



June 1, 1898



The  
Rockwood  
Review.



A Monthly Journal devoted to  
Literature, Natural History and  
Local News.



## The Rockwood Review.

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The "Rockwood Review" to be  
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in fact a very readable and spicy  
little Journal.

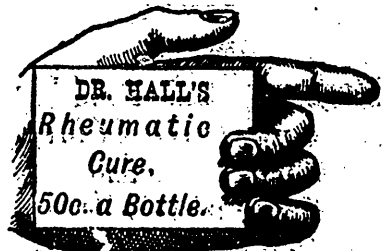
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# The Rockwood Review.

VOL. 4.

KINGSTON, JUNE 1ST, 1898.

No. 4.

## LOCAL ITEMS.

Miss Maddie Britton and Miss Baker, of Gananoque, were visitors at Rockwood House recently.

Godfrey's Band received a most enthusiastic reception at the hands of Kingstonians. Their playing was a revelation to the disciples of brass, who make the mistake of supposing the greater the noise the better the music. The overture to Taunhauser was the gem of the evening, and was magnificently rendered. The orchestra idea seems to prevail throughout the methods of this Band, and perfect balance, beauty of tone, and most careful attention to the ideas of the composer, characterized the whole of the performance. The programme was too long, and there were too many popular pieces, but outside of this the band was beyond criticism. Kingston is on a par with Toronto in its bad manner of demanding encores. It is absolutely impartial though, and will encore bad as well as good.

Queen's Birthday will be remembered, being marked by an incident quite impossible in 1897. The American soldiers landed in Kingston with rifles, for the first time since 1812, and received a warm and thoroughly sincere welcome. Blood is thicker than water, and no matter how much Canadians may criticize the steps which plunged Uncle Sam into war with Spain, and even if many believe that the war was a mistake, still nearly all would not care to see their American cousins beaten in the end. There was a lot of sentiment in the warm greeting, and if it leads to a better understanding in the future, it will be a good thing.

One of the characters at Newcourt is "Napoleon," who owns the whole place, and takes a deep interest in the welfare of the live stock. Before going to Newcourt, he created several sensations, notably when appointed Assistant of the poultry yard. Nap's ideas were not in complete harmony with those of lady in charge, and one day the differences of opinion reached a climax, when he turned some five hundred hens of different broods loose at one time, and gave them a Napoleonic airing. It is said that the Tower of Babel was not in greater confusion than the Asylum hen department for a few hours. A short time after this he took charge of the Bursar's horse and carriage, and became so interested in the welfare of his stock about the country, that on several occasions when the Bursar wanted his horse, it was miles away in charge of Napoleon, who gave himself the airs of a Prince. Newcourt has been to Nap. a source of deep interest, the sheep and "Keows," as he calls them, being more than well cared for by him. The destruction of the herd has given him great annoyance, and he has spoken with contempt of the Managers of the Rockwood Hotel "deoun there" for allowing the slaughter. His solicitude for the cows welfare was shown a week or so ago, when he rushed into the stables, and called for Mr. McGuire to come with his gun at once, as a wolf had got loose among the "Keows." Mr. McGuire went at once, and found that a "woodchuck" was the wolf described; nevertheless the animal was large enough to inspire Nap's anxiety for the beloved "Keows."

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In the early days of May Mr. Patrick Crimmins, for many years an attendant in Rockwood Hospital, passed away at a ripe old age. Mr. Crimmins was among the first of Rockwood's employees, and is deeply regretted by all who knew him.

Kildeer Plover were found sitting on eggs well incubated on April 30th. This is unusually early. The birds are extremely artful in leaving their nests, and the eggs are so much like the stones in the fields that they are difficult to find.

Dr. C. K. Clarke went to Toronto on May 2nd, on business connected with tuberculosis in the Rockwood herd of milch cows.

The people who willingly shut their eyes to the dangers encountered in drinking tuberculous milk, lay themselves open to severe criticism, particularly if they are the parents of delicate children. The dangers are not imaginary, and those who realize what the ravages of consumption are every year, should join in the work of exterminating the most dread disease of modern life. The frightfully contagious nature of the tubercle bacillus in cattle, should be object lesson vivid enough for the ordinary observer. Why any of the public should wish to shut their eyes to well established facts is a matter of surprise, and if the old adage, an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure, should ever be applied the present is the occasion. The first dairyman who proves that his herd is free from tubercle, by having the tuberculin test applied by a qualified inspector, will be rewarded by the patronage of the progressive part of the public.

Chewinks (Towhee Buntings), have been comparatively common this spring. They are somewhat rare visitors about Kingston.

