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CANADIAN LITERARY SOCIETIES.

VOL. I.

JUNE, 1871.

No. 12

THE TWO NEIGHBOURS,
OR,
REVENGE REPAID BY KINDNESS.

Continued from page 197.

BY ROBERT RIDGWAY, TORONTO.

CHAPTER VII.

The faithful shepherd's dog, sagacious, wise,
Attends his master's flocks with honest care ;
Watches their wayward ramblings, as he lies,
And by his warning bark bids them beware.

Obedient to his master's word he hies,
To gather them from moor, or vale, or hill,
Looks for each signal with bright, eager eyes,
And swiftly executes with zealous will.

He thus with boasted human virtue vies,
Noble emotions in his bosom swell ;
And, when he knows his duty, always tries
To do it pleasantly, and do it well.

Can human virtue o'er this standard rise ?
A standard practised, without boast, by brute,
Can human friendship bear away the prize,
By fair comparison, not false repute ?

Let human fame and boast here cease their cries,
Let base ingratitude here hang its head,
Let enmity and envy cease their sighs,
Let such slink by, ashamed with softest tread.

Pretenseless in appearance, form and size,
The humble servant, yet the friend of man ;
Faithful he lives, and loves, and faithful dies,
Who can do more than this ? Answer,--who can ?

"Vengeance is mine," saith he, whose stern
command

Gives nature law, rules over sea and land ;
Calms the wild tempest of the human breast,
Speaks each unruly passion into rest.

"I will repay," not thou, thy fellow man,
Thou dost not know how retribution can,
Be meted out in measure just and wise,
Correct the conscience, and point to the skies.

Thine enemy, who hungers, must be fed ;
If thirsty must have drink, as well as bread.
With glowing coals of love, be thine the part
To overcome, with good, the evil heart.

Paraphrase of Romans XII. 19-21.

When Spot started for help the paralytic man, conscious of his dangerous position, tried every expedient to arouse himself, and shake off that perilous, fatal lethargy, which he felt was creeping over him, and which he knew would wrap his senses in the slumber which knows no waking. But every effort was vain ; the eyelids would drop, despite knowledge and resolution, a few tears trickled slowly from beneath them and they closed, with an ejaculatory "God have mercy"—and consciousness departed.

The snow fell silently, drifting around the deathlike form; soon, nothing was discernible from above but a curious mass of drifted snow heaped against the rock. Hurry, canine messenger, "fetch somebody Spot," good, faithful, generous fellow, "forget and forgive," never mind old sores, set man thy superior an example of kindness for its opposite! Here he returns, stops on the bridge, looks down, and barks; there is no response! Spot snuffed and barked again louder.

"What is there old fellow?" said Wyatt, when he arrived; he looked down but could make out nothing.

Jim Snarr stooped down in the snow and peered into the darkness below.

"There's a sheep, or something here on the ledge I think," said Jim, "help me down and I'll see what it is."

Wyatt seized him by one hand and lowered him down.

Mr. Purdee stood beside Spot vainly trying to distinguish what the object was.

Jim laid his hand on the heap, with a great start and loud exclamation, "Why it's a man," he said.

"A man," said Mr. Purdee, "who can it be? But no matter who it is, he must be rescued."

"Waken him up," said Wyatt, "and I'll go for assistance."

He started off at the top of his speed, back to the "Bank" and gave the alarm. The meeting was over and the neighbours were preparing to return to their respective homes when Wyatt arrived, so that in a short time quite a number of the men were at the scene; a rope was carried down and several lanterns.

Jim tied the rope securely around the still insensible man, and he was carefully raised to the surface. As the pale deathlike face upturned, was exposed to the light, many were the living curious faces which crowded to gaze upon it. Meaning, significant glances were interchanged among the neighbours, but no one spoke until Jim, who had scrambled up, looked at the man and whispered to Wyatt, "why, this is the farmer that left the Public House, and that I could not get out of my mind all the way home."

Wyatt nodded an answer, and just

then it was shouted that a cart from the "Bank" was waiting at the turn, so four of the men took up the body and carried it up to the cart.

Mr. Purdee had sent off one of the young men for the nearest doctor who lived fully two miles away.

As soon as the men had placed the insensible form in the cart, Wyatt, who had been assisting, turned to Mr. Purdee, and said, "This is an extraordinary business."

"Yes, it is," said Mr. Purdee, "I can't see how this has happened, but I'm afraid there's something bad as well as strange."

"Why," said Wyatt, "he was in the 'Red Bull' at Hob Cross, this afternoon, and left quite suddenly, so much so, that his manner attracted Jim Snarr's notice, and made him quite curious as to whom it could be, and why he acted as he did."

Neither mentioned the name of the subject of conversation, yet both knew the man, several of the neighbours were sure they knew the face, but none were so certain as to hazard the assertion.

When they arrived at the "Bank," the body was carried into the kitchen, and laid upon a great oaken *squab* half couch half *settee*. The old farmer at the "Bank," looked at the afflicted object of general notice and involuntarily exclaimed, "Why this is Crooks! "Is not this Crooks? Mr. Purdee."

"Yes," said Mr. Purdee, "this is Crooks, and very sorry I am to see him here."

"Well, well," said the old man, "whatever has he been doing now I wonder?"

And many wondered and shook their heads, and talked and conjectured upon the subject as they walked in company to their homes.

In the meantime restoratives were being employed to bring back consciousness and movement to the still, deathlike man.

Tom Snarr had gone back to the "Bank," with the others to see who the man was, and whether he could be brought back to life. He had never had any personal acquaintance with Crooks, but had heard a great deal said about him, and was very curious to see a man of so strange a temper. As he stood looking on, he

was musing upon the vicissitudes and curious occurrences of the past twelve months; so deeply engaged and preoccupied was his mind with these subjects, that he failed to notice Mr. Purdee speaking to him, until Wyatt gave him a rough but friendly shake by the shoulder.

"Why Tom," he said, "are you off into the land of dreams to fetch Crooks back to us?"

"No," said Tom, "what must I do?"

"I want you," said Mr. Purdee, "to go and tell our folks that I may not be home till very late, or it may be to-morrow morning before I get home."

"Why not let me stay in place of you? I don't think you ought to stay."

"Never mind that Tom," said Mr. Purdee, "I don't mind staying at least until the doctor comes."

Tom went out, but shortly after returned, "I've sent word," he said, "I'll stay too."

Before the doctor arrived Crooks had so far recovered that he could open his eyes, for a few moments, and look round but he had not spoken. Towards morning Crooks fell into a slumber broken by occasional starts and moans. The sun rose in almost unbroken splendour upon the snow-clad landscape, but it brought no cheering influences to the eye or the heart of the suffering man. Soon the snow wreaths were dissipated; the drifts melted; dark openings in the white covering grew larger; the black patches in the moors lengthened into long strips or ridges; Sol was triumphant.

Wyatt as the morning advanced walked up to the scene of the previous night's adventure. He found on enquiry at the "Bank" that Mr. Purdee was gone home, but had promised to return during the day, and that a messenger had been sent, to Mrs. Crooks to inform her of what had happened. Wyatt strolled leisurely down to the foot bridge and carefully examined the place where Crooks had been found. While thus engaged, his eye was caught by the disturbed condition of the stone-work, and evident marks of violence recently made; his suspicions thus aroused he more closely examined both wall and bridge, and descending to the ledge of rock, found, immediately underneath the

plank, the iron bar stuck into the wall where it had been forced the night previous by Crooks. An idea flashed through his mind, but he did not at once take in the correct view of the case, but he had got the clew, and it now wanted nothing more than sagacious management to lead to a full exposition of the affair. Scrambling up to the roadway he at once started for Mr. Purdee's.

"Whatever could be the man's motive for doing such a thing as that?" enquired Mr. Purdee, after listening to Wyatt's information so far as he could give it.

"I think," said Wyatt, "that he wanted to injure me some way, but I don't see how he intended to do it, without hurting other folks as well, and surely the fellow is not a complete fiend."

"I must go and see the place for myself, and then, if he is able I will have a talk with him."

Accordingly the two men walked down to the bridge and examined the wall carefully. By that time the sun had melted the snow so completely that the marks of his crow were quite conspicuous.

"I wonder said Mr. Purdee, whether the bridge is still quite secure; because if it is not we must attend to the matter at once."

Wyatt swung himself down to the ledge once more, and as he did so, Mr. Purdee noticed that the stone-work moved slightly.

"See," Mr. Purdee said, "whether you can move the plank."

The sudden push dislodged the structure and stone-work and bridge went tumbling with a crash into the chasm below.

