

An

Octogenarian's
Reminiscences



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Arthur Fellocos
from E. C. S.
May 1916

AN OCTOGENARIAN'S REMINISCENCES

By the Author of

SIR ROWLAND HILL :
The Story of a Great Reform.

1923

N. du Bertrand Lugin

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INSCRIBED
TO THE FOUR WHO
WERE BORN IN
BRITISH COLUMBIA :
C.F.F. M.C.F.
R.H.F. AND A.F.
BY THEIR MOTHER.

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FOREWORD.

THIS work was completed in manuscript in the summer of 1914. It will be printed for private circulation because the present is, admittedly, an unfortunate, if not disastrous, time for authors, and little except books about war and the never-failing novel have a chance of attracting the reading public.

Two instances have recently come to knowledge of veteran writers of my sex leaving behind them, either in manuscript or print, Reminiscences of interest to near relatives and friends; and of the work in each case, thanks to a later, kindly-disposed generation, having attained the dignity of publication. Not being a prophet, however, I must refrain from predicting for my own venture a similar happy future.

ELEANOR C. SMYTH.

HOMESGARTH,
LETCHWORTH.
1916.

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CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

AT different times during the past years, some of my friends—one a successful authoress—unto whom, as is my wont, I had been spinning my old yarns, have said “Why don't you write your Reminiscences?” Invariably I have answered the question à l'Ecoisaise, by asking another—“Would anyone read them?”

But later it struck me that as in the course of a long life fate had brought me into contact with some rather uncommon experiences and with people as uncommon, it might be worth while to draw upon that mental storehouse, Memory, and make of the material extracted a volume which perchance others besides my friends would care to read.

The task was begun, but a combination of untoward circumstances prevented its completion; and it was laid aside for years. As, however, I had written a great part of my early far-western experiences while recollection of them was fresh, and had made many notes of other happenings, it seemed, when later I had more leisure, not amiss to resume the unfinished work. Therefore, mindful of my friends' injunctions, I looked it up, and in the following pages have preserved all that seemed worth keeping. Only as, although the daughter of a celebrity, I am not one myself, and am therefore less interesting than the experiences and people I have known, I shall as far as possible remain in the background.

My father, Rowland Hill, the postal reformer, was, in the oft-expressed opinion of many of his contemporaries, the greatest man of the nineteenth century. He was, at any rate, the author of its most beneficent reform. The present generations, who never knew the old postal system, can form no idea of the magnitude of the boon when the new system took its place. Nor can they realise how much the reform benefited commerce, encouraged education, strengthened the bonds of friendship, and knit afresh family ties which distance and heavy rates of postage had often loosened, and in thousands of cases entirely destroyed.

Some highly imaginative person recently gave it as his opinion that George Stephenson was the real inventor of the postal reform because without the aid of railways as mail-carriers it could never have been adopted. It would be just as logical to say that Rowland Hill was the real author of our railway system because the heavy subsidy paid to the different companies by the Post Office for carriage of the mails improved their financial position so much that they were enabled to run more trains; and that without that monetary aid the railway system could never have been a success. The one argument is as good, or as bad, as the other. As regards carriage of the mails, it should be remembered that the coaches had performed that duty ever since 1784, nearly half a century before the first railway was made, and rather more than half a century before the "iron horse," as a swifter carrier, took over the service. Indeed, at the time of transference, the work done by the coaches, thanks chiefly to Palmer and his successors at the Post Office and to Telford and MacAdam in the matter of excellent road-making, had reached a high degree of efficiency.

But I have elsewhere written of my father's great reform, therefore there is no need to dilate upon it here. I may, however, add that I knew him best of all his children, was from an early age his home amanuensis, and continued so to be, with the exception of my few years spent in the Canadian Far West, until his death; and that I have always been proud to call him father.

Of late years a habit has prevailed of contemning the Victorian age, and contrasting it unfavourably with that of to-day, though the need to draw such comparison is not obvious. Detractors notwithstanding, the Victorian was a great era, and famous for the many eminent men and women who lived in it. It was an age of great inventions and great reforms, though of some of the latter not a few present-day decadents seem bent on getting rid. It was an age of "plain living and high thinking," when men and women worked for noble causes, when they were not only intellectual, high-minded, and often highly educated, but were also endowed with the courteous manners which distinguished their ancestors of the eighteenth century, and lasted into the mid-nineteenth. It was, in short, an age which need not fear comparison with any other. That it should so appear to me is but natural seeing that my father's house was a resort of many of the Victorian intellectual giants; and recollection of scores of brilliant conversations there to

which I have been an eager listener is further responsible for the belief that the mid-nineteenth century was a golden age.* Our present-day mentors, however, sometimes assure us that each succeeding generation is an improvement on its predecessor; and one would fain accept the assertion as a truth. §

Remembrance of that age and experience of this also convince me that while education is now more widely diffused, it was of old more thorough, better digested, and freer from smatterings than it has become in these hurried days of "cram and exam."

One neglected study is that of modern languages, a knowledge of which is so important to those concerned in foreign trade, to students of foreign literature, † and to those who travel. A writer in the *Daily Mirror* of October 30th, 1914, indeed, declares that "it is a shame to our educational system that it refuses to supply facilities for the learning of" foreign tongues. He writes *apropos* of our soldiers' inability to converse with our Allies, who welcome them so heartily in France, an inability repeatedly deplored by the men themselves in their letters home. The pity of it! In the days of my youth he or she who could not fluently speak at least one foreign language was not much thought of.

One fine example of wise restraint and enlightened policy on the part of the Victorian women was shown during their agitation to obtain that first great charter of freedom, the Married Women's Property Act. How great and how much needed that measure was those only who lived before it became law can understand. The cause was won by steady perseverance

*In the *Westminster Gazette* of November 28th, 1914, is a review of Mr. Hutchinson's *Life of Sir John Lubbock*. Referring to the time in which the scientist lived, the reviewer says, "Nowadays, by a pernicious fashion, the Victorian age is derided as steeped in convention and dead to all the finer susceptibilities. It would be nearer the truth to say that the Victorian age was the most momentous, the most splendid in promise, and the most sensitive to ideals, of all epochs of the national spirit." Commenting upon a list (very incomplete) of Victorian "Immortals," the reviewer further says that one cannot help "feeling that something great has been lost to us in the turning of a century."

§Since August, 1914, however, the United Kingdom and its splendid Overseas Dominions have displayed a grandeur of character which at no period of our history has been excelled.

†Translations therefrom are sometimes unsatisfactory, recalling to mind the terse Italian proverb, "Tradutori, traditori."

and sound reasoning, and without resort to violence. Therefore the other sex came to acknowledge the justice of the demand; and the Bill was passed in a man's Parliament elected by male voters only.

And what of early and mid-Victorian art? The age producer great artists, among them Turner, who is of the immortals; Millais, the unrivalled, and the dauntless little band of Pre-Raphaelites, painters, poets, sculptors, who founded a new school, and revolutionised contemporary art. As I write, memory brings back the glorious vision of one Royal Academy annual exhibition which was certainly unique. Not long before, Ruskin, staunch friend to the new school, had said that not one of the men could paint that lovely object, an apple-tree in blossom. Thus put on their mettle, every member of that school sent in a picture in which apple blossoms were the distinguishing feature. The result was a marvellous "thing of beauty," and the great master was shown to be fallible.

Nowadays the Pre-Raphaelites are forgotten, and in their stead we have the art of post-impressionists, futurists, cubists, and other products of preliminary nightmare. But this is no new school. It is of fairly ancient lineage, and many generations have beheld it pictured, more or less defiantly of nature, upon those boards where daily figure the cups, &c., used for the beverage said to cheer but not inebriate. In my irreverent student days we called the thing the "tea-tray style of art."

The Victorian women, as a rule, dressed handsomely as matrons, simply, but prettily in youth, the clever fingers of the girls often achieving charming effects on an annual allowance which would barely suffice to clothe a modern girl for a month. When the modern parent, blest with a quiverful, reflects on this past felicitous state of things, he must sigh for a return to saner modes.

In these later times many grotesque fashions appear. In the last century's 'fifties and 'sixties there was but one—the crinoline. Unaccustomed eyes may judge of its absurdity by reference to old *Punch* volumes and other contemporary illustrated literature. Yet clumsy as the garment seems, its wearers speedily grew accustomed to it, and manœuvred it as dexterously as did their great-grandmothers the less-yielding hoops. And the crinoline had two superlatively good points. In wet weather it kept the damp outer-skirts well away from contact with the person; and it was undoubtedly this aloofness which enabled the women of that time to walk far better than

they have ever walked since. The clinging robes of the present day compel assumption of a shuffling gait. Of the two extremes, that of the crinoline appears to be both the wiser and the less ungraceful.†

But in those 'fifties and 'sixties of the Victorian age, I remember no instance among us of the pernicious tight-lacing mania which in earlier and also later times have prevailed. Some of us studied anatomy among other sciences; and thus had no wish to interfere with our admirably-planned internal arrangements. Moreover, we went in largely for athletic exercises and walking tours, rode much on horseback, and with our brothers and others played cricket, &c.; all of which involved an amount of physical exertion that a tightly-laced woman would have found irksome, if not impossible. If we ever saw a tortured waist we recognised it as belonging to a foreigner; though whether foreigner or not, we did not fail to comment unflatteringly on the deformity and to commiserate the victim. When the practice was revived rather recently, it was, I think, Sir Frederick Treves who warned the women adopting it that if they persisted, they would never be so healthy as were their grandmothers. I know not if the fashion came to this country with the fair damsels of the "American invasion," but I remember when in San Francisco half a century ago seeing some wonderful waists; and think it was towards the close of the 'sixties that, as one of their own newspapers rather unkindly put it, American heiresses and American beef were crossing the Atlantic together, the latter destined for the British dinner-table, the former intent on the acquisition of any coronets that should be on the market.

And how we Victorians did enjoy life! How specially jolly a time it was at Christmas Dickens's ever-verdant "Carol" tells us; and an earlier, higher-class, equally delightful style is pictured in Washington Irving's immortal "Bracebridge Hall." Redolent are both books of the simpler, heartier life then prevailing.

When I think of the Christmas of the Dickens era, its fun, good temper, and the abundant hospitality which present-day ostentation and extravagance have killed, I have a vision of a many-yards-long table set out in the spacious holly-and-other-seasonably-bedecked refectory of a Jacobean house, a

†Written in 1914. In 1915 the "hobble-skirt" was happily got rid of—let us hope for ever.

table ringed round with three joyous generations, at their head the good old grandfather, an encyclopædia of knowledge, endowed with the eighteenth century's beautiful manners, yet, when among us juniors, the youngest of all the crowd; his sons, their wives, and children hemming him round; the feast invariably followed by games, music, acting, dancing, and never-failing merriment. An usually clever family then, great thinkers, practical sympathisers with all good causes, and gifted with no small share of the Hudibrasian wit—only more modern, more refined—which was said to come from the collateral ancestor, Samuel Butler, whom we claim as one of ourselves.

And *apropos* of this fine old festival, why should our time-honoured "Father Christmas" be in process of deposition in favour of the alien "Santa Claus"? Already we unduly maltreat our mother-tongue when, for example, we confuse our adjectives and adverbs, and employ other barbarisms, such as the one which recently provoked a friend of mine, a purist in speech and learned in etymology, to remark, "When next an edition of Shakespeare's plays is brought out one of them will probably be renamed 'Like you like it'."

But these and other peculiarities seem less heinous than the substitution for good old "Father Christmas" of the eccentric, toy-laden, elderly gentleman who, when on nocturnal errands bent, prefers to enter each house by way of a sooty chimney rather than by a civilised hall-door; and who is feminine as to his saint-ship, and masculine as to his name—Clause or Klaus being, of course, the diminutive of Nicholas.

But enough of prosing.

CHAPTER II.

SOME EARLY RECOLLECTIONS.

THE story of Bruce Castle, Tottenham, in which old house I was born, is but meagre, yet tradition is positive that the present building is the third to stand on the one site.

The first was a Norman stronghold which, after belonging to Waltheof, who married Judith, the Conqueror's niece, came into possession of the De Brus or De Breix family, whose name is still existing on maps of north-western France, where indeed may be read not a few other place-names identical with the surnames of once-famous English houses of Norman descent, some now decayed, some, but far fewer, still a power in the British Isles.

Surprise is at times expressed that a Middlesex castle should bear the name of a Scottish royal family, the fact being overlooked that, before counting as North Britons, the De Bruses had become Anglo-Normans. Among other famous Franco-Norman houses settled in conquered England were the De Bailleuls, a scion of which family, in company with a De Brus, went to Scotland on what proved to be a matrimonial errand, for both men remained, each espousing a daughter (or, some say niece) of the then reigning monarch. One married pair founded the most famous royal house north of Tweed; the other, though less successful in the art of king-making, left an imperishable name to Oxford.

Two of the most striking objects in the greatly diminished modern Bruce Castle park when first I knew it were relics, hoary with age, of some one of the crusades in the shape of a pair of cedars of Lebanon. These, says tradition, were brought from Palestine by no one knows whom; perhaps by a knight of the De Brus line. How those choice spirits among the crusading hosts unto whom arboriculture was a hobby managed to keep from dying on the homeward way the plants, infant trees, or tree-cuttings, is a puzzle. But then, what could not those "Saracens of the West" accomplish? Anyway, the fact is indisputable that the stately cedars on whose far-spreading, easily-swayed branches the young Hill

cousins loved to swing till the practice, as too trying for the veteran limbs, was forbidden, have stood upright, sturdy and beautiful, for one knows not how many centuries, only at last to die slowly of sheer old age.

Their long and vigorous life should surely disprove an assertion sometimes made that it is impossible to keep alive any botanical specimens during a lengthy journey, such, say, as from Europe to British Columbia. If, however, a journey is measured not by distance but by the time it occupies, the passage from a British port by sea and rail to Victoria, B.C., is shorter than was that in crusading days between Palestine and Britain. Moreover, these mediæval arboriculturists, whether crusaders or explorers, did not confine their enterprise to cedars, for in my childhood I was accustomed to see in one of the small private enclosures surrounding a Kensington Gardens lodge several young trees, chiefly fruit, but some floral and ornamental only, with labels hung round their slender stems telling that our ancestors, crusaders sometimes, brought their fore-parents from distant lands at dates approximately stated. Generally the trees came from southern Europe or the near countries of Asia. Some of our most luscious fruits reached us in this way, but the annually recurring treat to generation after generation seldom inspires any of them to sing pæans of gratitude to the authors of the boon.

One fragment only of the second Bruce Castle remains, being a tower entirely detached from the modern dwelling, brick-built, with walls of great thickness, and said to be of Tudor origin, some four hundred years old. Architecturally, there is nothing beautiful about it, but as even in the sultriest summer it was always refreshingly cool, it was used as a larder and dairy. Cold milk drunk there on a broiling day was to a sun-baked, thirsty youngster what nectar is said to be to the Olympian gods.

A curious thing once happened in connexion with Bruce Castle. It is a well-known fact that on the site of ancient buildings whose foundations have not been thoroughly cleared away, grass and other herbage will not grow so vigorously as on virgin soil. Our English summers are rarely characterised by prolonged droughts, not even the phenomenal summer of 1911, during whose torrid course thunderstorms of tropical violence were not infrequent. But at intervals comes a summer which, like that of 1868, is one long spell of hot, dry weather when vegetation languishes, and even our lawns, for

all that they are "mown for a thousand years," become straw-coloured, and threaten to perish outright. During one such season the lawns lying in front of the Jacobean Bruce Castle fared no better than those of neighbouring grounds, worse perhaps, for, more or less faintly, along a portion of the wide, grassy expanse were seen indications of the foundation walls and towers of the long-vanished Norman stronghold, just enough to give hint of how part at least of the first Bruce Castle had been planned.

This story was told me by my brother, I being at the time, if I recollect rightly, in the North American Far West, and the circumstance seemed well worth recording in a note-book. The same thing has doubtless occurred elsewhere before and since, although only observant people make mental note of it. The late Marquess of Bute was one. While taking a walk one day in South Wales during the dry, hot summer of 1897, he noticed certain lines and squares marked in a large expanse of withered grass. He caused excavations to be made, when the ruins of an old monastery were revealed, some interesting relics were found, and the entire plan of the building was laid bare.

There was nothing beautiful about the interior of Bruce Castle as I knew it, the only objects of interest being two fine oaken staircases, wide enough for the proverbial coach-and-six to be driven up its shallow steps, and possessed of massive balustrades dark and rich in the colour which time and much polish give.

In the mid-nineteenth century Bruce Castle was to a bevy of young Hill cousins a veritable "Earthly Paradise." Two of the five Hill brothers and their families lived beneath its roof; and thus the children of the other brothers were provided, when on a visit, with a ready-made home-party of playfellows exactly a dozen strong. While the school-terms lasted, my uncle Arthur's happy scholars—for never was pedagogue better loved by pupils—kept the old house lively. But not even a hundred-and-odd boys could make more racket than, at holiday times, did the young Hill cousins, their cousins on different maternal sides, and their numerous friends. For at these times room for a crowd of juveniles seemed always to be found, the very walls of the old castle apparently expanding to receive them. Our hostess, my uncle Edwin's wife, had a heart capacious enough to hold in it youngsters by the score; and never could children be happier than were those periodically

assembled within focus of her watchful, sympathetic eyes. Perfect liberty was given us; we did not seem to be supervised, yet if anything was amiss our aunt saw it at once, and it was worth while for a short space to be cut off from companions if only to come under her tender ministrations. Hay-makings, picnics, out-door games of many kinds, boating on "my Lady Lea," then less inky-looking and odoriferous than she has since become, were among our summer diversions; and in the winter, Christmas festivities—to which I have referred in the previous chapter—dances, concerts, theatrical performances, and other pastimes afforded vent to our high spirits and untiring activity. Not a little histrionic talent, especially in our uncle Matthew's family, distinguished some of us, as it did, and still does, our Mackenzie cousins, among whom were counted Sir Morell and that one who, under the name of Compton, took to the stage at a time when it was held in slight esteem, made on it a distinguished career, and was known as "the gentleman actor." An earlier Morell Mackenzie during the wreck of the "Pegasus" played a heroic part.

I write feelingly of those days because, as a child, living in London was not easy for me, and I was, for long therefore, a small resident of then rural Tottenham, with its many picturesque old houses, including the alms-house founded by Philip II.'s chef, its widely-spreading green swards and groups of well-grown trees, among them the "Seven Sisters" group, to which belonged a tragic story. Then and later was I a frequent guest of that kindest of aunts.

In our white-headed age, those happy days at the old castle were a favourite subject of conversation with my brother and me; and although as a rich man he had troops of friends, and many things at his command, it was ever matter of regret with him that his children and mine had nothing that stood in the place of that unforgettable past of our own youth.

One's earliest recollections—those, I mean, which are indelibly stamped on the memory—are, as a rule, either terrifying or ridiculous. Mine partake of both qualities, and the earliest is of my being carried by my nurse into the Bruce Castle poultry-yard, ostensibly to feed the many feathered bipeds, but really, I fancy, to enable the girl to enjoy a chat with a male friend there employed. Like other small children, I wore short socks, and it seemed to me that my little bare legs offered a tempting repast to the hungry creatures gathered

around us, their necks outstretched, their beaks wide open, their voices clamorous. I shrieked with terror, but my nurse and her swain were deaf to all but their own talk, and the ordeal lasted till the ever-growing noise of frightened child and ravenous fowls reminded man and maid that the poultry-yard mid-day meal was over-due.

Another early recollection is of my being taken by my mother to see some distant cousins of uncertain age, and of my shaking hands with a venerable dame, their mother, who sat in an easy chair by the fire. The duty was impressed upon me of remembering, and of informing my own children if I ever had any, that I had seen and been spoken to by a lady who was born in the reign of George the Second. Who George the Second was I had not the slightest idea; but, seeing how unusually solemn my elders looked I understood that something very wonderful was implied by the allusion, and so I gazed my hardest at the old lady, and was secretly disappointed to note how strong was her resemblance to all the old ladies I already knew.

Other youthful experiences return to mind more vividly.

Being always independent of spirit, I liked, from quite an early age, to take myself unaccompanied to a junior school held at Bruce Castle for the benefit of the very young members of the Hill family and others—the thing that to-day would be called a Kindergarten. I much preferred the solitary walk or run to going with an ancient farm labourer who was appointed by my elders as escort, and who was wont at such times to bestow on me a stiff forefinger, apparently in the belief that without that support I might collapse before the journey's end. The forefinger was not uncleanly, but it closely resembled that of Clara Feggotty described in "David Copperfield" as being about as smooth and pleasant to handle as a nutmeg-grater.

But when I went alone there was the haunting terror of possible encounter with needlessly lively horned cattle; for long after a dreaded nightmare in my sleep. The lane I had to follow for the half mile or so from the house of the two old cousins with whom I dwelt after my parents left Tottenham had, for most of the way, an old wall of great height on the one side, and on the other a tall hedge not easy to struggle through, with a rather deep ditch in front of it. Whenever from afar I saw advancing to meet me a dark moving mass with long, white horns tossing about in it, I mentally measured my own distance and that of the approaching cattle from the large

iron swinging gate which gave entrance to Bruce Castle park ; and, being a swift runner, usually reached the goal first. But sometimes it was a very near thing ; and once I was only about a yard to the good, and had to clamber up and sit astride on the gate, which there was not time to open.

My brother, on one occasion, came to closer quarters with the horned enemy, and was not so fortunate as I. One lively bullock detached himself from his fellows, hemmed the boy into a corner of the high wall, and lowered his head with apparently the least amiable of intentions. But my brother, even as a mite, was always courageous, always resourceful. He squatted on all fours, and, being a capital mimic, barked fiercely at his assailant. The bullock, unused to a dog of so novel a breed, paused, threw up head and tail, and scampered after his companions.

My most thrilling adventure was with a said-to-be converted cannibal. A Maori chief had been "civilised" and brought to England, where he went about attired in European garb, but with face, hands, and doubtless much more of him elaborately tattooed. He visited at several English houses, and spoke our language fairly well. But some of our elders, remembering New Zealand aboriginal gastronomic predilections finally stamped out only in later years—and thinking that our strange guest might still cherish some of his antipodean tastes, privately warned us little ones to keep out of his way when alone. Now it was my delight, being so swift of foot, often to try in how short a time I could make the circuit of the park ; and one day, when about half way round, in the midst of the pretty, winding shrubbery path, along which one could never see many yards ahead, and quite out of sight of house or any of my kind, I beheld among the trees and coming in my direction, the tattooed ex-man-eater. At once I wheeled round, and fled as I never fled before, not even from the bullocks. As I ran, silently, for I needed all my breath for flight, the horrid picture of a pair of tattooed hands laid upon my shoulders haunted me ; and I kept up the frantic pace till I reached the three wide-open French windows belonging to the drawing-room, and saw within a goodly company of "grown-ups." Then I looked back, but the New Zealander had vanished, nor did I ever see him again. He was leaving us that day, and was probably merely taking a last ramble in the park by way of bidding it farewell.

Before my younger sister and I had entered our teens we came to be nothing if not political; and even our bows and arrows—the graceful, healthy pastime of archery was still much in vogue—bore the names of heroes, ancient and modern, British and foreign. One day our father presented each of us with a tortoise as a new pet; whereupon we bestowed on one the name and on the other the familiar title of a then tremendously great favourite. Not long after, our uncle Matthew came to see us, and was introduced to the latest acquisitions. “Which,” he laughingly asked, “is Daniel O’Connell, and which the Liberator of Ireland?” As our uncle knew the great Irishman very well, he added, “I shall tell him about the political tortoises, but I think he won’t feel flattered at their being called after him.” “Oh, but please remember,” said the elder child, “that it was the tortoise, not the hare, that won the celebrated race.”

Surely, that seventy-years-old remark entitled this scribe to rank among the prophets.

A pleasant recollection is of my being, as a child, introduced to the brothers William and Robert Chambers, then in the prime of life, and already deservedly famous. They, together with their contemporary, the well-known publisher, Charles Knight, whom we Southrons claim as entirely our own, undoubtedly did more, when the nineteenth century was in its youth and middle age, than any others of their craft to provide the public with cheap and at the same time wholesome literary works, both firms contributing not a few from their own pens. Till these enterprising men effected their revolution in the publishing world, books were far fewer than they now are, and were often costly out of all proportion to their worth. A few literary giants there were, and these are still counted among the immortals; but it was by no means a golden age of literature. Comparison between the works published when the nineteenth century was as young as is now the twentieth, and those which are issued at the present time shows how great has been the advance; though the modern binders might with advantage imitate their elders in some ways, as, for instance, in causing full-page or “plate” illustrations to keep from getting loose, a fault which is of rather frequent occurrence.

The case of the brothers Chambers is especially interesting in that they came of an impoverished stock, and had a hard struggle to achieve success. But they were Scots; and to be a Scot stands, as we know, for much in the world of intelli-

gence and dogged perseverance. The story of the brothers' early days and of their rise to influence and fame has been told by the elder, William; and its perusal should hearten any man prone to believe that poverty is an insurmountable barrier to ascent, and not a spur. No wonder that Peebles, the birth-place of the pair, treasures with pride the unpretentious "plant" with which they began their career as vendors of books, &c. Are there many of their countrymen, in these more self-indulgent times, who, while fighting life's hard battle, deem it possible to limit the cost of an entire day's food to fourpence-halfpenny, or three meals of porridge?

As I placed my hand in that of first one and then another of the brothers, my father, who held them in the highest esteem, briefly told me something of their story; and I, already in my small way a book-lover, gazed reverently into two pairs of kindly eyes which looked pleasantly into mine.

One custom among children in some of the households I knew in my youth, a custom for which the seniors were clearly responsible, has happily long died out, and is hardly likely to be revived. On the conclusion of the early dinner or late supper or both—meals on which to-day are bestowed the names of luncheon and dinner—the children present were each given a glass of wine. With this in hand, the little victims had to stand up, bow to every guest seated at the table in turn, and say "Your health, sir!" or "Your health, madam!" with what effect on the children's own health and possible future conduct may be readily imagined. As a sip of the wine was imbibed after each salutation, the glass would sometimes be emptied before the round was completed, and had to be refilled. I have seen young children grow flushed of face and unsteady of gait during the ordeal. Like many another wise parent, my father would never have allowed his children to follow this pernicious custom even had chance to practise it occurred.

In Washington Irving's fascinating description of country life a hundred years ago as shown in "Bracebridge Hall," a somewhat similar scene is introduced, though here it is not a child, but the housekeeper, a stately old dame wearing a sort of Elizabethan ruff, who comes in at the end of the repast, stands behind the squire's chair, and drinks to the health of the company, but in a single comprehensive toast only.

Another custom which has "gone by the board" is the Sunday (or other day) breakfast parties. To these festivals, as to many more pleasant things belonging to the mid-nineteenth

century, the term "early Victorian" is sometimes contemptuously applied by the younger generations which knew them not. But to one person at least who was often present, remembrance of these matutinal feasts is replete with charm. Taking place, as they did, not at the end of the day's work when men are glad to rest, but in the morning when wearied mind and body have been refreshed by a night's repose, the breakfast parties afforded a never-failing opportunity for the keen encounter of great wits, the telling of racy stories or repetition of latest bon-mots and on-dits, and for listeners or participators of graver tastes the learned discourse of scientists and animated talk of politicians. It may be heresy in the twentieth century to regret the passing of these enjoyable gatherings, but if so I plead guilty to being a heretic of the deepest dye.