The sympathy of the whole community has gone out to Mr. and Mrs. S. Stephenson in the loss of their infant daughter.

On Saturday evening, May 7th, a rather serious accident occurred at Beechgrove. Miss Fanny Geddes (Nurse), was coming down stairs with a lighted lamp when she tripped and fell. In a moment she was enveloped in flames, and had her foot and hands severely burned. She acted with great presence of mind, and although her clothing was in flames, succeeded in tearing off the blazing garments. Mr. James Lawless was on the spot immediately, and by aid of the fire hose promptly subdued the fire, which was rapidly attaining serious proportions.

DIED.—At Woodstone Cottage, on Thursday, May 5th, 1898, Elizabeth C. Stephenson, infant daughter of Mr. and Mrs. S. Stephenson.

Mr. L. Palmer of the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, has decided that the variety of white-rumped Shrike breeding here, is quite distinct from other varieties found in America, and has decided to give it the name ludovicianus migrans.

Red-winged Vireos came on May 5th, and Catbirds and Brown Thrashers at the end of April. The great migration of white-throated Sparrows occurred about May 2nd, the plaintive recommendation to "Sow-wheat Peeverly, Peeverly, Peeverly," being heard everywhere.



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### THREE BIRD SONGS.

On the topmost branch of the hickory tree,  
Which rocks in the wind like a ship at sea,  
The Oriole sings to his mate and me,  
Sweet—sweet!—what cheer!  
I am here!—here—here!

And down from the summer sky afloat,  
There falls the clear three-syllabled note  
Of the Song-Sparrow with the silver throat,  
Cheer!—cheer!—cheer!  
For summer is here—  
Well-a-way—well-a-way—well-a-way!

But the blithest spirit that comes in June,  
When earth and sky and wave are in tune,  
Sings all the morning and afternoon,  
Bobolink—bobolink—dink-a-down—daisy,  
Meadow-sweet—repeat!—repeat!  
Bobolink gone crazy!

K. S. McL.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Kingston Dailies have done good work by educating the public in regard to tuberculosis among cattle. Education is the only way to give people a knowledge of the dangers to which they are exposed.

Doctor Morgan, V. S., and Mr. T. McGuire can now be said to have graduated with honors on "tuberculosis." They have seen the disease in almost every stage, and can spot a tuberculous cow without asking many questions.

Miss Belle Convery, for several years connected with the Rockwood Staff of Nurses, received a handsome wedding present from the Officers and employees, who wished her much happiness. Miss Convery will be much missed, not only on account of her many amiable qualities, but also on account of her ability as an actress and singer. Hearty congratulations are extended to Mr. and Mrs. Gilmour.

Golfing is to be adopted at Rockwood in a mild sort of way, but in spite of the fact that the fever is not intense with most of the enthusiasts, two or three have been violently affected. These coming players have gone so far as to take private lessons on form, which is after all a very important part of the game. A few days ago one enthusiast armed with a kitchen spoon, which was supposed to be doing duty as a brassey bulger, was seen striking "Ajax defying the lightning" attitudes in the scullery, while his instructor with a bundle of summer savory under the arm played the part of Caddy. Red coats will be next in order.

The crew of the Iris have shown singular lack of enthusiasm this year, and great delay in getting their craft afloat.

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### THE VATICAN STATUES FROM AN UNARTISTIC POINT OF VIEW.

BY MARGARET W. LECLERQUE.

One evening last February, having nothing to do to kill time, I dropped in to see an honest old couple living in a small but comfortable house in the West End. I knew there was something remarkable about the history of this pair, and being fond of studying eccentric characters, determined to solve the mystery. The night was cold, and the wind howled down the street with unusual ferocity, as I knocked at honest John Cannister's door. A hearty "come in" was willingly answered, and I soon found myself greeted with the usual salutation of, "Why Miss LeClerque, how do 'e do?" and it was not long before I found myself seated by the kitchen fire, listening to the running commentaries on the doings of the day, as carried on by my hosts. Mrs. Cannister was an active little lady of sixty, and although very American in her ways and talk, was truly Canadian at heart. In the part of the country where she had lived a marked dialect was commonly used by the farmers, and this fact will account for her peculiar language. During the conversation, by chance I mentioned having seen beautiful views of the Vatican Statues at the theatre a few nights before. At the mention of the words Vatican Statues, Mrs. C. looked at me with a peculiar smile on her face, and said: "Well now, what did you think on them ere Statutes?" I praised them in an enthusiastic strain, and when I had finished she said, "So you like them ere statues too—if you don't mind listenin' for a spell, I'll tell you what I know on 'em." I settled myself comfortably in an arm chair, and heard the following story repeated. It will be well to give it as nearly as possible in Mrs. Cannister's own words.