The two men stood quietly contemplating the wreck. Mr. Purdee was the first to speak.

"Well, we shall have to put up a new bridge now, better go this way than the way yonder miserable man intended it to go; but I must go up and see him about this business, and if I cannot soften, I must frighten him, that is my plain duty."

As the day advanced Crooks had considerably improved, and was sitting up on the *squab* when Mr. Purdee entered.

His speech was affected, but not seriously; and he had just been expressing a desire to be sent home, when Mr. Purdee entered.

"I am very glad to see you so much better," said Mr. Purdee, "I have come on purpose to have some little conversation with you, and if our friends here, will oblige me by retiring we can chat more freely."

When they were alone Mr. Purdee said, "Mr. Crooks, I want to ask you some very plain questions, and I hope you will give me plain, straight-forward answers."

Crooks's face manifested some alarm, and he became at once confused in his manner; he knew Mr. Purdee's plain questions would be unpleasant ones, but there was no way of escape. Mr. Purdee watched the changes upon his countenance, and said.

"I do not want to distress you, but it is a matter of duty, and I must perform it."

"I suppose it's about the bridge business, is it not," said Crooks.

"It is, I want to know what was your intention for loosening the wall on which the bridge stood."

"Why," asked Crooks eagerly, "is the bridge down."

"The bridge fell down this morning."

"Is any-body hurt?"

"No," answered Mr. Purdee, "but some body might have been, and some person or persons were to have been; and I want to know who?"

Crooks looked at Mr. Purdee, and after some hesitation said.

"I suppose Mr. Purdee, you have always regarded me as a kind of half savage, that knew nothing about religion and those matters, and in some respects you are not far wrong; but I am not quite so ignorant about things, according to my own belief of what is right, as you may suppose; I think it is my duty to revenge an injury just as firmly as you believe it is my duty to forgive one; and acting upon my own notions of what is right I came to serve out a man that has injured me so that I cannot and will not forgive him until I've paid him off."

"And I suppose," said Mr. Purdee "that man was Wyatt."

"You've guessed right; I intended when I removed from the Black Farm, to serve him out for injuring my lads the very first chance I got; I saw him yesterday over at Hob Cross, and heard him telling some men which way he would come home, so I concluded I'd serve him out for once."

"Well, but how could you expect to serve out Wyatt," said Mr. Purdee "without injuring Jim Snarr?"

"I did not know," said Crooks, "that Wyatt had any one with him; I protest I did not. I would not, willingly, injure anybody unless they do me harm first. That is my principle. I go for principle, if I must hang for it."

"Why Mr. Crooks, you, certainly, whether from principle or otherwise is best known to yourself, hold the same opinions, and practice them, that savage nations held in olden times, and for that matter hold and practice still. Blood for blood is the cry of the savage; but we are living under a christian dispensation, and civilized law; it is not lawful now to take an eye for an eye, or in fact to take the law into our own hands at all, but rather to "resist not evil."

"I cannot agree on these points with you," said Crooks, "I've heard such things talked about often, but I've seen very few practise them; I will say this, however, that you are an exception."

"But," said Mr. Purdee, "supposing I were not an exception, the principle is the same, and as you have just asserted, you 'go for principle;' then again you must remember that in acting upon the principle you have laid down, you are apt to make terrible mistakes; in acting upon your own judgment under the influence of passion you can scarcely ever arrive at the truth. Look at the mistake you make in my own case, and now again in this."

Crooks was silent to this appeal.

"I am well aware," resumed Mr. Purdee, "that you have had some provocation, but you must bear in mind, you were the first to violate the law, and thus brought yourself into trouble."

"There should not be such laws," said Crooks.

"You allude to the game laws," said

Mr. Purdee, "but you should remember this, that even admitting they are as unjust, as you think they are, no one is justified in violating them. The grouse and partridge are so tame on my farm that they collect on the dunghill, and scratch among the other fowls, just as so many hens or pigeons; and were I so disposed I could either catch or destroy numbers, but I don't do so. Your boys came upon my farm to poach; I saw them that Sunday night, when Wyatt first caught them; now it is plain enough to my mind they were doing wrong in two or three ways.—1st. It was Sunday. 2nd. It was trespass. 3rd. It was against the law, and more especially so being *night*."

"I admit," said Crooks, "that it was not fair to trespass. I'll stand by that. But as to the other things I cannot see them as you do. I care nothing about Sunday, any more than any other day, and I do not want to abide by unjust laws."

"Do you believe there is a God?" asked Mr. Purdee.

Crooks was startled with the sudden and earnest manner in which this question was put; he instantly remembered the awful thoughts, the reflections, the remorse of the previous night.

"Do you believe," continued Mr. Purdee, after a short pause, "in the law of kindness, which a good God has commanded us to practise, and has instilled in all his laws given to us? You are silent, Crooks. Your conscience, for I cannot think you are without, although not cultivated; not instructed, but your knowledge of what is right between man and man condemns you. You know you have not done right as a neighbour; and had you followed my advice, given you long ago, been a respecter of God's laws, and man's laws you would to-day have been a happier man, you would not have lost the respect of your neighbours, and your own, you would not have made yourself amenable to justice, your sons would not have been compelled to flee from the country to escape the punishment due to a terrible crime, you might have been a happy, respectable, and respected man; and more than all this I am convinced that, unless you repent of

these things and reform, you will receive a more terrible punishment than your present affliction, which I regard as a direct warning, and which, if you do not heed it, will some day teach you that lesson which thousands have learnt by sad experience—that 'the way of transgressors is hard.' I see your cart is just coming into the yard. I hope you will remember what I have said to you, for I have said it as a friend who wishes you well."

Here Mr. Purdee, was interrupted by a knock at the kitchen door, and Mrs. Crooks and one of her boys came into the kitchen, accompanied by some members of the family. Mrs. Crooks, nodded to Mr. Purdee, in a serious kind of way as though not quite certain whether she was to be friendly or not. She then made enquiries respecting her husband, and was duly informed as to where, and how, and when he had been found. She was just as anxious, on learning the particulars, to have him removed home, as he was anxious to go, and no one desired to interfere; in fact his company was unpleasant in health, much more under present circumstances; so there was very little ceremony made about the matter. The men placed a lot of straw in the cart and laid him upon it so as to ride as comfortably as possible under the circumstances. The leave-taking was very unceremonious, and Crooks went away without giving Mr. Purdee any promise, or sign of reformation beyond an unusually thoughtful manner.

Nearly six months after, Mr. Purdee, accidentally heard news of his farmer neighbour, Crooks; he was about selling off his farm stock, and purposed to emigrate to Canada. His sons having settled in the woods north of Lake Ontario, not far from Kingston, were hewing themselves a home in the forest. They had already put up a large log house, suitable for their father.

Such was the information which Mr. Purdee received from different channels. Weeks past by and nothing more was heard of the Crooks family; but one day David, Mr. Purdee's younger son was coming home through the neighbouring village, when a parcel was given him for

his father; it had come by the carrier from Manchester, marked paid. On opening it, they found a beautiful brass collar for Spot; and upon the collar was engraved the following inscription:—"A present, from one who is grateful to Spot, who saved my life."

Mr. Purdee read the inscription and as he did so unbidden tears of joy and hope, for his former neighbour rushed to his eyes. He unlocked the collar and held it out for Spot to look at, the dog seemed to be aware it was for him, and examined it attentively. His old leather collar was removed and discarded, and Mr. Purdee, with his own hands fitted on and locked the new one. No sooner was it known among the neighbours than they came—some of them for miles, to see the collar and read the inscription.

(END OF FIRST PART.)

The Author reserves the right of republishing "The Two Neighbours."

(For the Canadian Literary Journal.)

STORIES OF THE NIAGARA.

BY G. V. LE VAUX.