One of my most vivid recollections is of the handsome mail-coaches already mentioned, which made Palmer famous. He had evolved them from the less good-looking, less well-equipped, and slower stage-coaches by which, till late in the eighteenth century, people who possessed no vehicles of their own had perforce to travel, not comfortably. Palmer's coaches were so great an improvement on their predecessors, from the primitive wagon of the middle ages onward, that it is little wonder that they should have been the pride of all who beheld them. Indeed, the degree of comfort and efficiency to which this citizen of Bath raised the mail-coach service was striking; and from the first he went on improving it. But, like all other reformers, Palmer had to contend against ignorance and vested interests; and ultimately the man was got rid of, but not the good work he had accomplished. Which is no uncommon experience. The story of his labours is told in Joyce's "History of the Post Office," the standard work on postal history from its beginning to the eve of my father's "revolutionary" reform.

Daily from London's heart poured forth, during the ensuing sixty or more years, a crowd of coaches laden with passengers and mails, and bound for the different trunk roads leading from the metropolis to other outlying centres of population. The importance of the coaches was enhanced by the fact that before the era of railways, telegraphs, &c., they were the swiftest mode of travel—actually twelve miles an hour!—and the purveyors of the latest news. Thus in times of political or other excitements, people gathered along the high roads to

hear the items of intelligence shouted out by the passengers as the coaches hurried past.

To my childish mind the pageant of the coaches assembled for the start was a grand one, and to be a participant in it a still grander. The sturdy-looking steeds, well-fed, well-groomed, well-accoutred, went, or so I thought, like the wind; and to ride behind them, and listen to their rhythmic footfalls was delightful. Delightful too was it to look on at the "lightning change" of the horse-team at the end of each stage; while to travellers of mature age each change gave opportunity for bets, just as, in these later days, does the estimated "run," before its official announcement, of an ocean "greyhound"—only that the earlier betting was less likely to lead to dire calamity.

But although mental pictures of a few long coach-trips remain indelibly fixed, the one I best remember took place when I was in my seventh year, and lasted throughout the sunshine of a beautiful June day. On this occasion we were almost constantly in sight of a scene in which men were toiling at a great earth-work. This appeared much to interest the coach's company, was the subject of many discussions, and caused our father to tell my elder sister and me, who were with our parents, that when next we made that journey to see our maternal grandfather, who lived in the then little town of Wolverhampton, we should travel by train. The many-miles-long great earth-work was the as yet unfinished London and North-Western Railway.

It is curious to note how often the old coach-road and the modern railroad, with perhaps a break here and there, run parallel with one another. Not only is this the case as regards the "premier line," but is also seen in that of the Great Northern, the London and Brighton, and others. In the case of the Great Western, there is a second travel-path, the "silent highway" which, for many miles, flows within sight of the train. Anon the stream gets lost to view, but presently comes back to gladden us with river-side pictures, only to disappear and return again and again.

We know that the coach road is often a modernised Roman road, and that the Romans utilised already existing ancient British tracks. And when we look upon the wonderful earthworks and cattle and other ways constructed by our Neolithic forebears in an age when Rome and perhaps Stone-

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henge even were not,* it is but natural to surmise that the origin of some at least of our present-day roads may in part date back to a still more remote past.

My maternal grandfather was one of those fortunate mortals who, when going upon journeys, were independent of public vehicles, and relied on their private equipages. But grandsire Pearson, as a man ever merciful to his beasts, took a few days, with one pair of horses, to cover the 120 miles which lay between Wolverhampton and London.

His grandchildren were devoted to the genial old man, but to one of them there was yet another attraction about his visits in that with him always came "Lightfoot." This horse was so tame that my grandfather never allowed him to be fastened to a manger; and he wandered freely among the stalls. For his sake I was wont to rise betimes, raid the sugar-basin or biscuit-box, and thus armed with toothsome spoils sally forth to the stable, climb to the window-sill, and sitting thereon call the gentle animal to my side. Then, as I fed him, I would clasp his warm, glossy neck with my other arm, and, talking caressingly the while—for these creatures love the sound of a friendly human voice—lay my head against his with a feeling of perfect bliss. It must have been through pretty, bright-bay "Lightfoot" that I came to prefer horses to all other animals, and to delight in cutting out for playthings whole herds of little paper horses warranted to stand steadily in every variety of attitude.

When my father was a member of the London and Brighton Railway directorate we lived at that then far smaller seaside resort; and while sojourning there saw the making of the branch line to Lewes. On elevated ground overlooking the valley of the Ouse, the great Earl De Warren and his wife Gundrade, one of William the Conqueror's daughters, founded a Priory dedicated to St. Pancras. Its ruins were so insignificant that their destruction by the Railway Company was regarded with indifference. But no indifference was displayed when the process of excavation revealed two much-damaged leaden coffins—the outer wooden ones had perished—in which were contained the bones, several of them fairly perfect, but all discoloured and shrunken, of the pious founders. These relics, I am told, are still preserved in a local museum.

* "Dew Ponds and Cattle Ways." By the Messrs. Hubbard, Longmans and Co.

CHAPTER III.

A YEAR IN FRANCE.

ONE happy twelvemonths spent by me south of the British Channel belongs almost to "ancient history," so unlike is the France of to-day to the France which first I knew.

The reign of her last, but by no means worst, king, Louis Philippe, was then drawing to its close, and many a time have I seen him driving in the direction of his favourite Neuilly and St. Cloud—the latter pleasant abode long ago reduced to ashes—along the wide, tree-bordered thoroughfare which, charged as it must have been with painful memories, could hardly have seemed to him an Elysian Field. From the palace of the Tuileries, destined also to perish by fire, he had to cross the now handsome Place de la Concorde, formerly Place de la Révolution, where many of his relatives and friends had, within his recollection, perished untimely. He would probably have shared their fate had he not been out of France, giving lessons in her language, and otherwise striving to make some sort of livelihood in these dolorous times. Further along that thoroughfare, and on its right hand, his glance must have often strayed to the little chapel built on the spot where his eldest son, the Duke of Orleans, was killed in a carriage accident, a tragedy further commemorated by a picture covering one wall of the chapel, and representing the royal family gathered round the young man's death-bed. And on the left-hand side of the road the king's glance may have sometimes lighted on a house whence one day an "infernal machine" was hurled as he drove past, only narrowly missing its aim.

More liberty is said to have existed in France during the "citizen king's" than in any previous reign. However that may be I know not; but one small incident, my buying from a book-stall on the Quai d'Orsay of a copy of the once-dreaded *Marseillaise* openly displayed there looks as if the assertion did not lack truth. Such a purchase, I was assured, would, under the stricter rule of the elder Bourbons, have been impossible. Had the old man not lost his better judgment over a certain

proposed Liberal banquet, he might have died king of the French. Or perhaps a too vivid recollection of the terrors of nearly sixty years before unmanned him, and when later troubles came hurried him to England.

Louis Philippe was one of those royal personages about whose parentage strange stories are told, the wife of "Philippe Egalité" having, it is said, really given birth to an unwelcome daughter. Such tales are not rare, though most of them are probably fabricated; and visitors to Edinburgh castle have perhaps heard one as strange as any.

To reach Paris in those far-off days was a very leisurely affair. From Dieppe my escort and I had to proceed by diligence. A slow, lumbering thing it was, clumsy in aspect after our gorgeous crimson and gilt mail-coaches, but much more picturesque and commodious. The sturdy-looking horses curiously apparelled; the several compartments into which the vehicle was ingeniously divided; the delightfully un-English company, chatty and pleasant-tempered; the long-booted postilion, alert, ubiquitous, alighting at every stopping place to crack jokes with town or country folk; the many loops of the winding Seine; the architecturally lovely cities and artistically grouped hamlets through which we clattered; and above all the historic town bearing the name of the tall Norse chief, Rolf the ganger—these are details of a scene which still lives in memory.

The Rouen I remember was indeed a thing of beauty, though destined not to be a joy for ever, as the hands of the destroyer and sanitary reformer not long after fell upon and transformed it. Necessary innovators no doubt, but utterly prosaic, and too apt to replace ancient picturesqueness by modern ugliness. The splendid old Norman churches and a few other fine buildings remain, but the Rouen which lasted into the mid-nineteenth century can hardly be said to exist.

Paris in the late 'forties was a little less than six decades older than the Paris of the Great Revolution; and thousands of men and women were still living whose memory easily covered that terrible time and the long, exhausting Napoleonic wars which followed it. These latter, while draining France of her sons, brought into conspicuous relief the admirable qualities of her daughters, who in countless cases had to fill the vacancies left at home, and by their able conduct of business and other careers proved the truth of the saying that the women of France stand at the head of the European sisterhood.

Some of the Paris streets were still lighted with oil-lamps suspended midway between the two rows of opposite houses, and requiring to be lowered when lighted or extinguished, a time-wasting process associated with unpleasant oleaginous smells. And from the walls of private and business houses still projected many of the great iron brackets* formerly used to hold other lamps, grim reminders of the sinister purpose to which these holders were occasionally put when the cry of "A la lanterne!" was heard about the streets.

One came across other relics of the Revolution when handing the *sou* pieces still in circulation, to make which the cannons of the destroyed Bastille had been utilised. Rudely fashioned and much worn were these coins, but still so numerous that, forgetting they would not last for ever, I foolishly neglected to secure a few as curiosities. They bore the effigy not of Louis XVI., but of the allegorical head of Liberty, not unlike that which figures on the coinage and postage stamps of to-day.

English people of the younger generations can scarcely form an adequate idea of the tremendous rejoicing which broke out in this country when the news came of the fall of that terrible fortress-dungeon. Though should they not care to study more serious history, Dickens' "Tale of Two Cities"—said to have been inspired by the author's recent perusal of Carlyle's masterpiece on the French Revolution—would give sufficient indication to the cause of that rejoicing. At the same time, all who care for ancient buildings must feel glad that our forebears, thrilled as they were by the stirring events in France, spared for posterity the Tower of London, whose demolition would have robbed thousands of modern holiday folk of a visit to what has now become an interesting relic of old times.

In Great Britain the course of revolution was watched with intense interest; and to many of our fellow country people the fourteenth of July came to be an anniversary worthy of celebration almost as though it were a British as well as a French national fête. "Bastille Day" was even regarded here as a lucky date on which our little-travelled ancestors might begin a journey, make some fresh start in life, or inaugurate

*Lamp-irons they are called in Sir J. Murray's English Dictionary. The one on which Foulon was hanged in July, 1789, still, it is said, remains at the corner of the Place de Grève.

other important undertakings; and an aunt of mine, fully forty years after the event, chose the fourteenth of July as her wedding-day. This enthusiasm lasted long, a proof of its fervour. In many cases it held its place conspicuously throughout the life-time of those who remembered the cause of its origin, and even throughout the lifetime of their immediate descendants.

At the present time there exists a tendency to minimise the horrors of the Bastille, even perhaps to think lightly of *lettres de cachet*. Doubtless, towards the close of the eighteenth century the Bastille was becoming less than of yore a place wherein heterodox religionists or wrong-headed politicians and inconvenient relatives could be shut up and consigned to oblivion. But if, as its apologists maintain, its evil reputation had decreased, why was it still an object of dread and of execration; why did the Paris mob spend its first fury upon it, and why were seven poor human mental wrecks discovered within its gloomy walls?

The English lady with whom my few schoolmates and I lived took care that in addition to the usual formal French lessons with a Parisian governess we should become familiarised with the spoken tongue at its purest; and thus it was our good fortune to go occasionally to the theatre, and more frequently to the principal churches—*Nôtre Dame*, the *Madeleine*, *Saint Roche* (always pronounced *Roc*), and others. The services at *St. Roche* pleased me best, because, ugly as the edifice was, the operatic stars sang there, and the music altogether was very fine. The *Madeleine* was a favourite church for weddings, and was often prettily decorated. At *Nôtre Dame*, much of whose ornamentation was tawdry and quite unworthy of a capital city's cathedral, I was so fortunate more than once as to hear *Father Lacordaire*, then at the summit of his fame as priest and preacher. When he occupied the pulpit, the cathedral was crowded with an appreciative congregation, so rapt that scarcely a sound was audible save the voice of the great man delivering in clear and earnest tones the message which he held to be divine. Being only a girl of fifteen, I was scarcely capable of appreciating *Lacordaire* as I should have done; but I well remember his dignified bearing, his evident sincerity, and the fine face growing animated while he spoke, and serving as truthful index of a noble soul.

A favourite play-writer of that time was *Scribe*, and I saw several of his dramas acted. What perhaps impressed me

almost as much as the good acting was the author's happy knack of choosing titles for his plays, proverbs being often requisitioned, such as "On ne badine pas avec l'amour," "Ne touchez pas à la reine," "Il faut qu'une porte soit fermée ou ouverte," and others.

A great change has taken place in the French language since I was a schoolgirl. The rather insipid question "Plait-il?" now met with only in old-fashioned books was already obsolete. While in Paris I heard it but once, and that was from the lips of an old gentleman. It is now as dead as is the expression "An it please you." Other changes include the frequent placing of the adjective before instead of after the noun, as though our neighbours were minded to imitate our rule. The English words "club," "jockey," "sport," &c., have long been appropriated by France; but the words adopted in later years are still more numerous. In Louis Enault's story of "Christine" there is a short sentence, two of whose three words are English—"Le steamer stoppait." In the French of last century's 'forties the sentence would probably have been—"Le paquebot s'arrétait." Already is "Square" becoming adopted in lieu of "Place," and other examples might be mentioned. On the other hand, we have long borrowed words from the French, and notably since the Norman Conquest, as is seen in our legal terms and other ways, curiously so in the change of name among our domestic and wild animals, which while living and tended by English serfs are English, and become French when killed and placed upon the tables of the Norman masters.* "Max O'Rell" was not far wrong when he said that English was French badly spelt and badly pronounced, and clinched his argument by printing side by side two paragraphs, the subject identical, but the one expressed in French, the other in English. The close resemblance was startling.

But not even royalty would nowadays take upon itself to make a linguistic change in the arbitrary fashion of the fourteenth Louis. An oft-repeated story says that the Roi Soleil's carriage was one day thus announced: "La carrosse de Sa Majesté l'attend." "*Ma carrosse!*" exclaimed the king. "Au contraire c'est mon carrosse qui m'attend." And thenceforth carrosse, heretofore a feminine, became a masculine noun.

*Sheep—mutton; ox—beef; and deer—venison are examples.

But a worse change was at hand. The Queen of Louis XIV. was a Spanish Infanta, who apparently found it hard to learn the language of her adopted country, the numerals especially. Hence, for more than 250 years the words *settante*, *ottante*, and *nonante*, which need no help of mental arithmetic to decide their meaning, have fallen into disuse save in remote parts of France and here and there in Canadian France; and the courtiers of Paris and Versailles, and eventually the general public took to the barbaric *soixante-dix*, *quatre-vingts*, and *quatre-vingt-dix*, just because a little Spanish girl was an unusually poor linguist.

In this country also because the German family who succeeded to the Stuarts' unstable throne found "th" difficult to articulate, we dropped it in many words; and thus *has* was permitted to displace the euphonious *hath*. My grandfather Hill, who was born half a century after the change of dynasty, knew many old people who deplored the new style of speech, and continued to use that immortalised by Shakespeare and Milton, by the English Bible of 1611, and by our Norse forefathers, among whom the two sounds of "th" were familiar, one, as the Icelandic sagas show, heading many a name of man and woman.

One alteration, distinctly for the better, made by our French cousins when the Republican Year One was inaugurated was later abandoned either because it was a democratic creation, or because the rest of the world preferred the older style. To this day, therefore, we persist in wrongly naming the last four of the twelve months. No need to ask what were the seasons indicated by *Gérminal*, *Floréal*, *Prairéal*, *Thérmidor*, *Fructidor*, *Messidor*, &c. The pity is that names so appropriate and euphonious should go out of favour.

When I was in France less than thirty-two years had elapsed since the close of the Napoleonic wars; and the Emperor, a prisoner in St. Helena, had been dead a quarter of a century only. The long-drawn out tragedy, though ended, was therefore comparatively recent, and the mutually hostile feeling animating France and England was still keen. My uncle Matthew, one of the most enlightened men I ever knew, often deplored this animosity, and was among the earliest to enter France after Peace had been concluded. In the course of several such visits he formed many valuable friendships among her gifted people. "We have," he once truly said, "to overcome, on both sides, a huge iceberg of prejudice."

Now that the two nations really know each other that iceberg has melted; and we can cordially agree with Anatole Le Braz when, quoting Renan, he says in "La Terre du Passé" "c'est si bête de se haïr."

In Jephson's "Walking Tour in Brittany," a pleasant episode is told which occurred during one of our harmful, unnecessary wars with France. A Welsh regiment had landed in that Province, and was speedily confronted by a Breton force. As the enemies drew nearer, the band attached to each host struck up a national air. The strains were precisely similar. There was a simultaneous halt, an outburst of exclamations culminated in cheers, arms were flung to the ground, and the cry went up in one language only—"We are brothers, and will not fight!"

It is a well-known fact that when Breton, Welsh, and Irish fishermen meet at sea—Cornishmen also while Cornish was still a spoken tongue—they are able to converse just as if they were of one nation, as in a sense they are. And it is the great historian Freeman, if my memory is not at fault, who in his admirable work on the Norman Conquest, tells us another, perhaps lesser known fact—that when Duke William was collecting forces for the invasion of England volunteers flocked to his standard from all parts of France, but that the contingent from Brittany was proportionately the most numerous. In many cases these men were descended from refugees who, when the invaders from the European continent's northern shores over-ran the island thenceforth to be known as England, passed across the sea from Greater Britain to the country of a kindred race. A people forcibly dispossessed is a people who hold long memories, and the Celt sets great store on his genealogical records. These Breton volunteers therefore followed Duke William as to a sacred crusade or hereditary vendetta, burning to avenge the unforgotten wrongs of 600 years before.

My year in France I may rightfully claim as a happy one, not that I found life especially felicitous under the guardianship of the English lady with whom my companions and I lived. It was the unvarying kindness of the few French friends I made and the several-months-long visit to Paris paid by my favourite aunt which mainly caused my stay to become a pleasurable recollection, and made me feel for France and her delightfully companionable people an affection which has lasted for more than half a century.

CHAPTER IV.

ART STUDIES.

WHEN my elder sister and I were young we studied painting under an excellent master, Mr. Leigh, of Newman Street, W. There were many other girl pupils in his roomy studio; and most of us were enthusiasts for Art, and cherished glorious dreams of a time when an appreciative public should regard us with mingled awe and admiration as great women painters, and pay fabulous sums of money for possession of the pictures we should produce. One of the crowd did indeed achieve success, but no such good fortune came either to my sister or me. And, to the intense disgust of every one of us, the cleverest student of all, a bright, witty girl, who could not have failed to take high rank in the art world, married a commonplace young man, with the result that palette and brushes were laid aside, or seemed so to be, for we saw no more of her pictures on exhibition walls, and she faded out of our ken. A few years later it may be remembered that Carlyle uttered a bitter lamentation over the untimely demise of a similarly gifted woman who gave up to babies what was meant for artistic mankind.

That so few of us saw our day-dreams realised was not the fault of our teacher, who was conscientious and painstaking, and during the hours of study permitted no waste of time. Rumour said that from him was evolved the egregious Gandish of Thackeray's "Newcomes," who painted huge pictures which nobody bought. It may be so, for the portrait-sketch in that work of fiction of the artist who produced "*Non hAngli sed hAngeli*" bore not a little resemblance to our much-liked instructor. Otherwise the two men were totally dissimilar; and Mr. Leigh would never have sinned against "poor letter h," for he spoke the English of a well-educated man.

As might be expected in a member of that family of famous humorists, the Mathewses, Mr. Leigh was a clever mimic, and on those rare occasions, such as lunch-time, when a brief suspension of our labours was allowed and our sand-

wiches were being consumed, he would send his pupils into fits of laughter. Once for our delectation, he acted for us his arrival during a recent holiday at the house of some Belgian friends, giving us in all varieties of voice and action the welcoming greetings of each member of the family, from the sonorous tones and courteous gestures of Monsieur le père down to the childish treble and impish manner of the little five-years-old son who saucily hailed the British visitor with "Ah, voici le petit Jean Bull anglais!" (Mr. Leigh was of good average stature, and in no sense small.) The fun of his mimicry was exquisite because of vulgarity there was never a trace.

Although so admirable a teacher, Mr. Leigh was a poor artist, and his own paintings when not bewilderingly allegorical consisted of anatomical studies of the most extraordinary description. One room in the house was his sanctum, and here he sometimes received visitors, parents of would-be pupils and their like. To wait therein for the master's coming must have been trying to weak-nerved persons, for the walls of this chamber of horrors were entirely covered with studies, most of them painted in oils on thick brown paper unframed and unglazed, of life-sized gentlemen not only without a shred of clothing, but what was very much more startling even, without their skins. Some of these people were represented as unconcernedly taking their "walks abroad"; and one was calmly reposing on a flowery bank, while others affected different every-day attitudes. In every case the muscles, &c., were conscientiously, even vividly, insisted on, as though to impress on the intending student the necessity of a correct understanding of anatomical detail. One painting conspicuously displayed was of a man's head several sizes larger than life, in which one eyelid was seen to be missing—the other being closed—leaving on view a staring, intensely blue orb which seemed to follow the beholder all over the room, and was most uncanny. A place of honour between the two windows was assigned to a skeleton which in life-time belonged to a poor Belgian soldier who, while dying in a Brussels hospital, sold his remains, for the benefit of his impoverished family, to the English artist.

At one time we pupils were all set to make drawings, from different points of view, of this skeleton; and the girl who did not flinch from lifting the thing from its perch, and carrying it into the studio where the rest of us were gathered at our

easels was the one selected for that duty. It fell oftenest to my sister, who was nothing if not strong-minded; and I remember how greatly, on one occasion, we were amused—though I believe we all simultaneously assumed a mask of strict decorum—when we beheld a sudden apparition of horrified countenances belonging to some rather elegantly dressed lady visitors into whose midst Louisa, in student's garb somewhat the worse for paint and wear, unintentionally charged while bearing the gruesome relic in her arms.

Against the walls of the large studio itself were ranged "heroic" life-sized plaster casts after the most famous masterpieces by Phidias and Praxiteles, so well chosen a collection that it was a joy and an education to see. Why is it that in these days such an assemblage can rarely be met with except between the walls of a museum? And does this change in artistic surroundings, this growing indifference to the works of the greatest sculptors the world has ever seen, account for the dying out of a once prominent industry, that of plaster-cast making?—an industry generally carried on by the Italians resident among us. The "imagee" man, as he was wont to call himself, was often seen in our streets half a century ago, his large, flat wooden tray bearing miniature busts, &c., upon his head. But he has long vanished. His likeness may, however, be found in an old volume of *Punch*, where a small boy, with an old face much resembling an eminent politician of the time, is seen discharging a squirtful of water at the counterfeit presentment of the benevolently smiling and once popular Pope Pius IX.

Pupils of the other sex in abundance had Mr. Leigh, some of whom later achieved fame as artists; but our master sternly banished them upstairs to a spacious attic; and they only filled the studio downstairs when we were not in possession. Curiosity is supposed to be an exclusively feminine weakness, but his "bears," as Mr. Leigh called them, quite out-heroded us female Herods as regarded the taking of an interest in the other sex; and often when we were assembled in the hall preparatory to departure homewards, and doubtless chattering with at least twenty-woman power, we would, on casually glancing upward, behold a row of picturesque, dishevelled masculine heads—for hair was worn of considerable length by artistic mankind in those days—overhanging the uppermost banisters, a spectacle which if the master's voice was heard among us, vanished as if by magic.

It was perhaps while making studies of the skeleton aforesaid and of the strange figures lining the sanctum's walls, which after awhile drew me as the candle draws the infatuated moth, that I came, like another Tommy Traddles, to love to draw the human bones, and, unlike him, the human sinews and muscles also. As my artistic affections were centred on these, on horses, on knights in armour (a very long way after Sir John Gilbert), and on superlatively beautiful ladies never habited in more modern garb than that of the fifteenth century, for none of which things a prosaic public cares, it is probable that had I adopted art as a profession I should have found a difficulty in making the proverbial two ends meet.

My elder sister, on the contrary, had a pretty knack of sketching from nature, besides being a minor poet, a brilliant conversationist, witty, and quick at repartee. Both she and I were as one in our admiration of the Pre-Raffaelite brethren of the brush already alluded to, the more heartily because when they sprang into sudden notice one year on the walls of the Royal Academy, we were still art students, and therefore keen to appreciate their whole-souled devotion to lofty ideals.

My younger sister, Clara, in addition to playing with perfect success the enviable part of beauty of the family, was an accomplished pianist, and a composer of charming settings to short poems by Tennyson, Longfellow, and others. Unfortunately, she sang and played her compositions entirely by heart, having a genius that way. In consequence of this facility, and of her taking too modest an estimate of their worth, they were never placed upon paper.

Some of our elder sister's poems were set to music by our younger, and I illustrated them. Some of the poems and illustrations are still extant, but the music composed for them, as for those of the better-known poets, are for ever silenced.

Promising young artists are sometimes cut off in early manhood, as were Arthur Herbert, son to a once famous Royal Academician, George Landseer, the bright, amusing nephew to Sir Edwin, and Adolphe Madot, the last of whom had a fine eye for colour and an appreciation of high-class Italian art and history. In my elder sister's and my later artistic life these and Arthur Stark, son to the better-known James, and who long survived the others, were among our many good art-chums of the male sex. Among our own, Barbara L. S. Bodichon and Emily Osborn were our greatest friends.

Two other, but less intimate, artistic acquaintances were sons to William Collins, R.A., the painter of a celebrated and frequently engraved picture, "Happy as a King," in which some children are swinging a comrade on a rustic gate, the delighted face and attitude of the little urchin thereon enthroned suggesting the rather sarcastic title. The sons were Wilkie, the future successful novelist, and Charles, a promising young painter who died too soon for lasting fame. Of the latter an amusing tale used to be told. His hair was of that sunny colour, not Titianesque, but often likened to a well-known vegetable; and on this account he was sometimes unmercifully chaffed. Being of a sensitive disposition, he one day disappeared for a while, and on his return was seen to possess locks of raven hue. Just about that time, however, the "Pre-Raphaelite Brethren" began their wondrous career; and red hair in artistic eyes became beautiful. Again there was a temporary disappearance, after which the young man, now as ardent a P.R.B. as any, rejoined his friends, and was immediately nick-named "Rouge et Noir."

How Adolphe Madot, his amusing little sister, and their kith and kin came to be English is told by a harrowing story which belongs to the days of the great French Revolution.

One night during "the Terror," while the family still peacefully occupied their chateau, a neighbour ran in to tell them that a mob was coming with the declared intention of setting the place on fire. Fortunately, it was within easy distance of the seashore; the family escaped in the darkness, and some boatmen were found willing for a handsome "consideration" to take them to some refuge—it might have been one of the Channel Isles—whence they could make for England.

When they were well on their way, and the dawn was breaking, the head of the family counted their number, and found that the youngest child, a little boy of two, was missing. The distracted parents implored, commanded, and sought to bribe the oarsmen to turn back; but these, doubtless fearing lest their fellow-citizens might wreak vengeance on them for aiding "aristos" to escape, pointed to the reddened sky, which indicated that beneath its glow stood the burning mansion, and said that return was impossible.

Later, the unhappy father visited the estate, now become the Republic's property, and made repeated but unavailing efforts to recover the lost child, or learn what had been its fate. He made more than one such journey; and when the country

had grown more peaceful took with him his all but heart-broken wife. But the mystery was never solved; and residence in France having become too painful, the family settled in London. "My poor little uncle," said Adolphe, when telling us girls the story.

Another strange, though less harrowing tale connected with the great French Revolution will be found in a later chapter.

Many French people who left their country during the Revolution also settled among us; and their descendants are, quite as much as were the Madots, to all intents and purposes English. And, as we see, expatriated Britons, in course of time, become as are the natives of the countries in which they make a permanent home.