### MRS. CANNISTER'S STORY.

Perhaps you never knowed before that me and John has seen far better days nor we have now, at least when I say better days, I mean as people calls them, although I don't hold with them altogether. The how of it was this though. About the time the "ile fever" was settin' men almost crazy in Canada, me and John was livin' on a hundred acres near the Ile Springs. We were tolerably com-fort-able, had a nice f.rm house, a good lot of hens, horses and stock, and but few things to fret us. Mary Ann was our only child, and of course we thought a mighty pile of her, and as she was keepin' company with Bill Sickles, the best off young farmer round the country, we looked forward to being left alone in a short time, and livin' quite cheerful on what little we had saved. I must say John was a trifle too easy goin', and too good hearted in a bargain, but by hard peggin' I kept him a kind of straight. Farmers must have their rights you know, and they have a hard lot to deal with. Well as I was sayin' before, everything was a goin' on a kind of slickery like on the farm when the ile fever broke out, and every feller was a borin' for ile on his farm. Long-nosed Yankees went about prospectin', and bye and bye two lanky, hatchet nosed prospectors came perkin' round to our house. That morning I had been washin' my ile tin in a pool near a spring by the house. Well these Yankee chaps comes prowlin' about, and the one with the longest nose seemed to have ile on the brain, and spied the ily scum on the pool in an instant. In they came and asked for John. I was a kind of glad that John was over to Sickles just then, so says I, "If it is land you are after I am the one to talk to." Well they offered fifty thousand dollars for the farm. I knowed they would give more, and I fit shy. At last they offered a hundred and nine thousand dollars. When John came home, he could

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not believe the news for ten minutes, but at last sittin' down on my new bonnet, in his quiet kind of way said, (scratchin' his head): "Well, Liza Jane, I did calkilate on livin' on the old farm for many a day to come, but seein' as how we are goin' to make so much money out of this show, perhaps we had better do it. All the same I kinder half wish the ile fever had broke out in a different place, for I don't like the idee of leavin' the old homestead." However, it was done, and it was not long before we were livin' in a big fancy house in this city. I was not goin' to let on, but I didn't half like it, and as for John, poor old man, he seemed perfectly washed out, although he tried to keep up a smilin' face on my account. Mary Ann was sent to one of these ere fancy schools, and was set fiddlin' away at a grand new pianner—but bless you, it wouldn't work, and I believe I was half glad when she ran off on the sly, and married young Bill Sickles. After she went, John went on feelin' worse than ever, so I made up my mind that somethin' must be done to cheer him up. At that time they were talkin' a good deal about "furrin towers" and Italy and the Italians, so I concluded that this must be tried. I found out the cost of the trip, and after calklatin' on everything, concluded that we might jest as well go on a tower as other folk. Early in June we started, and after havin' some peculiar adventures, arrived in Italy safe and sound. There ain't no use of tellin' you what we passed through before we reached Rome, but we did go through whole heaps of trouble, and were gettin' mighty sick of furrin travel. However people said a tower was the proper thing to take, and we took it. When we got to Rome, we were tolerable well used to the ways of them pesky furriners, and it took a pretty smart one to get the start of me. I can't say that I was much took with Rome as being a mighty fine city, however we had

got there, and were bound to see the sights. Some how or another we had struck upon an ily-tongued, cute lookin' Yankee, who seemed a kinder glad to meet any one from Canada even, as he said that was next thing to being to him. He knew an awful sight too about the place, and in a pblite kind of way said that if we would not have no objections, he would show us what there was to be saw. He asked us if we were fond of sculpter. John said he didn't know, but thought he was, as for me, I said if there was any one thing I liked it was sculpter, but I didn't think any of these Romings could hold a candle to John Peters, the marble cutter in our own village to hum—for he could make the most elegant grave stones, with weepin' willows and angels and flappin' wings on them. I would like to see how these long haired Italian marble cutters did though. Well, says he, I guess we had better dig for the Vatican fust, and off we started. John seemed to be gettin' a kinder sick of this travellin', and often said he wished he was back on the farm ploughin', but I still stuck up for bein' an aristocrat. We reached the Vatican, and after all the blowin' we had heard, I was somewhat disappointed with the outside look of the place. It was large, but the whole thing seemed in need of a good washin'. When we got inside, I saw that things was a little better fixed up than we thought at first. We struck into several long halls, and I could not help noticin' that our Yankee friend seemed to have somethin' the matter with him. Every little while he would have a spasm, roll his eyes up, clasp his side and look awful. I began to think that the poor feller had heart disease, and felt sorry for him. He seemed so awful bad at last, that says I: Young man, you had better sit down for a few minutes, and take some of this cordial I have, (I always carry a small bottle of brandy in case I should be took with spasms). O! Mrs. Cannister,