During the summer months it is usual for a passenger boat to ply between Buffalo and Chippewa—a little town on the Canadian shore, about three miles above the Falls of Niagara. It is generally supposed, and with reason, that no steamer could with safety approach much nearer to the Cataract than this point. On one occasion however a steamer descended to a point not more than a quarter of a mile from the rapids, and still succeeded in escaping from the fate which seemed to threaten her. Some years ago there was a Sunday School Excursion from Buffalo to the Falls *via* Chippewa. It was the 1st of June, and one of those bright, sweet days peculiar to this part of America. Nature arrayed in her richest garb, seemed to smile upon every one and everything. Few indeed could breathe the air of that lovely morning without inhaling "new health, new vigor, and new spirit." It seemed impossible for any one to live in such an atmosphere,

and be unhappy or despondent. However, the steamer, laden with her living freight, swept down the calm blue river, passing rich homesteads, white blossomed orchards, and numerous wooded isles, resembling floating emeralds on a glassy sea. On she came towards a great cloud of mist, long visible above the tops of the forest trees, seemed to rise out of the earth. The eyes of the little ones were fixed with awe on the "column of spray," and in a few more minutes they expected to be sailing through it, but the steamer giving a sudden turn to the left they suddenly found themselves in Chippewa Creek. Soon all were ashore and under the guidance of their elders, were walking towards the Falls. The goal was reached in less than half an hour, and little hearts trembled when they gazed on the face of the mighty Cataract. However the children soon grew familiar with the scene. The little souls looked out with wonder on the white face of the waters, and on the pretty rainbow dancing on the ever varying "columns of mist." Some of the more adventurous passed under Table Rock, and behind the falling waters, accompanied by their teachers. They gazed with ever increasing wonder on the snowy curtains which admitted and yet shut out the light of day. Many of the bravest lost courage as they stood at the entrance of this cavern of unknown length—a wall of rock to the right "a wall of water," to their left, both 160 feet high and curved at the top so as to form a natural gothic arch. The youthful visitors entered the cavern and gazed with awe on the mighty waters above them, below them, rolling over them, yet far beyond them. Almost drenched with spray and nearly terrified with the deafening roar—a roar louder than the united voice of a thousand peals of thunder—they retreated from the cave and proceeded to visit other places of interest.

The day passed quickly away—too quickly as many imagined—and towards evening the Excursionists took their leave of the Falls, and repaired to Chippewa with the intention of returning to Buffalo by the steamer.

While the Excursionists were enjoying

themselves at the Falls, the crew of the steamer enjoyed themselves in Chippewa, by drinking something stronger than water, and so had neglected to get up sufficient steam, and by some strange fatality the Engineer did not notice the deficiency. However "all hands" being on board the Captain issued the necessary orders, the boat steamed out of the Creek into the Niagara River, and was steered up stream. But judge the horror of the passengers when they observed that instead of ascending they were being borne slowly backwards towards the rapids by the current. Pale and speechless they gazed on the shore, and then down stream to the Falls, the fearful roar of which now seemed to be the death knell of all on board. The Captain rushed below and the terrified Engineer then discovered "the mistake" he had made, stating his present inability to generate sufficient steam. He advised the Captain to try to run the boat ashore if possible; but that officer in reply swore he would have the whole crew hanged the Engineer with the rest. So saying he ordered the men to put some pork (which was close by) into the furnace, he then snatched a can of oil from the Steward and committed it to the flames, after which he resumed his place on the "Bridge," and awaited events. The fires blazed up furiously under the influence of the oil and pork, steam was rapidly generated, the screw worked with increasing velocity and force, the downward course of the vessel was checked, though now not more than a quarter of a mile from the rapids. For a few moments she seemed to stand still on the waters as if "halting between two opinions" or uncertain which way to go, and then commenced slowly to ascend the current. An oppressive silence prevailed amongst the passengers, but they soon discovered that steam had triumphed over water, that their boat was moving up stream and that they were saved, snatched as it were from the very jaws of death. Then a murmur was heard above the noise of the engine—a long heavy sigh or spontaneous exclamation.

All on board had uncovered their heads and were thanking their Creator for so great a deliverance. An old man, the

late Rev. George Stokes, whose head was white with the snows of age, holding his hat in his left hand, waved his right towards the people intimating his desire to speak. When silence had been restored (for the passengers by this time were embracing each other with wild delight) the venerable patriarch said—"My friends, I once was young, but now am old, the snows of eighty winters have settled on my head, but never have I seen so manifest an interposition of Divine favour as you have just witnessed. The danger is over, the Lord hath delivered us. Great is his name and worthy to be praised—surely God has been with us to-day—My children bless the name of the Lord." Whilst the old man spoke tears rolled down many a cheek and as he ceased a shout arose from the ship—every one on board as with one voice exclaimed 'Blessed be the name of the Lord.'

Among the many stories associated with the Falls there is none so interesting as that related, by the Tuscaroras, of a young maiden called (Minoma of Niagara.) We have heard many versions of the story; but give the following as related to us not long ago by a young Indian of the village of Tuscarora (an Indian settlement near the Falls.) A tradition was prevalent amongst the tribes who in early times dwelt on the shores of the Niagara, that the Great Spirit of the Falls would destroy the world with a flood of waters were he not appeased from time to time by human sacrifices; and that if not pleased with his children he would withdraw the deer from the forest. They also offered "victims" with the view of securing success in war or any great undertaking. The unfortunate folks accidentally carried over the Falls were (they believed) selected as "peace offerings" by the greatest warriors in the happy hunting grounds (Heaven) and being sealed by him were carried down to the Cataract by the spirit of the first father (the Indian Adam?) who was supposed to reside "on a happy island in the Great Lakes." It would be well if the "pious Indians" had always left the selection of the victim to "the bravest of the brave in the happy hunting grounds", or even to "the spirit of the first father".

—but, like many white folks of eastern climes, they were fanatics in their way, always more willing to render tribute to superstition than to common sense. On one occasion when hard pressed by their enemies, and “forsaken by the deer,” it was resolved to offer a human sacrifice, and so the lots were cast for the selection of the victim. The men were placed on one side and the women on the other, and the lot fell on the latter. Then the squaws were divided into classes according to their tribes and lots continually cast until but two individuals were left—and the lots being cast once more, Minoma the fairest of her race—the blooming daughter of Idaho the head Chief—was selected. An Indian maiden of these tribes considered it the highest honour to be thus sacrificed for the good of her people. The Chief smiled when the lot fell on his only child—he seemed to be insensible to grief, but after events proved that his feelings were the same as would have been those of a “pale face” in the same position. His wife had been slain by his side in battle, and he called his daughter “the dear image of his lost Winona.” The red chief was proud yet meek, brave yet superstitious, stern yet kind, impetuous yet mild—the idol of his friends, and the glory of his race. Another day and he would be childless; and at length the morning of that fatal day arrived, the savage preparations were complete, the plenary festival commenced. The canoe or raft in which the victim was to go over the Falls, laden with a cargo of flowers, fruits and belts of wampum consigned to friends in the unseen world, was tied to a tree at the upper end of what is now called Streets’ Island. The Chiefs met in the Council Chamber and each kissed the devoted maiden on the forehead, and then laid his hands on her head; after which she was led down to the river, between files of women and warriors who bent their heads in reverence as she passed, whilst the children of the tribes strewed flowers in her path. Day began to fade into night, the moon rose as the sun set behind the tall trees of the forest. Two maidens conducted the victim to her seat in the frail canoe and then took leave of

her forever. At a signal from one of the Chiefs the frail bark was cast adrift, and the devoted maiden seizing a paddle guided her course towards the middle of the river and then faced down stream. She then looked once more to the shore, and waved her hand in final adieu. All eyes were fixed on her, but just then another canoe shot forth from the Island and rapidly overtook the former. It was that of Idaho—the maiden’s father. The eyes of father and daughter met for a moment. They clasped hands as the canoes came along side, and in another moment both glided together over the awful Cataract. Let us hope that they dwell in the mansions of bliss. Worse people have borne the name of Christian. Was it not possible that the frail bark guided the loving father and devoted daughter to the Christian’s Heaven?

The tribes bewailed the great Chief and his daughter Minoma for many moons (or months,) and being informed by a Medicine, from the Mohawk, that Idaho had fully appeased the wrath of the Great Spirit, they issued an order that so terrible a sacrifice should never be repeated.

(For the Canadian Literary Journal.)

IDYLS OF THE DOMINION.

BY ALEXANDER M’LACHLAN.

NO. VII.

THE BARN-YARD

The roads are drifted up with snow,
And cold the north-west winds do blow;
No gleam of joy, no sunny ray;
The sky is all one sheet of gray.
The woods are desolate and bare,
No little bird is singing there;
The elms stand with their heads downcast
As if they sigh’d o’er glories past,
And ever as the winds do blow,
They wave their bare arms to and fro,
And rave and moan with faces grim
Like spectres in the twilight dim.
And in the air there’s not a wing
No not one living moving thing—
Excepting when upon their flight
Some snow-birds circle into sight,
Alight a moment on the plain,

And then are up and off again,
And all things seem to sigh and say
"Oh weary is the winter's day."

And in the Barn-yard, neath the shed,
Each cow'ring creature hangs its head ;
E'en chanticleer's oppress'd with care,
No challenge sends he through the air,
And tho' a lover of the sex,
His shiv'ring harem he neglects ;
Scarce looks he at the draggl'd things,
With ragged tails and dripping wings,
No heart has he for love, or strife,
And musing on the ills of life,
He manages as best he may,
To pass the weary winter's day.