I can just remember some very old men who were either emigrés themselves or belonged to the succeeding generation; and it is a curious fact that while these elders remained unmistakably French their descendants as a rule show little or no trace of foreign origin. The founder of the mercantile house of De La Rue; the son of the distinguished writer, Malet du Pin; the well-known educationist and political economist, William Ellis; Dr. Roget, author of the "Thesaurus"; and others still looked and bore themselves like the older type of Frenchmen, and were polished and dignified of manner.

The descendants of those noble sufferers for conscience' sake, the Huguenots, I do not include in the above scanty list. They became "Englished" over two centuries ago, and, like the later arrivals, have made ample and valuable return for British hospitality. Only one wishes that some of them had not yielded to the weakness of translating their names, but had continued to bear those of which they had good reason to be proud.

CHAPTER V.

THE GOLDEN AGE OF SONG.

IT has been my good fortune to hear most of the great singers of the mid-nineteenth century, that golden age of song when the world still believed in the "bel canto" which perhaps some future Svengali may revive, if not for our delight at least for that of generations yet unborn.

By the time I was considered old enough to appreciate the opera, Jenny Lind had just retired, and I never heard that wonderful voice which ceased to thrill her devotees when it and she had reached the zenith of their fame. This abandonment of a great career was said to have been due to the influence of a certain bishop whose action lovers of song found it hard to forgive. While still a public singer, she made noble use of the money she earned, and hospitals and other charitable institutions benefited largely.

The first two of the many now long deceased songstresses to whom I have listened were Persiani, of liquid fioritura and clear, sweet shake, at one of her farewell performances, and Alboni, a famous contralto, whose deep-tone voice was almost manlike, and who, to our regret, visited our shores during part of one season only.

A universal favourite, as man and vocalist, was the basso profundo, Luigi Isidoro Lablache, unrivalled singer, delightful actor, and polished man of the world. He had been Queen Victoria's singing-master, and she thought so highly of him, both as teacher and friend, that she commissioned Winterhalter—a much over-rated artist on whose pictures she placed a value far beyond their deserts—to paint his portrait in a favourite character: Don Pasquale, if I remember rightly. One day when I was at the house of his daughter-in-law, Mme. Frederic Lablache, she showed me a duplicate of the picture, and told me its story. The original hung in one of the Queen's palaces in a part devoted to the portraits of her especial friends; and on one occasion while looking at that of Lablache, it struck her that the great singer's family might care to possess a copy. The kindly thought speedily crystallised into action.

When Lablache was in England the Queen often "commanded" his attendance at the palace, and when he appeared he was asked to "sit down, and tell me all the gossip of the musical world."

And well might she enjoy the society of this delightful old man, who was the idol of his profession as much as of the public, and who when on the stage could do anything he liked, since in all he did his charm and bonhomie were conspicuous. Even in a pause of acting he would, after absence in other lands, advance smiling to the footlights, and tell his audience how glad he was to be with them again. At other times, he would audibly hum the symphony of a favourite song while the orchestra played it, or join in or lead the applause with which the audience greeted a brother or sister artiste. One night when I was at the opera, and Frederic Lablache had just finished singing a solo, the old man laid his fatherly hand on the young one's shoulder, and, turning to the crowded house, asked if his son had not done well. And the house, reading the gratification depicted on the parental countenance, applauded heartily.

Lablache, though born in Italy, was the son of a French father and an Irish mother. With such a parentage, it was but natural that he should have charming manners and win the hearts of all who knew him. In person he was tall and broadly built, had, in spite of his portly frame, an easy carriage, and a handsome face surmounted, like Thackeray's, by a wealth of grey hair fast becoming silvered. He was also one of the most generous of men; and the Impresario Lumley, in his *Memoirs*, tells us that at times when disputes arose as to whom the parts in an opera should be allotted, this acknowledged monarch among singers would offer to fill some minor part, if only by so doing peace might be maintained. He possessed, and well knew how to use, a voice of rare beauty and compass, the full, rich tones being not unlike those of a cathedral organ. When concluding a song he would dwell upon a marvellously deep key-note which gathered in strength until it resembled the "grand amen" of the poem, and would then slowly soften till it died so gently that one hardly knew when it ceased. And then the audience, hushed till the last moment as though spell-bound, would break into rapturous applause, sudden and loud as a summer storm.

I think we never hear such singing now. Another great songster, Sims Reeves, whom I have heard scores of times, used to say that the modern style of vocal tuition, when it does

not destroy the voice outright, robs it of its native sweetness. And perhaps he is right.*

Will the "bel canto" be always in eclipse? Apparently the great Rossini thought not, for when a candid friend informed the composer of "Guglielmo Tell" that his operas had gone quite out of fashion, the old maestro grimly answered, "They and I can wait." Another story tells that when some friends were discussing at his house the question of "the music of the future," Rossini opened his piano, said "This is what the music of the future will be like," and sat down heavily on the keys.

Lablache often stayed at his son's house in London; and on these occasions Mme. Frederic's pupils sometimes saw their idol, or heard him in the room below ours practising his scales, &c., "just," once said a girl, "as if he had been only one of us." More than once while we, as members of a large class assembled to sing part-songs, glees, operatic scenas, &c., were busily engaged in our task, he would creep quietly upstairs, and be suddenly discovered in our midst, smiling, bowing, and paying us little compliments in his pretty, broken English. Then his daughter-in-law, feigning a severity which she certainly never felt, would turn him out to take refuge on the lowest steps of the staircase just outside the drawing-room door, where he would sit nursing a ridiculous little white dog like the fluffy, squeaking toys very small children delight in. Only when we had come to the end of some perhaps unusually complicated piece, he would put in his smiling old face once more at the quarter-opened door, exclaim "Bravé, ladies, bravé!" and immediately subside again.

Frederic Lablache never achieved much fame in opera; but was an admirable teacher of singing. His wife, too, was hardly a success upon the stage, though not for want of adaptability, but because as a contralto she had frequently to take men's parts, and she disliked appearing in male attire. She therefore abandoned the operatic career for that of concert singer and of teacher, a dual calling in which she excelled. Her system was so admirable and her taste so pure that her pupils learned to contemn any but first-rate vocalists; and thus when, long after her lamented death, I heard the cultured Albani, Lamperti's pupil, take part in a well-known duet with

*I write as one who was trained to sing in the school of Italy, and hold it to be the best. It has but one fault, if fault that be which prevents one's enjoyment of any other style.

a popular present-day prima donna, it struck me as an unequal partnership between an undoubted queen of song and a half-trained amateur.

The girls of to-day are fortunate in that it is open to them to adopt professions undeterred by the frown of the now happily deposed Mrs. Grundy and by her inevitable "What will people say of you?" The girls of the mid-nineteenth century were far from being the poor, spiritless creatures that present-day detractors affect to think them; but their efforts to attain independence were too often "nipped in the bud"; and if some of them later drifted into aimless, commonplace existence it was not always their own fault. In passing, I may remark that not a few of Mme. Frederic's pupils might well have taken to the singing profession, and that one of them, her ambition thwarted in the old land, cast the ban aside in the new one, and, as far as other occupations allowed, followed where inclination led. In rendering the songs of her native Scotland, largely aided as she was by her histrionic ability, Mme. Frederic, so far as I know, had but one rival, and that was a fellow country-woman, our clever, charming friend, Mrs. W. H. Wills, only sister to William and Robert Chambers.

As Miss Fanny Wyndham, her professional name, Mme. Frederic was chosen to be the leading contralto at the solemn ceremony in Paris which saw the translation to the French capital in 1840 of the great Napoleon's remains from St. Helena, where they had lain since he died in 1821. When describing this impressive scene to her pupils, she said that throughout its course the enthusiasm of the populace was something to be never forgotten; and that when the veteran soldiers, of whom many survived, gathered round the bier which carried their "little corporal's" coffin with its accompanying martial accoutrements, the excitement and passionate weeping of these poor fellows were so infectious that the singers, as well as the public, were in tears, and had hard work to prevent breaking down.

One of Mme. Frederic's daughters was born in a sleigh while the parents, not expecting the event so speedily, were driving among the steppes of Russia. This daughter became a fairly successful writer of children's stories; but she died young, and so far as I know, with her also died all trace of genius in a family once far removed above commonplace.

When the Marquess of Candia unselfishly wrecked his career through practical sympathy with Italy's then noble

aspirations, and became impoverished, one of the Grevilles—the incident is narrated in a Greville Diary—urged his young friend, as many other people urged him, to make use of his splendid voice by going on to the operatic stage as a means of livelihood. The ruined Marquess followed the advice, and became known to three generations of music-lovers as the unrivalled tenor, Mario.

In Mrs. Godfrey Pearse's interesting *Life of her father*, she tells how he, then a brilliant young officer of the King of Sardinia's Guards, once had a prophetic dream. He was, he thought, singing, in mediæval attire, before a vast assemblage of people who, while heartily applauding, called him by a name which was not his own. Was it "Mario"? Yet Mrs. Pearse further tells us that he chose his stage-name through reading the biography of Caius Marius, known as the third founder of Rome. But the two stories easily fit into one.

The voice "which was Rubini's peer" was lovely, unforgettable. United, as it was, to a graceful bearing, a handsome and singularly prepossessing face, and a disposition unspoiled by success, remaining to the last, says one of his biographers, what he had ever been, "a simple, trusting, great-hearted gentleman," it was but natural that he should become a universal favourite, justly sharing the popularity of his equally famous songstress-wife, the beautiful Giulia Grisi. They were indeed a peerless couple, whose place in the world of song, vacant so many years, shows no sign of being filled.

Unusually kind of heart was Mario, as was seen on countless occasions, and notably once in a London street, where a poor man and woman were singing in a style so much beneath the level even of average street-singing that they failed to attract attention. Noticing the handsome, well-dressed stranger, the woman begged for alms. But he waved her aside. Then, glancing at her woe-begone countenance, the pity that "runneth soon in gentle heart" stayed his footsteps, and he began himself to sing, holding his hat, as if to veil his identity, between his face and the now fast-gathering crowd. Useless precaution! From what other man's lips could issue notes of such "linkéd sweetness"? "Mario!" was the audible whisper that ran through his hearers' ranks. Largesse soon poured into the shabby hat held by the woman; and, the song concluded, the great tenor went quietly on his way.

On one occasion only did I hear Mario sing jauntily, if not carelessly. The song was the trashy "*La donna e mobile*,"

a thing unworthy of rendition by such a vocalist; and I sat near enough to see that his eyes were twinkling with fun as if he enjoyed the thought that although the words he sang were the reverse of complimentary to the fair sex, hardly one of its many members who sat smilingly facing him, and listening delightedly to every note that fell had the slightest idea how unmercifully he was castigating their imaginary faults—happily in a foreign tongue.

By his profession Mario amassed an ample fortune, which he used nobly and generously. But much of it was lost through unlucky investments; and when he had to face straitened means a second time and late in life, he was persuaded to make a re-appearance in London. Though now over sixty, his voice had lost little of its former beauty, and never, declared his audience, had he acted or sang more splendidly. It was his "swan song," and he put his whole heart into it. The citizens, who loved both man and artist—and their name was legion—gathered in force, and rose en masse as their old favourite appeared on the familiar scene. The tickets for the performance had been sold at a high price, the house was crammed, and so substantial was the addition made to his income that a fair amount of comfort was assured during the remainder of his long and honourable life.

But she who, as woman and singer was so beautiful, and as helpmate and mother so devoted, had already "gone before," and the loss was irreparable. What an appreciative public thought of Giulia Grisi is evidenced by the obituary notice which *Punch's* poet wrote, of which two lines run thus:

"Glorious women like to thee
We have seen not, nor shall see."

No one who has heard the diva Patti sing "Home, Sweet Home" is likely to forget that experience. Although by birth an Anglo-American ditty, it seems especially to belong to the charming foreign prima donna who not only made her "home" among us, but taught us how lovely and pathetic a song that is when rendered—as it so seldom is but always should be—by an appreciative and cultured singer. It was also one of Grisi's best-known songs, but I never had the good fortune to hear her sing it.

In addition to the great vocalists already mentioned, the names, personalities, and individual gifts of song come clearly back to memory of Sainton-Dolby, Clara Novello, Sontag,

Lucca, Tietjens, and others of my own sex; and among male singers of Gardoni, Giuglini, Tamberlik, Formes, Rokitanski, Santley, and many more; nearly all of whom have long passed over to the majority, leaving the musical world immeasurably poorer now that their fine voices and cultured mode of singing are no more.

To me, therefore, it is a cause of life-long rejoicing that fate should have cast my lot in the unforgettable golden age of song.

CHAPTER VI.

THE FURORE FOR ITALY.

OF all the many dramas, if so they may be called, of modern history, not one is more thrilling, more romantic, than that which, lasting as it did throughout the early and middle nineteenth century, saw the slow emancipation of Italy from a tyranny as cruel as any which disgraced the mediæval ages. Or so at least thought all those among us Britons who, living through or being born into, the long struggle, gave to the cause our sympathy and in many cases our active help.

Thus came into prominence that trusty band of British volunteers who fought so gallantly for Italy's freedom, and whose name is indelibly inscribed on the pages of her history as "Garibaldi's Englishmen." Of these a small remnant, well stricken in years and infirmities, survived to revisit the land of their remembered exploits, and take part in the recent celebration of half a century's enjoyment of her great deliverance.

Nor was the slow-moving revolution lacking in active help from the other sex, with whom detestation of wrong is perhaps an even stronger sentiment than it is with men. The names of many heroines, both Italian and foreign, deserve to be held in grateful recollection.

But Italy was not the only European country which was seething with righteous discontent. The "year of revolutions" (1848) saw a general upheaval which lasted through many succeeding twelvemonths, breaking out more or less vigorously every now and then. Only, however warm our sympathy with other struggling nationalities, in no case other than that of Italy did we raise a fighting force like Garibaldi's Englishmen.

Not even yet has this world-wide discontent abated, although it now manifests itself in methods saner than violent revolutions.

France, our nearest neighbour, as a people ever in the van of progress, led the revolutionary movement of 1848; and

according to etymologists contributed to our language the word "fraternise," seldom, if ever, they say, employed previous to that date. Notable persons, events, and epochs frequently leave a legacy in the shape of new words, the Boer War bequeathing to us "slim" in a novel sense, "commandeer," "khaki," etc. But it was France that on the occasion of three of her revolutions, of which two culminated in a Republic, gave the world a new national song, though one only, the "Marseillaise," is immortal. The tuneful "Parisienne" of 1830 and the catchy "Mourir pour la Patrie" of 1848 seem to be as mute to-day as are the older "Ça ira" and "La Carmagnole."

Germany—then a number of small States of minor importance, but tiresomely encumbered with differing coinage, customs, and reactionary governments—had also caught the revolutionary fever; and Austria, Hungary, and not a few other countries followed suit, Italy of course being always to the fore. To enthusiasts it seemed that the knell of despotism had sounded. But that was far from being the case; and the fate of those nationalities whose efforts at betterment came to nought was sad because failure was often followed by a ruthless recrudescence of tyranny. What that meant in southern Italy is told in Gladstone's "Two Letters" (to Lord Aberdeen) published in pamphlet form and describing the vindictive treatment of political prisoners in Neapolitan dungeons. It also figures in Ruffini's pathetic story of "Dr. Antonio."* Pamphlet and novel, though now forgotten, made at the time of publication and later a deep impression on the British public; and there can be no doubt that it was the pamphlet and its author's even then great personality which practically unlocked the doors of the foul prison that held Poerio, Settembrini, and their fellow reformers, and thus enabled them to come to England.

These men were no demagogues, anarchists, dynamiters, or other sort of fearsome human beings, but cultured gentlemen of quite moderate views who strove to establish constitutional

*Ruffini and Gallenga, both political exiles, came to write excellent English, a book by the latter on the West Indies being still remembered. Of other Italian patriots domiciled among us, Panizzi sought refuge here as far back as 1821, was justly held in high estimation, was sometime Chief Librarian at the British Museum, and, as Sir Antonio, died full of years and honours. The life of Mazzini has been appreciatively told by Bolton King. Unlike most other foreigners, our Italian visitors came to speak our tongue without a trace of accent.

government by peaceful and legitimate means. One of our English writers indeed, when describing Poerio, said, "His politics are of the sanest; he is a sort of Italian Lord John Russell."^{*} Yet during captivity, Poerio and the rest were put into fetters, chained to the vilest criminals, and subjected to the same abominable lodging, food, and general surroundings. "Twenty-four years of irons" had been the savage sentence passed on some of these good men.

That dreadful state of things has long ceased to exist in Italy, which in 1860 became a united kingdom under Victor Emanuel II.; and it is probably only in eastern Europe that King "Bomba's" methods now find imitators, nor even there will they perhaps last much longer.

We Londoners often welcomed men of this noble type; nor did we lack enthusiasm when warriors bold, fresh from newly-reaped laurels on battlefields, nor dauntless sea and landmen lately returned from scientific exploration and perilous adventure in unknown or but partially known far-off regions, appeared in our midst; for hero-worship was strong among us.

But the case of the newly-released martyrs from Neapolitan dungeons was different; was, fortunately for mankind, unique; and the men so plainly showed the wearing effect of their long and cruel captivity that our hearts went out to them at once. When they passed along our streets we sallied forth or stood at open windows, on balconies or other coigns of vantage, cheering wildly, waving hands, clasping theirs if opportunity offered, and casting bouquets of flowers into the carriages which bore them from docks or railway stations. And everywhere along the route hung out the red, white, and green banner of Italy by way of doing the patriots yet more honour.

In London, Bristol, at whatever port they landed, the welcome was always the same, and the occasion to on-lookers memorable.

In some parts of the peninsula the Italian revolutions were comparatively bloodless; and in Tuscany the grand duke, recognising the hopelessness of opposition, quitted his country quietly and without molestation, leaving a people who won the world's respect by proving that it is possible to carry out a *coup-d'état* unaccompanied by disorder.

^{*}Not yet an Earl, and likely always to be best remembered by his former courtesy title.

Some of us veterans at times doubt whether the present-day public gives to great causes, home or foreign, the sympathy which in our youth and middle age we enthusiastically, ungrudgingly, gave to Italy and other countries which were struggling out of mediæval darkness towards the dawn of brighter morrows. And a famous English statesman, noting that seeming tendency, once said that a nation which has outgrown its power of feeling noble enthusiasms is lapsing towards decadence. The sentiment was perhaps inspired by disappointment with the lull allied to weariness which followed the wild excitement over the thrilling events of 1848 and succeeding years. The lull was inevitable, but to those who had scaled the heights towards which the aspirations of the mid-nineteenth century bore us it was hard to come down to less lofty aims and the boredom of every-day trivialities.

But were that famous statesman living now he would recognise that the old spirit was but dormant, that it would show itself strong as ever when opportunity called for it, that the oft-quoted bull-dog tenacity of the race, the courage which reckes little of fighting larger hosts, the generous sympathy with oppressed nationalities and individuals are very far from being extinct. What Italy and other countries were to us of the mid-nineteenth century, cruelly-stricken Belgium and eastern France have become to our descendants. If the Alva-dictated "Spanish fury" of three-and-a-half centuries ago is scarcely yet forgotten in the Netherlands, how long will memory of the even more devastating Teutonic fury endure among its victims?

One well-known present-day writer of history, an enthusiast for Italy, and collaterally descended from and in part bearing the name of perhaps the most fascinating of all historical writers, has given us volumes about that country's emancipation as stirringly penned as though he had been an active participant in her glorious revolution.

The following extracts from George Macaulay Trevelyan's "Garibaldi's Defence of the Roman Republic" show how potent was the influence exercised by the great leader both among his own countrymen and the people of other lands.

"One of the Italians in after years told the story of his conversion" [to faith in Garibaldi and the Italian cause] "to the Rev. H. R. Haweis. He had come out, he said, with his artist friends to see what was going on one day when Garibaldi was recruiting in a public place in Rome. 'I had no idea' (he told the English clergyman) 'of enlisting. I was a young

artist; I only went out of curiosity—but oh! I shall never forget that day when I saw him on his beautiful white horse in the market-place, with his noble aspect; his calm, kind face, his high smooth forehead, his light hair and beard—every one said the same. He reminded us of nothing so much as of our Saviour's head in the galleries. I could not resist him. I left my studio. I went after him; thousands did likewise. He only had to show himself. We all worshipped him; we could not help it.'

"It was no passing emotion of youth, for eleven years afterwards the narrator was fighting for Garibaldi in Naples." (p. 119.)

The above is but one tale of many.

Nearly all the artists, British and foreign, then studying in the Eternal City, says Mr. Trevelyan, enlisted, and thus helped to swell "the special Students' Corps, which consisted of 300 University men and artists, and fought splendidly for Rome" (p. 118).

During that intensely interesting period—1848 to 1860—London was wont to present a spectacle which had never been seen before the earliest of those years, which ceased after the latest, and which is unlikely to be seen again.* Mention has already been made of the display of red, white, and green flags—the colours of Savoy-Piedmont, and now of united Italy—when, a few years later than 1848, we welcomed the rescued victims of King "Bomba's" cruelty. But the appearance in our streets of this popular tricolour had from the early part of the year of revolutions become so frequent that London might have easily been taken for a cisalpine city miraculously transferred beyond the "silver streak." At no time were our streets denuded of the favourite flag, but on public holidays and anniversaries of memorable historical and other events, British or foreign, it was abundantly apparent. Other flags were there, but comparatively few and far between. The flag of Italy floated in good residential quarters and crowded business thoroughfares, nor were smaller editions of it wanting in shabby streets; its appearance being typical of the universality of our sympathy and admiration. For our belief was strong that yet another glorious era was in store for the country already twice so great: first in the ancient Roman times; and later in the mediæval, when she gave birth to statesmen, scientists, sea-

*Whitsuntide, 1915, saw a partial revival of this spectacle.

men, sculptors, painters, poets, mathematicians, and others whose names are certainly not "writ in water."

It has been said that newspaper "special editions," now every-day affairs, published even in the most humdrum periods of our island story, had their birth in the early part of 1848; though they have been claimed for a very much earlier date. It was in February of that year that the second French Republic was proclaimed, that Louis Philippe's reign came to its abrupt conclusion, that his eldest son's widow, "the only man of the family," as someone called her, paid a fruitless visit to the Chamber of Deputies with her two little sons to see if the elder might be adopted as king in his self-exiled grandfather's stead, and that once again the French Bourbons found an asylum in England. But whatever might have been their shortcomings as rulers in their own land, they came to be liked and respected in this, where for many years they settled, and where younger generations of them were born.

Though uncertainty may attach to the actual birth-date of special editions, it is a fact that from February, 1848, onwards, at frequent intervals of the day, and nearly every day, the novel spectacle was seen of men and boys shouting themselves hoarse along our thoroughfares, their hands full of hastily-printed news-sheets; and that at the sound, we and thousands of other excited hearers hurried forth on purchase bent. We must have spent a small fortune in that way, for opportunity was abundant, and public interest at its keenest. Hyde Park, near which we then lived, was within fairly easy reach of newspaper-land; and as fast as one set of raucous shouters passed into inaudibility or sold out their supply, another set took up the blood-curdling tale; and again we sallied forth fearful lest ere we could reach him the newsman should have sold his entire stock. Who can wonder at the wide-spread excitement? Thrones were toppling over as though built of playing-cards; and all Europe was in a ferment. Even our staid little Queen-*dom* fell a prey to a mild edition of the universal fever; and the Royal family left London for Windsor.

Newspapers at that time were dear and in every way inferior to those of the present day. Their cost was made needlessly heavy by reason of the old war-taxes—still imposed even after more than thirty years of Peace—which, among other burdens, rendered obligatory the impress on every copy of the paper of a three-penny duty stamp. Nor was it till the happier 'fifties of last century that the worst of the "taxes on

knowledge" were repealed; and that thenceforth the long-wished-for cheap Press—the should-be best and most accessible of educators—became established among us.

To have lived through that famous year of revolution and its scarcely less revolutionary succeeding dozen twelvemonths is an experience to remember while life lasts; but it is doubtful whether the generations born since the passing of that time, and who, not having been onlookers, know little of it, can form an adequate idea of its effect upon us, its contemporaries.

The Napoleonic wars were also a stirring period; but whereas those wasted years of international strife tended to encourage international hatred, the effect of the mid-nineteenth century's revolutions was to promote international sympathy—as in the case of Italy—and strengthen that bond called "the brotherhood of man" of which we often hear as destined to efface international boundaries and obliterate international feuds.

Since her famous Revolution, Italy, now become one of the great European Powers, so far from voicing hatred of the "Tedeschi," and clamoring for the expulsion of "lo stranier," has entered into alliance—to last how long?—with her bitter foe of many years past. In the mid-nineteenth century the very name of Austria was loathed in the Peninsula; and while in the opera-houses, and indeed in any place beneath Italian skies, utterance of the Sardinian ruler's name was allowed only if made in a disrespectful tone, the name of the composer Verdi was enthusiastically cheered because its five letters spelt the capitals of *Vittorio Emanuele, Re d'Italia*.

CHAPTER VII.

AT LAST.

FROM childhood I have loved the sea, and longed to go on voyages. It is probably the old Vikings' spirit of adventure which, in numberless instances, crops out afresh among their descendants, no matter how remote. One other member of our family only felt as I did; and therefore sympathised with me. But he was more fortunate than I, for to his lot fell several opportunities of gratifying that love of sea-life which we inherited from the maternal side; for several of our mother's family had served with distinction in our Royal Navy, and one at least in that of the United States.

Like some other young Post Office clerks of his time, my brother made more than one trip to Egypt and back in charge of the Indian mail, a trip only to be undertaken by a careful man, unto whom a grateful country paid a daily allowance sufficiently liberal to allow him, if thrifty, to purchase curios with the surplus. Moreover, there was sometimes a short interval, after surrendering the outward-bound and before receiving the homeward-bound mail during which it was possible to snatch a hurried glance at a few of the wonderful Egyptian antiquities; and my brother was fortunate in this respect. Other long sea-journeys took him to Mauritius,* whose postal system needed rescuing from chaos and restoring to order; and to Australia. I, on the contrary, had never been out of sight of land, and had done no more than cross the English Channel half a dozen times; hardly an exhilarating achievement.

*The island of Mauritius, as most people are aware, was the last recorded home of the dodo. When my brother was there (in 1860) access to the lofty mountains in the interior was barred by a said-to-be impenetrable forest with dense undergrowth. But he used to say that the Mauritians were of opinion that, were this barrier removed, the dodo, sheltered by it from extermination, might be found to be anything but extinct.

Only towards the end of 1861 did I see my day-dreams realised; and that was when I married, and set out for British Columbia, in those days a long six-weeks' journey, involving many steamer-changes and the crossing by rail of the Isthmus of Panama. Then at last did I come to taste the ocean salt upon my lips, and feel the ocean-breezes ruffle my hair and bring colour to my face; then did I sway from head to foot in unison with the lively dance of the good steam-ship "Niagara" as she breasted the eastward-flowing, huge waves of the Atlantic in November.

"Rough!" exclaimed a pleasantly-smiling, toughened old salt, in answer to a remark I, one day, hazarded, while, for a brief space, I lay prostrate in a deck-chair; for we had set out in a "half-gale" which bore a surprisingly strong family likeness to a whole one, "Why, it's only really rough when you get three waves to a quarter of a mile!"

I shall not describe that first of my several crossings of the "Herring Pond." Descriptions of such transits have been done to death. But I shall have something to say of other voyages both on the Atlantic and the mis-named Pacific, and on other steamers less well-found and very much less sea-worthy.

Our ship took fourteen days to bridge the tumbling seas between Liverpool and Boston. But ocean "grey-hounds" capable of performing the trip in less than half that time were as yet unknown. Therefore the opinion on board was unanimous that, with persistent head-winds and heavy weather all the way, we had not fared amiss.

Boston we found in a state of great excitement, for the war between North and South which broke out in the preceding April was now raging. Having, like most of my country-folk, taken my view of the slavery question from that sensational book, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," I expected to see the negro in "Abolition Boston" treated as a man and a brother; and was amazed to find how different was his actual standing. For instance, he was not allowed to enter any public conveyance; when he went to a theatre he had to take a seat in the topmost gallery; his place in church even was of the humblest; no white person would receive him as a guest; and he was generally looked upon as the "missing link," only much more akin to "our poor relations" than to us.

