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THE PROVINCIAL.

HALIFAX, FEBRUARY, 1852.

FEBRUARY.

"Winter shod with fleecy snow,
Who cometh white and cold and mute."

Is fully realized during the reign of February. We have now the intense cold, the concentrated strength of the frost-king—who feels that his empire will not be of much longer duration, so rules while he may with a tyrant's power. The crisp snow rattles under the footstep, and the blue frosty sky has the cold glimmer of the eye that belongs to a hard heart. There is nothing now in nature that we can sympathize with. All is grand, even beautiful, but cold hard, cruel in its majesty. It is the most trying month of the year to the poor; the demand for fuel has almost exhausted their slender means. Few know of the suffering and hardship experienced by many of their number during this inclement season of winter, although within the last few years it has been locally ameliorated by the benevolence of District Visiting Societies, so indefatigable in their exertions for the relief of the destitute. There is still however, much privation and want both in the country and town, and more in February than at any other season. We all begin to weary of winter in this month, and long for some change in the face of nature. The amusements entered into with so keen a zest at the commencement of the year, are losing their relish, and we desire once more to behold the sunny skies, and feel the gentle breezes of a warmer season. We must, however, have patience yet—there is many a frosty day and long keen night before us, ere we can hope for spring—so we must e'en make the best of the present time, and enjoy what it has treasured up for us.

Mrs. Sigourney calls winter

"The jewel keeper of the heary north
With revenue more rich than sparkling diamonds."

And Allen Cunningham tells us

"It is a happy time—God gives the earth repose,
And earth bids man wipe his hot brow.
The poet pours his rhyme, and earth awakes."

With such high authorities as these, shall we think of the weariness or gloom, and not rather dwell upon the beauty and sublimity. Numb fingers, blue lips and red noses, must all be disregarded as highly unpoetical, and instead of hurrying, shivering to bed, we should think of the imagery on the window pane, and the bright peerless stars, sparkling in the midnight's frosty crown. Poetry aside, however, it is best to take the brightest view of the case, and bear cheerfully what only time can amend. Like joyous Barry Cornwall, let us smile

"When winter nights grow long
And winter winds blow cold,
And we sit in a ring round the warm hearth-fire,
And listen to stories old."

And after all is there a happier time than when we gather round the bright fire-side, with those we love best and talk over the gossip of the day, or conjure up some memory of those dear old times which seen through the vista of the past, seem so bright and fair that we love to linger upon the remembrance, and jot down every tiny item in the spirit's own treasury. The path we have trodden had many lovely flowers by its wayside, and though they may be faded now and withered, it is pleasant to recal them one by one, in the bright fire light of a February evening, and to talk of things and scenes long passed away, with those who knew and participated in them with ourselves.

And for the solitary, where can he find such a field for imagery, for quaint fancies and stirring dreams as in the glowing embers of a winter fire. Who has not conjured up from the living coals, some old memory of things that were, and seen departed faces and long lost smiles far down in those bright recesses on the hearth-stone. Who has not shaped forth some bright and beautiful dream for the future from the same source, till the spirit has been led away captive and chained for hours to the baseless fancy. The imagination has no such scope in summer, with all its beauty and softness and sunshine. "The spirits of the fire" have a more potent spell, and so we say with Kirke White—

"Drear February,
With no unholy awe we hear thy voice,
As by our dying embers safely housed,
We in deep silence muse."

But we lose ourselves in the labyrinth of poetry in which we are involved, and must give the spirit of quotation a check, else we shall make our *shortest* the *longest* month in the Calendar, which we are unwilling to do, although in the present year one day is added to its number. Why the year in which this occurs should be called *leap* because it contains one day more than the others, is a fact we are unable to elucidate, but the origin of the term *bissextile* generally applied to the fourth year is more apparent.* When

* For this information we are indebted to a P. E. Island journal, published at Charlotte Town, in which Astronomical and other scientific subjects have recently been popularly treated.

the Calendar was reformed by Julius Caesar, his decision was, that the months should contain alternately, thirty and thirty-one days—with the exception of February, whose ordinary number was to be twenty-nine, a more convenient form for the memory than it now obtains : every fourth year the intercalary day was inserted between the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth days of February, and the twenty-fifth being the sixth day before the calends of March, as the Romans computed time, the odd day was reckoned as two sixth days before the calends, or according to the latin *bissexto*, and hence our word bissextile.

Leap year has long been set apart as the ladies perquisite year, when the softer sex may usurp the privileges of the sterner, and instead of being selected have the power to select. Why or wherefore the idea was originated, we cannot inform the curious reader, but as we never heard of its being put in practice, we fear the traditional right has never exercised much influence over the disposal of the fair ones of creation, and unless Mrs. Bloomer insists upon the ladies soliciting their own yoke-fellows, as another item in their catalogue of "rights," it is more than probable they will never avail themselves of the privilege. Be this as it may, it is a popular belief that more marriages are celebrated in leap year than any other—and decidedly the many bridal in Nova Scotia during our past bissextile, might go to confirm the opinion. And if indeed the majority of our countrymen be more inclined to "marriage than celibacy," while on the subject of leap year, may we be allowed to hope the present one will be as successful as its predecessors.

There is no festival we believe peculiar to February, celebrated in our provinces, if we except that of the fourteenth, St. Valentine's day, and this is now but a gala-time with the very youthful of our population. There is we believe, no authenticated reason why this Saint should have been selected as the presiding deity over ditties of love and admiration, but her rule, for "Punch" tells us St. Valentine was a lady, is a very ancient one, and acknowledged in many lands, both in the old and new world.

Several thousands of letters pass annually on this day through the different Post Offices elsewhere ; and here in these provinces, our own postmen have a busy time. It is a day anxiously expected by the "rising generation," and many a dormant feeling of vanity and affection is first awakened by the perusal of some Valentine, supposed to be the production of a more than common favorite. These epistles, however, are not always complimentary or kind : on the contrary they are often selected as vehicles to convey some rather unpalatable truth, and expressions more akin to contempt than love, breathe out upon the page. Others again, are accompanied by some valuable proof of esteem, of course anonymously, and on these occasions—the Valentine is most welcome. Of late years there has been a great improvement in the appearance of these missives. The Stationers import a vast supply of really tasteful and elegant paper for this purpose, and those who are not *poets by nature*, can have the

deficiency supplied, by purchasing the literature with the stationery. This being convenient to the buyer and profitable to the seller, seems a very excellent arrangement, and the recipient of the touching strain, must not be expected to value it less, from the consideration that it was *paid for!* Long ago, in the time of knighthood and chivalry, Valentine's day was a most momentous one. Then, a lady had to accept for her true knight and champion through the coming year, him who should first proclaim himself her Valentine, under her easement in the early morning, and he was entitled to the high reward of a kiss from the lips of his chosen ladye. In Sir Walter Scott's novel of the "Fair Maid of Perth," there is a description of the old custom, which seemed then to be observed with almost a religious deference. In these degenerate days, however, when woman is *obliged* to stand up for her "*rights*" and take to "*Bloomerism*" in *self defence*, we can expect no such observance, the good old custom has now changed into a holiday for children, and the darts and flames and cupids are all launched at the defenceless hearts of seven and eight! With a sigh for the good old times of champions and chivalry, we must hasten to a termination of our gossip on February.

The iron chain of winter as we said before is now at its strongest. We have heavy falls of snow, and deep, impenetrable drifts—but the tinkle of sleigh bells rings out through the busy streets, while the bright eyed children gather in merry groups, and coast with the reindeer's speed down the snowy steep. We have become accustomed to winter, and therefore his blasts do not prevent our participation in out-door exercises and amusements. The skater, yet glides noiselessly over the shining lake, and the warm furs of the gay sleighs shelter merry forms as they speed in numbers over the smooth crisp snow. Concerts or lectures, balls or social gatherings, aid in making the long evenings pass pleasantly away, and much amusement and instruction may be enjoyed and stored, through the present month. With all its drawbacks, it has yet many pleasures, and one of its most pleasing reflections is that the strength of winter is weakened and passing away. We can bear with the noisy winds, and the drifting snow flakes, as we remember we are nearing the Spring. The days are growing longer, and even now we have some faint indications of "the good time coming." The present, though a chilling, is an intellectual season. Thomson speaks of

"The joyous winter days,
When sits the soul intense, collected, cool,
Bright as the skies, and as the season keen."

And here again the poet is correct, the mind is braced for action as well as the body, and thought is more vigorous beneath the influence of frosty skies. The keen air gives an impetus to the imaginative faculties, and the long still evenings are more conducive to literary pursuits, than any other period.

We see then, that winter has its uses and blessings, causing the blood to circle more healthfully through the veins, and the streams of thought to flow

with a bolder tide. So we bid farewell cheerfully to the last month of "fierce, deep unbroken winter," mindful of its pleasures and thankful for its good, freely acknowledging that though its skies are cold and its mantle white and frosty, we have experienced many enjoyments and blessings during the dominion of February.

HALF HOURS WITH OUR POETS.

FROM the noisy din of this busy and practical world, where strife and toil seem the necessary accompaniments of our existence, it is pleasant at times to turn aside, and hold commune with the gentle spirit of Poetry, that keeps her shrines and altars ever open for the worshipper, whose devotion will lead him to a pilgrimage. Despite the almost proverbial remark, that "ours is not a poetical age," there are many who love and reverence the unseen deity, and hold repeated companionship with her. In our Province for its numbers this would seem to be especially true, although from the reluctance of some writers to give their productions to the public, the prevalence of this taste may not be so generally known. Though Nova Scotia has not added a star to the bright galaxy, whose names are of immortality, she has given many a wild flower to the wreath of song, from the unpretending number, whose strains have gladdened the household, and appealed to the heart by their full knowledge of the joys and sorrows of human life. The Poet has been called "the prophet of the universe, the minister of nature and the interpreter of beauty," each of these high callings he nobly fulfils.—The lowliest devotee that ever laid an offering on the unsullied shrine of poetry, when his mission was sincere, and the tribute heartfelt and earnest, has already done something for the elevation of his race, and whispered though it may be in feeble words, of that universal bond of brotherhood which unites humanity. In the land where poetry is revered, there truth and sympathy will more prevail. It is then pleasing to know that young and uncultured as our country is considered, this beautifier of life and solacer of sorrow, has been appreciated; and we hope that the names of many who have given evidence of their labour and love in the cause and for the spirit of poetry, will become "household words" to the homes and hearts of their posterity. Since the columns of the Provincial are opened for the development of the intellectual, as well as the industrial resources of the Provinces, it may be our pleasant task to submit in the present and succeeding numbers, a few examples of the diversified poetical talent to which we have referred. Many who once gave utterance to those "wellings up of fancy," are now with the dead, but their verses still live as their sweet memorials, and from these scattered sources we have selected a few brief

specimens of the various fugitive compositions, the perusal of which tends to make us regret that our acquaintance with them is not more extensive. We have also a goodly number of living writers to bring before our readers, minstrels to whose lyre we have often listened with pleasure and admiration, as well as thankfulness that Nova Scotia had added so much to the sweetest department of literature. We are indebted chiefly to the weekly journals of past years, for extracts from periodical contributions of the several deceased writers referred to, and hope that though perhaps familiar already to a portion of our readers, they will not be unacceptable in their present shape, as a more permanent record of the literary taste and ability of Nova Scotians.