The Steers—and they're a stiff neck'd race,
Are fighting for the warmest place,
For here the savage and the cross,
Like men we wot of, must be boss,
'Mongst brutes or men, ah since the fall !
The weaker must go to the wall.
There's Brindle, and he's boss by right
Of many a hard contested fight ;
How like a bully, there he struts !
And shoves, and pushes, kicks, and butts,
And lords it over everything,
Like any God annointed King.

And yonder sits the Peacock vain,
Still careful of his tatter'd train,
Tries to maintain the lordly art,
And sullenly he sits apart ;
Why should a bird of blood and birth
Mix with the common fowls of earth ?
Tho' sorely he reduced at last,
The creature still believes in caste.

And there the Ox, still as a stone,
Is ruminating all alone,
Upon the life he's doom'd to lead ;
Unceasing labour, scanty feed,
While others live a life of ease,
And romp about where'er they please—
How men in youth his spirit broke,
And made him subject to the yoke—
How he of all the brute creation,
Should merit stripes and degradation,
To harder work than horses put ;
He says, as plain's an Ox can say
"Oh life is all a winter's day."

Both Tennyson and Browning have
something new in hand.

For the Canadian Literary Journal.)

THE BEST BED-ROOM.

BY DR. D. CLARK.

An excellent article in last issue of the *Journal* on "Beds," struck a key of my experience and this article is the result. I write feelingly because a damp spare bed-room, made disease my companion for months. At all times since, I approach the enemy with forebodings of catarrh, bronchitis, consumption, and a whole brood of inflammatory diseases either mediately or immediately, proximately or remotely as the occasion or cause of dire evils, when suspicion sleeps and the unconscious victim is really stretched upon the bed of death, and at the same time the bed of hospitality, spread by the kind hands of friends for an honored guest. Who knows but the following remarks may cause reflection in many who never thought of the matter before, and thus save many a valuable life? If so, I should have a medal from the *Philanbedic Society*. I, however, do not bid for the honour, and let that pass. Septimus Jinks, Esq., is wealthy and rejoices in a fine mansion. It is full of bed-rooms, of the seven feet by eight feet style. The bed is in one corner, the wash-stand occupies another, and a solitary chair is perched in one of the angles and a dressing table fills up the other angularity of the choice bed-room of the house. You creep round the foot of the bed, lest the half-opened door slyly edges itself between your outstretched arms, and infringes unceremoniously upon the end of the nose. You make a flank movement up the side of the bed, but if you are out of Scylla you are stranded high upon Charybdis, with abraded shins, or bruised toes, or cracked ribs. A beautiful dungeon it is. The window—a solitary sentinel of light—is in the first place covered with paper blinds, adorned with paintings of a high style of art in the centre. It is some lonely castle about to fall into a placid lake covered with monstrous wild fowls, second cousins to those who leave the imprint of mammoth feet upon the petrified sands of time, and surrounded by rocks of the most approved

pattern. It may be a lonely milk maid
 "Who sets her pitcher under-neath the spring,
 Musing on him that used to fill it for her,
 Hears and hears not, and lets it overflow."

These and sundries like these, seemed to my youthful fancy wonderful pictures. After the paper blind comes the cloth one. Then damask on one side and lace on the other, or both in duplicate. On the outside are green venetian blinds and all to ornament or keep the blessed light out, and the dampness in. No fire-place in the room, but an ornamental one in the adjoining parlor, like "Esq." to Jinks' name—more for ornament than use. The bed is unique, so high, so new, so white, so soft, so clean, so downy, so mountainous, so needle-worked, and so *musty*. It is the best room in the house, but, the doors of this miniature Bastille are kept constantly closed, except on state occasions. Then bonnets, and gloves, and muffs, and spare babies are deposited on this decayed and decaying mountain of feathers. It has had no other occupants for weeks. The walls ooze moisture. The windows sweat watery tears, and the bed-clothes imbibe the general contagion—dampness. If a stove or fire-place is in the room, it has never been blessed with a roaring fire in winter, except it may be for a few hours before it is to be occupied, when heat only drives the moisture into vapors, that will accumulate again with increased density when coldness returns to the pent up atmosphere. A waking man will resist the assaults of such an enemy, when a sleeping man will succumb. The former intently provides against the attacks of the enemy, but, the latter has an insidious foe sowing—if not tares—the seeds of disease while he sleeps. The moving body gives increased activity to animal as well as mental life, and the citadel has watchmen upon its walls to repair the breaches, but the passive physical frame is carried by assault and stratagem—the stronghold is lost, and the battlements crumbled into dust. A sleeping man with a slow pulse and correspondingly slow breathing is consequently endowed with lower vitality than a waking man. Life is always a struggle against dissolution in

animated creation everywhere, and sleep is only an intermittent step towards the portals of the grave. Such being the case the sleeping room should be the best aired, the best ventilated and the driest room in the house. Is a damp bed-room a fit place to incarcerate your friend even for a night? He may escape unscathed from one such ordeal, but if rheumatism or inflammation should issue, he will remember your hospitable asylum, as the place where the first nail of his coffin was forged. Such associations are far from pleasant, and yet, they are many, even in our comparatively dry climate. A class of men particularly exposed to this latent danger are itinerant ministers. A minister visits a neighbourhood to hold a series of religious services or missionary meetings. During his stay he must only tarry for a night at one place, or else he is considered partial or proud. He has to run the gauntlet of spare beds, and damp sheets, with now and then an exception, until the poor man leaves the neighbourhood a confirmed invalid with no very sweet reminiscences of thoughtless kindness, and somebody is chargeable with "culpable homicide." This accusation is not an idle chimera, but a verity seen every day in the wan faces, and heard continually in the 'hacking' coughs and hoarse throats of ministers of religion. Stand up, reader, while the court recites your indictment. Guilty or not guilty? "Guilty, my Lord." The sentence of the court is "Go and sin no more." And all the people say, Amen.

MR. HIGGINBOTHAM'S CATASTROPHE.

BY N. HAWTHORNE.

A young fellow, a tobacco pedlar by trade, was on his way from Morristown, where he had dealt largely with the Deacon of the Shaker settlement, to the village of Parker's Falls, on Salmon River. He had a neat little cart, painted green, with a box of cigars depicted on each side-pannel, and an Indian chief, holding a pipe and a golden tobacco-stalk, on the rear. The pedlar drove a smart

little mare, and was a young man of excellent character, keen at a bargain, but none the worse liked by the Yankees, who, as I have heard them say, would rather be shaved with a sharp razor than a dull one. Especially was he beloved by the pretty girls along the Connecticut, whose favour he used to court by presents of the best smoking tobacco in his stock, knowing well that the country lasses of New England are generally great performers on pipes. Moreover, as will be seen in the course of my story, the pedlar was inquisitive, and something of a tattler, always itching to hear the news, and anxious to tell it again.

After an early breakfast at Morristown, the tobacco pedlar, whose name was Dominicus Pike, had travelled seven miles through a solitary piece of woods, without speaking a word to anybody but himself and his little grey mare. It being nearly seven o'clock, he was as eager to hold a morning gossip as a city shopkeeper to read the morning paper. An opportunity seemed at hand, when, after lighting a cigar with a sun-glass, he looked up, and perceived a man coming over the brow of the hill, at the foot of which the pedlar had stopped his green cart. Dominicus watched him as he descended, and noticed that he carried a bundle over his shoulder on the end of a stick, and travelled with a weary yet determined pace. He did not look as if he had started in the freshness of the morning, but had footed it all night, and meant to do the same all day.

"Good morning, mister," said Dominicus, when within speaking distance. "You go a pretty good jog. What's the latest news at Parker's Falls?"

The man pulled the broad brim of a grey hat over his eyes, and answered, rather sullenly, that he did not come from Parker's Falls, which, as being the limit of his own day's journey, the pedlar had naturally mentioned in his inquiry.

"Well, then," rejoined Dominicus Pike, "let's have the latest news where you did come from. I'm not particular about Parker's Falls. Any place will answer."

Being thus importuned, the traveller—who was as ill-looking a fellow as one

would desire to meet in a solitary piece of woods—appeared to hesitate a little, as if he was either searching his memory for news, or weighing the expediency of telling it. At last mounting on the step of the cart, he whispered in the ear of Dominicus, though he might have shouted aloud, and no other mortal would have heard him.