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says he, it is not sickness, but the effect produced upon a sensitive nature, by the wonderful works of the great masters. When he had said this he gasped, nearly emptied that ere bottle before you could say Jack Robinson, and seemed to gaze at the statutes. Well, says I, if lookin' at these bits of tom foolery (I was bilin' mad) has that effect upon you, you had better go to hum as soon as you can, and I think these masters you talk about had very little to do spendin' their time makin' such heaps of trash as we see about here. Why, Mr. Brown, if you can believe me, the whole place seemed filled with hundreds of marble statutes—and such "statutes." Some standin' around on one toe, some spearin' fish, some playin' with snakes, some with one arm off or a leg gone, and amongst the whole lot hardly enough clothes to make a dress for any respectable woman. Oh, but I was bilin' mad to think that I had been brought to such a place. However that ere Yankee chap got me calmed down a little, and said that he would show us some of the particular sights. Now says he, we stand before—I think he called it the statute of Mr. Paul Bellviderey—said by conneysowers to be the finest statute on the face of the earth. Well says I, Mr. Paul Bellviderey may be a nice enough feller, but when he goes again to the marble cutters to get his statute took, I would advise him to put on more clothes, and instead of having such a milk and water look on his face, look like a man. And if he were my boy, I should make him get his hair cut. Some people standin' near began to laugh at what they heard me say, but I didn't care for my dander was up, and I turns right round and says, if Pauly Bellviderey was my boy I would set him at farmin' for a while, and he would be a great sight better feller. The Yankee chap next took us to see some statutes made by a Mr. Canopener, or Canoverer, I forget which.

Look says he at this magnificent Pursuse, that godlike face, that perfect man. I got madder nor ever, for the statute he was a talkin' of was that of a dandified chap, who looked like one of these very delicate dolls of clerks in some of the stores—too nice to sile his hands. He had forgotten his clothes too, and was standin' there with nothing but his hat on. I don't suppose he would have had that, had he not been afraid of catchin' cold in his head—for that Vatican is jest a terrible place for drafts and is damp. Says the Yankee, what a pity it is, people of the present day can't appreciate high art. The Greeks were far, far ahead of us. Now says I, I am jest ashamed to hear you talkin' like that, for if you call this high art, I'm a kinder glad I ain't got no taste. Give me a seventy-five cent plaster cast of an angel with a big pair of wings, like we've got in our parlor to hum, and it will knock the spots off any of your Paul Bellvidereys. And talk about your sim-mit-trical figures and godlike noses, Why I believe that if your Mr. Perjuice was to have on a pair of top boots, overalls, linen duster and ten cent straw hat, he would not look any better nor any farm lad. I'm not quite sartin he'd tech some of the boys near Ile Springs for looks. I had the Yankee there, and he did not seem to like my remarks, but I didn't care. He kept us on the move, and I was gettin' sicker and sicker of the whole menagerie, and as for John, why bless you, the old man was completely tuckered out. The more statutes we came across, the more there seemed to be left, and they were in all positions except standin' on their heads. What fools the Greeks must have bin thought I—nothin' to do but make a lot of statutes with high falutin' names. As for busts of ugly critters, who are a great sight better dead and buried if like the originals, there was whole heaps on 'em, and none had no eyes, and it's jest as well for they would

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have got might tired of lookin' round at sech a ridiculous show. There was one big chunk of dirty marble our Yankee friend nearly had a fit over. He called it the "Hercoolian Torsar," whatever that is. This says he is the famous fragment that Mr. Mike Angelow got his inspiration from, and worshipped all his lifetime. Well says I, your friend Mike was jest as big a fool as we have nowadays, and what he could see to worship there, is more nor I can tell. We have heaps of stones a great sight prettier nor that in the ten acre field behind our old barn at Ile Springs, and if we had not sold the farm, John was to had 'em blasted this spring. I'm afraid Mr. Angelow must have been a little light in his upper story. From his name I suppose he was Irish, and its jest as I've often told John, the Irish always are a little light headed, and no doubt when Mike had his crazy spell comin' on, he thought this "torsar" was the blarney stone and Irish like fell in love with it. Another group was called Layocoon. Why it got this name is ahead of my time, because there was no coons there as I could see, and I was too independent to ask that Yankee feller for information. There was an old farmer with snakes all around him and two boys. The snakes wasn't in their boots, for they hadn't any on. I guess the three of them were havin' a pretty rough time of it, for the snakes were ropin' them. I don't jest exactly know how the fight was to end, but thinks I to myself them snakes is foolish if they swallow the old man, for he looks jest as tough and gristly as a ten year old rooster, and it would take a camel to digest him. We went flyin' around and around, seein' this group and that, when the Yankee said we had not yet seen the Cistern Chapel. I was a kinder thirsty, and as I always drink soft water to hum, thought I might get a drink there. So off we went. When we got there, I