(Later, in San Francisco, where we made a rather lengthy stay, I became acquainted with several Southerners; and for

the first time heard expressed other views on that now historic struggle. In San Francisco it was then commonly said that, should the South triumph, as at one time seemed not unlikely, California, and perhaps a few more of the western States, would throw in their lot with the Confederacy; and it has also been said that the first trans-continental railway was planned to "keep California in the Union."

These Southerners were charming people, with courteous manners, voices innocent of twang and pleasant of tone, proud of their British descent, and often bearing, and with becoming dignity, names belonging to well-known, honourable British lineage. In the Northern States the names are as cosmopolitan as the inhabitants. "When I was in Virginia," once said a much-travelled countryman of mine, "every house-door was open to me because I was an Englishman."

Apropos of Mrs. Beecher Stowe, it may be recalled that she had an unhappy knack of dressing up fiction, very unsavoury fiction, too, sometimes, as truth; and was too much of a fanatic to write judiciously of the southern "peculiar institution."

A very different version of it is given by Mr. H. A. White, in his *Life of General Lee*. "It produced," he says, "no paupers and no orphans; food and clothing the negro did not lack; careful attention he received in sickness; and without a burden, the aged servants spent their closing days. The plantation was an industrial school where the negro gradually acquired skill in the use of tools. A bond of affection was woven between Southern masters and servants which proved strong enough in 1861-1865 to keep the negroes at voluntary labour to furnish food for the armies that contended against military emancipation."*

Their proved fidelity when, during the four years of warfare, they had ample opportunity to "rise," is sufficient guarantee of the strength of the attachment uniting the white master and the black servant. And, by way of further evidence, one may surely cite some of the old plantation songs, especially the plaintive "Swanee River," "Carry me back to old Virginny," and "Massa's in the cold, cold ground." Sung with appreciation, not rattled off barrel-organ fashion, the three are redolent of pathos and of beauty.

*"Robert E. Lee and the Southern Confederacy." By H. A. White. pp. 63, 64.

The Rev. Randolph H. McKim, once a Lieutenant and A.D.C. in the Confederate Army, summed up the case ably and with abundance of detail in "A Soldier's Recollections," giving ample references as authority for every statement made. He shows—what indeed has often been said by others—that the war was *not* undertaken by the South to perpetuate slavery, but to defend State rights. What these were, Madison, "the father of the Constitution," and other American statesmen and writers have defined. Each State they held to be a little Republic by itself; the entire Commonwealth "consisting of many co-equal sovereignties." The Southerners, remembering that this was by no means the first attempt on the part of the Northerners to coerce them, were therefore not unjustified in believing the war to be one of subjugation; and this is shown by General Lee's answer when asked if he did not consider that by taking up arms against the Union he was guilty of treason. "No," he said, "I believed that my allegiance was due to the State of Virginia."

While the "American Plantations" still belonged to Great Britain, the once vast Colony of Virginia—out of which were, later, carved what are now the States of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and part of Minnesota—not once, but many times, petitioned the Home Government to prohibit the further importation of slaves; and petitioned in vain. As a State, Virginia was the first to decree the abolition of slavery; but New England, this time backed by South Carolina and Georgia, secured its continuance. Huge fortunes were made in some of the New England States by running swift "slavers" to and from the African coast. In this detestable traffic Rhode Island was especially active; and it should not be forgotten that it was Massachusetts which enacted the first fugitive-slave law.

Originally all the "revolted Colonies" were slaveholding; but the North gave up the practice when it was found that the climate, soil, and industrial interests were all inimical to negro labour.

In all the Southern States abolition societies existed for many years, and were active; but they were killed by the fanaticism of some of the northern abolitionists.

The negroes living in the Northern States had by no means a felicitous time, as two veracious instances of ill-treatment on a colossal scale will show.

In 1830 a large body of free coloured people was driven out of Ohio; no protest being heard. In 1846 the liberated slaves of John Randolph were expelled by a mob from the lands actually purchased for them in that same State; and in Kansas and elsewhere the negroes were persecuted. The number expelled from Ohio alone was reckoned at ten thousand; and the inhuman deed was likened to the expulsion of the Moors from Spain and the Huguenots from France.

As regards secession, the first threat of that came not from the South, but from New England; and there were four such threats; in 1802-3; in 1811-12; in 1814; and in 1844-46, generally from Massachusetts. In 1812 "pulpit, press, and rostrum" agitation for secession. In 1839 an ex-President, John Quincy Adams, advocated separation, and declared that "the people of each State have the right to secede from the confederated Union." In 1842 he presented a petition from a Massachusetts town praying Congress "immediately to adopt measures peaceably to dissolve the Union of these States." In 1844 and 1845 the Legislature claimed the right to secede, and threatened to do so if Texas and Louisiana were admitted to the Union, because with Texas and Louisiana the South would become too powerful and too influential.

Only sixteen years later Virginia seceded; and when President Lincoln called for 75,000 soldiers to coerce the South we all know what followed. He also asked the border States to contribute their quota of men; and the call drove most of them to side with the Confederacy. "Our northern friends," adds Mr. McKim, "cannot deny to the men of 1861 the same right of revolution that their patriot sires and ours asserted in 1776."^{*}

The Southern cause was lost; and throughout the four years of bitter struggle, and since, the sympathy of the majority of people on this side the Atlantic has always gone with the North. Though, however much we may have differed in that respect, we are all of one mind to-day in rejoicing that the Great Republic has remained one and indivisible. Nevertheless, it should not be forgotten that to that lost cause belonged men and women of integrity, of conspicuously heroic mould, and by no means prone to indulge in unrighteous warfare. Where indeed could one name men of loftier character than Robert Edward Lee and "Stonewall"

^{*}"A Soldier's Recollections," pp. 296-321 (much condensed).

Jackson?—the latter of whom became one of the greatest military strategists of modern times.

Is it too late to be writing of the Civil War of half a century past? Hardly so when one remembers that, generally speaking, the merits of one side only have received much consideration.)

Of course, we "did" the sights of Boston and its pretty suburbs; and were taken to the wharf, now greatly extended and altered, where the famous chests of tea were thrown overboard by rebellious Massachusetts; and "there," said the pleasant old Bostonian who acted as our guide to this and other show-places, including Bunker's Hill and its ugly memorial tower, "they lie to this day!"

But our most interesting visit was to the poet Longfellow, then rather recently become for the second time a widower, his wife, while showing her children how to make seals, having accidentally dropped some flaming wax on her light summer dress, and being burnt to death. He lived in an old-fashioned, roomy house, with well-grown trees screening it from the road; a famous house, too, for when, during the War of Independence, Washington was in that part of the future United States, he made the dwelling his headquarters.

Longfellow we found most kind and hospitable, and his talk most interesting. Being a Bostonian, he was of course a man of cultivation and charm of manner, knew Europe and Great Britain, and many of our public men; and on his library table lay several old-world publications. Speaking of Tennyson, whose poetry he great admired, he said he thought "In Memoriam" the finest work of its kind since the advent of the Psalms.

Some twenty years later, while living in Nova Scotia, I became intimate with a cousin of his, Mrs. Harrington (née Wadsworth: the poet's second name), who was proud of the relationship and of the fact that every summer crowds of his fellow-country people visited the Province because the early part of the story of "Evangeline" is laid there. I would add that they also come to Nova Scotia—a land where the thermometer keeps within reasonable bounds—to escape the intense heat of their own summer.

Grand Pré, the village where dwelt the chief characters of the poem, is a small settlement prettily situated, possessed of a railway station, and standing in the heart of the "dyke-land" whose wonderful fertility is assured by the famous high

tides of the Bay of Fundy. Of the former Acadian occupancy traces remain in the many place and river names, and, according to rumour—thirty years ago, I mean—in an ancient, decrepit barn and an equally old orchard full of gnarled, decaying apple-trees long past bearing; both near to Grand Pré. Are these relics genuine, or should they rank with the ashes of Basil the blacksmith's forge, the site of which is, or recently was, said to be now occupied by a widely-spreading oak? A doubting generation has asserted that the ashes are renewed each spring, and are then carefully covered over till the tourist season recommences, when the earth is pushed aside, and the devotees are shown the cindery refuse unto which maybe, a few rusty nails and a horse-shoe or two have been added. Should anyone among the crowd presume to cast doubt upon the authenticity of the Evangeline legend, and question the actual existence of the doughty blacksmith—later a *coureur des bois*—why, here are the ashes of his forge, proof positive that story and man were real. What more could the most perverse of tourists require?

From Boston we went to New York, and thence by steamer to Colon on the Isthmus of Panama.

On our way thither one curious experience was ours. We had left New York fast bound in ice and snow, but by the time we had steamed well past stormy Cape Hatteras the temperature perceptibly ameliorated, although out of the sunshine it was still chilly, and at intervals we were pelted by sharp, short hail-showers, followed by gorgeously-tinted rainbows looking so near and so substantial that they seemed to be almost within our grasp. Although nearing the tropics, it was evident that winter's grip upon us was not yet loosened. But gazing southward, we one day beheld a wondrous thing surging steadily to meet us, and casting up rolling clouds of steam which, as we advanced, grew loftier and denser. What was it? Simply, the most famous of all the vast ocean rivers fresh from whirling into and out of the torrid Gulf of Mexico. Aboard ship the thermometer registered 44° Fahrenheit: in the Gulf Stream, as we saw it, 76°, a difference of 32°. Hence the seeming phenomenon of the clouds of steam.

Another day a much more exciting experience befell us. About noon the passengers were seen to gather to starboard to gaze and point at a brown object floating far off in the Caribbean sea. To some of us the thing looked like part of a wreck—the previous night had been stormy in those not-seldom

hurricane-visited waters—while others were sure it was a boat adrift with a solitary man on board. As he made no effort to signal us, the poor fellow was probably no longer living. Soon our steamer bent out of her course, and made for the waif, passengers and crew getting every minute more excited. And when we were so close to it that our wash set it dancing like a mad thing we found it to be only a large tropical tree afloat half and half out of the water, and destined perhaps to drift as far even as to the north-west coast of Iceland, where up to the line that marks the beginning of the Arctic regions wandering flotsam in the shape of trees detached from tropical jungles occasionally finds anchorage.

The making of the great fifty-odd miles long canal which now connects two oceans is without doubt a triumph of engineering skill, a world-wonder which would have amazed even those masters of scientific construction and of the universe so far as it was known to them, the Romans. But the work has involved, perhaps necessitated, the perpetration of one act of vandalism much to be deplored, the obliteration, maybe permanent, of most of the beautiful Isthmian scenery. That is, if the many views, cinema and otherwise, I have seen faithfully represent its present condition. When, on a sultry December day I first beheld the Isthmus, it seemed like fairy land, only that one very unfairy-like feature had strayed into the picture. For on the Chagres river's unlovely, bare-looking, muddy banks reposed scores of alligators resembling large, roughly-hewn logs of wood, and about as motionless, feigning slumber, but always, 'tis said, with eyes half open, watching for a favourable opportunity to get a sudden snap at any unwary pedestrian, biped or quadruped, who should come within reach. But the jungle, then abundant, was beautiful, with thickets of graceful, bower-like trees and flower-laden undergrowth, all laced together by blossoming parasitic festoons; with here and there a tiny village, a stream, or placid lake; and the steadfast, violet-tinted mountain-range making a scarcely varying background to the ever-changing scene lying at its feet. For several hours we sat in the leisurely-moving train traversing the forty miles of winding railway, watched the fascinating landscape, and consumed the luscious fruit which, whenever a stoppage was made to feed our insatiable locomotive with its wooden diet the picturesquely-clad natives importuned us to buy.

An unforgettable scene after snow-and-ice-bound Boston and New York quitted so recently.

Historic Panama—two cities there are of the name, one old and in ruins; the other a growth of yesterday, and not beautiful—looked so inviting that we felt acutely disappointed when we were hurried into the tender which was to take us out to the steamer lying afar off on account of the shallowness of the waters, a shallowness that exists on both sides of the Isthmus, and has necessitated the carrying out, for a considerable distance, of each end of the canal into the sea.

But from the tender's deck we had ample time to view the mountains that sweep round the bay, and to wonder from which "peak in Darien" "stout Cortez" certainly never "stared at the Pacific." For Keats' historic knowledge was at fault; and it was Balboa—after whom a settlement close to the western end of the canal has been called—who actually discovered that vastest of oceans.*

In due course the tender shipped us on board the very worst of the several bad Vanderbilt steamers on which I have made a voyage. One consolation, however, we passengers enjoyed for that "hugging" of the coast from Panama to San Francisco to which our careful captain adhered, in order, so 'twas said, that the vessel could be driven on shore should a storm arise in which she might founder; and that consolation lay in beholding, at unusually close quarters, some of the most magnificent scenery our globe can show.

We had lately crossed the Atlantic in a Cunarder; and although the steamers of that line were then far from being the palatial floating hotels they have since become, the contrast between the one on which we had spent fourteen days in comfort—and that one a second-rate liner only—and any of the Vanderbilts I have known was amazing. Some of these latter ought not to have gone to sea at all. They apparently went because there were no rival lines to teach the firm owning them

*Not only are the deeds of one historical person sometimes attributed to another, but even the nicknames or the titles of affection by which they "go down the ringing grooves of time" get wrongly fitted. What, for instance, can be less appropriate than the application to Elizabeth Tudor of the fond title of "Good Queen Bess"? Great in some ways she may have been, but the word "good" can scarcely be said to describe her. The "good Queen Bess" who actually and deservedly bore the appellation was Elizabeth of York, Edward IV.'s eldest daughter, who, by her marriage to that far from amiable person, Henry VII., united the white rose of York and the red one of Lancaster, thus ending a quarter-century of warfare. The better-known Queen Elizabeth was, of course, her granddaughter.

the value of wholesome competition; and because no railway then spanned the continent at its almost widest. It was a case of "Hobson's choice," and it gave the transatlantic Hobson a grand opportunity to become a millionaire.

One steamer I travelled by a few years later was on fire three times, the third time so badly that, but for our good captain's almost super-human exertions, we must have ended existence in the shark-infested Caribbean sea, for the supply of boats was shamefully inadequate, and had the vessel foundered, nothing probably could have averted an "ugly rush."

And at this stage of my story I would say that as I have narrowly escaped ship-wreck three times—I count the steamer thrice on fire as but one of the three—and as on each occasion the captain of the craft has been courage and capability personified, I have long come to believe that one is safer on a less seaworthy vessel with an efficient commander and crew than on a first-rate ship on which discipline is not so strict as it might be, and betting on the daily "run" is allowed. The captain of the steamer so frequently on fire did his duty nobly. During the entire voyage of ten or twelve days' duration, he was said never to have gone to bed till we arrived in port; and then when we would have gladly thanked him for what he had done, we were told that he had broken down, and was too ill to be seen.

On the two Vanderbilts by which I travelled during the last month of 1861 the accommodation in saloon and cabins was very poor, while as regards certain other necessary accommodation it was on the second steamer almost entirely wanting. The bedding was mean and scanty; and the food provided on both vessels even for the first-class passengers was insufficient, uninviting, and not too cleanly served. When it became apparent that the ship's officers, one of whom sat at each end of the several first-class tables, had rather better fare than we, including milk for the strange beverages inappropriately called tea and coffee, a spirit of revolt broke out among us, and whenever the chance occurred we raided the table-end supplies until defeated by superior force or more skilful strategy. How the second-class people fared for food I do not know, but was told that for the steerage it was a case of "toujours perdrix," only that, instead of those toothsome birds, very weak gruel was doled out three times a day in very slender portions; a fact which indeed I witnessed more than once. On the second steamer the cabins which the passengers of the intermediate class should have occupied, and for which they had paid, were filled with freight even before their rightful tenants went on

board at Panama. The victims had perforce to sleep wherever they could lie or sit, in nooks and corners upon deck, or on the heaped-up luggage which should have been consigned to the hold. When in the evening we walked the deck in the bright moonlight then prevailing, it was not always easy to avoid treading on the sleepers. To undress, or to change any but outer clothing must have been to many all but impossible.

And these and other discomforts occurred on a line of steamers part of whose voyages took place in the fierce heat of the tropics.

I have, of set purpose, reproduced this displeasing picture because it serves to illustrate some of the evils of monopoly; and because it is indicative of the heartlessness and greed of which those can be guilty who wield almost unlimited power under its ægis. While there are perhaps worse instances than that above cited, I, personally, have come across none. And I may add that in describing this experience, both as eye-witness and sufferer, I have been careful to avoid exaggeration, because over-colouration of the picture drawn never yet served useful or honest purpose.

For close upon a fortnight we endured these discomforts as best we could, though with ever-deepening indignation; and then one day, to our intense relief, the Golden Gate was sighted, and we bent to eastward. Heavily we rolled through the fast-roughening waves driving through that welcome portal, noting as we went how in the falling tide the lengthy bar's brown sand was being churned up, threatening disaster had we touched bottom. Supremely thankful therefore did we feel when the waters gradually calmed, and we were made fast to a substantial-looking wharf at San Francisco, and turned our backs alike on the steamer and on the storm which speedily broke with the customary fury of an (un)Pacific gale. Not long after, a friend told me that ours was the last voyage that "floating coffin" completed.

On a later voyage, and on another vessel, when outward and northward bound, and about to roll once more through the Golden Gate, this time in fading, not in growing, daylight, again we noted the same huge, storm-swept incoming waves and the same ominous churning of the sand. But happily we were now with the good captain who, on two subsequent occasions, skilfully averted ship-wreck—once when in a fog we were actually among the breakers—and so the steamer hove to, returned to safe anchorage, and the bar was not crossed till after sunrise, and then in a calm sea.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE " FORTY-NINERS. "

A CURIOUS-LOOKING city seemed the San Francisco of half a century ago to one then so little travelled as was I. Planted in any-how fashion up and down its steep sandhills which resembled nothing so much as the waves of a stormy Atlantic suddenly arrested and changed in colour and material, this city of only twelve years' haphazard growth struck one at first sight, and on a steadily-pouring wet day, as the dreariest and least desirable locality in which to pitch one's metaphorical tent.

But more intimate acquaintance showed that it possessed an interest of no common order, the many incongruities and cosmopolitan character of the picture simply fascinating the beholder. When, for instance, one went for a stroll along its untidy wood-planked streets, one met strange figures, faces, and costumes, and heard a dozen different languages in as many minutes; while, if extending the saunter out Mission Dolores way—where stood an ancient but far from beautiful Spanish Church—one came upon the curly-red-tile roofed adobe houses crumbling with age, not yet all cleared away, and some of them still bearing fairly legible Spanish names of streets.

Half a century ago San Francisco could boast of hardly a good-looking building, but it was picturesque after a somewhat slovenly fashion. Now it is like any other American city except that it occupies a site more imposing than many, and is, also like other American cities, made hideous by "sky-scrapers."

The gold-miners whom Bret Harte has immortalised are generally associated in the public mind with California, but were met with far beyond the boundaries of the auriferous State. Yet as that State was the scene of their earliest exploits, allusion to the men in this chapter seems appropriate, although some of the stories in which they figure here and in a later chapter belong as much to British Columbia as to California. The famous author has been accused of idealising the men, but that is not true. Indeed, I have seen enough of them to recognise

the photograph-like accuracy of his portraiture. The gold-miners were so entirely unlike anything this country has produced that they cannot be mentally pictured by those who have never seen them. The vanished type is moreover scarcely likely to reappear, at any rate in its former haunts, as there is no need for it in the more conventional Far West of to-day.

Its ranks were recruited from many nationalities and many grades of life, yet the men came in time to bear some sort of resemblance to one another as if born of one race; as also, to use a common language, being modern American-English modified by far-western idioms chiefly derived from the gold-mining industry, and further enriched with Indian, Spanish, French, and Dutch words; these three last contributions resulting, of course, from the colonisation of North America by the three nations speaking those tongues. Only the use of this language was not confined to the gold-miners.* If a little puzzling at first to understand, the talk was not nearly so bewildering as Chinook, the jargon said to have been invented by the Hudson Bay Company for parley with the aborigines, the chief ingredients of which seemed to be certain Indian dialects and very broad Scotch; a jargon which we later comers had also to know something of in our own parleys with that people.

No saint was that hirsute gold-miner, with his recklessness of life and of expenditure, and his partiality for strong liquor and gambling, in some of which respects many people nearer home are not unlike him. But leaving out of consideration the rogues and desperadoes of whom, as elsewhere, there

*Some miners' slang, if a trifle vulgar to ears polite, was not devoid of humour. It was, for instance, no uncommon thing in the little settlements which sprang up, mushroom-like, on the gold-fields, or wherever else the men most did congregate, to see fastened above the entrance to a "store" or to a restaurant, an ass's jaw-bone, and beneath it the legend, "Played out." The meaning to the uninitiated was that at these establishments no credit was given; the device conveying a subtle hint that to plead for deferred payment would be unavailing, and that only a person endowed with the small amount of brains possessed (in public estimation) by that despised animal would dream of asking for it. And apropos of the ass's jawbone, it may not be out of place to add that the prairie town in Saskatchewan known as Moose Jaw has been bereft of more than nine-tenths of its full title, which in the original Indian form runs thus:—"The place where the white man mended the wheel of his broken-down cart with the jaw-bone of a moose," which was, presumably, lying conveniently near on the trail. What person bound for that town, and with only two minutes to catch his train, could in the time articulate a request for a ticket to a place with a twenty-one-words-long name? It had to be shortened.

was in his ranks no lack, he was just what Bret Harte described him, rough, unconventional, as full of faults as are other people, but animated with a chivalric tenderness towards women and children which I have never seen excelled. For days together I have travelled on board steamer—the only one of my sex—once with two hundred, once with seven hundred, and sometimes with fewer of these men; and I have no hesitation in saying that any woman who respected herself and respected the companions with whom her lot was temporarily cast was absolutely safe in the midst of them. Unlike the many-questions-asking “down-easter” of whom I once met a most amusing specimen, these men were, as a rule, grave, taciturn, self-absorbed, because accustomed to a life which, under some circumstances, tended towards isolation; yet not a few of whom could talk well when once the way to penetrate their reserve had been discovered. On board ship, did one descend to the saloon where they sat round the stove, silent, downcast as to eyes, yet always observant, as indeed their hazardous life taught them to be, every man sprang from his chair to offer a seat. On shore, did one enter the long meal-room in some rude shanty cylept hotel, a little late for the repast, one found every man on his feet, mute, motionless, patient, not dreaming even of sitting down till the sole female passenger should appear. Was one seen to pause ere crossing some busy San Franciscan street, each vehicle, as a matter of course, drew up, and a narrow lane was formed between the two opposite rows of horses’ heads to enable one to pass through in safety—though this act was then characteristic of all far-western men.

It must, however, be distinctly understood that the homage was not paid to any particular woman. It was the tribute accorded to the sex to which one was so fortunate as to belong.

In later years it is pleasant to look back upon the picture; and if retrospect sometimes inclines one to regret the passing of the type, the reason chiefly is because since the Far West became “civilised” that chivalric tenderness has very perceptibly declined. It is not that men have grown boorish, but that the fair sex, being no longer in a tiny minority, has ceased to be a rare apparition, and has therefore also ceased to be regarded as semi-divine.

Although some five hundred of the old “forty-niners”* are

*The pioneer gold-miners of last century have always been so called because the great rush to California of people from all parts of the

said to have witnessed the birth of the present century,* every one of them by that time was probably at least seventy years of age; and not many are likely to be living now.

The following veracious anecdotes about them when in their prime may be not without interest. One tells of a party of miners "out prospecting," who, seeing a woman's hat lying on the trail, joined hands and danced round it for joy because it betokened that one of the other sex was in the neighbourhood. Not much of a story perhaps; but the action was thoroughly characteristic of the men.

At one of the San Franciscan theatres, while a crowd of miners just down from the gold fields were thronging into the seats, bent, as was their wont, on enjoying the coming performance after their long season of hard and hazardous labour in the north, the orchestra, previous to the raising of the curtain, began to play. A baby in the gallery was heard to cry. Up jumped a miner. "Stop that music!" he shouted. "It's years since I heard a baby cry." And as other men joined in the protest, the musicians, doubtless mindful of the forcible mode of argument sometimes made use of by these people, discreetly laid aside their instruments, and the curtain remained lowered till the infant ceased from wailing.

At another theatre, a Victorian one this time, a little fairy-like child, with a wealth of golden hair, was alternately dancing and singing songs in the sweetest of tiny trebles. It was not a one-child performance; other and better-skilled musicians were giving of their best, but on her was centred public interest because she was so dainty a little thing, and because the occasion was a benefit concert got up to enable her impoverished mother, just then stricken with serious illness, to go to a more southerly clime; and the audience therefore was in sympathetic mood. At the conclusion of the child's last song, some glittering object flashed across the theatre, and fell on the floor at her feet. It was a large gold nugget. Another and another followed; there began to be a rain of nuggets. And all round the auditorium were seen the roughly-clad, sun-browned miners dipping toil-discoloured hands into pockets or broad waist-belts for their

habitable world in quest of the precious metal occurred in 1849. Some people have imagined a connexion between their nickname and the "forty-ninth parallel" (of latitude) for reference to which see note in chapter IX.

*Thus says a writer to the *Daily Chronicle* of July 30th, 1901.

voluntary and very substantial donations, and smiling the widest of smiles as their eyes followed the pretty little creature moving joyously about the stage, and gathering in her golden harvest.

When coming south from the mines for the winter the men were flush of gold, though not of course in minted coin; and when visiting a theatre, although unpossessed of anything even faintly resembling a dress-suit, they generally occupied the most expensive seats. To the people sitting in less exalted places, it was therefore very funny to see the usual plush-topped balcony-railing of the dress-circle, which in other lands is ornamented with ladies' bouquets and similar trifles, showing in this case a long row of gold-miners' stout boots, more or less muddy, and more rather than less in need of mending.

As typical of the recklessness as regards their hard-earned wealth of which some of these strange folk were guilty, the reader is asked, as was the writer, to believe the following tale.

A "lucky" miner, on his way south, entered a Victorian hotel, and, having dined, bargained with the proprietor to smash everything in the restaurant for a certain amount of gold-dust and nuggets. Naturally, the host named a high price, which, as naturally with a miner, was not disputed. Everything was accordingly smashed, but the man's waist-belt was not yet depleted. A handsome mirror, one large sheet of glass, fastened to a wall remained intact. The price for destroying it was fixed, the valuable asset was shattered to atoms, the belt was emptied, and the ruined miner left the building smiling and happy, and bound afresh to Cariboo to dig out another fortune.

Here are two stories pleasanter to think of because illustrative of noble unselfishness.

One is commemorated in a short poem by Bret Harte, and is authentic history. Two miners have sunk a deep shaft in order to reach the gold which the "bed-rock" is bound or is expected to yield. Both men are far down the shaft, and both are suddenly aware that its sides are giving way. The man lowest down sets his back hard against the yielding wall, hoping to avert, if for a few seconds only, the inevitable catastrophe; and shouts to his mate above, "Fly for your life, Jake, fly for your wife's sake! Don't wait for me!" And that, says Bret Harte, is the last ever heard of "Tom Flynn of Virginia."

Similar unselfish deeds take place at times of awful tragedy, in the old country and elsewhere; and show that heroism is to be found in many climes and latitudes.

A steamer on her way to Victoria was wrecked only a few hours after leaving San Francisco. When the boats carrying the escaping passengers and crew were nearing the Californian shore—the wreck occurred off Drake's Bay—two women were seen standing on the deck of the slowly-sinking ship. They had retired for the night early, and in the confusion had been forgotten. The nearest boat put back, but, being already overweighted, to give room to two extra persons was hardly possible. At once a couple of miners who were on board gave up their places, and plunged into the sea, to take their chance to swim or sink.