"I do remember one little trifle of news," said he. "Old Mr. Higginbotham, of Kimballton, was murdered in his orchard, at eight o'clock last night, by an Irishman and a nigger. They strung him up to the branch of St. Michael's pear-tree, where nobody would find him till the morning."

As soon as this horrible intelligence was communicated, the stranger betook himself to his journey again, with more speed than ever, not even turning his head when Dominicus invited him to smoke a Spanish cigar, and relate all the particulars. The pedlar whistled to his mare and went up the hill, pondering on the doleful fate of Mr. Higginbotham, whom he had known in the way of trade, having sold him many a bunch of long nines, and a great deal of pig-tail, lady's twist, and fig tobacco. He was rather astonished at the rapidity with which the news had spread. Kimballton was nearly sixty miles distant in a straight line; the murder had been perpetrated only at eight o'clock the preceding night; yet Dominicus had heard of it at seven in the morning, when, in all probability, poor Mr. Higginbotham's own family had but just discovered his corpse, hanging on the St. Michael's pear-tree. The stranger on foot must have worn seven-league boots to travel at such a rate.

"Ill news flies fast, they say," thought Dominicus Pike; "but this beats railroads. The fellow ought to be hired to go express with the President's Message."

The difficulty was solved by supposing that the narrator had made a mistake of one day in the date of the occurrence; so that our friend did not hesitate to introduce the story at every tavern and country store along the road, expending a whole bunch of Spanish wrappers among at least twenty horrified audiences.

He found himself invariably the first bearer of the intelligence, and was so pestered with questions, that he could not avoid filling up the outline, till it became quite a respectable narrative. He met with one piece of corroborative evidence. Mr. Higginbotham was a trader; and a former clerk of his, to whom Dominicus related the facts, testified that the old gentleman was accustomed to return home through the orchard about nightfall, with the money and valuable papers of the store in his pocket. The clerk manifested but little grief at Mr. Higginbotham's catastrophe, hinting, what the pedlar had discovered in his own dealings with him, that he was a crusty old fellow, as close as a vice. His property would descend to a pretty niece, who was now keeping school at Kimballton.

What with telling the news for the public good, and driving bargains for his own, Dominicus was so much delayed on the road, that he chose to put up at a tavern, about five miles short of Parker's Falls. After supper, lighting one of his prime cigars, he seated himself in the bar-room, and went through the story of the murder, which had grown so fast that it took him half-an-hour to tell it. There were as many as twenty people in the room, nineteen of whom received it all for gospel. But the twentieth was an elderly farmer, who had arrived on horse-back a short time before, and was now seated in a corner, smoking his pipe. When the story was concluded, he rose up very deliberately, brought his chair right in front of Dominicus, and stared him full in the face, puffing out the vilest tobacco-smoke the pedlar had ever smelt.

"Will you make affidavit," demanded he, in the tone of a country justice taking an examination, "that old Squire Higginbotham, of Kimballton, was murdered in his orchard the night before last, and was found hanging on his great pear-tree yesterday-morning?"

"I tell the story as I heard it, mister," answered Dominicus, dropping his half-burnt cigar. "I don't say that I saw the thing done; so I can't take my oath that he was murdered exactly in that way."

"But I can take mine," said the farmer, "that if Squire Higginbotham was murdered night before last, I drank a glass of bitters with his ghost this morning. Being a neighbour of mine, he called me into his store as I was riding by, and treated me, and then asked me to do a little business for him on the road. He didn't seem to know any more about his own murder than I did."

"Why, then, it can't be a fact!" exclaimed Dominicus Pike.

"I guess he'd have mentioned, if it was," said the old farmer; and he removed his chair back to the corner, leaving Dominicus quite down in the mouth.

Here was a sad resurrection of old Mr. Higginbotham! The pedlar had no heart to mingle in the conversation any more, but comforted himself with a glass of gin and water, and went to bed, where, all night long, he dreamt of hanging on the St. Michael's pear-tree. To avoid the old farmer (whom he so detested, that his suspension would have pleased him better than Mr. Higginbotham's,) Dominicus rose in the gray of the morning, put the little mare into the green cart, and trotted swiftly away towards Parker's Falls. The fresh breeze, the dewy road, and the pleasant summer dawn revived his spirits, and might have encouraged him to repeat the old story, had there being anybody awake to hear it. But he met neither ox-team, light waggon, chaise, horseman, nor foot traveller, till just as he crossed Salmon River, a man came trudging down to the bridge with a bundle over his shoulder on the end of a stick.

"Good morning, mister," said the pedlar, reining in his mare. "If you come from Kimballton, or that neighbourhood, may be you can tell me the real fact about this affair of old Mr. Higginbotham. Was the old fellow actually murdered two or three nights ago, by an Irishman and a nigger?"

Dominicus had spoken in too great a hurry to observe at first that the stranger himself had a deep tinge of negro blood. On hearing this sudden question, the Ethiopian appeared to change his skin, its yellow hue becoming a ghastly white, while, shaking and stammering, he thus replied:

"No! no! there was no coloured man. It was an Irishman that hanged him last night, at eight o'clock. I came away at seven. His folks can't have looked for him in the orchard yet."

Scarcely had the yellow man spoken, when he interrupted himself, and though he seemed weary enough before, continued his journey at a pace which would have kept the pedlar's mare on a smart trot. Dominicus stared after him in great perplexity. If the murder had not been committed till Tuesday night, who was the prophet that had foretold it, in all its circumstances, on Tuesday morning? If Mr. Higginbotham's corpse were not yet discovered by his own family, how came the mulatto, at above thirty miles distance, to know that he was hanging in the orchard, especially as he had left Kimballton before the unfortunate man was hanged at all? These ambiguous circumstances, with the stranger's surprise and terror, made Dominicus think of raising a hue and cry after him, as an accomplice in the murder; since a murder, it seemed, had really been perpetrated.

"But let the poor devil go," thought the pedlar. "I don't want his black blood on my head; and hanging the nigger wouldn't unhang Mr. Higginbotham. Unhang the old gentleman! It's a sin, I know; but I should hate to have him come to life a second time, and give me the lie!"

With these meditations, Dominicus Pike drove into the street of Parker's Falls, which, as everybody knows, is as thriving a village as three cotton factories and a slitting mill can make it. The machinery was not in motion, and but a few of the shop doors unbarred, when he alighted in the stable-yard of the tavern, and made it his first business to order the mare four quarts of oats. His second duty, of course, was to impart Mr. Higginbotham's catastrophe to the ostler. He deemed it advisable, however, not to be too positive as to the date of the direful fact, and also to be uncertain whether it were perpetrated by an Irishman and a mulatto, or by the son of Erin alone. Neither did he profess to relate it on his own authority, or that of any one person;

but mentioned it as a report generally diffused.

The story ran through the town like fire among girdled trees, and became so much the universal talk, that nobody could tell whence it had originated. Mr. Higginbotham was as well known at Parker's Falls as any citizen of the place, being part owner of the slitting mill, and a considerable stockholder in the cotton factories. The inhabitants felt their own prosperity interested in his fate. Such was the excitement, that the *Parker's Falls Gazette* anticipated its regular day of publication, and came out with half a form of blank paper and a column of double pica, emphasised with capitals, and headed HORRID MURDER OF MR. HIGGINBOTHAM! Among other dreadful details, the printed account described the mark of the cord round the dead man's neck, and stated the number of thousand dollars of which he had been robbed; there was much pathos also about the affliction of his niece, who had gone from one fainting fit to another, ever since her uncle was found hanging on the St. Michael's pear-tree with his pockets inside out. The village poet likewise commemorated the young lady's grief in seventeen stanzas of a ballad. The selectmen held a meeting, and in consideration of Mr. Higginbotham's claims on the town, determined to issue hand-bills, offering a reward of five hundred dollars for the apprehension of his murderers, and the recovery of the stolen property.

Meanwhile the whole population of Parker's Falls, consisting of shop-keepers, mistresses of boarding-houses, factory girls, mill-men, and school-boys, rushed into the street and kept up such a terrible loquacity, as more than compensated for the silence of the cotton machines, which refrained from their usual din out of respect to the deceased. Had Mr. Higginbotham cared about posthumous renown, his untimely ghost would have exulted in this tumult. Our friend Dominicus, in his vanity of heart, forgot his intended precautions, and mounting on the town pump, announced himself as the bearer of the authentic intelligence which had caused so wonderful a sensation. He immediately became the great man of the

moment, and had just begun a new edition of the narrative, with a voice like a field preacher, when the mail-stage drove into the village street. It had travelled all night, and must have shifted horses at Kimballton at three in the morning.