The first which we give to the reader, is an extract from a poem on Recollection, by Mrs. Cotnam, the wife of an officer of the British army, who subsequently to her husband's death, settled in Halifax, and took charge of the Building in Barrington Street, in which the Legislature of the Province was then held, and since occupied as the Halifax Grammar School. It is evidently the production of a superior mind, and with others, to which limited space forbids the insertion, stamps the writer as a person of refined taste and strong poetic feeling, and the possessor of much genuine ability:—

What Recollection is—Oh! wouldst thou know?
 'Tis the soul's highest privilege below:
 A kind indulgence, by our Maker given—
 The mind's perfection, and the stamp of Heaven:
 In this, alone, the strength of reason lies—
 It makes us happy, and it makes us wise.

What does not man to Recollection owe?
 What various joys from calm reflection flow?
 What but this power—this faculty divine,
 Can Time recall, and make it once more thine?
 By this unaided, mortals could no more
 Review the past, explore the future hour.

What poignant pangs would rend the feeling heart.
 Doomed with the lover and the friend to part—
 If with the object, Memory, too, should fail—
 And dark oblivion draw her sable veil
 O'er every pleasing scene of former love.
 Our present bliss, our future hopes above?

Who could survive a friend's departed breath,
 If all were blank before, and after death?
 What smooths the bed of pain, and brow of care,
 If happy Recollection dwell not there?
 'Tis this alone bids virtuous hopes arise,
 And makes the wakening penitent grow wise.

When joys tumultuous rush upon the soul,
 Or grief or rage its faculties controul,
 'Tis this bids tyrannizing passion cool—
 Calms and resigns the mind to reason's rule:

'Tis this secures the blooming artless maid,
 When false delusive flattery would invade—
 Thus guards the heart 'gainst treachery and surprize,
 And teaches to bestow on worth the prize.

More of interest lingers round the authoress of our next extracts—Grizelda Tonge, great-grand daughter to the lady whose poem we have just given. She was the daughter of Cotnam Tonge, a member of the Bar, and who was elected Speaker of the House of Assembly in Nova Scotia, November, 1805. She was born and passed the greater part of her short life in Windsor, N. S. She is described by persons who knew her, as singularly graceful and elegant in appearance, with much sweetness of disposition and large powers of intellect. While still very young, she went to Demerara to join a portion of her family residing in that Colony, but shortly after her arrival fell a victim to the fever of the climate. She has left behind her many poems, from which space only permits us to make a brief selection, but these will be sufficient to convince the reader, that in Grizelda Tonge her native land of the Mayflower lost one of the sweetest minstrels that ever tuned a harp upon her shores.

The following effusion, addressed to her Grandmother on her 80th birth-day, nearly thirty years ago, is full of exquisite poetry, and the Spenserian measure in which it is written, (the most difficult in our language to manage) by its smoothness and gracefulness, strongly attests the superiority of the writer in mechanical execution as well as poetical excellence :—

How oft from honour'd *Portia's hallow'd lyre
 In tones harmonious this lov'd theme has flow'd—
 Each strain, while breathing all the poet's fire,
 The feeling heart and fertile fancy showed ;
 Oft times, in childhood, my young mind has glow'd
 While dwelling on thy sweet descriptive lay—
 Oh, that the power had been on me bestowed
 A tribute fitting for the theme to pay !—
 With joy I'd touch each string to welcome in this day.

But thou wilt not despise the humble song
 Though genius decks it not—though rude and wild
 Its numbers are ; ah, surely no ! for long
 Thy kindness I have proved ; while yet a child
 Pleased I have sought the Muse, and oft beguil'd
 With her low plaintive tones the passing hour—
 On the young effort thou hast sweetly smiled,
 And reared my mind even as an opening flower—
 Watching, with anxious love, o'er each expanding power.

Oh, more than parent, friend unequal'd, how
 Can I my love for thee confess ? or say
 With what a hallow'd, what a fervent glow,
 I hail thy mental beauty through decay,
 While I thy venerable form survey ?

* The adopted Poetical name of the writer's Great Grandmother.

Though eighty lengthen'd years have scatter'd snow
 Upon thy honor'd head—though sorrow's seal
 Is stamp'd with heavy pressure on thy brow—
 'Thine is an angel's mind! and oh, I feel
 It gives an angel's look which age can never steal.

Thy soul has long been ripening for its God—
 And when He calls it, I should not repine;
 But nature still must mourn—and o'er thy sod
 I know no tears will faster fall than mine—
 I know the bitter anguish that will twine
 Around my heart strings; but the thought is pain!
 I will not think that I must soon resign
 What I can never find on earth again,
 Oh, that blest prize has not been lent in vain!

For I do hope thy firm but mild controul,
 Thy precept and examples, may have shone
 With rays of brightness o'er my youthful soul,
 Which will my pathway light when thou'rt gone;
 And when, before thy Father's mercy throne,
 Thou join'st with myriads in the holy song—
 If it may be, wilt thou on me look down,
 And watch my faltering footsteps, while along
 This busy maze I tread, and guard me still from wrong?

Our concluding extract from the writings of Miss Tonge, was written on her passage to the West Indies, occasioned by recollections of her sisters:—

Three blossoms on a bending bough,
 We long together grew—
 Till Fate, with sternness in her brow,
 Arose, and passed this cruel vow:
 "I'll break these ties so true."

So I—the lowliest flower of all—
 Was severed from the rest;
 And when I heard the final call,
 How many a tear-drop fast did fall
 Upon my parents' breast.

But soon again these drops were dried
 By mercy's mildest ray—
 Which long reflected, shall abide
 A holy beacon, still to guide
 My soul in virtue's way.

For oh, this world is hard to brave,
 Now that I'm all alone;
 And active memory still will save
 Each scene within her secret cave,
 Of days forever gone.

I'm borne along the nighty sea,
 With dangers all around;
 Sweet Sister blossoms, where are ye?
 Still clinging to the parent tree,
 Upon your native ground.

Long may you thus together grow—
 And still Contentment's sunshine know,
 While you expanding rise ;
 And she—the graceful bending bough—
 When God sees fit to lay her low,
 He'll raise her fallen flowers, I know.
 And train them to the skies.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.

In pursuance of our intention to present from time to time, in the pages of this periodical, biographies of British American Colonists, who have attained to eminence at home or abroad, we have in this number given insertion to a sketch of this description, which we hope will be acceptable to our readers. Perhaps no department of literature is more universally interesting than biography. The names of those who have influenced the world by their moral or intellectual force, have always a charm for such as have been within the reach of their celebrity, and a more intimate acquaintance with the motives and realities of their past lives is eagerly sought for by all. No volume is so full of instruction and encouragement—it may often be of warning, as the life of a man who has fought the battle of existence, and left the record of his defects and his triumphs to the judgment of posterity. Bulwer in his inimitable story of "The Caxtons," has the following paragraph on the uses and benefits of biography:—"When some one sorrow, that is yet reparable, gets hold of your mind like a monomania—when you think because heaven has denied you this or that, on which you had set your heart, that all your life must be blank. Oh then diet yourself well on biography—the biography of good and great men. See how little a space one sorrow really makes in life. See scarce a page given to some grief similar to your own—and how triumphantly the life sails on beyond it. You thought the wing was broken! Tut, tut—it was but a bruised feather! See what life leaves behind it when all is done! A summary of positive facts far out of the region of sorrow and suffering—linking themselves with the being of the world! Yes, biography is the medicine here." And then follows that beautiful dissertation on the life of Robert Hall, so adapted to the young soldier and the old hero, both worn and suffering in that hard fierce battle—Life. Biography is also closely connected with the history of the country in which its subjects lived and toiled. The man of letters and science, does more for his land than a victor by force of martial arms. It is mainly by the influence of her great men, that a country rises to eminence in the scale of glory. The British Provinces, from their comparative youth and disadvantages, cannot as yet number many of these; yet there are several names, who have reflected lustre on the land of their birth, and caused the hearts of their countrymen to swell with pride, and some of them we hope hereafter to record in our pages.

In the following brief sketch of the life and productions of a Nova Scotian Artist, it will be seen that Nova Scotia has the honour of being the birth place of one whose pencil has added many valuable pictures to the rich treasury of British Art. We regret that the sketch is so meagre with regard to his

personal history and private life, but as his family connection in this Province is large, such particulars are for the present necessarily omitted.

GILBERT STEWART NEWTON, ESQ., R. A.

The subject of these remarks was born at Halifax, Nova Scotia, on the 20th September, 1749, and was the twelfth and youngest son of the Honorable Henry Newton, Collector of H. Majesty's Customs in this Province. Mr. Newton, at an early age, left Nova Scotia, and after tarrying a few years in the United States proceeded to Europe. He manifested at this period decided evidence of that talent which subsequently elevated him to a very high rank as an Artist. On his first arrival in Europe, in the year 1820, he visited Italy, and there availed himself of the opportunities afforded for studying the productions of the most distinguished Painters; and with enlarged knowledge of his profession he finally took up his abode in London, and entered himself a Student in the Royal Academy. The first works by which he became extensively known, were his "Forsaken" and "Lovers' Quarrel," engraved and published in the Literary Souvenir of 1826; his "Prince of Spain's visit to Catalina," painted for the Duke of Bedford, and engraved for the same work in 1831, and a scene from the Vicar of Wakefield.

Though Newton acquired skill both in drawing and color, and became acquainted with the fine proportions and the harmonious unities of the antique, he was more remarkable for delineations in which beau-ideal drawing had little to do—but expression every thing. He had less inclination for the stern and the severe, than for the soft, gentle, and affecting. He contented himself with painting small pictures, and the subjects which he embodied were either drawn from nature around him or found in the pages of our Novelists and Poets. He excelled in female beauty and expression, indeed in these, few Artists have ever equalled him.

The chief works of Newton were painted while he resided in great Marlborough Street, London, during which time the first circles of society were open to him. To form a correct list of his pictures would be an undertaking of difficulty, for they are dispersed throughout England, and specimens are to be found in many of the select private collections; some are in America, where their simplicity and beauty are highly appreciated. His happiest works are of a domestic and poetic kind—he loved to seek expression in the living face, and moulding it to his own will, to unite it to a fancy of his own. Some of his single figures, particularly those of females, are equal in sentiment and color to any thing in modern Art. They are stamped with the impress of innocence, as well as distinguished by remarkable beauty.