did not see any cistern, but did not say anything about the drink, as I was independent as usual. The walls were all daubed up, and in my opinion were badly in need of a good coat of whitewashin', and I said as much to our guide. As usual he nearly had a fit at my suggestien, and seemed a kinder insulted. Why says he, here we have some of the finest paintings in the world, paragorical pictures, which are marvellous. I took a good squint at these things he was blowin' about, and could see nothin' but a lot of daubs of blacksmithy lookin' fellers, with big legs and arms, and the whole pile on 'em lookin' as cross as sticks and generally upset like. There were other pictures of men flyin' on clouds, and hangin' on stars by one toe. The whole thing put me a good deal in mind of circus pictures, only there was no clown, and the colors wasn't half so bright and nice. The worst of it was the paintin's looked like circus bills half torn off a fence, and dabbed with splashes of mud. A good coat of clean paint is what I would advise, says I. The Yankee was awful mad at this, and says I guess there ain't no use showin' you any more, for you hardly appreciate high art. No, says I, we don't—and I'm proud of it. We were pushin' along for the front door pretty lively, when I sees a fancy dressed feller a loafin' in one of the halls. What's that monkey in clothes, says I? Oh, one of the Papal Zonaves, says the Yankee. Well says I, I am goin' to give him a bit of advice for his master. I couldn't go the Italian, but thought it didn't make any difference, so walking up I said in as mild a voice as possible. Young man, I wish you would tell Mr. Pope that he should be ashamed of himself, for having such a disgraceful place as this, and the sooner he gets all this rubbish cleaned out the better. If he wants to get the walls whitewashed, I'll give him a receipt out of the Weekly GLOBE, (I wanted to

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be generous), and I hope he'll take the advice of a decent sensible woman. I'm not exactly friendly to Mr. Pope, you can tell him, as I don't hold him on religion, I being a Primitive, but them's only matters of opinion. With this the man looked up, and at once I recognized Patrick Butler, the very same Irish emigrant who stole a horse from us in Ile Springs two years before. He knew me in a minute, and jest took to his heels as hard as he could go, and I after him; but it wasn't no use, and I had to sit on a seat and jest take a small dose of the cordial to revive me. Jest then John came up, and asks what's the matter? I told him, and asked where the Yankee chap was. Oh, says he, he has gone round the corner to get a bill changed, so that I can give the servant at the door a quarter. I lent him my pocketbook, and he'll be back in a minute. John Cannister, says I, you've been taken in clean, and done for. How much money had you in your pocketbook? A thousand dollars, says he, but why did you ask. Why says I, you're gulled, completely swindled, he'll never come back. And sure enough he didn't, and we had a sweet time before we got things straight again. Since that time I've held my own opinions of fellows who profess to study high art. There ain't no use tellin' you how we got through our little troubles and adventures amongst the Italians, and how we lost nearly all our money when we came back to Canada, but we are far happier as we are. Without wishin' to make any personal remarks, Miss LeClerque, I may say that I have my own ideas about people who go into fits over the Vatican Statues and high heart, and I never liked that Yankee chap from the moment I first set eyes upon him.

The old lady stopped talking, and thus ended her story of the Vatican Statues.

### GRANDFATHER'S CORNER.

#### CARACAS.

Leaving Curacao with regret, our Canadian correspondent, writing from Caracas, tells how he reached it, and what he saw, and we must let him pursue his narration in his own style:—

Our course held along the coast of Venezuela, yet in view of the Leewards, Buen Ayre and others of the group. On the morning of Saturday, we were enticed on deck to gain the earliest and best view of the approach to La Guira, or La Guaraza, as it more often appears upon our maps. Looking first out of my cabin window, I withdrew my head with haste and amazement, for it seemed as if we had run against a mountain. There were the northern Andes rising above us, a sheer precipice to the height of 6,000 feet. No similar instance of precipitous mountains can be found so near the water's edge, although on a smaller scale Capes Trinity and Eternity, on the Saguenay, and the huge Rock of Gibraltar, approach this spur of the Andes in sublimity and over-awing magnitude. Humboldt, who knew the Alps, the Himalayas, the Rockies, and the main Andes themselves, nowhere saw so sheer a height. We landed on the stone pier of La Guira, the hottest port, Aden perhaps excepted, in the world, all the year round. The town, with a population of 30,000, we found built tier upon tier, on the mountain side, and the owners of the dwellings had been forced to excavate from the soft rock not only house room but the very steps leading to their doors, upon which they toiled daily, many of them to a height of a thousand feet or more. The sun never shines upon these homes, nor does it upon much of La Guira, but it is not needed when all desire the shade. How hot it is I cannot tell. Think of Hades, and guess the rest. The people were forced, however, to build upon this mountain side,

