teaspoonful of the alkaloid in his stomach. When he woke up the next morning and found himself alive he came to the store and relieved himself of his bile. Three weeks later he got a good job in a down-town clothing house, and is now earning a good salary. He comes around about once a month to tell me that some of the mistakes druggists make are not so bad, after all."

GRIEF OF A MONKEY.—Very striking examples of conjugal love are found among certain monogamous monkeys. It has been observed, especially in the American marmoset, which, on the other hand, shows in the case of the females a weakness of maternal feeling. The female of this species, having become tired of holding her offspring, has been seen to call the male to take care of it in his turn. One of the marmosets of the Jardin des Plantes in Paris having died, the husband was inconsolable. He cared for a long time the corpse of his companion, and when he was convinced of her death he put his hand over his eyes and remained motionless, without taking food, until he succumbed himself.

A Pleasing Anecdote Spoiled.

HERE is a time-honoured story which we find going the rounds of the press. It has a new application and new names, but the tale is more ancient than might be supposed on a superficial examination:

John Quincy Adams and John Hancock, "the Signer," married two sisters, the daughters of a noted Methodist divine in Connecticut. John Quincy was a favourite with the old people, and Mary's choice was approved by them. So, when the banns were published, the parent said, "Mary, if you will furnish me the text, I will preach you a wedding sermon." She was equal to the task, and gave the text, "Mary hath chosen the good part, which shall not be taken from her." Needless to say that justice was done to the occasion and the text.

Not so with Margaret, who in the meanwhile was receiving the attentions of her John in a very inexpensive way, so far as her parents were concerned: for it is said that "he never crossed his legs under their festive board." So, when the banns were published, she said to her father: "Father, you preached a wedding sermon for Mary. Cannot you preach one for me?" He at first demurred; but at last he consented, and called for the text, when Margaret, who was equal to the occasion, said, "And John came, neither eating nor drinking, and ye say he hath a devil."

This is a pleasant anecdote, and may be true about somebody; but as to John Hancock and John Quincy Adams it can't be true.

John Hancock died four years before John Quincy Adams got married. Hancock's wife was a Miss Quincy, of Massachusetts; Adams's wife was a Miss Johnson, of Maryland.

If this ingenious inventor had substituted the elder John Adams for John Quincy, the anecdote might have appeared more credible, for both John Adams and John Hancock married Quincys. But if the father of either bride was a preacher, he could not have been a Methodist, because Methodism was not then established in America.

A Pretty Good Bad Boy.

A good many years ago now a small, bare-legged boy set out from his home in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, for an afternoon's sport with a gun. He rambled along, as boys will, with his eyes wide open for everything that came under them, as well as for the game that was the special object of his expedition, and he had not gone far when he saw a chaise approaching, driven by the Governor of the State.

The Governor was a very popular and distinguished man, who was being talked of for the Presidency, and we should not have liked the small boy if he had not been a little overawed by finding himself alone in the presence of so august a personage. He was equal to the occasion, however, and as the chaise reached him he stood aside to let it pass, and gravely presented arms. The Governor at once pulled

up his horse and looked with amusement at the little fellow standing there as serious as a sentry, with his gun held rigidly before him.

"What is your name?" said the Governor.

"Thomas Bailey Aldrich," replied the boy, with a military salute.

He was invited into the chaise, and though he lost his shooting, what was that in comparison with the distinction of riding into Portsmouth Town with Governor Woodbury.

This was forty years ago, and since then Thomas Bailey Aldrich has earned a place among the foremost of American authors by a series of books, some in prose and some in verse, which are distinguished by the purity of their tone, the refinement of their style, and the picturesqueness of their invention. One of them is called "The Story of a Bad Boy," and except that some of the names of persons and places are changed, it is so faithful a picture of the author's boyhood that it might be called an autobiography.

Beautiful Spring.

THE glorious spring weather which has descended upon us during the last few days makes those of us who dwell in cities long for the bird-voices, buds and bright flowers of the open country. Most of us are unable to give effect to our longings, being compelled to do our daily dole on the business treadmill during six days out of the seven. In Toronto, however, we are not left altogether without the means of gratifying our fondness for Nature's beauties. The parks and open places are less numerous than they might be, but there are various spots where brief glimpses of *rus in urbe* may be obtained at a nominal cost, or at no cost at all. The florists' shops, for instance, present an ever-changing panorama of beauties, and a visit to them costs nothing. I have long been in the habit of availing myself of the privilege thus afforded, at this season of the year, and I have always found that it does much to gratify the desire for rural delights that steals over one with the departure of snow and the appearance of green grass.

On the east side of Yonge street, a short distance above Gerrard, is Slight's Temple of Flora. I often spend a pleasant half hour or so here, rambling in and out among the pots and baskets in which the numerous floral beauties are displayed. My last visit to the establishment was paid yesterday afternoon, and it was the next most pleasant thing to a day in the country. As I entered the place from Yonge street my olfactorys were greeted with all the perfumes of Araby. The conservatory is not large, but the variety of beautiful roses, lilies, carnations and what not is remarkably fine. The establishment is in three stories. Ascending the first flight of stairs one lands in what is called the show-room. Here there is an almost endless display of rare flowers and plants, such as are not commonly met with in the greenhouses of this country. Some of them are surpass-

ingly beautiful, and it is noticeable that many of the least attractive to the eye are sweetest to the smell. Ascending to the third story, one finds it divided off into five compartments, each being devoted to some special and particular purpose. In No. 5 I saw the most beautiful crimson-purple Duke of Connaught rose my eye ever looked upon, inasmuch that, if the truth must be told, I felt strongly tempted to steal it.

I have no time to dilate upon the many sights I saw here. I passed on my way homeward along Carlton street, dropping into the Horticultural Gardens *en route*. All Torontonians are familiar with this pleasant spot, and I am not going to take up space by describing it. But I had not proceeded far upon my homeward journey ere I came upon another florist's establishment well worthy of a visit. Turning northward from Carlton up the western side of Ontario street, I reached the grounds of Mr. S. L. Beckett, who here has a plot of about 5,000 feet. Upon entering the greenhouses I was again struck with the interminable varieties of beautiful flowers which meet one at every hand, and which each and all addresses the beholder in an unspoken language. Easter lilies, roses, carnations, hyacinths, calceolarias, japonicas and what not are here in hundreds. Upon entering into conversation with the proprietor, I learn that he makes a specialty of growing and establishing young, hardy plants. If so disposed you may count several thousand of these from the spot where you stand. But the attractions of the place are such that you can spend your time much more agreeably by gazing about you at the countless bright flowers that stare you in the face on every hand. A considerable portion of the ground is not yet taken up, but the proprietor is about to convert all the vacant space to horticultural purposes, so that the attractions of this spot are likely to be materially increased before the summer is over. Having spent all the time I could spare in viewing the contents of the greenhouses, I betook myself homeward. Ere long I shall probably visit some of the other "pleasant spots to while away an hour," and if agreeable to your readers, I should like to call attention to them in a future number. Meantime, such of your readers as "love the sunshine and the meadow" cannot do better, when they have a spare hour, than follow in my footsteps.

SUSAN.

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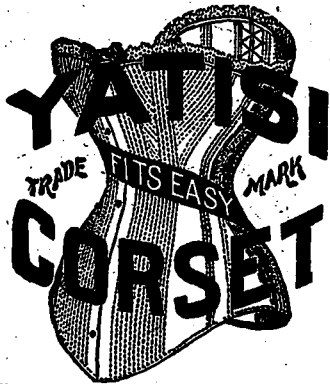
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384 Sherbourne St., Toronto,
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