Newton was a slow Painter, and like all others of similar habits, was indebted for every thing to long study and repeated touches. He sometimes received high prices for his works. The Duke of Bedford gave him five

hundred guineas for "the Prince of Spain's visit to Catalina," and Lord Lansdowne paid him the same sum for his "Macheath."

In person, Mr. Newton was tall and well proportioned, he was mild in his manner, a perfect gentleman, and a very respectable scholar.

In Lockhart's Life of Sir Walter Scott, we find honorable mention of Newton, as the friend of some of the most distinguished literary men of the day. Sir Walter in his Diary, speaking of sitting for Portraits, says:—"This is far from being agreeable, as I submitted to that state of constraint last year to Newton, at request of Lockhart; to Leslie at request of my American friend; to Wilkie, for his picture of 'the King's arrival at Holyrood House,' and some one besides." In the Diary also the following passage occurs:—

"Leslie has great powers, and the scenes from Moliere by Newton, are excellent. Yet Painting wants a regenerator—some one who will sweep the cobwebs out of his heart before he takes the Pallet, as Chantrey has done in the sister Art."

About three years before his death he visited America, where he married a young lady of considerable personal attractions. He was elected a Royal Academician in 1834.

Upon his return to England he continued to follow his Profession, but his health, unhappily, soon after failed him, and in consequence of the distressing malady under which he suffered, his labours were entirely suspended.

After a few months illness, he died at Chelsea on the 5th August, 1835, and his remains were interred in Wimbledon Church Yard.

"THE TRUTH, THE WHOLE TRUTH, AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH."

·"Justitia fiat ruat cœlum."

THE discussion of the much mooted point—whether the present generation are wiser than their forefathers—we leave to other and abler hands. It is clear, however, that a restless spirit of change is abroad on the earth. Its waves have rolled onward in resistless fury, till whole dynasties have been overwhelmed amid the surging billows; while the upheavings of society, and the sacrilegious destruction of time honored customs, but too well attest the potency of its spell. What wonder then, that the last few years have witnessed the introduction of numerous innovations—accompanied, no doubt, by many reforms,—but the extent of those reforms, and the amount of good or evil that has followed in their train, must be left to the judgement of after ages.

The genius of the present age is to cut away with indiscriminate zeal, to apply the knife with an unsparing hand to laws and usages, which have been handed down to us, hoary with time, and sanctified by the veneration paid them by our ancestors; as if, in yielding respect to their opinions, we necessarily compromised our own dignity, and stultified our own powers. And yet there are few, if any, who are willing to acknowledge themselves as dogged sticklers for practices which have only antiquity to recommend them. No. The age of chivalry has departed, and the besom of utilitarianism will sweep before it every thing, which cannot return a practical answer to the question—“*cui bonum?*” “Onward,” is the watchword of the present age;—and we would neither stay the march of intellect, nor retrograde our steps; still would we insist that we fly not from the evils we know, to those we wot not of. Let our *furor* be tempered with prudence, and while we differ in opinion from our ancestors, and seek to modify and modernize the usages and laws handed down to us, let us not deem them *all* lilliputians in intellect, or boast that we are *all* giants. That our institutions are not perfect, we frankly admit. That abuses have crept into our polity, and that evils exist which require to be expunged, we as freely acknowledge. But still, change is not always improvement, the remedy may be worse than the disease; and gathering experience from the past, wisdom would bid us pause, lest clumsy hands should mar the fair proportions, or ruthlessly destroy the sacred edifice we seek to beautify and adorn.

The above train of reflections has been suggested by a perusal of the Act to Amend the Law of Evidence, which has recently become the Law of England. And we have asked ourselves, is it wise or prudent—as has been done—to remove all the guards and checks which were interposed in order to preserve the witness box pure, and above suspicion. The great aim of Courts of law, is, to arrive, as nearly as possible, at the truth, and to mete out equity to the parties who present their several claims to be weighed in the unerring balance of justice; and in order that a correct result may be arrived at, it is of the first importance that the mind of the court and jury should be correctly informed of the facts they are required to try.

The mind of man is so peculiarly constituted, that even unknown to himself, and, it may be, in opposition to his wishes, his feelings become interested, and his judgement more or less biased, and these too often lend their coloring to his view of facts. These remarks apply, of course, with ten fold force to the parties whose interests are involved in the question to be decided. This was probably the reason why, until recently, any amount of interest, however small, was sufficient to render a person incompetent as a witness, whether the party would be beneficially affected, or the reverse, by the verdict.

This rule was, doubtless, in many cases oppressive, and worked injustice by shutting out testimony essential to a right adjudication of the question at issue; but it was, nevertheless, for the reasons above stated, the result of an

intimate knowledge of human nature, and a jealous desire on the part of its framers to preserve the stream of justice pure and unsullied. It was thought that where a man's *own* interests were involved, the temptation to benefit himself at the expense of truth, would be great—too great unhappily, in a vast majority of cases, for the selfishness of human nature to withstand; and in the spirit which dictates the prayer “lead us not into temptation,” the framers of our law determined that the testimony adduced in a court of law should not only be pure, but beyond all taint of reasonable suspicion—even if, thereby, private interest might sometimes suffer. Nor did the existence of such a rule presuppose that the testimony of a party interested would always, of necessity, be so base and false as to be unworthy of credit. It was not needful to take so gloomy a view, or to imagine that such would be the result, and that no man could be found, who esteemed a good conscience as of more value than silver or gold. There are doubtless many men of stern integrity, and unimpeachable veracity, who would state “the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth,” let the consequences be what they would; but, unfortunately, there are others of easy virtue, with whom the sanctity of an oath would be a trifle light as air, in comparison with the claims of their own interests. This rule, let who will cavil at it, establishes, beyond doubt, the fact that our forefathers were honest men of upright intentions—*anxious to eschew the least appearance of evil.* We may possess a larger amount of worldly wisdom, but honesty may be the price we have paid for our lore.

Such being the rule, and it having been determined, for very grave reasons, that parties interested should be incompetent as witnesses, it is evident that the rule must be general in its operation, and that it could not possibly determine any amount of interest at which the disqualification should cease. No rule, however cunningly framed, could enter in the merits of each particular case, or search the conscience of each witness as he entered the box, so as to determine whom to receive, and whom to reject. One man, strong in conscious rectitude, scorns the base temptation, while another scruples not to sacrifice on the altar of self interest, obligations the most sacred and binding. A rule, either of law or practice, should be fixed and inflexible—circumstances should bend to it—not it to circumstances.

The inconveniences which, from time to time, arose from this disqualification, at length induced a relaxation of the rule, and by statute it was declared that interest in the matter in question should no longer be a ground for excluding a witness from giving evidence; but that their credibility, and the weight to be attached to their testimony, should thenceforth be determined by the jury, or other persons appointed to try the cause. But this provision was not extended to render competent *the parties to a suit*, or any one in whose immediate or individual behalf an action was brought, or *the husband or wife of such person.*

The above law has introduced a radical change in the rules of evidence, and the parties qualified to give testimony. A disability was removed, which sometimes tended to obstruct the enquiry after truth, and the existence of which was absurd, where the interest was small in amount, and unnecessary when the witness was a person of irreproachable character, and unimpeachable veracity; while with an intelligent jury, the cases in which evils would result, or injustice be done, must be presumed to be rare, from the power they possessed of rejecting the testimony, either wholly or in part—where from the amount of interest, the witness manifested in the result, his known character, or the evident bias of his mind, they had reason to believe that he was deposing to what was false—stating aught in malice, or extenuating aught.

An increased amount of responsibility was thus thrown on the jury,—but not more, perhaps, than the interests of justice demanded, or the public service required,—nor greater than twelve honest men might fairly be called upon to assume.

We come now to consider the Act to amend the Law of Evidence, which has been recently passed,—and by which, in *civil cases*, all restrictions have been swept away; and the parties to a suit, and those in whose behalf it is brought, or defended, are *competent and compellable* to give evidence on behalf of either, or any, of the parties to the suit. This change has only been introduced into the higher Courts of Law in England, within the last few months; and further time and more extended experience is, doubtless, requisite to enable the public to determine how far it will tend to further the ends of justice, or render its administration more satisfactory; but, for ourselves, we confess that we view it with apprehension and distrust, and cannot repress the fear that the evils it will produce, will more than counterbalance the amount of good likely to result from its adoption.

It has passed into a proverb, that a man who is his own lawyer, has a fool for his client; and why is this? Because his feelings become excited—his judgment biased, and he views the facts of the case through glasses strongly colored with the hues of self-interest. And is a man likely to be more impartial—will his feelings be less excited—his prejudices less powerful, or his perception clearer, as he mounts the stand to certify in his own behalf, or in obedience to his opponent's subpoena? How many men at such a moment—eager for victory, or anxious to avoid defeat, will feel the sanctity of an oath, or remember that they have imprecated the vengeance of Heaven on their heads, if they swerve one hair's breadth from the most rigid line of truth? And will not a legal victory be dearly bought if purchased with the price of perjury? And is it wise, for a mere personal advantage, to place a man in such a position, that the excitement of the moment—his feelings and his interests—will throw around him their baneful influence, and cause him to forget that he has sworn to tell *the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?*

We would not have our remarks construed into an insinuation, that truth has winged her flight from our earth; or that honesty and integrity are strangers to the breast of man; but we do say, that the new law of evidence places a great temptation before a frail mortal, and will often force him into an unequal struggle between his sense of duty and of right on the one hand, and the claims of his interests, or the gratification of his passions on the other. Besides, let a man be never so well disposed, yet unconsciously to himself in such a situation, his mind will become warped, and his views distorted, and in such a state the statement he will give of facts, though deemed honest by himself, may nevertheless be strangely at variance with the TRUTH.

That our fears were not groundless, or merely the chimera of a heated imagination, is evident from the fact that recently on one of the circuits in England, the presiding judge ordered no less than six parties to a suit, who had been examined as witnesses in their own causes, to be indicted for perjury; and we read that this summary proceeding has inspired so much terror, that in some instances parties have declined proving their own cases.

This law has been only in operation in England since November last, and it was hardly to have been anticipated, that its mischievous effects would have so soon become apparent, but it indisputably proves, however humiliating, that the claims of a man's private interests, are of paramount importance in his eyes, and which he will secure at any and every cost. When that millennial period in the world's history arrives, in which the golden rule shall be engrafted, not in the moral code alone, but shall become the governing principle of man's life, and regulate his intercourse with his fellow-man, then, may this new law of evidence safely find a place in our statute book; for then—and not till then—may we anticipate that justice will not be subordinate to private interest; and that a party, in detailing his own case, will state neither more nor less than the truth.