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because there is no room elsewhere, the overhanging mass of rock crowding the city into the sea. The houses, one storey in height, are built of mud and sun-dried brick, smoothly plastered and beautifully painted. There was a delicious greenery in some places, nevertheless, for several squares, with palms and bamboo groves about them, decorate the city.

Our first reception at the hands of the citizens, recalled early acquaintance with the most impressive heroes of the Arabian Nights. We have found the Forty Thieves in personæ. We had to pay 40c. to land, 40c. to have our trunks conveyed to the customs, 40c. to have them weighed, and a final 40c. to have them taken to the Mountain Railway Station, and all this amidst forty scents of unknown varieties. Forty negroes and more than forty Spaniards beset us, selling us papers, tickets and other authorized means of extortion, accompanied by a grab game which bereft us of our baggage, and made its recovery a trial of patience, perseverance and policy. We got off with an expenditure of \$1.40 each, for our impedimenta were not numerous, but others less or more lucky in their professions, were mulcted \$4 to \$6 each. The day was Sunday, the chief working day of the week, and all were agog with business bustle. The Customs Officer had a proper eye to Sabbath observance, and wouldn't examine our baggage until Mangana, Old To-Morrow, and we had to stay over night at his brother's Hotel. What hotel life we saw! But I need not describe it here, for La Guýra is but a smaller Caracas. The heat was intense, for the savage mountains seemed to shut it in to smother us. So we took the train for Nacuto, three miles away along the coast, a narrow strip ten rods wide serving as a road-bed for the road running between the lofty cliffs and the Caribbean Sea. This town is the fashionable watering place of Car-

acas, and is the Newport of Venezuela. The tramway was built by a German company, and is noted for nothing more than its ramshackle cars, small engines and narrow gauge. We enjoyed the first view of the precipices, nevertheless, and the beautiful luxuriant groves of banana, plantain and cocoanut palms covering every open space of ground. So excessive is the growth of vegetation here, that the uncultivated parts are impenetrable, and trees are so thickly matted with leaves, branches, climbers and parasitic plants, that you are unable to see through them, as you would through so many house-roofs. Tall cocoanut palms sway aloft their crown of leaves, and drop their ripened fruit, and on any one tree you may see leaves, buds, blossoms, green, ripened and even decayed fruits and withered leaves, hanging side by side. All seasons seem to be gathered upon one branch—birth, life and decay are side by side, and there is an eternal spring. Nacuto we found to be a delightful place, and one can never forget its beautiful parks, in which we found palms, ferns, mangroves, olives, oranges, bananas and mahogany trees, spreading and intermingling their foliage to overshadow all. Nothing penetrates here, and nothing is more welcome than the sweet and cooling sea breeze. Like Laguyra, Nacuto is crowded between the mountain and the sea. We went to the baths, built of stone, and protected by barricades against the incursion of sharks from the sea. A low stone wall separates the men from the women, and our northern eyes saw the strange sight of male and female bathers, wearing trunks in some instances, but more generally destitute of all clothing; but custom has never regarded this as improper, and the sexes remain practically and mutually invisible the one to the other. We speedily procured bathing suits, and immensely enjoyed our first salt water bath in

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the Caribbean Sea. The water was quite warm, and it was hard to realize that this was in January.

As evening approached, we set out to walk to Laguyra, and found it soothingly cool under the shade of the mountain wall, with lithe palms above us, and auriferous stone as a road-bed. Before we reached our destination, a mist arose from the sea and enveloped us, and I who had been nearly suffocated with the heat of the day, was soon shivering with the damp and cold atmosphere. So are bred miasmatic fevers, and so has Laguyra come to be regarded as the incubator of the worst fevers the world has known. On Monday we took the train for Caracas, which lies on the mountains six miles from Laguyra. The railroad was built by a German company, and overcame engineering difficulties which at one time seemed to render its construction impossible. Imagine how these difficulties have been overcome, when I tell you that the distance of six miles from the port to Caracas is covered by a road thirty miles in length—so numerous are the sweeping curves. The train, which makes two trips a day, comprises a strongly built engine and three small coaches. There are brakes multiplied by brakes to prevent a catastrophe, and the track is built of rails forty-two inches apart. We set out upon a grade at an angle of 45 degrees, as steep as the roof of an average house. Astonishing as was this exploit, it was excelled only in the curvature. At no one moment could we fail to see the engine almost beside us, tugging and puffing, with its grunt of "Rip! Rip! Rip!" Below us a precipitous chasm of 3,000 feet, above us an incline which it seems impossible to ascend. The height is dizzy, the depth unfathomable. We hurry over it, we plunge into it, we reach the top of one grade, and are hurled scarcely dragged down another, at a maddening pace. We turn a tortuous curve,