How the name of the first circumnavigator of our globe came to be associated with the place where the ship-wrecked people touched land is a curious bit of veracious history. It was told me by Dr. Mackintosh, a relative of the famous Sir James of that ilk, a delightful old man who had long sojourned in San Francisco, and used to relate thrilling tales of early experiences there.

While Sir Francis—taking mayhap a brief holiday from the fascinating process of "singeing the King of Spain's beard"—was cruising off the Californian coast he was told by some of the aborigines of a wonderful inland sea which was reached by a narrow strait between lofty hills. The strait is known to-day as the Golden Gate. The Pacific ocean outside it, and all along the northern shores is, like other seas and sea-washed countries, much troubled with dense, humid white mists, one of which must have shrouded the Golden Gate what time Drake vainly sought the entrance. Otherwise he could not have missed it, for the channel is fairly wide. At last his vessel arrived off a bay several miles to the north; but it proved to be a comparatively insignificant indentation which soon touched land. Its relative proportion beside that wonderful inland sea, now so well known, strikes one as not unlike that of the Isle of Wight to the larger island of Great Britain.

Drake thereupon came to the conclusion that the aborigines had deceived him; and in that mistaken belief sailed away. But to this day Drake's Bay is printed on maps of California; and thus the great man's name is imperishably linked with the Far-Western land of gold. He was there long before our American cousins found it; before even those yet earlier explorers, the Spaniards, landed on that lengthy peninsula of rolling sand-hills, which shuts out the Pacific ocean; and, struck with the brilliant verdant clothing which they wore in early summer,

called the site on which—earthquakes permitting—San Francisco now stands, Yerba Buena. The appellation still appears on out-of-date maps, though perhaps little, if any, grass remains; and with its disappearance maybe has also faded recollection that it was the Spanish missionaries of the Order of St. Francis who bestowed upon the tiny settlement on Yerba Buena the name the city still bears in its sturdy manhood.

CHAPTER IX.

SOME "OLD TIMERS."

DURING my stay throughout most of the 'sixties in British Columbia (or rather Vancouver Island), then in its youth as a separate and sparsely-peopled Colony cut off from eastern and central Canada almost as effectively as if it had been in another planet, I came in some ways to get a backward peep into the Britain of our early English, or as some people, with doubtful accuracy, prefer to call them, "Saxon," days.

Little Victoria, the capital, must have been not unlike our own infant settlements in Britain of a thousand and many more years past, in that it was a wooden town of unpretentious buildings which, except where it faced the sea, was hemmed in by vast forests whose outer fringe only had been explored, and in which roamed packs of fierce timber wolves and other beasts of prey and of preyed upon, among these last the gentle-eyed deer of various tribes and a few of the, in Europe, extinct great "Irish elk." But at least this dense, arboreal barrier, hundreds of miles in thickness, and, thanks to the giant pines, often well over two hundred feet in height,* held back the icy northern winds, and hindered from running to waste the bounteous rains which came in their season, and kept fresh the lovely wild flowers, many of them identical with the blooms we cherish in home gardens, but which in this favoured far-western island grew wherever sunshine fell upon them. And, in passing, one is fain to express regret that at the present day such wholesale, and often reckless, destruction should go on among what Drummond of Hawthornden, in connexion with woods nearer home, called "the statelie comeliness of forrestes olde."

Nor did the oft-claimed resemblance to older, even "druidic" Britain end here. There were people in that sparsely inhabited land who reminded me of the curious illus-

*A friend of mine recently told me he had felled one which, when measured, gave a total length of 315 feet.

trations in pictorial History of England books in which the serfs and thralls are represented at their daily avocations. I remember once seeing a white man clad much as, according to those illustrations, the humbler folk of old must have been, and whose heavy moustache, lengthy beard, and abundant, tawny locks reaching to the shoulders brought back to mind Tennyson's portraiture of Coventry's long-haired, grim earl. The strange-looking being I saw sat, with his Indian wife beside him, on a rude wagon evidently home-made, and drawn by an ox which at another season doubtless dragged a primitive plough. The rough, unmade road or track along which the vision slowly passed, and the sombre, shaggy forest served as appropriate adjuncts to a picture which seemed, by many hundreds of years, to be wholly out of date. Not even was wanting here and there in the shallower woodland recesses some green-coated, treacherous, dismal swamp where legions of frogs made hideous the night with their loud, discordant song, and recalled to memory the story of how in the pre-revolution days of France the hapless peasants were set to flog the ponds and morasses all night long in order that the seigneur and his family when in residence at their country seat, might slumber undisturbed.

This phase of early British Columbian life has long passed away; and the men of the type described were, as a rule, the humbler employees of that "Great Company" which caused the name of "Rupert's Land" to be printed broad-cast athwart old maps of three-quarters of that portion, the widest, of the American continent which stretches north of the vast freshwater Lakes and of the "forty-ninth parallel."*

The Company has long held honourable record for its treatment of the aborigines, with the result that these too fre-

*The boundary between the United States and Canada had to be more exactly defined when the population of the latter country, more than half a century ago, began to spread beyond the Great Lakes; and the forty-ninth parallel of north latitude was finally agreed upon, a many-hundred-miles-long lane of spacious width being cut through the primæval forest. "Nor a fortress and not a gun are to be seen along the line which separates two friendly English-speaking nations," recently declared a public speaker. A true dictum; but it fails to represent the entire case if what I have heard be a fact, namely, that the boundary-line itself tends to disappear, and houses and farm-buildings little by little are encroaching on the erst wide lane. Is this slowly-growing effacement symptomatic of that future union of which Goldwin Smith and others have dreamed?

quently harshly-used tribes long ago came to prefer the "King George" to the "Boston" men—i. e., the British to the citizens of the United States. True it is that to the Company has also been attributed, perhaps by people jealous of its extraordinary success, a genius for profitable bargain-making, as, for instance, when causing a musket worth a few shillings only, to be set on end against a pile of furs, often of great value, till the latter has attained the level of the musket's mouth. Though if the Indians found no fault with such transactions, who else should cavil at them?

But among these strange-looking people there must have been some who were not the Company's humbler employees, since rumour said that in one farm-house as primitive-seeming as any, and within easy reach of little Victoria, a master-piece from the brush of one of the famous Italian painters of over four hundred years ago was treasured as an heirloom. Was its proprietor a man of broken fortune who forsook his country, but took with him his most cherished possession? I had hoped to see it, but opportunity never came.

Other members of the Hudson Bay Company, Scots to a man or of Scottish descent, as their names proclaimed them, and off-shoots sometimes of clans renowned in history—was it not a Simon Fraser who gave his surname to a well-known British Columbian river?—were, to my thinking, unusually interesting to talk with, being men of a type I had never yet seen. Some had only recently come into contact with Europeans, having spent the greater part of their lives in that grand Far West which till the advent of the first of its several gold fevers, that of 1858, was to the outside world little more than a "geographical expression." These were the higher-classed officials, most of whom in the earliest days dwelt, together with a few other people, within the lofty, wooden walls of the little fort known in pre-Victorian times by its Indian name of Camosun.

Almost the only once intramural building still standing when I revisited British Columbia in 1910 was the Company's old store, outwardly scarcely changed, inwardly unrecognisable. It was long the only thing in the shape of a shop, a genuine "Universal Provider," in which I sometimes made hardy-needed purchases as an excuse to enjoy a chat with the officials. For they were pleasant of speech and courteous after the mode that elsewhere has long died out; and it was as they grew more sociable that they came to tell me stirring tales of

older days when they themselves were young, and life was more adventurous as well as less conventional than in the 'sixties. Some of the Indian legends which figure in a later chapter I gathered from their and other men's lips.

One of my friends was old Chief Justice Cameron, who on an ideal summer day drove me to his country house in order that the sight of his garden of fruit trees, then a thing rare in the land, and in their full glory of blossom, should gladden with a "little glimpse of the old country" a sometimes home-sick exile.

Another friend, a doctor, a learned man, and a most interesting talker, after whom Mount Tolmie is called, had landed on the north Pacific coast in the last century's mid-'thirties. He had kept journals recording the impressions and experiences of a long life, including descriptions of the beautiful and abundant flora which in his youth clad even to the summit of the lofty hills a land made temperate of climate by the great Japanese current which has on the western American coast the same beneficent effect that the Gulf Stream has on western Europe. The journals to-day would be of priceless value. After his death they were borrowed by an acquaintance who professed a wish to read them; and they exemplified the oft-quoted fate of literary treasures which are lent.

Once a year the Company's sailing vessel set out from Britain laden with everything that heart in reasonable mood could desire; and on her return voyage took to the Motherland the "peltries" which had been collected during the previous twelve months. For the dwellers in this remote, ocean-washed West this vessel was for long almost the sole link between themselves and the old world; and in the earliest times Fort Camosum received a mail only once a year. The letters took about five months to come, and the answers to them were dispatched when, a month or so later, the lading of the ship had been completed. By the time the return voyage came to an end another five months had sped, and the missives' news was somewhat stale.

Once therefore in each recurring twelve-months the Company's officials, mindful that the one great event of the year was at hand, gathered in a throng upon their wharf to gaze as lovingly as if she were their human child on the good ship "Princess Royal," as, her long western-bound voyage ended, she swung leisurely and gracefully into port. No steamers

then attempted to round stormy Cape Horn, or to thread the intricacies of Magelhaen's Straits.

Some of the Company's curious-looking, low, small-windowed, old buildings were demolished only half a century ago; and during the process one saw that even in the smallest houses pebbles from the sea-shore had been used to fill to the roof the fairly wide space dividing the outer and inner wooden walls, thus forming an effective arrow and bullet-proof barrier. The necessity for such a defence had, by the advent of the 'sixties, passed away, but in the earliest days of Fort Camosun the aborigines were given to attack the little settlement, and if it seemed likely that they would succeed in breaking in, had, so legend avers, to be bought off by the much-appreciated gift of a barrel or two of "molasses" which the besieged lowered over the stockade. An action whose effect, as in the case of our own old-time payment of the "Dane-gelt," probably insured the speedier return of the enemy.

Only a few months before I set foot in the little town a fleet of war-canoes manned by a hostile tribe surrounded a British gunboat lying in the harbour, and challenged it to fight. To-day the war-canoes are used by the descendants of those and other warriors to paddle races on "Victoria day," May 24th. And a fact which did these men credit in the May of 1910 is worth recording. As Edward the Peacemaker died early in that month, a discussion arose among Victorians of all nations, Japanese and Chinese included, as to whether the festival should be celebrated at all. Practically, the question was settled by the aborigines in conclave assembled. "The great white father who loved us is dead," said they, "and our hearts are sad. We will join in no celebration."

It was as if they had held a casting vote, for no celebration was held.

Nor were the aborigines the only aliens who lamented the passing of the justly popular sovereign. One day, when we were in a Chinese shop buying curios, and another time when similarly employed in a Japanese store, the proprietor in each case being on friendly terms with us, and knowing us to be English, alluded to King Edward's death. With both Chinaman and Jap the burden of the little speech was almost identical and evidently sincere. Our nation, each man in effect said, has lost its best friend, and we loved him, and grieve that he is dead.

On the day of the royal funeral in England there was in Victoria a great open-air gathering of representatives of different nationalities—no building could have contained the crowd—to manifest the universal sorrow pervading even so remote a portion of the Empire as “the land of the setting sun.” And a conspicuous feature at the ceremony was a carriageful of the great Chinese merchants resident in the city dressed in their grandest attire, their bearing reverent, and their countenances, albeit as grave as usual, plainly showing the sympathy they felt.

In British Columbia where the “celestial” can live without molestation, and without the certainty that should he carry a case into a court of law he will be worsted even when justice is unmistakably on his side, John Chinaman has a well-merited reputation as a sober, industrious, thrifty, and law-abiding citizen. In this land, where he is well treated, he has become a frequent builder; and not only on his own account, for the shrewd fellow will even “run up” a house or store for the less thrifty white man to occupy as tenant or purchaser if possessed of the wherewithal to pay.

I have seen in a Victoria suburb the country house of a Chinese millionaire, the funniest building imaginable. The prudent man must have bought the bit of land at a nominal price, perhaps at a time of trade depression, and put up a humble shack in the days of his early struggle. As he rose in the world he evidently added shack after shack to the original one till the structure resembled a long straight terrace of mean houses. The height and breadth of the building were out of all proportion to its length; and if the millionaire had often to walk from end to end of his abode, such promenades must have made serious inroads on his valuable time.

One question has often perplexed me while gazing with criticising eyes at modern Victoria's architecture—Why are the private residences, not infrequently standing in well-kept gardens, generally pretty, sometimes indeed handsome, while the public buildings, with few exceptions, are so much the reverse? The Chinese millionaire's private residence must have been one of those exceptions which are said to prove the rule, for no amount of fresh paint or other ornamentation could have redeemed it from ugliness.

Some anecdotes about old-time Chinamen servants come back to memory.

A lady I knew in Victoria used to give dinner-parties on the model of those in the old country; or rather attempt to do so. The work of preparation was always tremendous, the consequent fatigue most wearing, the failures many, and sometimes ludicrous; and after the breakdown of her latest function of the sort, she wisely abandoned a practice which was entirely unsuited to a colony in its babyhood, rough to live in, and lacking nearly every mechanical contrivance that tends to labour-saving. Her Chinaman was a good cook, hard-working, and obliging, but possessed of a rather easily ruffled temper. An especially grand banquet was in progress at the lady's house, and the soup and fish courses had come to table, proved satisfactory, and been removed. Then ensued a long pause, so long that at last the hostess left her guests, and penetrated to the kitchen. The outer door was open, the stove-fire all but out, the place in confusion, the rest of the dinner only partially cooked, and rapidly cooling. Of John there was no trace, nor did he ever reappear. Something—no one knew what—must have offended him.

Another friend of mine possessed an unusually handsome grand piano, her pet piece of furniture. On one occasion she went to spend the day with her parents, but, before leaving, told the Chinaman to clean the house thoroughly, and set everything in order. On her return she was pleased to see that the place look "as fresh as paint"; but on entering her "best" room, she beheld him mounted on hands, knees, and even boots upon her cherished piano, his brush, pail, water, and other accessories of office beside him, and scrubbing at its polished surface as vigorously as if it had been a floor.

Yet another friend had often assured me that her Chinaman was a perfect treasure. He was little more than a boy, but wholly without silly boyish tricks, with a full-moon-like, amiable face, orderly ways, a love of toil, and devoted to her baby. One day, as she sat quietly sewing in the sitting-room, she heard in the adjoining kitchen a mysterious sound the like of which had never before come to her ears. She rose, gently opened the door, and peeped in. John, on hands and knees, with one arm was washing the floor, the other being clasped round the child, unto whom he was crooning some quaint Chinese lullaby, doubtless composed a few thousand years ago, the baby meanwhile at intervals crowing with delight. Unwilling to disturb the strange duet, my friend retired as quietly as she had entered. Alas, the treasure soon after fell victim

to the oft-recurring "gold-fever" epidemic; and to the despair of the house-mistress, departed to go north, and dig the precious metal at Cariboo.

A Chinaman at one time in my service covered the kitchen walls, doors, &c., very neatly with the local newspapers as fast as we had done with them. The walls being unplastered, thus showing the rough boards of which they were built, I rejoiced at John's evident sense of tidiness, never dreaming of what was to follow. When the paste dried he began to inscribe the sheets with large Chinese characters in some black pigment, causing the room to look like one of the usual large tea-chests, but with the outside inscriptions turned inside. Having no knowledge of the language, I was unable to decipher them; and my friends were equally at fault. Some surmised that John was an author of prose or poetry, and that, with a view to achieve immortality for his compositions, he resorted to this mode of advertisement. But a young English friend, much given to tease, suggested that, in order to enlighten those of his own nationality and calling who should come after him, my Chinaman was recording in imperishable form his candid opinion of the household's mistress, and, with singular appositeness, doing so in the darkest of hues.

It is no longer possible for people of small means in British Columbia to keep a Chinaman-servant, for of late years the powers that be have, in their unwisdom, levied a poll-tax of five hundred dollars (£100) on every "celestial" who enters the "country of the free." John of course does not really pay the fine; the actual victim is the householder, out of whose pocket a wage far heavier than he ever paid before is extracted. And thus many people are unable to enjoy the comfort afforded by possession of an often efficient and trustworthy "help."

CHAPTER X.

A FAMOUS GOLD EXCITEMENT.

A CURIOUS episode in the story of the nations, and to onlookers at least as interesting as curious, is the gold excitement which periodically breaks out, and in its effect upon human beings is sometimes as disastrous as a severe, widely-spread epidemic, since of those smitten by the malady many fail to come unscathed through the ordeal. In these later days a gold excitement has become of comparatively rare occurrence; and when one does occur people are apparently less given than were their forefathers to yield to its fascination, even, in some cases, to the extent (by those forefathers) of the throwing up of regular employment or assured good prospects in their own country, and cutting themselves adrift, maybe for ever, from all that they most value. But our blood was perhaps more prone to rise to fever point in that wonderful mid-nineteenth century when, for scores of years, revolutions alternating with gold or diamond discoveries were the thrilling order of things.

However it may be with revolutions, elsewhere perhaps than in Eastern Europe or in Mexico, the gold discoveries have been somewhat staled by custom; and although occasional report of new auriferous "finds" is still made, the news meets with scant attention, the public remains calm, and the episode is soon forgotten. On the scene of past excitements, where the precious metal is even now obtainable in paying quantities, the quest, when not abandoned, is conducted in more humdrum fashion, machinery having largely displaced human sinew and muscle, and lessened the use of primitive pick, shovel, and rocker, implements likely, sooner or later, to be of interest chiefly in museums.

The discoveries of gold in California, and not long after in Australia, were the first in modern times to upset mankind's mental equilibrium all the world over. British Columbia claims to have had two such sensations, the first in 1858, the second in 1862, the latter much surpassing the former in fame

and ferment. For whereas in the earlier of these two years people thronged into the new colony in their hundreds, in the later they came by thousands, from the uttermost ends of the earth, and in every variety of floating thing that could be relied on not to sink too easily. The mode of conveyance was necessarily limited because of land travel there was little or none. For in the Wild West at that distant time railways were non-existent, and the formidable "sea of mountains"—"twenty Switzerlands rolled into one" as the Canadians proudly call it—which barred access to those seldom-visited regions had not yet been explored, was indeed a veritable terra incognita.

The Klondyke gold excitement took place many years later than 1862; but as British Columbia was not then my home, I know nothing of it. Of the gold fever of 1862 I was, however, an eye-witness so far as are concerned the landing and occasional sojourn of the newcomers at the port of Victoria. Cariboo, in which district the gold was chiefly found, I never saw, though by steamer and stage I have travelled a long way in its direction.

It is an every-day saying that a gold excitement attracts the worst of life's failures, the world's riff-raff, the wiliest of its rogues.

The saying has only a modicum of truth. The crowd which in 1862 disembarked at Victoria or Esquimalt en route for the gold fields was composed in far greater proportion of those who, like our Norse ancestors, had in them the love of adventure and over-seas travel, or who, influenced by more modern views of life, believed their chances would be better among a new than an old community. And with many of these I made friends, of whom, I believe, scarcely one is now alive.

In those days we were all young, enthusiastic, and firmly persuaded that we should speedily achieve fortune. For was not the young colony "boomed" as a veritable "Tom Tiddler's ground" at home and everywhere else, especially perhaps—though of this we then nothing knew—by men with axes to grind in the shape of "real estate" or other things in the land of gold to sell? And youth, at any rate in our case, was prone to put faith in whatever it read or heard.

The landing of the motley crowds from the many vessels which brought them to Victoria or Esquimalt was a curious sight. Some of the craft requisitioned for the voyage were venerable steamers much in need of repair, and some afflicted with a decided "list" to port or starboard, looking anything but

sea-worthy, yet crammed with immigrants. All sorts of sailing vessels also came laden to their full capacity. And the human beings who landed were sometimes as strange looking as the craft they came in.

Then was I brought into closer contact with the gold-miners described in a previous chapter. For although we had spent some weeks in San Francisco before coming north, a few of these men only had then crossed our path. They were doubtless "up-country" where the gold fields were. Here in Victoria they landed in crowds, quietly, gravely, hardly vouchsafing a glance at anybody or anything, and went their way without fuss or hesitation. They "knew the ropes," and made for far distant Cariboo as quickly as steamer and other conveyances could take them. Sombrero on head, bowie-knife in small back trouser-pocket, revolvers in broad sash or ample waist-belt, the loose blouse we used to call a "garibaldi" clothing the upper person, the long "gum" boots reaching to the knees which enabled their wearer to work with impunity in water for hours together, the tightly-rolled blanket and gold-mining implements upon the back and shoulders, each man looked thoroughly "fit" and ready for the strenuous life before him.

It was the more gently-reared, inexperienced "tenderfeet" who showed excitement, or seemed as if after landing they did not quite know what to do next.

But one young tenderfoot looked perfectly happy as he stood proudly flourishing a large soiled-linen bag (plainly so labelled) which, later, he told us he had run away with from home, and expected to fill with the nuggets he had been told were to be picked up on the sea-shore. We used to see the poor fellow sometimes wandering there, but never a nugget went into the bag because there were none to pick up. He was not "all there," to quote an expressive Americanism; and his fellow ship-mates, who were uniformly kind to him, after awhile joined together to pay his passage back to England. But he never reached home, nor could inquiry trace him further than San Francisco, where, as likely as not, he met with foul play.

Many of the new-comers had been led to believe that the gold mines were within easy reach of Victoria; and were at first incredulous when told that the most difficult part of their long journey still lay before them, involving as it did a few hundred miles of slow river-steamer travel and rough tracking,

chiefly on foot, through dense forest or over steep rocks and mountain passes where, in the picturesque slang of the professional gold-miner, "a man has to hang on by his eyelids." For while this gold excitement was in its youth the good road made by the Royal Engineers which was to facilitate communication between the new gold fields and the more settled parts of the Wild West was still far from completion.

I was not in England when the gold discoveries of 1862 were made, and so knew but little of what appeared in print or was heard in conversation about them there; but many of my new friends assured me that no mention was made of the difficulties of the long journey to Cariboo, a journey which in the rude state of the land portion of the route could hardly be accomplished by any but the professional gold-miners, and not easily by them. In other ways, too, the new-comers were disappointed; and thus it was that disillusion began to set in, and many returned whence they came.

Among these last was a young man with whom we had some slight acquaintance. He left us intending to return home, but never got so far. The steamer on which he was a passenger from San Francisco to Panama caught fire when off the coast of one of the Central American Republics. It was headed for shore, but stranded on an outlying sandbank beyond which was deep water, and was there burnt. A dreadful shipwreck it was, attended with great loss of life, the young Englishman we knew being a victim. The steamer was not one of the "floating coffins" of that line, but a comparatively new, good boat.

Another person who sojourned among us for a brief space, but whose departure for more congenial scenes was inevitable, was an ancient, but remarkably well-preserved, dapper, active, knee-breeched gentleman in whom we were all much interested because he looked like no one else, and because there were then so few old people in the colony that when one appeared it was for us young folk an occasion for turning out to stare. This veteran was said to have been dentist to George III.!

A familiar figure in our midst during a year or two posed as an especial friend of young people, and was in more than one sense a most imposing person. He loved to promenade the streets sandwiched between any pair of young men, arm in arm, or with a paternal hand on one shoulder of each, discoursing delightfully the while a benevolent smile lighted up his countenance. Every young man who believed in him,

and they were many, was "my dear boy." All were to trust him because of his vast business experience; he would, without charge, advise them how best to utilise their money; their interests should be his interests, and all should grow wealthy together. After he had, somewhat hastily and unexpectedly, left the colony, his dear boys looked more than a little glum. Their distress did not arise from loss of their beloved mentor, but from loss of quite another descripton.

Another man, quite as imposing, but lacking the paternal manner which in the other too easily won his dupes' confidence, returned home "ruined." Notwithstanding his sad plight, he was somehow able, on his re-appearance in London, to start a lucrative business which he carried on for many years, and was said to have realised a fair-sized fortune. It was also said that, while in the colony, he had engaged in a very different calling, being, as it were, a one-man-power Stock Exchange, and that his clients had an unhappy knack of investing in concerns which turned out badly, or were non-existent, or were found to have always provided dividends out of capital. But the missing capital itself could not be traced.

Three friends had before leaving England invented a fascinating costume in which to go out digging for gold at Cariboo. The costumes were all alike, made of some soft material and of rather light colour, prettily embroidered with narrow scarlet braid, decidedly becoming, and the very thing for a fancy ball. They were not donned till the wearers went on board the good steamer "Enterprise" bound for New Westminster, on the Fraser river, which port marked the end of the first and easiest stage of the long journey to the gold-fields. We went to the wharf to wish the three "good speed and good luck"; and I thought how much nicer they looked than the roughly-clad miners, some of whom were grinning widely for no reason apparent to ordinary onlookers. We never beheld those fascinating costumes again; and the three who had worn them avoided answering questions concerning their disappearance. Later we learnt from eye-witnesses of their brief existence that the fancy-ball garments had been discarded in a very few days as hopelessly soiled and worn out; and our friends, in due course, returned to Victoria habited much after the style of the miners whom perhaps they had hoped to teach how to dress suitably for the part to be enacted.

The above-mentioned are but a few of the people who crowded by ship-loads to the new colony in 1862. They are all

actual portraits; but were I to add to their number the record might prove interminable. I shall therefore write merely of four other persons who came to Victoria before I did, and whom I very well remember.

The first of these was one of the strangest people I have ever met either in the old or new world. He was an old French gentleman belonging to the ancienne noblesse, an emigré of the far-off days of the Great Revolution. As 1862, the date at which first I saw him, was but 73 years later than 1789, the unforgettable time which saw the outbreak of that "world-shaking" event soon after which the emigration began, it is quite possible that scions of the old nobility who, as young children, accompanied their departing relatives and friends should still survive, though of course in greatly diminished number. The oddest thing about this particular scion is that he should be found in the then youngest and one of the most remote of our colonies.

This human waif from old France was tall, spare, bent, very shy of making acquaintances, very aged, and apparently too poor to live elsewhere than in a cave hollowed out from a hill-side, but concealed from the vulgar gaze by a large, strong-looking door which I never saw opened. What a sorry change from that ancestral abode which perhaps he still remembered, though it may have been destroyed nearly three-quarters of a century previously. One of my friends, a near neighbour of the lonely old man, had won his heart by addressing him one day in his own unforgotten language; and with her he came to be on speaking terms, on one occasion even presenting her with a bouquet of the lovely wild flowers which were still plentiful in the Vancouver Island of that time, accompanied by the poetic "compliment" whose composition was dear to the gallant eighteenth century sons of France. But I cannot recall his name or title, if indeed I ever knew them. Nor do I know how long he had resided in that strange abode; and the lady I allude to was too kind-hearted to betray curiosity as to his antecedents.

Other French people had left their native land at a time of later political troubles, and foregathered in the Far West. Among these was my friend M. Driard, a refugee, proprietor of a noted Victorian hotel, who left France after Napoleon III.'s coup d'état—an act called by Victor Hugo "le crime du deux Décembre" (1851)—settled in British Columbia, and died there, after having won the esteem of all who knew him.

These terrible revolutionists have a way of being in private life the most amiable of mortals; and, softly be it spoken (or written), of often also contrasting favourably in that particular characteristic, and not a few others, with the most strenuous upholders of "law and order."

Other emigrants from France were a charming old couple, M. and Madame Sandrie, who, on the fall of the second Empire, returned to their beloved Paris, only to be shut within its fortifications during the memorable siege.

There were other French people in Vancouver Island, but with the exception of some of the good sisters of the convent whom I had the pleasure of knowing, they were chiefly French Canadians, nearly all of whom came from that most interesting Province, historical Quebec.