"Now we shall hear all the particulars," shouted the crowd.

The coach rumbled up to the piazza of the tavern, followed by a thousand people; for if any man had been minding his own business till then, he now left it at sixes and sevens to hear the news. The pedlar, foremost in the race, discovered two passengers, both of whom had been startled from a comfortable nap to find themselves in the centre of a mob. Every man assailing them with separate questions, all propounded at once, the couple were struck speechless, though one was a lawyer and the other a young lady.

"Mr. Higginbotham! Mr. Higginbotham! Tell us the particulars about old Mr. Higginbotham!" bawled the mob. "What is the coroner's verdict? Are the murderers apprehended? Is Mr. Higginbotham's niece come out of her fainting fits? Mr. Higginbotham! Mr. Higginbotham!"

The coachman said not a word, except to swear awfully at the ostler for not bringing him a fresh team of horses. The lawyer inside had generally his wits about him, even when asleep. The first thing he did, after learning the cause of the excitement, was to produce a large red pocket-book. Meantime, Dominicus Pike, being an extremely polite young man, and also suspecting that a female tongue would tell the story as glibly as a lawyer's, had handed the lady out of the coach. She was a fine, smart girl, now wide awake and bright as a button, and had such a sweet, pretty mouth, that Dominicus would almost as lief had heard a love tale from it as a tale of murder.

"Gentlemen and ladies," said the lawyer to the shop-keepers, the mill-men, and the factory girls, "I can assure you that some unaccountable mistake, or more probable, a wilful falsehood, maliciously contrived to injure Mr. Higginbotham's credit, has excited this singular uproar. We passed through Kimballton at three

o'clock this morning, and most certainly should have been informed of the murder, had any been perpetrated. But I have proof nearly as strong as Mr. Higginbotham's own oral testimony in the negative. Here is a note, relating to a suit of his in the Connecticut Courts, which was delivered me from that gentleman himself. I find it dated at ten o'clock last evening."

So saying, the lawyer exhibited the date and signature of the note, which irrefragably proved, either that this perverse Mr. Higginbotham was alive when he wrote it, or—as some deemed the more probable case of two doubtful ones—that he was so absorbed in worldly business, as to continue to transact it even after his death. But unexpected evidence was forthcoming. The young lady, after listening to the pedlar's explanation, merely seized a moment to smooth her gown and put her curls in order, and then appeared at the tavern door, making a modest signal to be heard.

"Good people," said she, "I am Mr. Higginbotham's niece."

A wondering murmur passed through the crowd on beholding her so rosy and bright, the same unhappy niece whom they had supposed, on the authority of the *Parker's Falls Gazette*, to be lying at death's door in a fainting fit. But some shrewd fellows had doubted all along whether a young lady would have been quite so desperate at the hanging of a rich old uncle.

"You see," continued Miss Higginbotham, with a smile, "that this strange story is quite unfounded as to myself; and I believe I may affirm it to be equally so in regard to my dear uncle Higginbotham. He has the kindness to give me a home in his own house, though I contribute to my own support by teaching a school. I left Kimballton this morning, to spend the vacation of commencement week with a friend, about five miles from Parker's Falls. My generous uncle, when he heard me on the stairs, called me to his bedside, and gave me two dollars and fifty cents to pay my stage-fare, and another dollar for my extra expenses. He then laid his pocket-book under his pillow, shook hands with me and advised me to

take some biscuit in my bag, instead of breakfasting on the road. I feel confident therefore, that I left my beloved relative alive, and trust that I shall find him so on my return."

The young lady courtesied at the close of her speech, which was so sensible and well worded, and delivered with such grace and propriety, that everybody thought her fit to be preceptress of the best academy in the State. But a stranger would have supposed that Mr. Higginbotham was an object of abhorrence at Parker's Falls, and that a thanksgiving had been proclaimed for his murder, so excessive was the wrath of the inhabitants on their mistake. The millmen resolved to bestow public honors on Dominicus Pike, only hesitating whether to tar and feather him, ride him on a rail, or refresh him with an ablution at the town pump, on the top of which he declared himself the bearer of the news. The select-men, by advice of the lawyer, spoke of prosecuting him for a misdemeanour, in circulating unfounded reports, to the great disturbance of the peace of the commonwealth. Nothing saved Dominicus either from mob law or a court of justice, but an eloquent appeal made by the young lady on his behalf. Addressing a few words of heartfelt gratitude to his benefactress, he mounted the green cart and rode out of town under a discharge of artillery from the school-boys, who found plenty of ammunition in the neighbouring clay-pits and mud-holes. As he turned his head to exchange a farewell glance with Mr. Higginbotham's niece, a ball, of the consistence of hasty-pudding hit him slap in the mouth, giving him a most grim aspect. His whole person was so bespattered with the like filthy missiles, that he almost had a mind to ride back and supplicate the threatened ablution at the town pump, for though not meant in kindness it would have been indeed a charity.

However, the sun shone bright on poor Dominicus, and the mud, an emblem of all stains of unreserved opprobrium, was brushed off as soon as dry. Being a funny rogue, his heart soon cheered up; nor could he refrain from a hearty laugh at the uproar which his story excited. The handbills of the select-men would cause

the commitment of all vagabonds in the State; the paragraph in the *Parker's Falls Gazette* would be reprinted from Maine to Florida, and perhaps form an item in the London newspapers, and many a miser would tremble for his money-bags and life, on learning the catastrophe of Mr. Higginbotham. The pedlar meditated with much fervor on the charms of the young school mistress, and swore that Daniel Webster never spoke nor looked so like an angel as Miss Higginbotham, while defending him from the wrathful populace at Parker's Falls.

Dominicus was now on the Kimballton turnpike, having all along determined to visit that place, though business had drawn him out of the most direct road to Morrystown. As he approached the scene of the supposed murder, he continued to revolve the circumstances in his mind, and was astonished at the aspect which the whole case assumed. Had nothing occurred to corroborate the story of the first traveller, it might have been considered as a hoax; but the yellow man was evidently acquainted either with the report or the fact, and there was a mystery in his dismayed and guilty look, on being abruptly questioned. When to this singular combination of incidents it was added that the rumor tallied exactly with Mr. Higginbotham's character and habits of life, and that he had an orchard, and a St. Michael's pear tree, near which he always passed at nightfall, the circumstantial evidence appeared so strong, that Dominicus doubted whether the autograph produced by the lawyer, or even the niece's direct testimony, ought to be equivalent. Making cautious enquiries along the road, the pedlar further learned that Mr. Higginbotham had in his service an Irishman of doubtful character, whom he had hired without a recommendation, on the score of economy.

"May I be hanged myself," exclaimed Dominicus Pike aloud, on reaching the top of a lonely hill, "if I'll believe old Higginbotham is unchanged, till I see him with my own eyes, and hear it from his own mouth! And as he is a real shaver, I'll have the minister, or some other responsible man, for an indorser." It was growing dusk when he reached

the tollhouse on Kimballton turnpike, about a quarter of a mile from the village of the same name. His little mare was fast bringing him up to a man on horseback, who trotted through the gate a few yards in advance of him, nodded to the toll-gatherer, and kept on towards the village. Dominicus was acquainted with the toll man, and while making change, the usual remarks on the weather passed between them.

"I suppose," said the pedlar, throwing back his whiplash, to bring it down like a feather on the mare's flank, "you have not seen anything of old Mr. Higginbotham, within a day or two?"

"Yes," answered the toll gatherer. "He passed the gate just before you drove up, and yonder he rides now, if you can see him through the dusk. He's been to Woodfield this afternoon, attending a sheriff's sale there. The old man generally shakes hands and has a little chat with me; but to-night he nodded—as if to say 'charge my toll'—and jogged on; for wherever he goes, he must always be home at eight o'clock."

"So they tell me," said Dominicus.

"I never saw a man look so yellow and thin as the squire does," continued the toll-gatherer. "Says I to myself, to-night he's more like a ghost or an old mummy than good flesh and blood."

The pedlar strained his eyes through the twilight, and could just discern the horseman now far ahead on the village road. He seemed to recognise the rear of Mr. Higginbotham; but through the evening shadows, and amid the dust of the horse's feet, the figure appeared dim and unsubstantial, as if the shape of the mysterious old man were faintly moulded of darkness and grey light. Dominicus shivered.

"Mr. Higginbotham has come back from the other world by way of the Kimballton turnpike," thought he.