This rule goes a step further, and not content with making the parties to a suit competent and compellable witnesses in all except criminal proceedings, renders the husband competent and compellable to give evidence for or against his wife, and the wife for or against her husband. Heretofore the law has considered the identity of the wife as merged in that of her husband, and has absolved her from the responsibility of many of her acts, under the supposition that they were committed under, and by the authority of her husband. But here again we behold the spirit of innovation at work. The old land marks are being levelled; and principles that were considered fixed and immutable, are undergoing a radical change, or being wholly annihilated, till, before long, we may find ourselves afloat upon a sea of doubt, without a rudder to direct our course, or a beacon to warn of approaching danger; and shall scarce know what to receive and what to refuse.

Such a rule may not be out of place where matrimony is looked upon in the

light of a civil contract merely, to be governed by the same rules that regulate civil or mercantile transactions ; but 'tis passing strange that those who look upon " marriage as a matter of more worth than to be dealt in by attorneyship ;" and profess to believe that a married pair " are joined by heaven, each interwoven with the other's fate," should be willing that the harmony and confidence which ought to exist between husband and wife, should be grievously impaired, or totally destroyed ; well knowing that without this,

" Domestic bliss—that only bliss
Of Paradise that has escaped the fall,"

will be searched for in vain in the married state.

Will this new innovation tend to the furtherance of justice, or the eliciting of truth ? or will it not rather give the victory to the hardest swearer, or the most brazen faced woman ? What chance will a timid, retiring, and conscientious female have in comparison with such a one ? May not her very diffidence be taken as proof against her, strong as Hely writ, and her very caution, lest her feelings should betray her into giving an undue coloring to her statements, be construed into an attempt, on her part, at concealment. In future, let no husband make a confidant of the wife of his bosom ; let him not trust her with any secrets which he would not have blazoned before the world ! but let him so demean himself in her presence that she will have nothing to state to his prejudice ; and let him tell her just what will benefit his cause, when she is forced into the witness box to give her testimony against him ! We have seen it stated, but at present we have it only on the authority of newspaper *dictum*, that on the question of the examination of a wife on behalf of her husband, under this Act, Mr. Justice Earle ruled—that the wife is a competent witness for her husband ; but that thirteen, out of fifteen of the Judges, have decided that she is not competent if objected to ; but that if not objected to by the other side, she may be examined. They consider it analagous to a case in which a party tenders an unstamped receipt, when a stamped one is required by law : It may be received, and will be, if not objected to, for a Judge will not volunteer to point out the objection. We shall look with some degree of interest for the report of the case in which the above principle was laid down ; for we confess, that after a careful examination of the law, we cannot perceive the reason which has induced the above modification, adopted by a majority of the Judges.

It has been urged in defence of this law, that it assimilates the common law to the equity practice. But a little reflection will convince that this is not the case. The answer of the defendant in Chancery is taken as an admission under oath ; but is not received as evidence except as *against* himself, or to contradict his testimony in another cause ; and where the answer charges the defendant by the admission of one fact, the plaintiff is not required to prove that fact ; but the defendant must make out by evidence his fact in discharge.

And we know, that where facts, necessary to substantiate a claim, are concealed in the bosom of the defendant, the plaintiff, by a bill of discovery, may compel him to disclose them under oath ; but neither of these cases go to anything like the length contemplated by the law. The admissions of a party are always taken as evidence against himself in every Court ; and a bill of discovery does not enable a party to prove his own case, but merely to obtain the admission of the defendant ; besides which, experience has pretty well established the fact, that the plaintiff seldom gains much advantage from such a bill, however much " the defendant may damage his conscience."

We admit that this law may remedy some inconveniences, and the case of a tradesman presents itself to our mind as an example, whose business may not allow of his keeping a clerk, and who may, therefore, be unable to prove the delivery of goods, and so lose a disputed account. But cases like those of private inconvenience, we submit, are not sufficient to counterbalance the mischiefs likely to flow from the law ; besides which, in the case supposed, other methods of avoiding the evils complained of might be adopted.

We are not prepared to assert that the law might not be so modified as to obviate many of the ill effects we anticipate. Suppose a party were only allowed to be called as a witness for his opponent, and that his testimony were only received as evidence against himself, we would, in this case, have all the benefit which is derived from an answer in Chancery, or a bill of discovery. Or a party might with safety, perhaps, be heard to prove his own cause, if his testimony were not received unless corroborated to some extent at least, by other disinterested witnesses.

We believe that it has been suggested by the Chief Justice of England that where a party to an action is to be examined as a witness, he should be absent from Court until required to give his testimony, and should retire immediately after he has given it ; but however guarded, we shall still look with suspicion on the law, and doubt the necessity for the change, as well as whether the change be an improvement ; but while we thus give our views on the subject, and the reasons which have induced them, we desire to do so with modesty, and with all deference to the opinions of others who have decided in favour of the change, and whose judgment is entitled to far more weight than we can claim.

One word, before we conclude, touching the introduction of the law into these Provinces. It can only be looked upon in the light of an experiment in England ; for though a similar enactment have been in force in the County Courts, yet grave doubts of the usefulness of the law in those tribunals, have been entertained by persons well qualified to judge ; and we would suggest that it would be prudent, at all events, to wait and see how the experiment succeeds in England, before foisting on our law a change which might hereafter be deplored, but which it might then be equally impossible to remedy ; besides, a

couple of years has hardly elapsed since the disqualification arising from interest has been removed, and time has not yet been afforded for judging how that will work, and how it suits the genius of our people. During intercourse with our Courts, we have observed, that a large number of persons who present themselves as witnesses, are singularly careless of the obligations of an oath. A subpoena seems to have a magic influence upon them, and on its reception they all at once become partisans in the cause—anxious, not so much that justice should be done, as for the success of the side which they have espoused. We do not mean to say that in every case, this proceeds from a corrupt motive; but their desires become so strong that they mislead their memories, and so they themselves in turn may mislead a jury. This temperament although it is not confined to Nova Scotia, should lead us to adopt with extreme caution, any change which may have the effect of increasing a crime so baneful to the morals of a people, as that of perjury, but which, we fear, is extending itself too far. The wisdom of our ancestors, and the practice of many countries excluded the testimony of interested persons. Let us be careful that in departing from the course they followed, we rush not into the danger which they sought to avoid, or invite the evils they so carefully eschewed.

THE MINISTER'S COAT.

SCENE—*A Country Parsonage in Nova Scotia.*

Two gospel preachers on a former time
Were met together in the western clime;
One full of patience—so the legend saith,
The other was an advocate for faith;
To this the lines in pleasant places fell,
That in the far off wilderness did dwell.
Tho' zealous both—yet neither had the zeal
To preach a doctrine that he did not feel;
Or any principle as truth propound,
That is not in the sacred volume found;
Some pencil-marks of each disciple's mode,
Court observation in this Episode.

Says patience, Sir, I sorrow and rejoice,
Tho' sorrow certainly is not my choice;
My lot is cast in such a barren sphere,
Experience adds to patience little here,
And hope that would not shame to Paul allow,
Is rather chary of her favours now,
My ministrations often seem unblest,
And my privations are the people's jest:
No evidence of charity is seen,
Amongst us here like what in old has been.
A christian axiom that did once obtain,
Professors now do not pretend to feign—
That those who hear the gospel preach'd should give

Enough at least to let the preacher live ;
 But I—O! sad perversion of such plan,
 Must preach, and live—the best way that I can.
 Yet tho' such trials seriously annoy,
 I have some seasons of exceeding joy,
 And gladness now is in this heart of mine,
 To learn a goodly heritage is thine.
 Health—affluence—peace—and all the blessedness,
 That Heav'n's ambassadors on earth possess,
 Saints to encourage, brethren to bestow
 Counsel in joy, and comfort in your woe ;
 Besides the promises establish'd sure,
 For them that faithful to the end endure.
 Whilst like an exile in the bush I dwell,
 With none to ask, if I am ill or well ;
 Yet in this distant solitary spot,
 Jehovah—shammah may in truth be wrote,
 And surely there is little to desire,
 Where souls are given to pastors for their hire.

My friend, replied the advocate of faith,
 You have forgotten what the Scripture saith ;
 Hence the first lesson that you should have learn'd,
 By want of faith but dimly is discern'd,
 He that would follow me, must take his cross
 And count all earthly privileges dross ;
 Dross when compared with that unfading crown,
 That might by faith already be your own.
 Act faith and ask—and what ye ask believe
 Is yours—and doubtless you shall that receive.
 By faith and self-denial thus we gain
 The happiest state that saints on earth attain ;
 What can you want—or what more would you crave,
 Than in this vineyard of the Lord's you have :
 I see rich dainties, wherewith to be fed,
 In great abundance on your table spread,
 And tho' your raiment is not quite so fine,
 It savours more of vanity than mine ;
 Even in those robes your better-half now wears,
 No self-denial unto me appears,
 And luxuries are seen on every side,
 Far less akin to poverty than pride.
 For all your ills I know no better cure,
 Than just a tithe of what I must endure ;
 Rent costs you nothing—farm and fuel clear—
 Whilst I must pay down sixty pounds a year ;
 And half as much we annually require,
 Just for the single article of—fire.
 Then my position—*Status* if ye will,
 Must be upheld in good report and ill.

Beg pardon, Sir, in evident surprise,
 Said him of patience, where do you *practise*
 That self-denial you have made so free,
 To recommend as excellent to me ?
 Why, sixty pounds! the sixth part of that sum,
 Would pay my bills for six long years to come.
 Strange self-denial, it must be, requires
 Whole thirty more to keep a house in fires ;
 At such a dwelling, would it not be vain,
 For faith itself a moment to remain.

In my opinion (humble it may seem)
 Faith oftentimes is pushed to an extreme,
 And is by Heav'n an instrument design'd,
 Less for the use of matter than of mind,
 And though in language frequently implied,
 Its pow'r on Earth is virtually denied;
 It is a native of another sphere,
 And only comes on special missions here.
 In temp'ral things at least it is restrain'd,
 And Earth's chief blessings are by toil obtain'd :
 'Tis true the lilies never need to spin,
 And yet are clothed—but then they do not sin ;
 But does it follow—bodies such as ours
 Should be obedient to the law of flow'rs ?
 And those that will pervert the Lord's commands,
 Or find a warrant there for " idle hands "
 And ask expecting what they wish bestowed,
 Instead of acting faith are tempting God ;
 Experience teaches, and one fact will show,
 How much to this preceptor I may owe.