Many of our fellow British emigrant friends, recognising that gold-mining was hardly congenial employment, yet unwilling to return home in the character of unsuccessful members of society, wisely decided to remain in the young colony, accepting any sort of occupation they could find, and biding their time till they could do better, and perhaps some day set up a business of their own. Several of them became eventually successful and even distinguished men, and at their demise left honoured memories in the land of their adoption.

In the meantime, with an eye to economy, and it being the summer season—and in Vancouver Island the summer of 1862 was ideal—many lived in tents; and more than one pleasant little "Canvas-town" came into being, looking delightfully picturesque, especially at night, when the fires of pine branches and bracken were throwing out a cheerful blaze, and crackling for all they were worth. What jolly little impromptu meals were served up by very amateur cooks, what songs were sung, good stories told, and what a "high old time" altogether it was! Tea at Canvas-town was a sociable, refreshingly unconventional event at which we sometimes assisted, when, instead of Society small talk, we were regaled with the novel experiences of our hosts.

This man was one night roused from sleep by a persistent scratching against the outside of his tent, saw a strange moving shadow projected by the moon upon the canvas, turned out to investigate, and beheld a shaggy little brown bear not much bigger than a Newfoundland dog—in Vancouver Island the bears are small and gaminivorous: the formidable grizzlies

existing only on the mainland—who apparently wanted merely to ask for a small contribution in the shape of scraps from last night's supper. These he accepted amiably, and then withdrew to the forest.

That man, going down to the water-side to fish, heard a slight rustle as he passed under a tree, looked up, and beheld a puma stretched full length upon a projecting branch. He looked at the puma, and the puma looked at him. But neither spoke; the chance acquaintance did not ripen into intimacy. One would willingly stroke or fondle a nice cat of reasonable size for the pleasure of listening to its purring appreciation of the kindly attention bestowed. Only when a cat is nine feet long, six as to its body, and three as to its tail, prudence suggests that discretion is the better part of valour, and one decides to pass on. But the puma, unless molested or accompanied by its young, is said to be a not supremely malicious creature, and if let alone will let the way-farer alone, as did the puma our friend passed by so closely.

Had our Canvas-town chums camped further afield in the forest, they might have received a visit from the wolves—a hungry pack of which one day, I was told, swept the little town of Victoria during the hard winter before our arrival—or from that most dangerous of all animals, the erratic bull which has escaped from some farm in his giddy calthood, and, like the noble savage, has ever since run wild in woods. A small party of whom I was one had once a rather narrow escape from one of these creatures, a handsome young fellow with a superb red hide which shone like satin, whose beauty even in the midst of our alarm it was impossible to help remarking.

As our friends got on in the world, they naturally took to dwelling in houses instead of tents; and with improvement in circumstances, pecuniary and social, there came ere long into vogue among us pleasant Saturday afternoon riding parties and unostentatious and thoroughly enjoyable picnics to favourite haunts in lovely scenery such as Sangster's Plains, Langford Lake, &c. (At the present time I understand that, in spite of good roads now in many directions and of great cleared spaces which, half a century ago, were portions of the dense "bush," riding parties and picnics are "out" and the more formal, often "deadly lively" garden parties "in"; and I am not the only person who thinks our older pastimes were more sensible and very much more keenly enjoyed. In becoming "civilised," unostentatious sociability has declined, Victoria, like San

Francisco, has lost its individuality, and, in consequence, much of its former charm.)

And the summer amusements alternated pleasantly with the winter ones such as dances, amateur theatricals, and concerts. Nor let me forget the joyous meetings at each other's houses, when, girls and boys alike, we devoted ourselves to the making of plum-puddings and other toothsome things, varied with interludes of singing, recitations, games, and the tripping of the light, fantastic toe. Frivolous enough, all this, perhaps; but when a throng of people are thrown together not one of whom has passed many birthday mile-stones it is permissible sometimes to be young and foolish.

An old chum, not long ago, when speaking of that happy past, not inaptly said that we were like a very large family who never quarrelled.

I have written as if, with the exception of a few French friends, our only associates were Britons. But that was not the case. We knew Americans, Canadians, Germans, Italians, and others, making little or no distinction of nationality but only of individuality; and it was from a German who in an earlier part of his life had sojourned in his native backwoods that I learned how to "build" a log fire scientifically.

When the decline of the great gold excitement of 1862 set in, a long season of depression, ever growing more acute, followed; and many of the new-comers, unused to such sudden ups and downs, were reduced to poverty, dire at times. Those who could return whence they came often left for ever; others drifted to San Francisco or elsewhere; and little Victoria, with grassy streets and shut-up buildings, was a dismal spectacle. To make matters worse, the powers that were, in their un-wisdom, undid one of the good works of Sir James Douglas, no longer the colony's chief ruler; and Victoria as a free port ceased to exist.

All honour then to the brave folk just mentioned who stayed on, lived resolutely as best they could through the long commercial gloom, and in not a few cases had their deserved reward.

Many years after my early sojourn in far-western Canada, a "boom" prevailed there and in other parts of the Dominion, speculation, especially perhaps in the west, "ran mad," and absurdly inflated prices were paid for land cleared or uncleared, and near to or remote from well-settled places.

Then came the inevitable collapse, many people were ruined; and the stream of emigration which, attracted by the boom, had flowed Canada-wards in ever-increasing volume, turned aside to go elsewhere. And just then followed the ill-considered refusal of the United States' offer of trade-reciprocity, a measure which, if it had not saved the situation, must have ameliorated it; and so things went from bad to worse.

CHAPTER XI.

THE HOUSE IN THE WOODS.

THE last year of my residence, half a century ago, in British Columbia saw us established in an old house built by the Hudson Bay Company as a trading-post with the aborigines. It stood far up the Esquimalt harbour, and close to a small peninsula flanked on either side by a little bay, one a charming inlet shut in by thickly-growing shrubs, whence, at times, issued gaily-tinted humming birds of butterfly-like flight, which visited us fearless of harm because never molested, even entering the house, and settling for a brief space on some tall piece of furniture or other coign of 'vantage. This bay was carpeted with layers of smooth, cleanly-looking pebbles, so diminutive that to walk on them was as pleasant as if they had been sand. The other bay was a mere expanse of flat rocks with a muddy shore which even at low tide never seemed to dry.

On the rock-strewn peninsula grew some giant pines whose upper branches in a gentle breeze gave out a pleasant, slumber-inviting sound, and in a tearing wind roared as loudly as the waves. And at the peninsula's extreme point, hard by where a sturdy cypress grew, lay one of those curious deposits of shells, bones, wood ashes, &c., relics of prehistoric times which are found in north-western Europe and other parts of the world, and are known as "kitchen middens." But vainly did I search for tokens of the long past in this deposit, only later to learn that it had already been often rifled, presumably by those among the officers of the Royal Naval Squadron lying in Esquimalt's outer harbour who had scientific tastes. Access to the spot was easy and the navy men often strolled along the track which went past our house, and sometimes dropped in for a chat and a little music.

From the front of the dwelling we had a grand view to southward of the mountains on the United States' mainland, the Olympian and Cascade ranges, whose summits are eternally snow-clad. This huge territory, extending far out of

sight, eastward as well as southward, was the very substantial cause of that vexed "Oregon question" regarding ownership which, ever and anon, came up for discussion in our British Parliament some three-quarters of a century ago. It was then an almost unknown land whose great value, now so well understood, was not appreciated at the time; and thus we got rid of the troublesome thing in the same airy spirit of "Well, never mind; it's all in the family, you know!" with which we gave up a slice of New Brunswick and Quebec, the island of San Juan and sundry islets in the Gulf of Georgia, and the very many-miles-long coast line from Alaska southward which cuts off so much of north-west British Columbia from the sea.

A verandah bordered two sides of the house; and here I would often sit, and watch with interest those grand mountains with their varying aspects, now misty, intensely blue, and more remote than ever; now seeming so near that, in spite of their very many miles of distance, one could descry, however faintly, their dark masses of dense forest and their sunlit vales and uplands. Curious was it also in summer to gaze at the thunder-storms raging about their flanks. The huddled rain-clouds looked so strangely diminutive and the vivid lightning-flashes so tiny, a couple of inches or so apparently in length, that one was reminded of the proverbial storm in a teacup. Of noise there was, of course, none audible.

The house was far from beautiful, but was substantially built of thick, squared logs, and was warm in winter and cool in summer. It had the small-paned windows peculiar to old-time colonial buildings when a breakage of glass was a serious matter. The rooms were lofty and of fair size, and the kitchen was vast. It was in this room that the aborigines used to bring their peltries and other things to barter against the Company's muskets, &c., as mentioned in a previous chapter. Overhead was an undivided attic, well-floored and roofed, and running the entire length of the house. It was the chosen and often noisy play-ground, especially at night, when high revels were occasionally held, of the rats who, of their own act, shared the dwelling with us, enjoying board and lodging free.

Not a rat was in the house when we took possession; but the very day of our arrival, we were assured by the young son of the nearest farmer from whom we were to be daily supplied with milk, that we might shortly expect the rodent invasion, as the animals always left the smaller house when the larger one

became occupied. As the farm was at least a quarter of a mile away, quite out of sight, not even a chimney-pot visible, and only to be reached by a rough track over steep rocks and through dense forest, we felt sceptical as to the prediction; but our new friend was a true prophet. Now how did the cunning creatures find us out? Yet our experience was as nothing compared with that of other people if some of the stories told us were true. For instance, it was said by more than one eyewitness that when the gold-miners in goodly numbers went to a newly-found gold-field—their exodus being therefore a noticeable event—no matter how distant the place, the rats would be there as soon, or nearly as soon, as the men.

It was at this crisis that we took to sleeping with a loaded double-barrelled gun and loaded revolver between the mattresses. Not that we feared attack from the adjacent Indian village or from white marauders. We armed ourselves solely against the rats. Yet not for long. Familiarity, we know, breeds contempt. It sometimes also breeds a reluctant toleration. For presently I banished the fire-arms and the hostile attitude; and, as if by mutual consent, peace was established. The creatures were so clever and so amusing that I had not the heart to shoot them. When some toothsome morsel, saved over-night to re-appear at breakfast the following morning, was found to have disappeared during the night, no matter how carefully we had covered it, the theft had been so ingeniously effected that resentment changed to laughter. When the depredators nibbled little holes in the wooden partition-walls in order to effect surer entrance to the rooms, I simply stopped the holes with small squares of tin nailed across them; and went on stopping any freshly made. When at night I rose to attend to my children, the rats on the floor, table, or elsewhere regarded me with not unfriendly glances, and politely moved out of my way. I broke the peace-treaty on one occasion only, for the trodden worm will sometimes turn. One night I was roused from slumber by a vigorous scratching at my back. It was one of our self-invited rodent-guests plainly of opinion that I had monopolised more than my due share of bed, and bent on administering a rebuke. But even when I drove him away, he bore me no malice.

Of larger wild animals I never beheld one during our sojourn in that house, though pumas were sometimes seen at no great distance; and till a very few years before wolves had been troublesome in the neighbourhood, and were still dreaded

even on not far-off sheep-farms. Many a dolorous tale of their depredations did we hear from an old farmer who became friendly with us, and from whom we purchased meat, &c., the mutton, as sheep, often dying a violent death at the jaws of their savage foes.

The rats, of course, we endured as best we could, but with the few human beings within reach we were on the pleasantest of terms. On our left, about a mile away along the shore, lay an Indian village; and on our right, seemingly only a stone's throw across the water, rose powder-magazine islet. That it should be so near might have made me feel uneasy but that the custodian, whose house was also on the islet, was a steady, trustworthy man, who when one of our chimneys and some of the surrounding wooden tiles (called "shingles") were on fire, promptly came to our aid, and with the self-possession and handiness of the genuine old-timer, put out the blaze, and showed us how to act another time.

As for the Indians, I had now seen enough of them to take them at their true value. The "noble savage" is dead. Some people say he never lived; but that he was once an actual person I firmly believe; and I judge him partly by some of his race who are still living, but who have come little into contact with the white man. Therefore in the course of this chapter, and especially at its end, I hope to show that some of the ancestral good qualities still survive even among the aborigines who have come into that contact.

Before me as I write, hang portraits of three chiefs, men of to-day, but attired as were their forefathers previous to the coming of the people who call them savages—a term corrupted into the more modern "siwashes." The portraits are photographs; and photographs are truth-tellers. Man for man, their faces are as intelligent and as prepossessing as are those of many among the best of my fellow-countrymen. The three were not inhabitants of the neighbouring Indian village, nor did they live near it; but I mention them because their portraits serve as justification for what I say of them and of others among their kind. I may add that not a few of those British Columbian friends for whom we entertain the pleasantest recollection are of Indian as well as European descent.

That the aborigines of to-day are a "wretchedly degraded race," idle and thriftless, &c., is an accusation devoid of truth; and the lives of the villagers I came to know so well were proof of its unverity. However early, on long summer days, I

might look across the broad waters of Esquimalt's inner-harbour, I never failed to see the canoes about in all directions, and the day's fishing going steadily forward.

One very early morning I was startled to see, in the little bay whose mud never dries, some strange-looking figures which, at first glance, I took to be animals of, to me, a novel kind. They were Indian women bent double in their own peculiar way, each armed with a strong pointed stick, and using it to dig up clams. The clam lives in the mud, and at low tide sends up at intervals the funniest little fountain of water. The jet is only momentary. But it is sufficient to show the clam's whereabouts; the squaws go for him then and there, and speedily gather in a basketful.

Another early morning, when the tide was unusually low, and round about our favourite little bay, the star-fish of gorgeous colouring were left uncovered on the usually submerged rocks, a stalwart young Indian paddled his tiny canoe into their midst, and with unerring arrow, transfixed the exquisitely-tinted creatures one after another. As he needed both hands for his small bow, he laid his paddle aside, and, solely with the sway of his lithe frame, caused the canoe to bend to right or left, to dart in the required direction, to obey him like a living creature. It was a lesson in graceful athleticism.

With old John, as he was called, we had much to do. We employed him to chop the fallen trees into good-sized logs for our fires; and very well the work was done. But he had one failing, the result, perhaps, of constant early rising. There would be a cessation of the axe's sound which was replaced by one quite different. Guided by his stentorian snores to the spot where he was sleeping, I used, quite gently, to say "John," and in a moment he was wide awake. As a rule, the Indian is a light sleeper, a habit transmitted through many generations because of old he dwelt "in the midst of alarms." "Go on cutting the wood," I used to add in my best Chinook; and John, no whit offended at the interruption of his nap, went on till the next change of sound took place.

One early morning, I saw him in his canoe on the further side of the small peninsula, armed with a spear with which he perseveringly prodded the rocks a little below the surface of the water. What, I thought, could John be doing there? Presently, his task accomplished, he laid his spear aside, and, with both hands, pulled hard at something hidden in the recesses of a submerged rock. Out came at last a quivering, jelly-like

mass which, while its horrid-looking, but now harmless tentacles trailed in different directions, he lifted into his canoe. He had killed a large octopus—may I never see a more repulsive-looking creature!—with which, when safely stowed half in and half out of the canoe, he set off in the direction of his village. Just above those rocks I had often sat with my little ones about me.

On another occasion I saw John perform a really wonderful feat of seamanship. A sudden tempest had come on when he must have been far up the inner harbour, and before reaching home he had to cross a broad expanse of now angry waters. His canoe was small and unfit for stormy seas, but this was no paltry wood-cutting affair, and John was thoroughly wide awake. Bent nearly double, with head well down, he paddled at lightning speed, the canoe fast flying, yet threatening every moment to be swamped. I stood on the high bank close among the humming-birds-haunted bushes, and watched him breathlessly till he stood on shore, and dragged the canoe to safety.

The indians used one paddle only, working it now on one side of the canoe, now on the other. It resembled nothing so much as a flattened note of exclamation turned upside down, and with a tendency to widen towards the middle of the blade.

Another friend was an extremely knowing old squaw, the most persistent, blandly-persuasive beggar I ever knew. She would sit on the kitchen floor, never on a chair, and, greetings over, would ask me for a little meat, because she was, oh, so very hungry. When sure of the meat, a bit of bread to eat with it was suggested; and so she would go on until she had collected the materials for quite a nice little meal, never asking for more than one thing at a time; and I, much amused, gave it as requested, to see when or at what her gently-voiced demands would cease. The comestibles secured, she would ask for a needle, then for a bit of cotton to thread it with, then for a piece of stuff to sew at, then for I know not how many more things, until at last I clapped my hands, and exclaimed, "hyack, clattawa!" which, being interpreted, meant "Be quick, and be off!" when she would vanish—till next time. She was a curious-looking woman. In babyhood, while still bound to the board on which of yore Indian children passed their earliest infancy, not even legs or arms being at liberty, a large flat stone had been placed upon the upper part of her head, so that it should assume the long tapering shape which then was dear to aboriginal mothers. Later, a great walrus tooth had

been permanently fastened into her chin; and with her face and the parting of her hair made as scarlet as paint could make them, she was not a little vain of her personal appearance, and, doubtless, in her youth may have been considered a beauty.

But my chief friend from the village was Lucy, a girl who, like her parents, had come under the influence of Bishop Demers—of whom more anon—and his Catholic missionaries. No walrus tooth in chin, no hideous malformation of cranium, no painted face had Lucy; and she was as good a girl, and as sweet-tempered, capable, and industrious as any maid could be. She used to paddle her small canoe across from the village, draw it up, and leave it on the pebbly shore, appearing at our door, punctuality personified.

Punctuality! Aye, trust an Indian to tell the time of day approximately at least, as well perhaps as did our own forebears ere artificial time-tellers were set up. Sun, moon, and stars were the Indian's guides, the best of clocks, too, never in need of winding up, of regulating, or of repairs in any way. Two artificial clocks had we, but the outdoor life, and the frequent rising in the night that were my lot taught me astronomy as I never before understood it, and made me thoroughly conversant with those phases of the moon whose meaning, simple as it is, I had hardly grasped till then. No wonder the Chinese, Chaldeans, and other nations whom we call semi-civilised were skilled astronomers. Had I continued to live in British Columbia and at the house in the woods, I too, with help of the celestial orbs, might have learned to read the time of day and night as easily as did my Indian friends.

Lucy was clever at washing the household linen, &c., at cleaning rooms, at doing many odd jobs which made her, very literally, a "help." Most amusing was it to witness her appreciation of civilised cookery. The first time she partook of cherry-pie was a record occasion; and I was careful that the treat should often occur again, for custom never staled her delight in it. One day, while busy with a large tub full of the household soiled linen, the poor girl severely scalded one of her arms. She was in dreadful pain, but I at once seized the flour-dredger, and powdered the hurt place liberally, the relief being instantaneous. The washing was laid aside, some tea, and a remnant of cherry-pie, happily discovered in the larder, were administered; and, later, she paddled her canoe home again, all smiles. Her gratitude knew no bounds. On her next visit she brought her chief household treasures to show me—

the portraits of her family! It was still the era of the now forgotten daguerreotypes, hideous things which invariably made one's nearest and dearest folk look like the worst of male-factors; and Lucy's cherished specimens were the most hideous I ever beheld. One I especially remember. Half a century ago, the outer garment of every male Indian consisted of a blanket, fastened, in lieu of brooch, with a wooden skewer; and this particular one of Lucy's daguerreotypes showed a chief thus attired. The portraits were many, and the artist must have found the transaction profitable, for, in a spasm of generosity, he had gilded the skewer! The effect was most funny, but Lucy thought the adornment beautiful, and to please her I feigned an admiration equal to her own.

On my long-after, second visit to the colony, I took with me a pretty little silken scarf of somewhat bright colouring to give my favourite. By this time, of course, she would be an old woman, seeing that more than forty years had elapsed since she and I regretfully parted; but I knew she would be gratified at being remembered. Alas, I found that, with the exception of a solitary lodge, the village had disappeared, and a factory stood on its site. My friendly Indians had long died out. One family alone remained; and to me every member of it was a stranger. The house in the now sadly-thinned woods had also vanished. Not long after we left, it was burnt; the work, it was supposed, being of an incendiary. Not a vestige remained, but it was easy to identify the site because the rectangular space was covered with daisies growing so closely together that they resembled a vast snow-white carpet with hardly a visible speck of green. In the old days not a daisy, not a dandelion grew upon Vancouver Island. Both, I was told, were accidentally introduced many years ago; and, like other alien flora, both have taken kindly to that fertile soil, and spread afar.

During my year's sojourn at this old Hudson Bay Company's house I was twice shot at. The first assailant was a sailor from one of the men of war lying in the outer harbour. He was seemingly out for an afternoon of duck-shooting; and peppered me with small shot as I sat on the verandah with my boy-baby in my lap. I looked in the direction whence the firing came, beheld the man in his boat near one of the two small bays, and thought I had never seen a broader grin on any human countenance. Perceiving therefore that the incident was merely a blue-jacket's idea of a joke, I remained where I

was, picked the shot out of my own clothing and the frills of the child's white summer frock, and when I looked round again sailor and boat were gone.

On the second occasion I was sitting in the same place, and again my little boy was sleeping on my knees. I was otherwise entirely alone, my old servant and twin daughters being out of sight and sound, wandering in the forest in search of wild strawberries and flowers. This time the shower of shot was nearer, sharper, more plentiful. Again I looked up, only to see a tall Indian, too tall to be one of our villagers, and to me a total stranger. He was standing, gun in hand, close to the short isthmus leading to the peninsula, not twenty yards away, and staring hard at me. Had I been new to the colony, and new to the aborigines, I should have been thoroughly scared. As it was I felt far from comfortable. The house was empty of human beings, and even the dogs had followed the wanderers to the woods. On every side the doors and windows were open, and should the man attack us, the child's and my chance of escape would be small. So, to quote a familiar French saying, I took my courage in both hands, and with the baby in my arms, sauntered leisurely down to where the stranger stood. In the Chinook tongue I hailed him amicably, asked what luck in hunting he had had, and chatted with him for a few minutes. He also talked in a friendly tone, but seemed unaccountably shy. Then I bade him farewell, and as leisurely sauntered to my seat again, but with the queerest sensation down my back—which in going from him I necessarily had to turn—wondering whether, ere I reached the chair, another volley of shot, this time perhaps striking a vulnerable place, might not be sent after me. But nothing happened; and when I turned to wave a hand in his direction, he and the deer which his gun had previously laid low were nowhere to be seen.

The man, not noticing my presence, and perhaps thinking the house unoccupied, as it often was, had doubtless fired at a bird or other animal near me, had missed his aim, and quite unintentionally bestowed the contents of his gun on me instead. His seeming shyness must have meant self-reproach mingled with relief at seeing that I chose to regard the incident as what it clearly was—an accident.

At no time during our twelve-months' stay at the house in the woods did the Indians of the neighbouring village act towards us in any hostile manner; and we lived near enough to

be annoyed had annoyance been intended. Indeed, as I have shown, we practically sojourned in the midst of them; and the land all about the house and the waters round two sides of it were their daily resort.

One reason of this pleasant state of things probably was that the land on which the village stood had not yet become sufficiently valuable to tempt the white man's greed; and the aboriginal inhabitants were therefore let alone. Whether the near presence of the Royal Navy's men-of-war, or the many-years-long influence of the Roman Catholic missionaries kept the covetous away, and helped our Indian friends to remain self-respecting, I know not; but at the time we were their near neighbours they were certainly more happily circumstanced than the Songish and other tribes who dwell in the vicinity of Victoria, where as the little settlement of white men grew, and received immigrants who had no connexion with the Hudson Bay Company, there was much temptation to these later comers to get rid of the aborigines.

In what cold-blooded fashion this was, in many cases, done is told in a little work entitled "The Passing of a Race" by the Hon. D. W. Higgins, late Speaker of the Provincial House of Commons, and a well-known journalist, a man universally respected, incapable of misrepresentation, and whose intimate knowledge of British Columbia is derived from more than half a century of residence therein. The story is a painful one, and is too long to be given in detail here.

In some instances the "fire-water"—that fell weapon of the dispossessors—was used lavishly; and the shameful business was so lucrative that the people engaged in it could easily afford to purchase the connivance of the police, one of whose duties, of course, was to aid the authorities in suppressing this very evil. Much cunning was exerted to defeat all efforts to cope with it, one ugly feature being revealed when, at a later time, an early building whose site was required for something more up-to-date was being demolished. In the basement was found an ingenious contrivance, well screened from public view, by which secret drinking was facilitated, while entrance to the house itself could be avoided. Being close to the harbour shore, the place was accessible not only to ordinary people who did not wish to be seen, but also to the aborigines of the Indian village on the opposite bank, and to passing canoes manned by other tribes.

In the middle of the Songish village once stood the rude fort of a prominent chief consisting of a circular pit several feet in diameter, and just deep enough to enable a man to stand upright with only head and shoulders above ground, further protection being secured by a ring along the pit's rim of tall, strong wooden barriers in which had been drilled some loopholes commanding views of land and sea, so that he could look, and if needful shoot, in any direction he chose.

In the palmy days of aboriginal life, this man, it is said, could muster three thousand warriors to do his behest; and as one who battled ceaselessly against the destroyers of his race, he was well qualified to be a leader of men. He was therefore an obstacle in the path of those who hanker after the property of others; and the purveyors of strong drink saw that the never-failing slow poison must be called in to effect his "removal."

The stuff provided for aboriginal consumption was always adulterated with fiery, thirst-provoking ingredients; and when once this erstwhile redoubtable chief took to imbibing it he rapidly became a sot. Eventually he was killed in an affray with the police, and his fortress was destroyed. "Captain John"—his Indian name is forgotten—is described by Mr. Higgins, who knew him, as having once been "a fine-looking, dignified man."

The Indians perished by thousands; the horrid traffic ere long spread to other parts of beautiful Vancouver Island; and the "noble savage" ceased to be. But large fortunes were made in the business, and perhaps the men who amassed them were incapable of self-reproach.

I have seen the site of Captain John's fortress, but the tragedy described by Mr. Higgins took place fully twelve months before I landed in the young colony; and the small remnant of Indians living in the shrunken village allowed us to visit unmolested their picturesque habitations, and to purchase their beautifully-made and often tastefully-decorated baskets, their mats and carvings in wood and horn, and their embroidered mocassins, &c. These things are still made, but less care is spent upon their production; and they are got up chiefly to sell to the tourists who now visit the Province in increasing number. There were no tourists half a century ago; and the mats, &c., of that time were often wonderful affairs, some grotesque, some not inartistically coloured. Many bore strange representations of the human face, while many again showed the whale,

the raven, the bear, or "totem" beasts, resemblance to the actual creatures being generally hard to discover, each seated on the shoulders of the animal immediately below him till the lengthy single file threatened to become endless. To-day, many an Indian mat might have come out of a London shop. Thus, as in Japan and elsewhere, "civilised" art replaces or adversely influences the native art of other countries, and, too often, sooner or later, gives originality its death-blow.

Not only had it become safe, half a century ago, to wander about the Songish village, but one might even look on, at any rate from a judicious distance, at the great "potlatch" periodically held. Of one of these I had a capital view. A potlatch is an occasion on which one friendly tribe shows hospitality to another friendly tribe, when presents are given, a feast and games held, and other ceremonies gone through. Such at least was the character of the potlatch at which I was an onlooker.

The war canoes, with their lofty prows carved to resemble, however faintly, an animal's head, bore a curious resemblance to the similarly-adorned "long ships" of our Norse forefathers. Filled with "braves" they had an imposing air, as, paddled swiftly and steadily, they swept through the entrance to the harbour and made for the strand on which stood the Songish village. When in former days these primitive "long ships" appeared, packed with warriors in their war-paint, clad in the handsome, if barbaric, full dress, and armed with death-dealing weapons, the effect, though terrifying, must have been grand. But, like the snows of yesteryear, those times and sights are gone for ever.