He shook the reins and rode forward, keeping about the same distance in the rear of the grey old shadow, till the latter was concealed by a bend of the road. On reaching this point, the pedlar no longer saw the man on horseback, but found himself at the head of the village street, not far from a

number of stores and two taverns, clustered round the meeting-house steeple. On his left was a stone wall and gate, the boundary of a wood-lot, beyond which lay an orchard, farther still a mowing field, and last of all a house. These were the premises of Mr. Higginbotham, whose dwelling stood beside the highway, but had been left in the background by the Kimballton Turnpike. Dominicus knew the place; and the little mare stopped short by instinct, for he was not conscious of tightening the reins.

"For the soul of me I cannot get by this gate!" said he, trembling. "I shall never be my own man again till I see whether Mr. Higginbotham is hanging on the St. Michael's pear-tree!"

He leaped from the cart, gave the rein a turn round the gate post, and ran along the green path of the wood-lot, as if Old Nick were chasing behind. Just then the village clock tolled eight, and as each deep stroke fell, Dominicus gave a fresh bound and flew faster than before: till dim in the solitary centre of the orchard, he saw the fated pear-tree. One great branch stretched from the old contorted trunk across the path, and threw the darkest shadow on the one spot. But something seemed to struggle beneath the branch!

The pedlar had never pretended to more courage than benefits a man of peaceable occupation, nor could he account for his valor on this awful emergency. Certain it is, however, that he rushed forward, prostrated a sturdy Irishman with the but-end of his whip, and found—not indeed hanging on the St. Michael's pear-tree, but trembling beneath it, with halter round his neck—the old, identical Mr. Higginbotham!

"Mr. Higginbotham," said Dominicus, tremulously, "you're an honest man, and I'll take your word for it. Have you been hanged or not?"

If the riddle be not already guessed, a few words will explain the simple machinery of this "coming event" which was made to "cast its shadow before." Three men had plotted the robbery and murder of Mr. Higginbotham; two of them successively lost courage and fled; each delaying the crime one night by his disappear-

ance; the third was in the act of perpetration, when a champion blindly obeying the call of fate, like the heroes of old romance, appeared in the person of Dominicus Pike.

It only remains to say that Mr. Higginbotham took the pedlar into high favour, sanctioned his address to the pretty schoolmistress, and settled his whole property on their children, allowing themselves the interest. In due time, the old gentleman clapped the climax of his favours by dying a Christian death in bed, since which melancholy event Dominicus Pike has removed from Kimballton, and established a large tobacco manufactory in my native village.

(For the Canadian Literary Journal.)

A FATHER'S LAMENT FOR HIS CHILD.

BY BRENISLAUT.

When first thou camest, oh! my darling lost!
My baby girl, my first-born and my blessing,
I said—"Nought now where-with my fate is
cross'd
But will seem light, I have all worth possess-
ing,"—

To everything my heart was reconciled,
Nor ever dreamt of losing THEE my child!

A pearl thou seemedst, so securely set
In love's sweet circle, that a gift I deemed
What God had only lent; and idly let
My mind stray down thy future,—fair it seem'd!
And never thought of suffering at all
The agonizing pain of thy recall.

How dear thou wert! oh! what shall e'er assuage
Thy mother's grief and mine for loss of thee?
'Tis hard to even try to disengage
Our hearts from the sad memory, that we
Are left to mourn thee gone; the gathering tears
Will blind our eyes through all the coming years.

Never again thou'lt come to me my love!
But I will go to thee, to where thou art
In angel brightness safe in heaven above,
Nought then can come between, no more to
part—

Down the long ages happily we glide,
My treasures safe, all gathered at my side!

AN UNEXPECTED EXPOSTULATION.

It was late at night. The windows were curtained and the doors were closed. The shaded lamp cast a dim light about the room, and a not unpleasant circular glare upon my desk. I had been writing a good deal, and now and then dozing a little. I was gradually approaching that stage in prolonged toil when inclination for rest is apt to prevail over the attractions of effort. I stayed my hand and put down my pen. My eyes closed, and for a few minutes I lost consciousness. I was disturbed by the noise of some one coughing close by—a sharp, hacking cough. I looked up: A man—an entire stranger to me—was occupying an easy chair placed over against my writing table.

How he came there I don't know; but he *was* there. Not a ghost, of course.—I have no faith in such things. They have been time out of mind of great service to story-tellers, but even for fictional purposes I regard them now as rather exhausted and exploded contrivances. They have been brought on the scene too often; they have been decidedly overworked. Directly they are introduced one sees through them now; and the fact that one can do so, no longer occasions the awe, and chill, and thrill the story-teller had calculated upon producing. I agree with the man of science, who maintained that "ghosts proceed from the stomach"—a derivation clearly destructive of their claims to respect on the score of their romantic character."

Not a ghost, then; but a man simply;—and yet of appearance sufficiently curious and exceptional, quite apart from the consideration that his presence in my study was most strange and unaccountable, to arouse my attention in regard to him, and to warrant my setting forth, as concisely as I may, some description of his personal peculiarities. For some minutes neither of us spoke. Meanwhile I felt myself at liberty to study and scrutinise him very particularly.

What was most remarkable in his aspect was his expression of utter lassitude and exhaustion. His age could not

readily be determined. There was certainly nothing suggestive of the freshness of youth about him; nor, on the other hand, did he manifest any marked symptoms of senility. His infirm and effete condition seemed less attributable to lapse of time than to some oppressive weight of care he had been compelled to sustain, or to his experience of some cruel measures of suffering. He was well dressed, but his clothes looked as though they had been made for a man of more substantial mould, and hung loosely about him. It might be that he had lost flesh and shrunk considerable since he had first assumed them. His features had undergone apparently that sharpening process to which prolonged ill-health subjects its victims. His nose, I noted, was peculiarly thin, angular and projecting. The skin was drawn very tight across his bony and somewhat contracted forehead. From the wanness of his cheeks, his mouth looked unduly large, and his teeth over prominent. His eyes were very lustreless, and had a tendency to roll about waywardly, and his heavy lids, a dull pink in color, seemed with difficulty restrained from drooping and closing. His hair was long, straggling, dry, and dusty looking. He had clearly devoted little attention to its arrangement. His whole appearance betokened deficiency in vital and muscular power. Yet his presence was gentlemanly altogether, although it conveyed a suspicion that physical decline had possibly relaxed somewhat his regard for social rules and usages. When he spoke, his voice was weak and flat in tone, and produced with some exertion. He accompanied his speech with a nervous jerking of his limbs, a swaying of his body, and a tossing of his head, that were decidedly distressing to observe. He reminded me of that famous figure in the fantoccini performance, which on a sudden loosens itself, and falls in fragments about the scene. Conditioned as he evidently was, it seemed imprudent of him to venture upon much abruptness of gesture, or precipitate change of pose. There was no saying what might result from hasty action of this kind on his part. His laugh struck me as hollow, wild and discordant

in the extreme. There are some laughs which are very catching, so to speak, and on the instant provoke mirth in the auditor, sometimes even to quite an extravagant extent; other laughs, from their strained and artificial quality—I have often heard such upon the stage, when the actors are required to stimulate a joy which seems hardly justified by the words they have to utter, or the situation in which they appear—are depressing almost to despair. Whenever my visitor laughed, he produced echoes within me of a strangely dismal and disturbing kind.

"So you're at it again," he said, half interrogatively, and half by way of comment.

I admitted that I had been pursuing my ordinary vocation.

"I thought as much." And here he laughed in a way that is always described in novels as "bitterly," and I suppose can only be so described. At the same time I may say that I have never found the description quite adequate or satisfactory.

"Let me off easy this time," he continued, laughing distressingly.

"What is it you want?" I asked. He moved about uneasily in his chair.

"To be let alone," he said presently. "Drop me. Forget me. Ignore me."

"But who are you?"

"You know. Gad, you ought to! Why cant you let me alone?"

"I really fail to understand," I observed.

"Yes of course that's part of the business. I was quite prepared for that."

"I should be happy, if I could, to oblige you in any way."

"No doubt. But you won't. I've lived long enough—I've suffered enough to know that. Almost since books were published—"

"Since the discovery of printing?"

"No, not quite so long as that. I was let off rather cheaply at first. I had not been found out. My existence, perhaps, wasn't known then. But gradually they dropped on to me; and they've never ceased dropping on to me ever since."

"Who dropped on you?"

"You, and the whole kit of you."

"Really——"

"No—it isn't true, and you never heard of such a thing, and you can't believe it, and its not your doing. I know all about that. But things have come to a precious pass at last."

"If you would kindly explain a little."