What tho' tho' pleasing prospect that we view,
 May promise much, the promise is not true ;
 If " distance lend enchantment " surely here,
 A stranger's vision will not be so clear,
 As theirs that in the settlement abide,
 Attending flocks that's scatter'd far and wide.
 That index to appearances confin'd,
 Must always be of an uncertain kind,
 And in a land like this, where human toil
 Compels the means of living from the soil.
 A thousand acres no criterion gives,
 How he that holds them in fee-simple lives :
 Hence in this quarter various ills arise,
 That chafe the spirit—and the temper tries ;
 Ills that can measure self-denial's height,
 And make faith almost visible to sight ;
 With this for preface I proceed to tell,
 An incident that unto me befell.

The stipend's small this people can afford,
 Where I am call'd to labour for the Lord ;
 Small as it is (and none will say 'tis large
 That know my duties or hath seen my charge) ;
 If it were paid tho' less it would provide,
 What I require, and something more beside ;
 But since disease our produce has destroy'd,
 A fellow-feeling ev'rywhere is void ;
 Whatever ills from poverty arise,
 Still greater these, that apathy implies,
 Where both are found not much is ever stor'd,
 That can be spared to servants of the Lord ;
 Then deem not strange, that as arrears increas'd
 My outer-man the naked truth confess'd ;
 Or that my wardrobe frugal in its prime,
 Show'd the impressions made on it by Time.
 Thro' some mysterious sympathy my Coat,
 (Its age at present is by me forgot)
 Blush'd from a black into a dirty brown ;
 Then at the elbows " grinn'd a ghastly " frown,
 And bye and bye some hapless accident,

One sleeve in rags up to the shoulder rent ;
 I had no other—and you can allow
 That faith and works might be at issue now ;
 I used it still—and surely thought of course,
 Where justice fail'd—necessity would force,
 And had some hopes to see my shame transferr'd
 Unto my hearers—there at least I err'd ;
 Priests saw me oft and Levites not a few,
 But kind Samaritans kept far from view ;
 Nor of my own was there a “two-pence” paid,
 To mend the old—or get a new one made.

With it—not in it—tho' against my will,
 I persever'd my duties to fulfil,
 And tho' I married, visited and preach'd,
 No heart was opened—and no conscience reach'd ;
 All else was seen, applauded, or condemned,
 Except my Coat—it was not even *hem'd*,
 And tho' at first I saw without alarm,
 The tatter'd fragments dangling at my arm ;
 Yet when that signal of distress gave out,
 You will admit that I had cause to doubt,
 The more especially, as day by day
 And week by week, three months had pass'd away,
 But all that time no shadow did I see
 Of coat or stipend coming unto me ;

Then Sir—yes then I candidly avow,
 My wife made this one I am wearing now.

ALBYN.

THE WALTON CLUB.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

JACK HAMPER'S STORY.

Few of our readers, we daresay, have heard of the Walton Club, and we have no intention to write its history. It is still in the enjoyment of a green old age, and has life enough in it, with fair play, to last for the next half century. The object of its members is not to live in the world's eye, or engage much of its attention; but simply to cultivate that quiet and social friendship which the common love of a noble and rather intellectual sport is calculated to promote. Its laws are somewhat peculiar, and are rigidly enforced. Every man who aspires to the dignity of membership, must be able to walk twenty miles at a stretch before breakfast, nor grudge to stand in the water half a dozen hours afterwards; he must be able to dress a hackle, to the satisfaction of a Committee—very finical on the matter; throw a line fifteen yards with one hand, or thirty with both. He must also be able to read an ode in Horace, and know something of Anacreon; carry a shrewd and pleasant temper about with him at all times, and never be above associating with, or cheerfully assisting,

a poor brother angler, should he fall in with him in his travels. Its numbers are thus necessarily few; but we question if the Governor General's Executive Council, or indeed any Council in these Provinces, could turn out a finer set of heads, or a larger number of thoughtful, intellectual, and benignant looking eyes, than brighten the hospitable board of the Venerable President, on each returning birth day of old Izaak Walton. But our object on the present occasion is to introduce to the reader our youngest member, Jack Hamper, a gentleman of excellent parts, but small experience, and whose undertakings have hitherto been any thing but prosperous. As his hopefulness is large and his good nature unbounded, success however is pretty sure to shine upon him one day or other, and whether or not, he bears his misfortunes in the meantime with so much philosophy, and reasons so steadily and closely on each new disaster that he is a kind of living virtue moving in our midst, almost as valuable as the excellent discourses of a certain reverend and revered brother of the craft. At our last meeting it was Jack's turn to tell a story, and he told it so well, and it was really so good, or at least we thought so, that although we could not prevail upon him to put it in black and white himself, after a little demurring he extended that liberty to us. But fully to appreciate it, the reader should have seen Jack while in the act of telling it. He had just discussed a hearty dinner of four courses—the wine was circulating slowly but hospitably, and our hero was at peace with himself and all the world. His head was thrown back upon his chair; his right foot rested upon the knee of his left leg, while his fingers kept beating a quiet and unconscious tattoo upon the supported boot, lying in placid negligence immediately under his large benevolent speaking eyes. Jack looked well; his head was superb, his leg unexceptionable, and though he had been clad in rags—nobody would have mistaken him for anything but what he was, and is—a gentleman. But it is high time that he spoke for himself—and without further ceremony, Jack Hamper *loquitur*.

“Last summer I was instructed to proceed to Prince Edward Island to look after some of our men who took it into their heads to desert in all directions, and as the country people sheltered and concealed them, it was necessary to act with great caution in unearthing the unreasonable poltroons. I had heard that the Island had some first rate “trouting stations,” and as I thought that it might not be altogether impossible to unite pleasure with duty, I thrust some fishing tackle into the basket of the coach with my other baggage, and bowled quietly along to Pictou. Here I found a small steamer, and I had not been half an hour on board before I discovered in the Captain, an obliging old Scotchman, a regular trump, shrewd, easy, and communicative. I pumped the old fellow like a well, and long before we had arrived at Charlottetown, had made myself acquainted not only with every cranny of the Island where a fish was to be caught, but what was of more importance, had got some most valu-

able hints as to the probable whereabouts of the skulking gentry I had come after. I never felt happier in my life. My spirits were in tip top order, and as I walked along the streets, but half built up, with the houses looking in all manner of ways, I felt disposed to sing a pean in honor of the engineer who is said to have laid down the plan of this city of spacious distances—when I was all at once pulled up by my young friend B—— who carried me to his house, and that very evening we had completed our arrangements for an excursion into the country, for the purpose of hunting up the deserters if we could get scent of them, and trying our fortune in some of the rivers which intersect this fine Island. The next morning we were under way. Although the distance we had to go did not exceed fifty miles—Mrs. B—— fitted us out as if we had been bound to the North Pole, instead of the quiet little stream that hides itself in the wilderness. The weather was promising, and our horse seemed very frank to the road. We had taken the precaution to arm ourselves with every variety of tackle, not forgetting the inestimable flask, duly furnished, without which no fisherman of course can consider himself fully accoutred. Sir Walter Scott tells a story of a brother of the craft taking cramp while wading, and being found afterwards with his face downwards upon the bank—with a sly men—"he had no flask." There is not, I do verily believe, a finer piece of country in the world, than this little island; there is scarcely a rock or stone to be found in it from the one end to the other; the roads are pretty fair, making allowance for the resources of the Colony—while the undisturbed extent of wood and water would gladden the heart of the English sportsman, and the light soil invites the spade of the husbandman to repay his labours more than a hundred fold. We trotted along at an easy rate, for as a true disciple of the honored art, I always consider the comfort of my horse before my own, and if one of us must go without supper, I take care that he shall not be the party. Ensneced under the sharp peaked hat of a German student, and clad in that kind of linsey woolsey, called "pepper and salt," neither my companion nor myself was badly equipped for the expedition. Eleven o'clock found us half way, and drawn up at the fantastic but hospitable door of a half-pay officer, who had turned farmer, and who seemed to make but a poor job of it; but there was no mistake in the sincerity of his welcome, and while a hasty lunch was getting ready, he led the way into his park and played a solo upon a bugle to the no small delight and edification of a couple of young donkies—not ourselves, but the real four legged animals who danced and capered about in perfect ecstasy. The amusement perhaps was not very aristocratic, but a poor fellow in these wilds is so hard up for variety that even the antics of a donkey are something to have to show his friends. Less than an hour saw us again upon the road which was still excellent, diversified here and there with a flock of friendly geese striving to pick up a living—or a huge porker, snuffing the air of perfect freedom, and rooting up by the way

side either unconscious of or indifferent to the more cultivated society which honoured him with a passing notice of the whip, and then left him to the enjoyment of his own philosophy. B—— had promised us a good hearty country dinner at an old farmer's within some six miles of the fishing ground, and our somewhat jaded steed was now drawing near to the house; she seemed to be quite aware of the circumstance, for as the fields of yellow grain came into view, she pricked up her ears, threw her head about, and stepped out with all the liveliness of the first half hour. What a pleasure it is to see a dumb animal happy, and doubly pleasing is it to see so noble an animal as the horse who has worn himself out in serving you—even after the heat and burden of the day, paw the ground with delight, as he listens to the language of kindness or feels the hand of his master placed gently and pleasantly on his back. What happiness is there in that noble eye, and what heart, that has any ingredient of humanity in its composition, could give unnecessary pain to the noblest brute that has become the servant of man? In the meantime, we were rapidly nearing a white painted wooden cottage of no great dimensions, but of very pleasing exterior. Utility seemed to have been consulted fully as much as ornament, for all the various offices and out-houses required about a farmstead were placed in rather closer contiguity than I would have fancied. I thought to myself, however, that beggars should not be choosers, more especially as my stomach was giving me some rather forcible admonitions to the effect that due attention had by no means been paid to its various requirements upon the journey.