Although at the potlatch I saw, hundreds of Indians thronged the sward in front of the usually sparsely-populated village, making, as they moved, a constantly varying scheme of bright and sombre colour, all was quiet and orderly; and when, later in the day, the visitors departed, disturbance there was none. I have known some London Bank Holidays end less tranquilly.

Potlatches are now fewer and farther between, show an altered program, are less gorgeous in colouring, and the gifts displayed resemble over-much the prosaic, if useful, products of the old country or the United States.

The present is a happier time in some ways for the aborigines. In 1911, the Songish tribe was indeed removed from the western shore of Victoria harbour, the valuable tongue

of land on which their village stood being required for certain railway termini. But in this case friendly negotiations were carried on, and the tribe acquired land on secure tenure, of 163 acres instead of the 112 they were relinquishing. The new settlement was advantageously located on Esquimalt harbour; and previous to the removal one of the negotiators, Mr. Helmcken, son to the universally-esteemed Dr. Helmcken, grandson to Sir James Douglas, and with Indian blood in his veins, made a speech to the assembled aborigines, in which he alluded to his maternal ancestry in a manner that evidently delighted his hearers. The transaction, ending as it did with Mr. Helmcken's felicitous remarks, emphasised the passing of the bad old days and inauguration of a better era.

Ample time has since elapsed to prove the wisdom of a policy of strict justice combined with faith in Indian integrity.

Previous to this occasion no chief or ordinary man had, at any time, possessed more than a couple of hundred dollars. Now each head of the forty-one families removed was given ten thousand.

And with what result?

Mr. W. E. Ditchburn, Inspector of Indian Agencies, answers that question in his report to the Ottawa Government, from which document the *Victoria Colonist* of January 11th, 1914, in its comments on the case, thus quotes:—"The Indians have done well with their suddenly-acquired wealth. No group of white men of average thrift and intelligence could have handled these funds better." Five only of the forty-one recipients "acted the spendthrift." The rest invested their money wisely, and, says Mr. Ditchburn, of the fund even now 24 per cent. "consists of actual cash to the credit of different Indians in the Bank." And this more than two years after the making of the monetary distribution.

On the new Reserve the tribe has built some good private residences and shops, and furnished them well; and most of the families are now sufficiently civilised to keep the buildings in a clean and healthy condition. Chinook, I am told, is to-day a dead tongue; and the Indians are learning to speak, read, and write English. In the *Colonist's* picture of one shop appear printed notices of the groceries and other things for sale. One item is "soft" meaning non-alcoholic "drinks"; and there is even an "Ice-cream Parlor"!

Still, desirable as in some ways these modern houses may be, they so entirely lack the unique picturesqueness of the

older Indian lodge that one cannot help regretting the latter, which, though of the flat-roofed, square-box style of architecture, was redeemed from ugliness by a slight, but perceptible waviness of lines caused by its being built not of mere squared logs but of the big trees themselves barked and lopped of their branches. Along its four sides stood at intervals stout, upright supports, some carved in more or less grotesque fashion, totems mostly. Windows there were none, but sufficient daylight entered through the doorway and the hole in the roof whence escaped the smoke from the central log-fire. Once inside the lodge, if a large one, the feeling suggested by the exterior view that its height was out of all proportion to its goodly length and breadth was lost because in each corner lived a separate family or off-shoot of the parental family, whose belongings materially diminished the available space in the interior. Fairly comfortable seemed each corner, partially enclosed and lined as it was with the closely-woven mats of rush, &c., at which of yore the aborigines worked so patiently and well. Floor there was, of course, none, but the earth which did duty for one looked dry, powdery, and clean.

Some twenty years later in wildest Donegal I saw many dwellings beside which the older style of Indian lodge here described would have compared favourably.

Are my aboriginal friends "the wretchedly degraded race" which unobservant people call them? If ever that reputation was deserved, upon whose shoulders should the blame be laid?

CHAPTER XII.

A GROUP OF INDIAN LEGENDS.

IN British Columbia at the present time recollection of the Indian legends seems, like the aborigines themselves, to be dying out; a fact all folk-lore lovers must deplore.

Two of my own sex, however, Mrs. Dennis Harris, of Victoria, Sir James Douglas's youngest daughter, and Pauline Johnson (Tekahionwake) of Mohawk-English parentage, have, none too soon, rescued from oblivion a portion of this lore. But in both instances the stories these ladies have given to the world are wholly unlike those I have collected. And in one incident only, to be mentioned later, do I trace resemblance between any of my stories and those in Mr. Spence's recently-published "Myths of the North American Indians."

Some years ago the *Victoria Colonist* appealed to such of its readers as were cognisant of any Indian legends to communicate with the editor. But apparently no response was made. Happily, during the 'sixties of last century, thanks to my friends, Dr. Robert Brown and, as already stated, some of the Hudson Bay Company's veterans and other old-timers, I had gathered a little of that, to me, fascinating lore; and thus am able to reproduce it.

One story tells of a chief who, at dusk, was canoe-wrecked upon an uninhabited island. There for hours he lay, alone, wounded—for he had been worsted in battle—and in a death-like swoon, only recovering consciousness during the night, when, by the light of a brilliant moon, he beheld the sea-weed strewing the shore slowly rise, assume the form of human beings, and bend to do him obeisance. One version of the story tantalisingly ends at this point, just when one would wish, like the children, to ask—what happened next? Another version says he left the island, went, with his new vassals, to the far north, and became the progenitor of a powerful and war-like tribe.

Other legends come properly to an end, as indeed all should do. Witness the following.

Long ages ago, a numerous people left eastern Asia in many large canoes (? junks) in search of a new country, some now forgotten trouble having caused an exodus on an extensive scale. One night in mid-ocean the voyagers, who always hove to in the darkness, because to them this was an unsailed sea, tethered their frail barks to a thick tangle of sea-weed. But before the ensuing dawn a terrible storm scattered the fleet, and wrecked all but seven transports. Even these were blown far apart, being ultimately driven at seven different points upon a strange shore, that which we now know as maritime north-west America. Here they settled, and founded the seven great said-to-be aboriginal tribes which, as time went on, separated into many minor tribes, each speaking its own dialect, which gradually came to differ from the other dialects just as the old Norse tongue, which once was spoken all round the European North Sea, came to differ; the purest English, say some linguists, being spoken only in far-alooft Iceland, which has been comparatively free from foreign lingual invasions.

But to this day, some words yet linger in the speech of those scattered North American maritime tribes which hint at an Asiatic origin; and an undeniable trace of Mongol, Japanese and Chinese parentage mingles with the Red Indian and Eskimo type of physiognomy.

According to some aboriginal authorities, it was after this fashion that the world was peopled.

Once upon a time, two persons only dwelt upon our earth, a white woman and a red woman, who lived together in perfect amity. One cloudless night they lay down to rest in a valley which was their chief resort. It is in the country known to-day as the State of Washington, U.S.A. There they composed themselves for slumber, gazing meanwhile at the clear mid-night sky overhead. Said the white woman to the red one, "I should like that white star to be my husband." And said the red woman to the white one, "I should like that red star to be *my* husband."* They slept, and lo! on awaking, found themselves in Star-land, where all took place as they had wished. And time went on, life being pleasant and food abundant. For the pale-face brave and the red-face brave were mighty hunters whose good bows and swift arrows never failed to bring down bird or beast. And the wives, of course, stayed at home, did the customary squaws' work, and looked well

*Could this have been "the red planet Mars"?

after the garden, especially the bed in which grew the onions, a food beloved of Indians. Right in the centre of this bed was an onion larger than all the other onions put together; and this the pale-face and the red-face sternly forbade their wives to touch; a prohibition which of course set the women on to look and long. And the more they looked, the keener grew their longing. Then one day when they were alone, they made straight for the huge onion, and pulled until at last they pulled it up. Underneath it was a great hole; and peeping through this they saw the world they had left looking far off and small, and beautifully green. Straightway, they yearned to go back to it. But the hour of their husbands' usual return was at hand; so the great onion was rolled back to its hole, and no word about the strange discovery was spoken by the wives. Only, thenceforth, every day when the two braves were away hunting, the women worked fast at a long rope which, as they made, they carefully concealed. At last, when it seemed sufficiently long, and the husbands were safely away hunting, their wives again pulled the great onion aside, and let the rope down through the hole. But it fell far short of earth, dangling uselessly in mid-air. So they hauled it up, and went on working to make it longer. And when they let it down once more the end touched their beautiful green valley. Then they made fast the other end to the great onion, and slid down to the grassy land. But lest the two braves should, on their return home, pursue and punish them, they pulled hard at the great onion till it fell into its place, and till the rope gave way. And the latter's many folds in falling made the grand Olympian and Cascade mountain ranges eternally snow-crowned alluded to in the previous chapter. But the women went back no more to Star-Land, and the children born of them peopled the world with the white race and the red.*

The mainland of British Columbia is, like Norway, carved by the sea into many fiords, which sometimes penetrate very far inland. One, I remember, trended so far north that during a two-days' journey the giant pines on its shores gradually dwindled to the size of shrubs, and finally disappeared, leaving

*In the stories of "The Red Star and the Yellow Star" (p. 172) and "The Legend of Poia" (p. 200), of Mr. Spence's "Myths," occur mention of the hole through which communication is maintained between Star-Land and Mother-Earth. In the one case the hole is concealed by a large stone; in the other by a turnip.

only banks clad with sparsely-growing grass—a very picture of desolation.

Countless centuries ago, "further back," as the Indians express it, "than the oldest woman even can remember," a large canoe full of braves, mighty warriors and wise men all, lay motionless on the placid waters of one of the longest, deepest fords, and the chief's face wore an anxious look. Never, he thought, as he turned his gaze first to one shore and then to another, had he seen the tide fall so low as it was falling now. And as he and those with him watched, they saw it go on slowly ebbing till at last the very sands erstwhile always hidden from view and great rocks that no one had seen before were left bare. Then he sent messengers far and near to warn of coming disaster the different tribesmen living round the coast. But the careless people laughed, and said that it was folly to look for troubles of a sort which no man even in the most distant ages had seen or heard of. Thereupon the wise chief ceased to warn, and bade his fellow-braves carry their stranded canoe to the summit of the loftiest hill of the range near by, and make it fast to one of the big trees. And that done, each man sat in his appointed place, paddle in hand, waiting for the inevitable to arrive. The sea kept out of sight for two entire days, and on the third came in again with a mighty rush and roar, mounted high and higher, sweeping all before it, and hiding many a familiar headland deep beneath the waves. But the chief and his braves had tethered their canoe securely; and, paddling hard against the now lessening stream, rode out the flood in safety. In all the country round they were the sole survivors.

St. George's best-known feat had its parallel in the American Far West. Somewhere along the shores of a narrow creek opening out of the Straits of Juan de Fuca, and deeply indenting the mainland, there lived, a very long time ago, a terrible dragon. His appetite was enormous, insatiable; and, as a consequence, the population for scores of miles round dwindled alarmingly. But deliverance was at hand. A young warrior belonging to a far-off tribe heard of the trouble, and burning to do battle with the monster, set out armed only with his valiant heart, his trusty bow, and a hundred arrows. On his way, he stopped to take counsel with an aged witch of great renown, who, doubtless flattered by the tactful compliment, gave him something considerably more substantial than mere good advice. When he reached the creek, he planted on its

shore a single arrow, placing one more at regular intervals till on arrival at the inlet's head, he had but one arrow left, and of course came upon the dragon. At the mouth the creature opened wide at sight of him, he let fly the arrow, and then retreated to the next and the remaining arrows, which he shot off in turn, not one of them missing aim. And as he retreated, the dragon closely followed him. When he came to the hundredth arrow, and sent it after its ninety-and-nine fellows, the dragon made a final rush, and swallowed the hundredth arrow, bow, and warrior at a single mouthful. And so both combatants perished, for a hundred arrows, a bow, and a brave clad in the elaborately spiked sur-coat the friendly witch had given her visitor proved too indigestible a meal even for a dragon of insatiable appetite. As, however, there was no beautiful princess waiting on the shore to marry the hero when he had slain her country's scourge, he went willingly and open-eyed to his doom—in his disinterestedness surely a paladin among dragon-killers. Along the Pacific slope, as elsewhere, remains of the great extinct saurians of which geologists tell us are not infrequently met with; and the universality of such discoveries furnishes a likely clue to the origin of the numerous dragon stories that are found all the world over.

The part which witches play in legendary lore is pretty much the same everywhere. As a rule, they love, as did Macbeth's "weird sisters," a companionship of three; but are also seen singly or in pairs. Here is an experience which recalls Scott's poem of "Glenfinlas." Countless ages ago (of course) two hunters were paddling up a long, narrow fiord whose course is so winding that, as the men advanced, the lofty cliffs and hills on either side seemed to close behind them, and bar all prospect of return. At last the canoe entered a wide lake on whose furthest shore stood a solitary Indian lodge. Out of it came to greet the hunters three fair women, who promised all sorts of delightful things if the visitors would accept their hospitality, and step inside the dwelling. One man, despite his friend's entreaties, yielded to their blandishments. He entered the lodge, and the heavy curtain which veiled the doorway at once closed behind him. His companion, fearful of evil, remained in the canoe, but kept it idly lying just off the shore. With the darkness came on a violent tempest accompanied by terrifying noises that did not seem wholly to belong to the storm. But the lonely hunter held steadfastly to his vigil, and when daylight reappeared looked anxiously towards the land.

His friend's mangled corpse lay outside the lodge. At once the angry survivor paddled swiftly homeward, roused the other braves of his tribe, and with them returned to the scene of disaster as speedily as the canoes could be propelled. But they came too late for vengeance. Lodge, witches, and murdered hunter had all disappeared.

Thus is explained the origin of the cataracts along an unusually wild part of a great far-western river. Long ages ago, a wizard much given to prophetic dreams, and to what does not invariably accompany them, practical ways, foresaw that in a very distant future some tribes of white men, both numerous and powerful, would come to settle on the river-banks, and, among other places, near to where a mighty waterfall leaped sheer into the stream below. Said to himself the far-sighted wizard, "There are many salmon in the lower river; they throng it in a serried crowd at times; but no fish can leap up so lofty a fall, and those among the coming people who will live above it may starve. I will turn the fall into a long, broken cataract; and then the salmon can leap to the upper stream." Now on the right shore, and just above the fall, stood an Indian lodge in which dwelt two witches. Potent at spells as was the wizard, he knew that, should his fair rivals see fit to spoil his plan, he might be out-matched by them. So—mark the wisdom of the inspiration!—he changed himself into a tiny, helpless, crying child. His sobs brought the two witches to their door; and their womanly hearts softened at sight of the forlorn little creature. Straightway they took him inside the lodge, soothed, fed, and adopted him. It was the berrying season, and all day long the women worked in the woods to gather in the fruit harvest, leaving the child to tend the fire, and play with the primitive toys at which when at home they wrought for his delight. But every day when he was alone he became again the stalwart wizard who broke, hurled, and shifted rocks till the sun was near sinking, and the two witches returned always to find the little waif asleep. One day, however, he was so work-wearied that he went to bed forgetting to make the usual transformation. Then when his foster-mothers came back from berrying, they understood the trick that had been played upon them; and, falling on the sleeper, put him to death. But his great work was accomplished, the last barricade had given way, and to his dying ears came, instead of the even flow of a solitary fall, the noisy, wayward rush of broken waters. To-day, in due season, the salmon leap up the long cataracts right merrily; but

how many people remember to thank the kindly wizard for his unselfish labour?

Enough of legends. Here is a tale only half a century old which reads as romantically as only of the foregoing.

Along one of the then silent, and even now sparsely-populated water-ways carved by the sea afar through the deep valleys of British Columbia, went the young explorer, Dr. Robert Brown, his canoe swiftly propelled by two sturdy Indians, each grasping his single paddle, which always serves the dual purpose of oar and rudder.

The inlet widened into that lake which has already figured in one of the witch legends; and on the margin of a yet further lake hemmed in by dense woods was a tiny islet whereon stood a moss-grown boulder, tall and conspicuous, covered with ancient runes. These no living Indian could interpret; and of their history one detail only has escaped oblivion—the tradition that the great chief who was their carver, his arduous task fulfilled, departed for the moon, whence he was known never to return.

An enthusiastic archæologist, the young explorer landed on the islet, and speedily made a copy of part of the inscription. This he carried back with him to the then chief white settlement. In the Victoria of those days dwelt two Chinese merchants "of credit and renown"—Quong Lee and Yan Wo Sang. The head-clerk to one of these firms was said to be the most highly-educated Chinaman along the Pacific coast of North America, and was a personal friend of the young Scotsman. To this kindred soul Dr. Brown showed his drawing, told the story of his "find," and asked his friend if possible to interpret the runes. After long and careful study of them, the learned Chinaman said that the inscription must have been made very many centuries ago, that it was somewhat akin to an ancient Chinese dialect of which he had a slight knowledge, and that it seemed to be the handiwork of a painstaking, but not very scholarly man. Now is it not open to conjecture that the islet had served as landing-place to one of the surviving crews of that great fleet which left eastern Asia in long-past ages; and if so, that the runes were carved in order that the story of that exodus should not wholly pass into oblivion?

More than once have I heard Dr. Brown relate this curious story; and as he was a man on whose word implicit reliance could be placed, there is no room for doubt as to its veracity. It would be interesting to learn whether to any other old-time

explorer a sight of this prehistoric relic has been vouchsafed; also if it is still in existence, or has fallen victim to the passion for destruction which animates that too numerous horde—the modern vandals. Unhappily, I cannot identify the inlet in question, or remember whether it was in Vancouver Island or the mainland.

It is much to be regretted that missionaries and other well-meaning but not always broad-minded persons should, in years past, have discouraged the preservation of the aboriginal legends, the Indians' sincerely-believed and deeply-cherished folk-lore. The natives therefore long ago learnt to be silent on the subject. They are an observant people. "The white man," they said, "laughs at our old stories; and so we will tell him no more of them."

It is not that the aborigines have grown ashamed of their legends; it is that they dislike to hear them ridiculed. But unfortunately this sensitiveness, natural, and even laudable as it is, tends, even among the tribes themselves, to hinder the handing down of their folk-lore by word of mouth, as from time immemorial has been the custom, from the elder to the younger generations; and is thus causing that heritage to pass out of recollection. It is only when the Indians come in contact with men who, like Dr. Brown, treat them as reasonable mortals and win their confidence, that they can be persuaded to open their lips on the subject.

Apropos of such more than probable loss, one thinks what a rich fund of enjoyment would have been missed by many thousands of appreciative readers had Longfellow never put pen to paper to give the world that noble epic—"The Song of Hiawatha."

CHAPTER XIII.

THREE NOTEWORTHY PRIESTS.

ONE of the best men I ever knew was the first Roman Catholic bishop of British Columbia, Monseigneur Modeste Demers, a native of the Province of Quebec.

It is a moot point whether the representatives of the Hudson Bay Compny or the bishop and the old priest, also a French Canadian, who accompanied him were the first white men to land as settlers on Vancouver Island in the far-off 'thirties of last century. As visitors of course the Spaniards—who gave the name of Quadra to the island—and Captains Cook and Vancouver long preceded them.

The old priest I never saw. He was, I think, somewhat of a recluse when not engaged in missionary work; certain it is that he was a diligent gardener with an especial liking for hollyhocks. He lived in a diminutive house shut in by a substantial wooden fence not tall enough to hide from view the yet taller flowers he loved to cultivate. They were unusually fine specimens, rich and varied in hue. Therefore, as another hollyhock devotee, I could never refrain, when passing his abode, from lingering if only for a minute to gaze at the old man's favourites, well knowing that while any stranger stood outside the shy gardener was hardly likely to appear.

Bishop Demers was a very fine character, one of that type of earnest, high-minded priests whom we reverence in the persons of Las Casas, "the Apostle of the Indies," and Theobald Mathew, who so unwearingly devoted himself to the cause of temperance in Ireland. Demers too was universally respected, and by those who knew him well, whereof I had the honour to be one, beloved. In manner he was courteous, kindly, and somewhat bluff; and in appearance homely. Not a man used to figure in super-polished society, but if worth be a criterion, fit to associate with the best. On his serious side he was strongest, for his heart was in his work, which lay in faithful service to the church of his dedication, and zeal in improving in every way the condition of the aboriginal people among

whom his lot was cast, and whose hearts he had early won. Even when overtaken by old age, he still set off regularly on his periodical missionary visits in a canoe or boat attended only, till younger priests came to the colony, by the hollyhock-loving veteran. Some of his Indian disciples propelled the humble craft with their swiftly-moving paddles; and seemingly the good bishop never looked for more showy or more comfortable mode of transport. No apostle of old time could have led a less ostentatious or more righteous life.

Not infrequently, when taking a journey one would pass some Indian village, and see perched upon a lofty rock or standing in a surrounding group of wigwams, a small wooden edifice, unlike its neighbours, steeple-crowned perhaps, when the remark would be made, "That is one of Bishop Demers' churches."

One story which testifies to the truth of an oft-repeated saying that the bishop was wont to plant his missions in places unfrequented by the ordinary white man, and only by chance revealed to him, tells of a miner out on an exploring tramp in search of fresh (gold) fields and pastures new, who lost his way in the bewilderingly monotonous forest, wandered for days a-hungered and despairing, and was saved—how? When his strength had all but ebbed, the tinkling, faint at first, of a bell came to his ears. Hope revived; he struggled desperately in the direction of the bell, fearful lest the sound should cease, and the clue therefore be lost. Suddenly the forest cleared, and he saw a flowing river on whose nearest bank stood an Indian village with one of Bishop Demers' little churches in its midst. As the starving man emerged into the clear warm sunshine, which to anyone long prisoned in the dim twilight of a dense forest seems like a foretaste of Heaven, the bell's clang was hushed, and out from the sacred building streamed the Indian villagers with the pastor at their head.

It is well perhaps that, at any rate in a time now happily gone, the existence of these oases should not be generally known. There is not a little truth in the cynical saying: "Explorers first; next, missionaries; thirdly, soldiers." To which might be added: lastly, the traders in "fire-water," and the slow extermination of the earlier possessors of the coveted land.

In the case above-mentioned the missionary preceded the explorer.

Many stories are told of Bishop Demers; and their number could be easily augmented had he been a man to talk of his own

deeds. One story concerns the massacre of some white men by the aborigines. On whose shoulders lay the fault of that fell act I know not; but I do know, and have already shown, that the aborigines have been even more sinned against than sinning—terribly sinned against, as Mr. Higgins and others have, with only too much reason, declared. The tragedy occurred during the official reign of Sir James Douglas, to whom I have more than once alluded, a man of great experience, and the ablest, wisest Governor British Columbia has yet had. When the news reached him he straightway sent for Bishop Demers. "There are only two men here who can cope with this trouble, you and I. I cannot go. Will you?" are the words with which the Governor is said to have ended the dolorous tale.

In only one way was the bishop likely to answer. A gunboat for his protection was offered, and declined. Accompanied by one priest, Demers, armed only with his splendid fearlessness and noble sense of duty, went to the scene of disorder, landed among the still excited braves, parleyed with them, asked for the murderers, and bore them away, no hostile hand being laid on him, his fellow-priest, or those who manned the little vessel which brought him.

In the case of another massacre of white men, at a time when a less experienced ruler—one who had not "grown up with the country"—directed governmental affairs, and, presumably, the good bishop, though still living, was not consulted, a different policy was pursued. A man-of-war was sent to the turbulent Indian village, which was shelled and the wigwams burnt, with much destruction to life and movable property, the innocent, as is generally the rule when drastic measures are resorted to, suffering with the guilty. Not after this vengeful fashion would Bishop Demers have acted.

Another excellent priest, this time of the Church of England, who has left golden memories behind him, was the Rev. Edward Cridge, a pioneer of last century's 'fifties, and second chaplain to the "Great Company's" representatives in Vancouver Island, who lately died when midway through his nineties. His life was saintly and he held the faith he professed with a transparent sincerity which won the respect and affection even of those who theologically differed from him most widely. He will always be honourably remembered as having steadfastly braved the displeasure of the local head of his church when that very over-bearing head suddenly expressed an intention to introduce extremely high ritualistic practices, and was

made to suffer for his honesty. He was ultimately rewarded by the building of a "reformed Church of England" edifice in which he thenceforth officiated till the infirmities of old age overtook him, and by the lasting warm esteem of the large and influential portion of the congregation which left the older building when he did. He was an accomplished musician, the 'cello being his favourite instrument. It is no exaggeration to say that he played it divinely, and with no unsteady hand even when blind and over ninety; and not less divinely when rendering on it some of the beautiful old songs born in the British Isles which are likely to long outlive the rubbish now too often inflicted upon us.

Another ecclesiastic of the English Church, a young man in the famous gold-mining times of the Cariboo district, died recently in England full of years and well-deserved honours. He came from the old country over half a century ago, and Fate consigned him to that stronghold of the "forty-niners." And with them, uncongenial company as they must have been, this tactful young clergyman, fresh from intellectual University life, a cultured circle, and a refined home, made friends.

Several stories are told of him, of which perhaps that of his début as the gold-miners' pastor is as curious as any. My friend, Dr. Robert Brown, told me the tale many years ago; and, like Captain Cuttle, I made a note of it, and re-produce it here.

A rudely-hewn little wooden church had been erected, and on the Sunday following its completion it was to be dedicated to divine service. The programme began by the clergyman setting the door wide open, standing in front of it, and ringing a large hand-bell. Of these preliminaries no notice at all was taken. Sunday—when observed at all—on the gold-fields was generally devoted to the washing and mending of clothes, to extra sleep, to the settlement of accounts, to the writing of home letters, if home there was any, and to divers other duties. Clothes-washing was an indispensable Sunday "work of necessity," though one that was sometimes woefully neglected. Gold-mining is not too cleanly an occupation; and I once beheld, without surprise, on the person of a man aboard ship who was returning to spend the winter in San Francisco a splendid diamond brooch—the miners occasionally exchanged their gold dust and nuggets for the more easily portable precious stones—set in the front of a shirt somewhat out of repair and in evident need of a visit to the wash-tub.

The young clergyman paused ; but after awhile began afresh to sound the tinkling call to prayer. No use. Again he paused ; then walked up to a couple of men who were throwing dice on the up-turned base of a large barrel. "Could you not," he said, pleasantly, "lay the game aside for a short time, and help me with the service in my church?"

"Guess that's so," was the equally pleasant answer, for "parson" was already getting known and liked in the rough community. Had he not, a few days before, shown what he was worth by bringing into requisition such knowledge of the healing art as, ere leaving home, he had thought it expedient to acquire, and doctoring the gaping wound of a man who, but for the pastor, might easily have bled to death?

Only the dice-throwing went on steadily without sign of cessation.

Another man, his washing, mending, &c., finished, was now engaged in the favourite occupation of "whittling" a stick. "Could you not," the clergyman asked, "do that as well inside the church as out here?" Which question is proof that he recognised the advisability of compromise.

The miner gazed at the pastor, and hesitated. Apparently the invitation struck its recipient as one worth acceptance, since it at least included a bench to sit upon. He was the first to take his place in the church, stick, whittling-knife, and all. Finally, after more patient, good-tempered looking-up of his strange flock, the clergyman collected a few other men ; and by the time one of them had assured him that if they might also bring their dogs they would not "mind" coming—a proposal with which it seemed diplomatic to close—quite a fair-sized crowd had seated themselves on the benches, the dogs, for whose good conduct promises had been readily made, lying quietly at their masters' feet.

Not with formal liturgy did the young clergyman open the service, but with a short speech of welcome ; and, next, with the singing of a well-known hymn, in which some of his hearers, perhaps with recollection of far-off, other days, joined with greater heartiness and better knowledge of words and tune than he had dared to expect. And, lastly, he gave a brief address so full of friendly feeling, and withal so free from admonition to men, mostly his seniors in age, and who never accepted new rules of conduct at the bidding of another, and any such other a man outside their own ranks, that presently

his sentences became punctuated, as it were, by audible marginal notes, all uttered in gold-miners' picturesquely forcible dialect, with an occasional oath thrown in; and all signifying hearty agreement with the sentiments enunciated by the occupant of the primitive lectern.