shriek through a suffocating tunnel, roll into a narrow opening, pass a signal house into a bamboo grove, and then go on with the steam created grunt of "Rip," puffing, panting, tugging until we tire of the excitement, and look across the intervening valley to the towering peaks of verdant life. We are not yet atop. We wind six times around one peak, and then plunge into another tunnel. And yet the peaks show thousands of untravelled yards yet to be covered. We enter nine tunnels, though a dozen times we wind past the track we have just struggled over, and the chain seems endless. Suddenly steam is shut off, brakes are grimly and tightly set, and down into the valley of Cachoa we plunge, at seemingly endless speed, and stop only at the station of Caracas, whence we are soon rattling along a narrow dirty way, over street tram-tracks towards our hotel. We pass hideous houses of one storey, with no opening on the street, but entered by deep narrow doorways, and lit up after a fashion by barricaded windows. We pass too natives dark, gloomy of aspect, scantily dressed, barefooted, negro-shinned and dirty. And from these scenes of squalor there bursts upon our view the Plaza Bolivar, truly magnificent in every point, and filled with multitudes of fine carriages, many fair dames, and southern cavaliers.

For a few days we remained at the Hotel for which we were bound, and afterwards removed to a Boarding-house, where we found a varied company of first-class people, and had ample opportunity to become familiar with Venezuelan life. A few words as to Caracas. In 1815 it was destroyed by an earthquake, but one house having been left standing, and it although wrecked was repaired, is now a comfortable hotel, and is much respected for its age, having already survived a century and a half. The valley of Cachoa, in which the city is situated, is seven



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miles long, three broad, and is undulating throughout. It is completely surrounded by magnificent mountain scenery, capped by clouds formed from the mists which rise in from the sea. To the north, the mountains rise some four thousand feet above the level of the valley, and we are looking upon them under aspects varying with every hour. When covered by the clouds of silver and grey which crown them, or roll down their green steep sides, or where torriential forces have grooved and wrinkled the slopes, you have a picture which the northern eye surveys with delight. Ever and anon a cloud sits on the peaks, then lowers to the bosom of the Andes, leaving the pinnacles open to the fierce sun of the tropics. In the centre of the valley lies the low flat-housed city of Caracas, stretching from cliff to cliff at its broadest, but not extending eastwards and westwards far enough to occupy more than half of the available space. To the west are beautiful green plantations of banana, coffee, cocoa, cocoanut and oranges; to the eastward are parks, drives, plantations, race course and cemeteries. The population of the city is 90,000. Half of the inhabitants are negroes, while a third are Venezuelan, Spaniards, and the remaining portion are of various origin, but it would be safe to say that negro blood tinges the whole. The earthquakes, which are frequent and destructive, have taught everybody caution, and the houses are nearly all of a single storey. The walls are about two feet thick, and built to crumble rather than to tumble, and are composed of sun-dried bricks, mud, stones and clay, plastered over with a smooth mud concrete, and painted in various colors, a gloomy grey predominating. The bars of the windows project to the peril of passers by, and the doorways are yawning and forbidding. Few openings are on the street, and frequently but one solid line of gloomy low walls

greets the eye of the stranger. The roofs are covered with red, dirty, rusty clay tiles of a hundred years ago. To a northerner, the aspect of the city is flat, ugly, dense, dirty, forbidding. Some of the streets are narrow enough to prevent people to shake hands across them, while the sidewalks are of concrete, just wide enough for two passengers, until a window projecting, as all do, or an obtrusive lamp-post bars or narrows the way. But notwithstanding these apparent obstacles to all comfortable progress, tram-cars, of Curacao size and appearance, thread the city on many of the streets, and foot passengers and carriages throng the highways. Negroes clad in calico or unbleached cotton, bearing burdens upon their heads, and incessantly smoking cigars, elbow each other and talk in loudest tones. Richly, even if not tastefully dressed Spanish señoritas and señoras, are occasionally met coming from mass. Every woman paints her black or olive face in a disgusting manner, an inch thick, from the bridge of the nose downwards. Some of the señoritas are pretty, and luxuriously arrayed in silks, satins, laces, diamonds and Parisian shoes. But these are rare. Spanish Dons, with negro blood, fine handsome fellows, very often intelligent, polished and companionable, are frequently met in society, turn out dressed in the height of last year's European fashion, with silk hat, Prince Albert coat, patent leather shoes, collars, ties and cane all complete. Carriages by hundreds, nay thousands, pass and repass, filled with these finely dressed, darkly handsome men and women.