We were now before the door, and a fine hale, fresh looking old man stepped out and welcomed both of us with all the frankness of old acquaintance. There was no mistaking the welcome that spoke so eloquently in his eye. I have often thought that though every feature of the human face may be trained to hypocrisy—the eye is the last to assume the mask, and the first to rebel, when brought into a critical position. The old farmer whose name I don't care to mention, for reasons you will understand by and bye, was a friend of my friend B—— so that I had not been fifteen minutes in the house before we were upon the footing of old acquaintances, and found myself discussing family and general matters, as if I had always been a member of the household. Every one and every thing appeared to be so perfectly happy in this unpretending home, that I was actually beginning to draw comparisons or rather contrasts by no means favourable to myself, when the farmer invited me out to look at his cattle, his patent thrashing machine, and other apparatus of which he seemed particularly proud, and I have no doubt I should have been very happy to examine them on any other occasion with the utmost minuteness. Some how or other a change, most sudden, and most unaccountable, came over what had hitherto been the steady and unswerving philosophy of my life, since I had entered the farmer's parlour. I believe I forgot to tell you, that this

old gentleman was an Englishman and an excellent specimen of his class. He had left that country some thirty-five years before, without either means or resources of any kind, but a stern spirit of integrity, and now by the cultivation of this virtue, joined to the Saxon attribute of persevering industry, he was the proprietor of some twenty thousand acres of fine land, to say nothing of a comfortable bundle of notes in the Bank, which B—— assured me was by no means a small one. These were blessings to be sure, but he had one more, and that was a child—an only child! with an eye as blue as an Italian sky—and a mouth which a Grecian Sculptor would not have disdained to adopt as a model. She was in fact a houri in the wilderness, as sweet, as gentle, and as timid as a young fawn. She had scarcely ever, I believe, seen what the world calls society, and yet, upon my honour, her face was as noble, her step as graceful as a court beauty. Of course she was shy, but that only in my mind heightened her attractions, and I can assure you that the farmer's proposal to visit his sheep and oxen sounded to me vastly out of place, and I blundered out an excuse, I am afraid not a very specious one, to the effect that I was very tired, or something of that kind. At all events B—— and the farmer went off on a survey of the pigs and poultry, and I was left to entertain my somewhat frightened young friend, and though I tried my best, it must have been a miserable failure; but I did not see it at the moment. I talked of poetry and the great people of the day, and did every thing in my power to bring her out and inspire her with confidence in herself, for I soon saw that she possessed good sense and respectable though uncultivated powers. I did what I believe people seldom do, that is, I kept up a running fire of conversation—almost wholly on my own side—while a regularly constructed chain of thought was passing through my mind, of the last importance to both beings who were now either by accident or design, seated pretty near each other. The gay trifle gurgled along with a pleasant murmur, but the deep fountain of the future swelled its waters unseen and unperceived. To make a long story short, I was fairly caught by this little country girl, and in one short half-hour I had uncoiled from myself a mass of prejudice and ignorance, and in its place I was surrounded by an atmosphere untainted by either selfishness or disappointment. I had just come to some very decisive conclusions regarding the real happiness of man, when my old friend broke in upon me, his face radiant with satisfaction, for B—— had spoken with unqualified praise of the contents of his homestead, and I am not sure that he was not almost as proud of them as of his daughter. The dinner was excellent, but I thought rather a dull affair, and when B—— urged the necessity of setting out to head quarters at once, I was never more disposed in my life to feel angry at the fellow's impatience, but as I could conjure up no manner of objection, I could do nothing but chime in acquiescence, and having received an invitation to spend the afternoon on our return, at the cottage, without

further loss of time we struck right into the wilderness. I can't tell how it was but I felt my hand tremble as I shook that of my fair young friend, and was inclined to be angry that the gentle pressure I essayed to give received no sympathetic return. I felt inclined to be serious, and though I knew how absurd it was, I could not for the life of me help it. The jolting of the waggon however, over ruts and clumps of trees, compelled some little attention, and as the darkness increased the way became altogether wild and dreary. The shadows of the huge trees, the silence and solitude of the scene seemed to have a contagious effect upon both of us, and as B——'s whole attention was necessarily occupied in piloting us through this dismal path, I had sufficient time to mature my new plans, and would I believe have communicated them to my companion, had I thought that he was in a condition to listen to me. As it was evident that the intricacies of the villanous road were quite enough to contend with I did not trouble him, and I confess, I felt some diminution of anxiety when he announced that we had at length arrived at the termination of our journey. I looked round, and certainly did see a partially cleared spot, and a straggling disjointed log hut stuck down in the midst of it. "Here," cried B—— "we will set up our staff for the night—so Jack, let the horse loose, and I will apprise the natives of our arrival. You see—we must 'rough it,'" and I fully coincided with the observation. A rough, rugged, but good natured looking squatter shortly joined us, expressed his regret that he could not accommodate us better, but would do what he could, and as an earnest offer to give up his own bed, while he and his wife could sit by the fire: it was all one to him! This kind proposal we would by no means assent to, and when we looked around us, the temptation was not very strong to go to bed any where; so that B—— determined to pass the night by the fire with the assistance of a few cigars. I felt jaded and anxious, and notwithstanding all my efforts to the contrary went to sleep. But it was literally a sleep of fits and starts. B—— was not the only inhabitant of the apartment besides myself. We had calls from numerous diminutive strangers, who attached themselves to us without the ceremony of an introduction, and made both of us glad to direct our steps towards the river some time before the sun appeared above the horizon. The distance was not great, and the grey streaks of light were just beginning to break through the sky when we arrived at the river. I never felt less in a humour for sport, I was cold and uncomfortable, but made no complaint. With a kind of sleepy indifference, I put my rod together, assorted my tackle, and tied on the first fly that came to hand. The line was thrown, and I was thinking what sheer nonsense it was to be standing shivering by the side of the river, while I might be enjoying a warm bed and a comfortable home. When hallo! half a dozen leaps at once at my random fly, and all my mental grumbling vanished in a moment. Again, again, again; every throw was a fish, and there seemed to be twenty candidates for every

cast of the fly. B——, who had not got his tackle in order, to my surprise gave a grunt of dissatisfaction, and declared that if we wanted fish we must wade. As the fish were small, I understood his meaning, and was ready to act up to it, so that we both plunged into mid-stream almost at the same moment, with a reasonable expectation that we would make "a day of it!" Nor had we miscalculated. The gravity of our panniers increased rapidly, when a rather unpleasant incident brought my morning's amusement to an abrupt termination.

TALES OF OUR VILLAGE, No. 1.

It was long ago when the following incidents occurred: so long, that the grass has grown green over a thousand graves, and those who were young and light-hearted then, are either sleeping in them, or live now with furrowed cheeks and silver hair, seared in feeling and bowed by the trials that encompass man in his pilgrimage. The very recollection of the tragic tale has ceased to shock, and is now only related as one of the passing memories of things that have been. Long ago then, not many miles from our Village, stood a white cottage, the homestead of a respectable farmer, whose family consisted of a wife and two daughters, whose lives passed calmly on in the quiet routine of a country life. The youngest of the two girls, Mary, has been described as a bright, pretty, graceful girl, the pet of her family, and one who cast a halo of sunshine round her wherever she moved, from her happy temper, her constant good-nature and kindness. With these attractions the young men of her acquaintance were much smitten, and she enjoyed the popularity of a belle, without as yet bestowing her affections on any. Among those who surrounded her with attentions and admiration, a young Englishman of the name of B—— was the most constant and serious; the girl was evidently well pleased with his attentions at first, as his manners and person were agreeable, but his character was much disliked by her family, and always obedient to their will she discouraged rather than promoted his suit. He was a passionate, idle, and dissipated young man, who could love deeply, yet sacrifice but little for those he loved. Her father disapproved of him exceedingly, but while his attentions were confined to occasional visits and polite offers of escort to Mary while walking or riding out, no disapproving notice could be taken of them, and while her father still received him as a friend, Mary was free to accept those attentions so gratifying to every woman's heart. But with one so impetuous and violent as B——, this state of things could not long continue; nor were they without danger to the young girl he sought as his wife. His pleasing address made much impression

on her young fancy. and she would gladly have obviated her father's dislike to her lover had it been possible. When a woman once begins to make excuses, and wish that others would do the same for a man who is attentive to her and anxious to gain her affection, she may be placed in a similar position with "her who deliberates," and whom the proverb assures us is lost. Mary gradually learned to love the young Englishman, whose suit she had at first discouraged in obedience to her father's wishes, and it was not long before she acknowledged to the gratified B—— that could he succeed in obtaining her father's consent to their marriage, she should be well pleased. It was a sad disappointment to Mr. R—— when this confession was reported to him, and he tried long and repeatedly to efface the impression made upon his daughter's affection, but at last his better judgment yielded to his parental feelings, and with every promise of reformation from the young man, who then seemed really determined to amend his life, and become worthy of the girl he had chosen, he was received in the family as Mary's accepted lover, and with every prospect of an early period for their union. For a time all seemed bright and happy, and the family began to hope that their consent had been a judicious one, and that they had aided in rescuing the young man from unprincipled companions and utter ruin; but when once all obstacles were removed, and he felt himself secure in Mary's affection, and was treated by her family with confidence and kindness, he soon relapsed into his former habits, which, not all the persuasions of his friends could induce him to renounce; his conduct daily grew worse, he absented himself from the society of all the R—— family, except Mary, and to her he was capricious, often unkind, and always exacting; his jealousy was excessive: if she reasoned with him, and urged him to forsake the vicious courses he was pursuing, he accused her of unkindness and acting under the influence of her father, from whose tyranny, as he termed it, he was daily urging her to escape and become his wife. But the young girl now fully awakened to the unprincipled character of the man to whom she had engaged herself, refused to concur in any such proceeding, and often by her resolution was subjected to violent outbreaks of temper from B—— which still farther cautioned her from rashly placing herself in his power. His conduct at last grew so unbearable that Mr. R—— forbade him his house, and peremptorily commanded Mary to have no further intercourse with him, and to consider their engagement as dissolved. It was a hard trial for the poor girl who had once loved him very dearly, and built all her hopes of earthly happiness upon her marriage with him, but his conduct had been so unkind and violent during the last few months, that she acquiesced in the prudence of her father's will, and submitted quietly, but sorrowfully, and with many tears to the sentence that so painfully clouded her life. Hope, however, that is always strong in the human heart, and particularly with those who love truly, and who bear all things and hope all things of those they love, encouraged Mary to look on the

bright side and trust that in a little while, her lover would regret the course he had taken and once more return to the orderly habits he had assumed during the early period of their engagement, and be all to her he had formerly been. The hope however was vain and idle, he only plunged more deeply into drunkenness and gambling—the two vices that so grievously beset him. His selfish love for Mary was not at all diminished in consequence of her father's decree; its violence only seemed still more excited, and his belief in her love for him, though often clouded by jealousy, was by no means eradicated. He sought constant opportunities of meeting her, and was soon by his violent and passionate entreaties, the terror of the poor girl's life; he beset her in her walks and daily occupations, continually pleading for a few moments conversation, which if granted were employed in vehement protestations and violent threats of vengeance, unless she consented to his entreaties; these meetings still further increased Mary's dread of him, and served to extinguish the love that had still been cherished for him; she often told him this, but his jealous anger would then be aroused to such a degree, that unless she could escape from him, she was glad to soothe his fury, and promise that with his reformation her affection should again be his. He was often intoxicated when he forced himself upon her presence, and then his violence was so extreme that she was at last afraid to go out alone; or meet him without the presence of her sister or some other friend. Terror and anxiety were preying upon her health, and added to the disappointment and grief the conduct of her lover had caused, she was hardly able to bear the burden thrown upon her. Life was one scene of terror: if a shadow crossed her path she feared it was B——, and her father felt that some active measures must be taken to remove him from the place, or the life of his daughter would be the forfeit. Human nature cannot long hold out against such perpetual anxiety, and the comfort of the whole family was embittered by the presence of the man who had done so much to make them unhappy before. His conduct in the meantime, grew worse and worse, his associates were the most depraved. The love of Mary, which had once been as a guiding star, he now felt was withdrawn from him, and his rage and jealousy completely mastered him, until he was the unhappy victim of the worst passions of existence. It was an unusual thing now for Mary to leave the house of her father. During some of her last interviews with B—— his conduct had been so terrific that she trembled for she hardly knew what, but felt it to be the most prudent to remain at home in future, although her spirits and health both suffered from confinement. In consequence of a brilliant victory, during the war between England and France on the side of the former, the garrison town of Halifax was illuminated, and such a sight being a novelty with the inhabitants, the announcement excited much interest, and many who lived within a few miles of the town determined to make it a gala night for their own amusement, as much as to evince their loyalty. Mr. R——