"I was gradually collared. They approached me at first in an insinuating, carrying sort of way. They were deferential and considerate. Oh, so considerate." I think he swore here, but I don't feel quite sure. I was 'dear,' and 'gentle,' and 'polite.' I don't mind owning I was conciliated—flattered a bit. I stood still and listened. Quickly they got the halter round my neck, and I was in custody for the rest of my days. And what I have had to endure!"

"But who and what are you?" I demanded anew, and this time rather prepotently, for I own I felt annoyed at the man's extraordinary demeanour.

"That's right, bully me." Your capable of it. I was prepared for that. I'm accustomed to that."

I rose from my chair and confronted him.

"Sit down," he said. I could see quite enough of you before. I don't want a scene with you Heaven knows. I'll tell you who I am, though you know very well already, or ought to know. I am the General Reader. There! You've heard that name before?"

I admitted that the term "General Reader" was not unfamiliar to me.

"I should think not, indeed," he said, with one of his most unpleasant laughs. "Haven't I just cause of complaint?"

I observed, not too confidentially, that I wasn't aware he suffered under any particular grievance.

"Haven't you been all at me, persecuting and oppressing me this many a long year?" At first I admit I was let off easy.

"Again, I ask, of whom are you speaking?"

"Authors, writers, compilers, adapters, copyists, essayists, historians, reviewers, journalists, penmen, reporters, novelists, dramatists." He paused for want of breath. "There," he resumed shortly, "is that list long enough for you?"

"But what have these people——?"

"You're one of them! You know you are," he cried.

I disregarded the interruption. "How have they injured you?"

"How haven't they? Haven't they piled volume after volume upon me, until they've nearly flattened me out like an ironed shirt? Formerly they were content to address themselves for the most part to a class, a section of the community. Now they're all on to me, twenty—twenty?—a hundred at a time. You're a critic?"

I owned that I had sometimes written reviews. I left him, if he so chose, to dwell upon any discrepancy he might discern between his question and my reply. But he went on:

"And you've said of this book, 'Will give pleasure to the General Reader;' of that, 'Not above the capacity of the General Reader;' and of the other, 'Well suited to the requirements of the General Reader.'"

I admitted that I had sometimes availed myself of those and similar convenient phrases.

"Just so," he cried, with a spasmodic chuckle and general twitching of his members. "I knew it. I said it. All the rubbish that's published is shot on to my head. Books are even made rubbishy on purpose now, with a view of pleasing me. Formerly when a man wrote something that was especially deep, and sound, and valuable, and, of course, heavy, he knew at once it was no use bringing it to me—not a bit—that it was over my head, beyond my reach. With that state of things he was content. I need not say I was. But now he'll sprinkle his dull pages with bad jokes, chaff, flippancy, and vulgarity, and then you, and such as you, will urge the General Reader to buy it, and what's worse to read it. Everything now is supposed to suit the General Reader. His maw is big enough to shove anything into. He has stomach for every known subject. He has the digestion of an ostrich. Now he's made to swallow paving-stones, and now he's surfeited with whipped syllabub. 'Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light,' That's a quotation that is. Shakespeare,

you know. Bless you other folks can quote besides you." He surveyed me as he said this with an air, I thought, of quite superfluous significance.

"Twaddle, imbecility, tiresome lectures trite moralizing, common-places, balderdash, jargon, tom-foolery, slipslop, palaver, drivel; that's the diet you've been recommending me. Has it done me good? How do I look? Sick? Ill?"

"Sick and ill," I said.

"Can you wonder? How would you have liked it yourself! After all, you know I'm only human, a man and a brother—that kind of thing. Do I look dyspeptic?"

"You do," I answered, frankly.

"Is it surprising? Think what you and such as you have made me undergo."

"But what would you have me do in the future?"

"Spare me. Have some mercy, some little consideration. You've overdone it, indeed you have. The General Reader has his limits. His back will only bear a certain burden, and I declare just now, if you put another volume on it, though but a thin duodecimo, it will give way as shure as fate. Don't then. He isn't learned, you know. He doesn't set up for being of much account; but as a rule, the General Reader's willing, and can be fairly amused at a cheap rate. But don't overload him, don't over-drive him, and above all, don't over-cudgel him. If you do, he'll only drop."

"I am willing," I said, "indeed, I am most anxious to serve you, and please you, if you'll only show me how."

"It's very simple. When your going to write of this or that, that it's 'certain to entertain the General Reader,' just think if it really is so certain; ask yourself whether it entertained *you*, and then consider whether, in truth, it will entertain *him*. Think, also, how many other people may, at the same moment, be writing and recommending other things certain to entertain the General Reader. And the same with what's erudite, and valuable, and interesting. I've got to dread all those terms. They make me shiver and turn goose-flesh all over. Generally speaking, indeed, draw it mild,

or I won't answer for the consequences. Spare the General Reader; he hasn't deserved the treatment he has received at the hands of you and your lot. Think of the life you've led me. Surely I deserve a little consideration."

He paused, and for a moment I felt myself unable to make him any reply. I mused over what he had been saying. It did occur to me that possibly there was some reason in his complaint, and that of late years there had been rather what he called "a dead set" made at the General Reader!"

"But you skip a good deal, I suppose?" I said, presently.

"Skip? I should think I did. There had been an end of me long ago if I had not skipped. But even skipping's trying when you have to do much of it. I've skipped sometimes until I'd hardly a breath left in my body, or strength in my fingers to turn a leaf. I owe much to skipping, I admit; but one can't be always skipping. I don't think I need trouble you any more just now," he added, after a minute's silence.

"You're very good," I said. "It is late."

"Only bear in mind, and urge upon others to deal forbearingly with me in the future. Please use all your influence to achieve that result. Publish what I have told you if you like."

"Do you think it would entertain the General Reader?" I enquired.

He groaned. "You are hard upon me still," he said. "Upon my word you are. But—risk it. It may do some good. At the worst, it will be but one more drop in the cup. Yes, risk it!"

I passed my hands across my tired eyes, thinking how I could give literary shape to his conversation. When I looked up he had gone. He had not even said good-night. His departure had been as noiseless as his entry.

However, I have followed his counsel. I have risked it.

The younger Dumas (the elder, too, since his father's death), and several other literary Parisians, talk of living in Italy until their country's troubles are settled.

OUR FIRST YEAR.

With this number ends the first year's issue of the "CANADIAN LITERARY JOURNAL." In a season of the year anything but favorable for such an enterprise, with many essays that our undertaking would prove a financial failure, with protestations that Ontario was not yet advanced enough in wealth and position to sustain a purely original Magazine, with manifold predictions that neither talent, energy or support would be forthcoming to maintain such a Journal as our prospectus promised, in fact, in the face of almost every difficulty did we a year ago venture before a critical, yet generous public with the first number of our Magazine. Some earnest advocates of our cause predicted us a life of six months, while many less sanguine kindly meted out its existence for three months at most. Although we were fully determined that the Journal would at any rate be issued a full year, let the support be what it would, yet we did not anticipate the flattering reception given us by the Canadian Press and people, which we so universally received. We very early found that there was a wide field for a native literary periodical, wider in fact than we anticipated, which led us at the expiration of three months to increase the size of our Journal eight full pages. Even this additional size we now find is by far too small for our demands, and with the beginning of volume two, we shall still further increase the size, making it sixty-four pages monthly, and adding richly to its appearance, by profuse and beautiful illustrations. The year, which in our efforts to establish a Canadian

Magazine has just closed, proves to us conclusively that there is ample room in the Dominion for good first-class literary periodicals. Hitherto the great influx of British and American publications have greatly tended to take the place of native productions, but our progressive tendencies, our rapid growth, our increasing wealth, our individual national proclivities, all demand home industry, home creation. We have emerged from embryo, and in the manhood of our might and importance should, and do look for the upbuilding of ourselves by ourselves in all branches of industry. In the western portion of the Dominion there is really no other periodical published devoted exclusively to original Canadian Literature, except our own, while in the east the only one of importance is Stewart's Quarterly, published in St. John's, N. B., which holds a prominent place with the best American Magazines, There is another monthly published in Montreal, but which falls sadly behind the mark, and which necessarily has a very limited circulation. We bespeak for our new volume, which will now be known as the "CANADIAN MAGAZINE," a generous and hearty support from all classes in the Dominion, and we can confidently promise a Journal which will vie with any Monthly published.

Miss Mulock, (Mrs. Craik,) has been specially secured to write for the Journal, and her new tale will begin in the first issue, while talented writers both at home and abroad will regularly contribute.

In conclusion we most heartily thank our many supporters for their past confidence and kindness, and trust that each succeeding year may witness our gradual, yet sure progress in the good work of upbuilding and fostering a pure, healthy and original Canadian Literature.

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