Every person is polite and well behaved, and none is seen in an intoxicated condition upon the street. All are honest, agreeable and cheerful in appearance, but beneath this pleasant exterior there is a hot-blooded discontent that is worth fearing. In another letter I hope to tell more of the people.

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### NATURAL HISTORY NOTES.

BY W. YATES.

Many farmers in this Township suffered much loss from the depredations of field mice that harbored in the corn stooks, as the same were left starling to dry in the fields last fall.

And after the winter snow fell, the rodents resorted to nibbling the bark, under the snow line of young shade trees, as well as fruit trees. Maple saplings, beeches, June berries, (the Amelanchier), have been in innumerable instances effectually girdled, and will die from the cause. The trees of the above description in many instances that have been saved, were such as had been previously protected by loose cylinders of sheet iron, tin, or tarpaper, surrounding the tree base 12 or 18 inches above the ground surface.

Even in the wild woods the same mischief was carried on through the winter, and thickets of maple trees, etc., were partly destroyed. But rather more surprising was the way that wild shrubs having an acrid and pungent flavored bark, such as the leather-wood and hamamelis, or witch hazel, being similarly denuded.

Have the rodent tribe medicinal instincts in swallowing these nauseous substances?

Dogs, as we all know, occasionally resort to eating the leaves and stems of the Mayweed, it is supposed as a cathartic, and where the Cardinal flower grows abundantly, in wild boggy situations, the poppy smelling seed Racemes, are extensively bitten off in the autumn by rambling cattle, and similar erratic or abnormal appetites, such as horses, sometimes show by eating greedily at certain times the resinous coarse leaves of the common Burdock!

And may there not be a similar selective tendency in the well known habit of Bovines, to pasture for one or two days in the early spring on the leaves of the wild

garlic, or Canadian Leek. This food substance rids the animals partaking it of the numerous parasites that ill wintered cattle are frequently annoyed with. This species of food seems as deterrent to cattle lice as is the mephiticism of *M. Mephitica* to the enemies of that quadruped.

The Rodents too are all of them much bothered by the attacks of wood ticks, which fasten on burrowing animals, or those that domicile themselves among rotten wood (as in tree hollows). Said ticks are careful to fasten on their victim in places difficult of access to the teeth, or paws, or claws of their unwilling post, as back of the ears, about the neck, under jaw, etc.

The groundhog, the various species of squirrel, and wild rabbits particularly, at the end of winter are rarely quite free from the presence and injuries of these sanguinary pests. And when snows are deep, the hare and rabbit frequently live much on the leaves of the swamp cedar, or on the bark of the bitter willow, which food substances though perhaps only resorted to in time of extreme hunger, necessarily impart their acridity to the bodily consuming animal tissues.

Yet the Ruffed Grouse on similar extremities, is known to resort to the berries of the poisonous dogwood.

And the bird's flesh is believed to prove poisonous to the human stomach at such contingencies, although to the bird the berries seem innocuous!

Many of the large horned Owls trapped in winter, are infested with swarms of winged ticks, about the size of the domestic house fly.

This at a season when the owl is supposed to pass the most of their time in hollows of large decaying trees, where rotten wood is one of their main encamping substance.

By the rodent mice depredations, we learn to have more toleration for the Raptorial birds, and for

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wasels, minks, etc.

The checks and balances are an integral part of the whole.

There are "necessary evils," and perhaps good and evil are only terms of comparison, as one or other energy obtains preponderance.

There are compensating errors, evil perhaps is good in the process of making.

Or in a nascent state the deep snows prove the rodent (mice's) Sebastopol, and owls go to barns, or else emaciate!

---

Miss Geddes, who was rather seriously burned at Beechgrove, is making satisfactory progress.

\* \* \* \* \*

Mr. Edward Gilmour and Miss Bella Convery were married on May 23rd, 1898. This couple are extremely popular, and have many well wishers about Rockwood. Mr. Gilmour was presented with a handsome chain by his fellow officials, and at the presentation made a feeling address.

Miss Trendell, who left Rockwood at the end of May, was the recipient of two beautiful presents, one from the Officers the other from the general Staff. The presents took the shape of a chaste and dainty silver service.

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