persuaded his daughters to go over and witness the illuminations with some of their neighbours, but Mary, who had lost all interest for such scenes now, for a long time declined the invitation, and when she at last consented, it was only that she should walk to the ferry on the Dartmouth side of Halifax harbour, with her sister, and survey from thence the brilliant scene for a few moments at its commencement. This plan was agreed upon, and near the close of the afternoon the girls left home together, and reached the place of observation just as the town hung out its lights of rejoicing; they stood for some time admiring the scene and gazing with delight at the thousand reflections in the broad blue harbour, as the streams of light gleamed and seemed to bathe in the sparkling water. The brighter lights of heaven were studding the sky some time before they turned to depart, and Mary's terror was awakened lest they should meet B—— on their homeward walk, who doubtless had cognizance of their movements. It was with feelings of great relief, that she heard a young man of their acquaintance propose accompanying them, and the offer was eagerly accepted. The night was very lovely, and feeling sure that they would be safe from the intrusion of her tormentor when so effectually protected, poor Mary was more cheerful than she had been for many months, and gladdened her sister's heart by joining in their conversation, and appearing interested in the events of the day. They reached home safely accompanied by their friend, who went in and remained a short time to partake of the tea that awaited them; he then left for his own house, which was some miles distant, and the family were left alone and undisturbed. Mary, whose health was now feeble, was fatigued from her unusual exertion, and retired to an inner room to rest upon the sofa, while the others were seated round the kitchen fire, talking over the subjects of the day and expressing thankfulness that B—— had not molested the girls as was usual whenever they went out. He had been in Halifax all day, and for a wonder, had been alone; he had lately received letters from home, which kept him later than he had at first intended; but knowing that almost all who would come to witness the illumination would remain till the evening was advanced, he felt certain of meeting with the R—— family, should they join the party from their neighbourhood. Not finding them on the Halifax side, he crossed over; but this took a long time in those days of slow ferry boats, and before he reached Dartmouth, Mary was far on her homeward way; he looked anxiously for her among the many busy groups gazing eagerly upon the resplendent town, but the fairest star to him was missing, and he stood abstracted and idle as if uncertain what to do. At this evil moment, an acquaintance come up to him, and after a few words of greeting, said to him: "Ha! B—— you have lost Miss R—— at last; I saw young B—— walking home with her just now. They came down to see the illumination together, and I suspect you have but a poor chance left." These poisoned words so infuriated the miserable man, that the spirit of evil

always waiting its opportunity, whispered to him a fearful thought, which resulted in a fearful deed. The restless wretched feeling of jealousy, which blinds and maddens all under its influence, was perpetually haunting him; he continually saw Mary bestow her love upon some more favored rival, and the very idea was madness; how much more, when it was confirmed by those sneering words of his informant. His brain seemed on fire, and he rushed to his home with a maniac's wildness and a demon's purpose. Wretched, indeed, is the state of those who have no safeguard from the fire of jealousy; none but those who have experienced its tortures, can speak of its horrors, or warn others from yielding to its impulses—it destroys confidence, tampers with conscience, and makes a charnel of the human heart. Oh! strive against it, combat with it, listen not for a moment to the poison of its evil insinuations, it is more terrific than death, more cruel than the grave. The unhappy man wandered about for some time, listening to the horrible promptings of this evil spirit, until his frenzied mind resolved itself into one desperate resolution, the consequences of which were indeed heart-rending. Mr. and Mrs. R——, with their eldest daughter, were, as before mentioned, seated round the kitchen fire engaged in conversation, when the door opened, and the familiar but dreaded countenance of B—— appeared, his face was haggard and his eye gleamed with a wild brightness unnatural to it. "Where is Mary," he asked, "I want to see Mary, is she at home?" Mr. R—— told him his daughter was unwell and could not see him; he changed his tone to one of persuasion, begged her father to allow him to see her for a minute, he had something of great importance to communicate, and he must see her that night alone for one moment; his importunity was so great, that Mr. R——, fearing he would stay all night unless his request was granted, went in and spoke to Mary for a few minutes, telling her to speak to him if she would, but on no account to let the conversation be private, as he feared he had been drinking and might be violent. Mary, though much agitated, consented to come out with her father and endeavour to pacify B—— by her presence, if the object could be thus accomplished; he was standing by the outer door when she came into the kitchen, he started forward a few steps on seeing her, and implored her to speak with him alone. "But a moment, dear Mary," he urged, "just come out for a moment with me, I have something to say to you, which I must say alone." His tones were so vehement, and his manner so wild and excited, that the already terrified girl would not have ventured to move a step nearer to him, much less be alone with him, even had her father not warned her against it. She merely faltered out—"if you have anything to say to me, say it here before my father and mother; I have often told you I would not talk with you alone, and you cannot have anything to say to me that they should not hear." For some moments longer he stood irresolute, urging her to come but for one moment; but as she did not stir, he advanced, saying, "let me then whisper it

to you, I must, I will speak," and with the words stood beside her. The poor girl trembled violently as he bent down and put his arm round her, drawing her closer to him as if to speak something in her ear, when he drew a knife from his pocket and plunged it to her heart! One groan, one last hurried grasp, and she fell lifeless at her mother's feet, before one of the family had time to rise or stay the hand that performed so fearful a deed. Horror stricken and paralysed, they gazed on the awful scene before them: strength seemed wanting to raise the poor girl or secure her murderer, who was now wounding his own person with the knife wet with the blood of the bright young being, who had loved him so well, and whose reward was a cruel death by the hand she once hoped would have been her safeguard and protection in the hour of danger.

It was but for a brief space that the wretched father gazed on the awful spectacle before him, and then collecting his terrified energies, he rushed from the house to a neighbour's who lived a few yards from his gate, shouting for help, and telling in frantic language that his daughter was killed, and that B—— was her murderer. In a few moments, help was at hand, but human aid was powerless. For poor Mary, the assassin's knife had done its work too surely, and the bright eye was closed, the fond heart stilled forever. B—— was soon secured, but instead of looking with remorse on the crime he had committed, he seemed to triumph in his work, making no attempt at escape, but frequently repeating, "no one else can have her, I have put her far from the power of every one." He was severely wounded from the many blows he had himself inflicted with the knife, and fainting from the loss of blood, was conveyed to the prison at Halifax, where he had been a few short hours before writing to the friends of his childhood and youth, little thinking that the hand which traced the words of remembrance and affection would soon be dyed in a fellow creature's blood. It was afterwards ascertained that the deed was one of premeditation, at least for a few hours. On receiving the intelligence in Dartmouth as to Mary's presence there, and her subsequent return, accompanied by the young man before alluded to, he had determined upon the deed he so fatally executed, and then went to a neighbour, asking him to lend him a sharp knife which he had been commissioned to borrow by some one who required it in the morning for slaughtering an animal. On receiving it he had immediately proceeded to the house of Mr. R——, and not even the sad face of the girl he had professed to love so well, could turn him from his fearful purpose.

He was committed for trial some time after, and being proved guilty, was sentenced to death, and shortly afterwards his life was the forfeit for his unnatural crime. He never testified the slightest repentance, but on the contrary always expressed delight in having taken her from the reach of all the world; he died as he had lived—a hardened, unprincipled man, the victim

a hundred vices, among which the most destructive to his soul was that of jealousy. There was deep and bitter mourning for poor Mary R—— in her desolated home. It was hard to see one so young and beloved cut off by the hand of the man she had loved so fondly, and many sorrowed over her tragic fate. The fearful events of that night were never forgotten by her family. Her sister pined gradually away, and but a few months had passed ere she was sleeping by her side in the neighbouring church yard. Their mother, thus bereaved of her children, to whom she had looked for support in her declining years, wasted also, and within one year from the murder of Mary, Mr. R—— found himself alone by his hearthstone, his best and dearest far away, where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest: his home was desolate indeed to him, and he soon left it to find a dwelling where memory could not speak so loudly, and have such influence over his heart. Scarce a record is left to tell where the house stood that was the scene of this sad story; only the cellar now filled with rubbish and rank grass, points out the site of the ruined dwelling: and as was said in commencing the tale, is itself but a memory of the past, and has already taken its place among forgotten things, even in a settlement where such occurrences are happily rare indeed. The writer, however, has often listened to its recital, and the sad fate of poor Mary R—— has always appeared the most deeply interesting of the few simple legends of our Village.

THE RHINE AND THE ALPS: OR, THE "BEATEN TRACK"
IN 1851.

BY A TRAVELLED DARRISTER.

CHAPTER I.—PRELIMINARY.

WE imagine we already see before us the mild rebuke of the infallible *Athanasian*, "the subject is stale and exhausted"—and the more energetic remonstrance of the *spificator*, "utterly common place and devoid of interest." "What we want now are travels in Central Africa, beyond latitude seventeen, or a good way north in Asia; Tartary for instance, well smothered in the sands of the desert. Why then did Sir Feathery Lead, give us, or what is worse *sell* us, that "better as new" bundle of French Sticks? And why *will* Jules Janin and Company continually scribble about *London*; as if there could be any men or women in France (to say nothing of children) who are not intimately acquainted, as far at least as books can instruct them, with

everything veracious that can be said about London. As if there breathed an individual Briton to whom anything new or strange can be *safely* told about a city so well known as Paris? But we will not further anticipate the severity of our fate.

We not long since met a farmer, who recommended *us* in search of the sublime and beautiful in nature, to go to *Cambridgeshire*: "that is a fine county, sir," said our honest bucolic friend. We are pretty sure that three-fourths of our countrymen and women, who roll listlessly in their carriages through the highland countries of Europe, moved thereto by a strange infatuation, would be less *bored* in *Cambridgeshire* with flat walks, flat rides, flat pic-nics and flater champagne. *Cambridgeshire* inn-keepers swell the cry! Will not some fashionable wool-wearing Saxon lead thither the impetuous flock! They would follow him, aye! even to death.