But this promising beginning received a sudden, disastrous check. Among the canine horde two ill-tempered brutes, ever on the worst of terms, found themselves in unwonted, close proximity. The air was speedily rent with angry cries and savage scufflings, every other dog joined in the fray; and pandemonium reigned. The pastor's appealing voice was drowned, the excited miners leaped to their feet, the canine "free fight" was transferred to the open air, every man vociferously backed his own animal, and the little church was left empty save for one disappointed person.

Although the young preacher fared indifferently at the start, it is known that, long before he left the Cariboo country for more congenial scenes and company, he had become a favourite. The Bret-Hartean gold-miner, if pictured in a goody-goody story-book, would be woefully out of his and the book's element; though, while lacking the essentials which should fit him for a London drawing-room, he was, as a rule, uncommonly shrewd, and he knew an honest man when he saw one. Moreover, the gold-miner duly appreciated the outsider who, like the parson of my tale, with all his gentle bringing-up and University training, did not place himself on a pinnacle whence to look down condescendingly on the rough crowd below. Nevertheless, it is doubtful whether for all this sensible young man's tact, eloquence, and good example, he won over many miners to become frequent attendants at church services.

I do not give the clergyman's name because, although I have little doubt about it myself, I am conscious that, after the lapse of half a century, and after seeing him but once, I might be mistaken as to his identity, albeit not as to the truth of the story in which he played the hero's part. And as the old friend to whom I owe the tale has long been dead, I cannot now apply to him for corroboration.

Among my many men friends, I have counted as some of the staunchest not a few priests of various denominations, men too broad-minded as well as too courteous to make allusion to any lack on my part of orthodox faith. I may add that, on the

other hand, I have always been free from that worship of the "black robe" which is supposed to be a peculiarity of my sex. Therefore, in writing as I have done of these three men of lofty character and exemplary life I may claim to have given them their just due : no more, and, as I trust, no less.

CHAPTER XIV.

SOME EASTERN PROVINCES.

SEVERAL years after our return to the old country from British Columbia my children, then nearing woman's and man's estate, and I spent more than twelve months in eastern Canada to see if settlement in the older and better developed portion of the Dominion would be desirable. We made our home in Nova Scotia, where the extremes of heat and cold are less trying than in the other Atlantic and the central Provinces.

Unfortunately it was a time of great depression, and we found Nova Scotia, in common with other Provinces, suffering from the blighting effect of the so-called "National Policy"—which might more aptly be termed "Irrational Policy"—i. e., Protection in its severest form. It was established some years previously by the much over-rated politician then at the head of the Canadian Government, its effect being distinctly harmful.

Therefore, much as we liked the country and its people, we saw that no future offered itself to us there. "Our young men and women," said the friends whom we consulted, "have to go to the United States. They can rarely find employment here." And the little factories, nearly all of them deserted, and one at least in ruins, lying along the shore of Halifax's spacious inner harbour, and built in the belief that Protection was the best possible nurse for infant industries, stood like mute witnesses to the fallibility of the protectionist creed and the truth of our friends'—themselves no free-traders—remarks anent employment.

So we left the Province, and took a long tour into New Brunswick, Quebec, and Ontario, saw a little of the United States, voyaged on the St. Lawrence and the great Lakes, finding these last wearisomely monotonous, "nearly," as some one said, "all sea and sky," saw Niagara and the Thousand Isles, shot Lachine rapids, so called because their discoverer

believed that after passing them he should reach China, and altogether had a "real good time."

Niagara we found disappointing. The Montmorency Falls, near to Quebec city and to the then pretty, rural Orleans Island, are, though of much lesser extent, perceptibly loftier and situated amid scenery far less tame. The British Columbian Thousand Isles, lying between Victoria and Prince Rupert cities, are also more beautiful than their Laurentian namesakes, much more extensive as regards the space they occupy, often individually larger—Princess Royal island, I was told, bearing near comparison with the Isle of Man—and possibly richer in the variety of their natural products, the giant pines included. Eastern Canada also lacks the grand scenery which is the pride of all dwellers in the Far West.

The "habitants" of the Province of Quebec are portrayed with photograph-like fidelity by W. H. Drummond, who in "Johnnie Courteau" and other works, sings (in print) of them delightfully. And the historian, Freeman, after visiting their land, declared that in the way of conservation of old customs, ideas, language, &c., it is transatlantic France which is the old country and European France the new. The remark is now many years old, but although P.Q., as it is often written, has a good deal changed since then, in many ways it is still the France of a past century.

Old or new, the huge Province, severed in twain by the St. Laurence, has a fascination all its own. Can remoteness from Europe and from the brusque manners now too often prevailing on both sides of the Atlantic where English is spoken account for the pleasant old-time ways which distinguish many French Canadians, and cause them to respond so readily to advances from a stranger when these are made in the French language? And in what other part of the North American continent than in gregarious Quebec could the fact be pointed out to the tourist that the banks of a great river highway are in places lined with lengthy single rows of unpretentious farm-houses standing almost as near together as do the detached "desirable villa residences" along old-world suburban roads? Resemblance otherwise there is none, for where else could one behold the narrow strip of land belonging to each homestead running sometimes for a great distance up hill and down dale so that the end of it is not always seen? The "tenderfoot" is told that the farm-lands are purposely made long and narrow so that the houses may be near enough to enable this sociable

people to meet easily at each other's home after a hard day's work, and spend a festive evening. Evidently not a race which takes its pleasures "moult tristement."

Between the long line of farm-houses and the broad river which they face stand sometimes rows of closely-planted poplars, the habitants having learnt from experience that they serve as lightning-conductors. But death is said to be the almost certain doom of anyone rash enough during a thunder-storm to stand on the narrow strip of land between the river and the slender belt of trees. For when summer is at its height "Our Lady of Snows" gets into her most melting mood, and St. Laurence's valley with its thermometer emulating in altitude that of India—the temperature is said to rival Calcutta at its sultriest—is at intervals visited by tempests of tropical severity.

To the habitant of old the St. Laurence was almost a sacred stream; and a story is told of a veteran who from his fishing-boat on its waters gazed horror-stricken at the first steamer that plied there. When sufficiently recovered from the shock to become articulate he said to another equally scandalised fellow-veteran, "Mais croyez-vous donc que le bon Dieu va permettre tout ça?"

When he had grown accustomed to the novel apparition, and even come to read calmly of it in his native provincial papers, the habitant, as a matter of course, accepted the spelling he saw therein. After all, "stimeur" as regards pronunciation is an almost exact equivalent of the English word. But he is now reconciled to the ordinary orthography, and even makes as free use as any of the uncanny but convenient monster of his former dread, a change of habit that was bound to come because the brother Franks of Cartier, Champlain, and the rest, whether in the old country or the new, are as much at home on water as on land.

If Quebec to-day is "loyal" to the Empire it is because when, more than a century-and-a-half ago, the people of New France came to live under British rule, the treaty of peace secured to them retention of three precious possessions—"Nôtre foi, nos lois, nôtre langue";* and because the promise has been kept. No statesman worthy the name would to-day dream of disturbing the arrangement, though were any one

*The words above quoted are inscribed as a motto on the first page of at least one French-Canadian newspaper.

sufficiently ill-advised to make the attempt failure would be inevitable.

At heart transatlantic France must, naturally, prefer connexion with European France; but the long and disgraceful story of the treatment which the daughter-country received at the hands of the Motherland during the disastrous reign of the fifteenth Louis and his rapacious favourites, as told in Parkman's "Wolfe and Montcalm," suggests the thought that a change of allegiance, even in the not especially felicitous days of our early Georges, could scarcely have been a hardship to the starved and swindled colonists who, ill-equipped for warfare as they were, had fought valiantly under the banner of the fleur-de-lys. When we read in our French history-books of the deplorable condition at that time of the old-country peasantry and others we too often forget that there were actually two Frances, not one, which suffered. Had the men and women then ruling the old land been worthy of the heroic Montcalm—who, when dying of the wounds received on Abraham's Plains, thought not of himself, but rather of a prayer to the victors to show clemency towards the vanquished—France might still be guiding the destinies of Quebec and Acadie.

Out of Acadie were carved the modern New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Geographically considered, the two belong to the Province of Quebec; and the three divisions form a territory larger than European France, and much too valuable to warrant the sacrifice so wantonly made of it.

When the expulsion of the habitants from Acadie immortalised in "Evangeline" took place, their compatriots dwelling in the southern portion of the peninsula were seemingly overlooked, their numbers being perhaps inconsiderable and the then dense forests screening them from observation. Their ranks were swelled through the drifting back of many of the people forcibly expelled; and they now constitute a large percentage of the provincial population, for the French Canadians, unlike their European kinsfolk, multiply fast. They are an orderly people, simple of life, thrifty, and fairly well-to-do. Many live in a straggling village some twelve miles long; and there is said to be a general disposition to hold aloof from English-speaking Nova Scotians because recollection of that cruel expulsion, though all who witnessed it died long ago, has never passed away.

While visiting Quebec I was interested to see if the priests of that Province at all resembled my old friend Bishop

Demers, now many years dead, and was glad to find his not an uncommon type. Like him, the men in many cases were stout of build, pleasant of countenance, not superlatively intellectual, but very far from dull, and evidently on the best of terms with their flocks. Especially were those characteristics noticeable in the person of the local priest whom I saw at one of the little settlements alongside the Saguenay at which our steamer called in the course of a two-days' excursion up that river. He was chatting with his peasant parishioners, his kind old face radiant with smiles, the very picture of bonhomie. He might have been Demers himself. In fiction the type also appears, though, owing to the tragic circumstances of the story, under graver aspects, as Father Félicien in "Evangeline."

Was Nova Scotia the "Markland" or "Vinland" of our Viking forefathers? In the public library of Yarmouth, a southern sea-port of the Province, are treasured two stones said to bear Runic inscriptions—"said," because sundry sceptics are unkind enough to doubt that they are genuine. Both were discovered on the shore near that port, the first more than a hundred years ago, the second eighty years later. In each case the inscription seems to be the same, but in one only is a portion of it decipherable, a local antiquary having made out the words—"Harkussen man varu," i. e., "Harku's son addressed the men." In the list of those who accompanied Thorfinn in his transatlantic expedition of 1007—nearly 500 years before Columbus discovered some of the West Indian islands—the name of Harku is said to occur; and the stone probably commemorates the Norseman's visit. In size and shape the stones are also similar, and each weighs about four hundred pounds.

The heavy cloud of depression which, a quarter of a century and more ago, weighed upon Nova Scotia—a province which must always interest those who have lived there—has, according to the handbooks issued by the Provincial Government, materially lifted. The new blood for which the country asked has invaded her from the United States and old world, some of whose people have, among other pursuits, settled as farmers on the land, and speak well of it. Possessing, as the province does, coal-fields so vast as to be practically inexhaustible, and rich in other natural products, Nova Scotia seems destined to become an important industrial country; while as to her orchards there can be no doubt that her apples—to say nothing of other fruit—yield the palm for excellence to those

of no rival land. She is also well endowed with fresh-water lakes, with rivers, and in her famous dyke-districts—alluded to in Chapter VII.—over which the periodic 75 feet high Fundy Bay tides are at times allowed to flow, with a wonderfully fertile soil. But she lacks the grand scenery of British Columbia. Her geographical position, projecting as she does into the sea like a huge wharf as though to catch the passing ocean traffic, also renders communication with other world-ports easy.

But the long spell of dullness should never have been. Sixty and fewer years ago, Nova Scotia, like the rest of what then constituted Canada, enjoyed Reciprocity with the United States, and made perceptible, if leisurely, steps towards prosperity. Too leisurely to please the Protectionists, who thereupon introduced their favourite remedy, which after a brief spurt of lively trade was followed by commercial stagnation, one of whose effects—and one which should have been a convincing proof of the folly of the change—being that long-continued exodus of the young people of both sexes to the United States in search of a livelihood to which I have already alluded. "There are more Nova Scotians in Boston than in Halifax," is a remark I often heard, "and nearly all are doing well."

"The twentieth century," once said Sir Wilfrid Laurier, "belongs to Canada." Rather a boastful claim to make, though even if, during that long space of time, all other nations obligingly agreed to slumber like the princess of fairy-tale, would the Dominion make good use of her monopoly? It is certainly a grand country wherein is room for many millions of settlers, and where men have already discovered, and will go on discovering, its numerous and valuable natural products. But to become really prosperous an enlightened commercial policy must replace the present mistaken one, which directly leads to corruption, and was appropriately called by Sir Richard Cartwright—perhaps the ablest and undoubtedly the wittiest statesman that country has produced—"legalised robbery," because it is the system which, by laying heavy burdens on the very many non-manufacturing Peters, enables the far fewer manufacturing Pauls to achieve fortune.

One glaring instance of Protectionist unreason is seen in the placing of heavy duties on imported woollen goods such as underwear, blankets, &c. ; and this in a country where the winter is always a long one and sometimes Arctic in severity. Heavy duties on every-day necessities are supposed to foster

their manufacture in the land where those duties are levied. Theory and practice do not always agree, and the most obvious result of the barring out of foreign and old-country merchandise appears to be the production in the newer land of goods of inferior quality at enhanced price.

When seeking to make "tariff reformers" realise that Free Trade benefits communities far more than does Protection, the advocates of the latter doctrine will sometimes point to the United States, where Protection is the law of the land, as an example deserving of imitation, and say that what is good for that country—which good is more than doubtful—ought to be good for the Dominion. But that does not follow. In size the Republic, vast but compact, nearly equals Europe; and, owing, in great measure to her many different climatic conditions, possesses far more variety of products than does Canada, and is therefore less dependent on other nations. Within her wide borders she enjoys absolute Free Trade, no protective barrier limiting intercourse between any one State and every other fellow State in the Union. Canada also is vast, though where she is at her widest lies a huge region which Nature has made fitter for habitation by polar bears than by average human beings. Thus the boast that she possesses a larger acreage than the United States counts for little. She too trades freely throughout the sister provinces, but she lacks her neighbour's climatic conditions, and needs many things from the other side the boundary line which she is unable to produce.

A glance at the map shows that the two countries are actually but one, and that unrestricted trade relations would be advantageous to both, but especially to Canada, whose provinces are somewhat loosely knit because so widely outspread.

In the now distant days when a more enlightened commercial policy prevailed, Canada was sometimes described as a "happy land" wherein people of small or moderate means could dwell in comparative comfort. That character is deserved no longer. Can it not be won again?

CHAPTER XV.

A MEDLEY POSTSCRIPT.

IN a previous chapter* I alluded to a claim made sometimes during my early residence in British Columbia, and doubtless before and since, that in prehistoric times Great Britain must have resembled Vancouver Island as I knew it in the mid-nineteenth century. One person maintaining that view was my old friend, Dr. Tolmie, who, as a student and lover of nature, and a man of cultivation and intellectual gifts, was well qualified to be an authority.

The remark made during a chat with him set me thinking. The two islands lie in widely different longitudes, but their latitude is much the same except that Great Britain as the larger extends a good deal further north; and they have a similar climate. Both are situated to the west of a vast continent; and, as already mentioned, while the Gulf Stream warms the one, the Japanese current performs the same kindly office for the other. The similarity of the flora is striking. Hyacinths, larkspurs, lupins, cyclamens, and many more flowers familiar to us as "tame" ones, grow wild in profusion in the western island wherever sunshine reaches them; and as for the roses, where do they not flourish? Even in narrow clefts of the rocks where there seems hardly soil enough to tempt a small weed to take root, they are seen in summer painting the sombre background of giant pines with a foreground of glowing masses of pink and white.

But the likeness is not complete unless Britain also possessed huge trees like those that are the glory of the western island. Had they ever existed here, and lasted, as they might easily have done, into historic times, why does no remnant or record of them survive? The puzzle was elucidated when that fascinating volume, "Forty Years in a Moorland Parish," by Canon Atkinson, came into my hands.

The Canon's incumbency was in the Cleveland division of the North Riding, Yorkshire, at Danby, more properly

*"Some Old-Timers."

Daneby,* for it was part of the large Danish settlement made in the middle east of Great Britain long before the Norman Conquest. Taking kindly to the country of their adoption, the Danes did much forest-clearing and land-draining, though for several succeeding centuries the aspect of nature remained wild and very unlike what it—he is speaking especially of Danby and its surroundings—“is now, and long has been, a bare and treeless moor.”†

This large district was formerly covered with a dense forest guarded and intersected by morasses so treacherous that not even the Domesday Commissioners, when engaged in their survey of the Conqueror's recently-acquired kingdom, were able to gain access to more than its outermost fringe.

Even in Canon Atkinson's time the diminished swamps were dangerous, especially in rainy seasons. Men did not venture to cross their quaking surface, and cattle instinctively shunned them.

The useful work wrought by the Danes has been continued; and with the shrinkage of the morass area much treasure in the way of bog-oak, as in Ireland, has been exhumed. And we know what beautiful things are carved out of it by the Irish, that nation of artists who produced the Book of Kells and much more besides, of which, unhappily, only a portion has come down to our time.

The locality of these Danby morasses, when not more unmistakably shown, is indicated by what is called “black land,” the adjective being the more truthful half of the appellation, for one of the Canon's helpers, during a drain-making process, fell through the land (?) nearly up to his waist into the decayed interior of a large, rotten tree-stump, and when extricated looked as if he had been “painted with the dregs of a few scores of blacking bottles.”

The story of the formation of one morass is probably the story of most morasses if not of all. The one into which the unfortunate helper fell was caused by the silting up of the streams

*It is well known that where Thorpe and By occur in our place-names their origin is Danish, By standing for town. On north-European postage-stamps we sometimes see the words By-Post, meaning town or local post; and we still use By in the double word By-Laws for town-laws. Canon Atkinson tells us that when the eminent Danish antiquary Worsaae visited England he found more than four hundred place-names of Danish origin in Yorkshire alone. See the map of the Cleveland country in Canon Atkinson's book.

†The passages in quotation marks are in the Canon's own words. The rest of the material used has been much condensed.

which in a still earlier age threaded their way through the primæval forest. Some dam had been gradually formed, perhaps by the growth of a weed akin to that which is now choking parts of our modern disused canals and to that which has produced the peat-bogs, or by those persevering dam-makers, the beavers. The streams thus ceased to flow, and were transformed into a large, shallow lake; and this, deprived of outlet, became stagnant, and slowly rotted the lower portion of the trees which stood in it. One may note a similar effect to-day in the case of trees caught by a flood which is long in subsiding. They generally die. After awhile, the trees in the stagnant lake were killed, and in course of time came toppling down, the decay of the trunks having commenced "just where the water-line ringed the bark," and where fungus, rot, and insects were busiest at work. Ultimately the interior of the trunks throughout their length, even though protected by six inches of bark, decayed together with the surrounding smaller trees and forest undergrowth, the whole combining to form the more or less treacherous "black land."

These trees, the Canon said, was "firs of some sort." So also are the arboreal giants of the western island—indeed of several sorts. The rotted oaks of the primæval forest he likewise found to have been finer specimens than any now growing in our country. So also do the oaks in the western island of to-day surpass in size and beauty the modern British oaks. The fir trees the Canon saw uncovered in the swamp showed, a few feet above where their roots broadened out, diameters—not circumferences—of from four to six feet; and one trunk must have measured "sixty or seventy feet from the ground before it ceased to be timber that might be squared."

After this revelation from our own long past, it seems not unreasonable to believe with Dr. Tolmie that once upon a time Great Britain as well as Vancouver Island grew the "big trees" which, until they are ruthlessly exterminated, as seems not unlikely, will still be the glory of the much-favoured North Pacific American coast and even up to the far interior. If, as is sometimes said, the far-western trees have taken a thousand years to grow, tardy repentance in the shape of re-afforestation hereafter will scarcely repair the present-day waste. Year by year, the western island gets more like the eastern one with farm-houses, villa residences, trim gardens, meadows, &c. The change is not always for the better, climatically or in other ways.

The giant pines are frequently "bearded with moss," the beard sometimes growing to great length; and in a recently-published edition of "King Arthur's Knights," illustrated by Walter Crane, mention occurs of ancient forests and of trees similarly adorned. In Malory's edition the knights are made to resemble those of his own, the Plantagenet, times—just as in the eighteenth century Hamlet, Macbeth, and other Shakespearean characters used always, when on the stage, to be costumed after the fashion of Georgian days—though the actual Arthurian legends, like those of the "Mabinogion," with some of which they are identical, must be many centuries older than the middle ages. In one Arthurian legend at least, allusion is also made to the ruined Roman cities, then tenanted only by bandits and wild animals, their original inhabitants having left the country "fifty years before"—a date which gives colour to Sir Laurence Gomme's dictum that the traditional Arthur was probably the Roman *dux bellorum* Artorius, who threw in his lot with the Britons when these were fighting the Teutonic invaders from over-seas. Artorius was certainly crowned king at Silchester, Caerlon and London.*

In old provincial English towns one occasionally sees large stones or blocks of masonry, sometimes well and smoothly squared, sometimes in much damaged condition, looking like the spoil of ancient buildings, and serving now as foundation to the later brick-built houses, themselves often several centuries in age. Some such are to be seen at Stratford-on-Avon; while at Anne Hathaway's near-by village of Shottery is a remnant of what may have been one of the many castles erected during Stephen's troublous reign, only to be demolished by his successor, the statesman Second Henry—perhaps the real "greatest of the Plantagenets." It is a large piece of masonry in good condition let into the wall of a Shottery Manor out-house, and still shows the four drilled holes arranged in form of a cross through which, during a siege, arrows and arquebuses could be levelled at the enemy outside. Elsewhere I have, as doubtless have others, noticed what were evidently some of the stone steps of a winding flight within a castle's round tower now doing duty as door-sills, gate-posts, &c.—showing that the ruined Roman cities above-mentioned, the Norman keeps, &c., and, to judge from other signs, even the

*"London." By Sir Laurence Gomme; pp. 77, 130.

beautiful ecclesiastic fanes destroyed to pander to Henry VIII.'s greed have served as quarries to later builders.

That despoilment of this kind is not yet extinct is shown by the following veracious story.

While the sexton belonging to a rural parish was one day digging a grave, he saw a stranger, an intellectual-looking old gentleman, wandering in bewildered fashion about the "garden of sleep." On being asked what he was searching for, the venerable archæologist replied that he was trying to find the tomb of a crusader, "a beautiful specimen of thirteenth-century sculpture which I greatly admired when I was here a few years ago." "Oh, you mean that cross-legged old fellow," said the sexton. "Why, he didn't seem to belong to anybody; so we broke him up long ago to mend the road."

Apropos of the De Bruscs alluded to in my second chapter, Canon Atkinson tells us that Henry I. granted to Robert de Brus the manor of Danby, a fact recorded in a late entry in Domesday. So great a favourite was he with the king, and made so wealthy with other royal grants that he grew to be one of the most powerful barons of the time. It was this Robert's second son and namesake who "having become enfeoffed in the county of Durham and in Scotland," also came to be "the progenitor of Scottish kings."

Some years before the close of the twelfth century, the elder Robert's neighbour, Bernard de Baliol, granted a charter to the Abbey of Rievaulx—which name is said to be Norman-French for Rye Vale, the Abbey standing on a bank of the Rye river. The document contained many stringent conditions, among them one directing the monks to provide traps to catch the wolves; and a second ordering them to take summary proceedings against "other prowling wild beasts and marauding outlaws." He also made a generous grant to the Knight Templars. If the Baliol, Balliol, or De Bailleul who went north with Robert de Brus the younger a-courting the king of Scots' daughters, was, as is likely, a scion of Bernard de Baliol's family, the two men were probably friends of long standing.

In an old note-book of mine the following strange tale appears; but from what source it came I forget.

In Spain, and in those far-off days when religious persecution was still a terrible reality, there lived two venerable gentlemen who were life-long friends, one being a learned doctor of physic, the other a Churchman of exalted rank. Of these, the former lay "sick unto death." The latter, sitting by his

friend's bedside, strove by discoursing on sacred subjects to bring comfort to his soul. "Cease your kindly ministrations," after awhile said the dying man. "They are well-meant, but are unavailing. I am now at Death's door, and shall soon cross the threshold and be where no harm can overtake me. I am, and always have been, a Jew." At once the great Churchman fell on his knees, and in fervent tones put up a Hebrew prayer for the dying. He also was a Jew, but intimate as the two men had been throughout life, neither had confessed, or even suspected that the faith each held was the same, and was not that which both professed.

Attention is often drawn to the fact that the draught-horses of to-day have speedily grown used to and lost fear of the steam and petroleum-driven vehicles which at the present time ply in their thousands along our thoroughfares, and thus come into close contact with those highly nervous creatures. But horses are not the only quadrupeds which have overgotten a dread of carriages—I use the word in its broader sense—other than those to which long-established custom has harnessed them. When I was a child, and while railways were still in their youth, I have often seen the domestic animals in the fields, horses, cows, bullocks, &c., spring up, and career about wildly at the aspect of a near passing train. To-day, their descendants rarely vouchsafe even a passing glance at one. This indifference is but another proof of that hereditary instinct of which Mr. Thompson-Seton and others have told us, and which shows itself in the careful avoidance by hunted animals of the man who carries a gun. No doubt the ancestors of the wild creatures of to-day looked with equally natural dismay at their human contemporaries who went about with bows and arrows or even ruder weapons. But with the tame animals of to-day the hereditary instinct has led them into an opposite direction, that of trust. They have discovered that the ugly, shrieking, steam-belching, earth-shaking monster which is gone almost as soon as it appears has no intention of molesting them.

It is a curious fact, well known to all who possess a long line of family portraits, that in one generation or another the wearer of a face in nowise resembling the faces of his or her contemporary relatives is said to "hark back" to some ancestor, remote or near; a process not infrequently repeated, though the resemblance is by no means always to the same ancestor.

A school-fellow friend of my elder sister and mine, at whose house we often visited, was the "living image" of the

portrait there of a thrice-great-aunt who had been a youthful beauty far back in the eighteenth century.

But here is a case of likeness resuscitated after the lapse of many centuries.

In the course of a long-past summer, my parents were visiting a well-known family resident in Cornwall; and, accompanied by their hosts, went for many a drive about that interesting county.

One day, in passing through a narrow, deeply-sunken lane, the carriage was brought to a halt while a smock-frocked man in charge of a wagon prepared to draw it close to the steep bank on one side by way of giving the swifter vehicle room to pass. "Look well at that man's countenance," said Mr. Magor to my father, "and I will tell you afterwards who he is."

As the carriage rolled on, the wagoner turned to answer his landlord's pleasant "Good day!" and so brought his full face into view. Then, as he moved beside one of his horses which was a little restive, his profile showed in clear relief against the animal's brown neck. His head, my father, when telling the story, used to say, might have served as model for the portrait on the coinage issued during the reign of one of the greatest Roman Emperors.

"His name," resumed Mr. Magor, "is Constantine; and tradition, firmly believed hereabouts, says that he comes of the family of Constantine the Great."*

And tradition was probably right. Roman Emperors were occasional residents in Britain, sometimes making a lengthy stay; for, as the Rev. P. H. Ditchfield reminds us, Hadrian made this country, York especially, his home; Severus lived and died here; Constantius also died in Britain; and Constantine himself was here proclaimed as Emperor by the Roman legionaries then stationed in this island. Sir Laurence Gomme adds other Emperors or candidates for emperorship to the list, some of those who assumed the purple being of British birth. † Moreover, the remains found in many parts of modern England of what in some cases must have been extensive and palatial villas seem to indicate that during the more than four hundred years the Roman connexion lasted the conquerors built with little regard to cost, and not for a few seasons only, but for a permanency. No wonder the Roman physiognomy has lasted among us to this day.

*In the "west countree" is a little village called "Constantine."

†"London," p. 70.



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