For ourselves, we had better at once confess that we are of a prosaic, steam, rail and coach travelling disposition; but we do endeavour to keep our eyes and ears open, and avoid if possible (though it is not always possible to avoid) travelling in the dark, through a country we have not before seen. But we have also the *misfortune* to cherish a warm affection for nature in her beauty—in her grandeur—but chiefly where grandeur is the back-ground and framework of beauty, before it has become stark and frozen into the stern solitude of desolation. We use the word *misfortune* advisedly. The true lover of nature seldom meets with *real* sympathy—and what is more disgusting than the affectation of sympathy in such things? And what more common? And the said nature, lovely as she is as a companion, appears what an angel might be—almost too sublime for man's intellect to commune with. Man needs human sympathy; and nature diminishes its consolatory power by elevating his mind above it! The awful—the eternal—begins to enshroud him. Then let him quickly retrace his steps, and revisit the haunts of men. And now, as they say in France—"revenons a nos moutons,"—it is time that we should drive our little flock of "notions" along *the beaten track* of Europe.

TO THE RHINE.—On the 31st July, 1851, we rushed across the pleasant County of Kent, at the rate of something under forty miles an hour—arrived at Dover—boat to Calais waiting—fresh breeze—good passage. Memorandum—if you lie down *directly* you will not be ill in a few hours, certainly not in an hour and a half—the time then occupied in crossing to that unlovely town of Calais, surrounded by dirty ramparts, straight roads, ditches, poplars, willows, and wind-mills, as far as eye can reach.

At Calais we slept, and next morning *paid our bill*, the charges in which were suggestive of the fact that wherever the English pass in considerable numbers, the inns which they frequent are more expensive than those of other places. In astute France, however, if it be discovered that you are a Briton, you are pretty sure to be charged about fifty per cent. more than your fellow

traveller, the economical Frenchman or German;* and this will be done generally in a more unblushing manner than in Germany, Switzerland, &c., where we verily believe there is *usually* no difference made between English and others, unless it be that the charges for *all* travellers are higher at those inns which the English most affect.

And now before we quit France, miscalled "La belle," which we are about to do immediately, this being by no means our first visit to that country,—a word about the air and the sky thereof. It may be owing to a want of delicacy in our sight, and happily in our respiration, but we never could perceive—though we have often heard it boldly asserted—that the sky of France is of deeper blue, and the air of France lighter and more pure—and that too as soon as you first land upon her shores, than the sky and air of our native land. However, we cannot help suspecting that those original observers who first gave currency to this notion, which has since been pretty extensively circulated, had seldom before their continental trip wandered far from the influence of that atmosphere which wafts to the loving ear the sound of famed bow-bells, and had even been unaccustomed to the invigorating breezes and sunny skies of Surry, Kent, or Berkshire.

August 1st.—More than two hundred miles by railway; second class, padded and lined as well as many of the first class carriages on the Great Western. Over swamps, past St. Omer and Lille, a Belgian visitation of boxes and portmanteaus at Mouseroir—and then through a country of corn—corn to the horizon—corn on both sides—not corn fields but a corn plain—all yellow—eight hours of corn—one hundred and sixty miles of corn: a monotonous plenty which might have delighted our Cambridgeshire fellow-traveller. Yet if our object at that time had been to visit cities, there were two rather remarkable breaks in that iron journey. Ghent and Mechlin showed for an instant their spires and towers; but a city seen from a railway is hardly so distinct in the memory as the recollection of a dream. We passed Liege also in the same reckless manner, and stopped in the evening at Chandfontaine, the next station beyond that Belgian Brummagem.

Chandfontaine is simply famous for that which its name expresses, a supply of water ready heated for use in the cauldron of nature. There are two or three Hotels. The largest is a very extensive building called the Hotel des Bains. In it people may board by the day if they choose, for five and six francs each person. There is a piano, and a drawing-room; and during the two days that we remained there, among about thirty ladies and gentleman, there were none English but ourselves! The valley of the *Vesdre*, in which Chandfontaine is situated and which the railway follows for fifteen miles—ascending from Liege to Verviers—is as picturesque as hills, rocks, woods, and

* The prices at French inns to a *Frenchman*, are, bed one franc—coffee or tea sixty-five centimes to one franc—dinner according to his notion on the subject.

a trouty-looking stream can make it. There are indeed rather too many mills for our wild Welsh taste; but everywhere upon the Continent the trout stream and the trout, are both more *exploites* than is usual in similar localities in an island; and the lover of either seclusion or fly-fishing—and we will boldly make confession of our love for that sport—will we think find some of the lovely mountain districts of Great Britain more to his taste than the perpetual nets and saw-mills; but we will not anticipate. There are but few trout in the Vesdre at Chandfontaine, but higher up they are said to be plentiful; at any rate the water becomes much more clear as you ascend the stream.

“THE WATER LILY.”—A POEM, BY ALBYN.

WE have received a work, in pamphlet form, bearing the above title. As a Nova Scotian production we call the attention of the readers of the “Provincial” to its contents—it is a panegyric on the loveliness, emblematic influence and effect of that beautiful denizen of our lakes and rivers—the graceful lily, and the strain has a few anecdotes connected with provincial life. We are unwilling to check, by censure, the developement of any literary taste in the Provinces, and we give this author due credit for an appreciation of the beautiful and love for the elements of poetry. Pruning and revision would do much for the “Water Lily,” as a poem, but we will let it speak for itself in the extracts here given from its pages:—

“When has the wildest of enthusiasts known
 Or dream'd of banquets equal to our own;
 Not banquets blent with bacchanalian rites,
 But these the soul to ecstasy invites;
 When the bright rainbow o'er the landscape cast
 In beauty stands magnificently vast,
 And soften'd sunlight mingling with its rays,
 In ev'ry tint imaginable plays
 On the blue mirror of the vestal host
 That shone in paradise ere it was lost,
 Another sun there and another bow
 Look upward from the azure vault below.
 And other Lilies to another sky
 Display the glories that upon them lie.
 The diamond's lustre and the ruby's gleam,
 With gold and beryl involved and seprate seem,
 Onyx and Opal—and the various hues
 That em'rals yield and living pearls infuse,
 Now one from one by discipline unseen
 Dividing spread and leave a space between,
 Now swept together like an ensign torn
 From the irradiant mantle of the morn,
 Or wove in bracelets clasping in the sky

Stamp't with the autograph of the Most High.
 Ah! vain alike the poet's airy thought,
 And the achievements by the pencil wrought,
 To bind in verse or bid the canvas show,
 Millennial omens of a brighter glow.

“Touch'd by those transports that the trav'ler knew,
 When lost Assyria rose before his view,
 Nor less imperious these the pilgrim feels,
 When at his prophet's sepulchre he kneels,
 Here in the forest—the antipodes
 Of antiquarians and of devotees.
 Where pagan rites nor heathen mystics mar
 The light'ning rays that shine from reason's star,
 In idle hours I wake the harp to tell
 What kindred feelings in my bosom dwell,
 A stranger to the knowledge that is hid
 In marble manuscript and pyramid,
 Yet on these Lilies undiscypher'd still,
 I see God's finger, and I read his will—
 Old as creation—yet for ever new,
 Year after year they open to my view,
 Nor can the critic's or the linguist's eye
 Find error there—nor expletive espy.”

TO A BEAUTIFUL NOVA SCOTIAN;

ON THE AUTHOR PRESENTING HER WITH A ROSE.

SWEET maid to thee I give this Rose,
 Because thy cheek of crimson glows
 With blushes all as bright;
 Type of the vestal's sinless fire,
 Of all in woman we admire,
 Bloom, tenderness, and light.

But when upon thy lovely face
 The blush of modesty I trace,
 I fear this flow'ret then
 Would but a faint resemblance bear
 To all the graces dwelling there,
 Light beaming from within.

When dew drops pure at summer hour,
 Are sparkling on the roseate flower,
 Whose virgin leaves consign
 Their grateful incense back to heaven
 In rising sweets at solemn even,
 While mellowing sunbeams shine.

Thine eyes appear and light disclose
 Like diamonds placed beside the Rose,
 And tell the softest tale
 Of a pure, stainless, lofty mind,
 That all endearing womankind,
 In silence can reveal.

The hallow'd last repentant breath,
 That Saints do at the hour of death
 To heaven for mercy sigh,
 Breathes not a fragrance more divine
 Than scents these nectarous lips of thine,
 Of Ruby's deepest dye.

Sweet form whose "step hath fairy lightness,"
 Picture of hope and "pleasure's brightness,"

 Maid of the noble brow,
 If aught could make my soul adore,
 And love angelic woman more,
 'Tis maidens such as thou.

R. M. S.—r.

REVIEW OF THE PAST MONTH.

To begin with ourselves: This journal was ushered into existence and our first number, for January, we are constrained to say, was well received by the reading public, although not so generously supported by those who are most expected to foster and promote the growth of a native literature, as we had been induced to hope. There are some, it would seem, who are disposed to look upon an effort such as the present, as something not of a utilitarian character—something having analogy only to the light and useless—not calculated to rouse the latent energies of our people, or direct them in right channels, or to instruct and elevate them mentally and morally in the social scale—some who view the pursuits of literature as a kind of vicious indulgence in a description of light-reading—so termed—fitted only to amuse, and not suited to the wants of colonists. They do not perceive the necessity of an attempt to exalt and refine the mental powers of a growing and expanding population, that is soon destined to make of these North American Provinces a great nation—and hence the apathy and indifference that prevails in some directions on the subject. We might, by way of contrast, point with some propriety to the example afforded by our neighbors in the Eastern States, and more especially to the town of Lowell, long since famous for its manufacturing capabilities, and equally noted even in literary circles of the mother country for its periodical work, entitled "The Lowell Offering," filled entirely by contributions of a useful, amusing, and interesting character, by the operatives employed at the mills. Some selections from this periodical have been republished in Great Britain, under the title of "Mind among the Spindles," in illustration of the truth that literary taste and ability is confined to no class or sphere of operation. The OFFERING, as we understand, was for a long period sustained with spirit and success, by a community not more able than our average provincial population, and by whom the latter ought not to be outdone or excelled in literary pursuits. Yet to a degree of indifference to literature, that is perhaps characteristic of new countries, more than to any pecuniary inability, must we attribute the necessity which led to the recent discontinuance at the close of 1851, of a Canadian Monthly Magazine, after an existence of fourteen years. We transfer from the Hamilton (U. C.) Spectator, the

Editor's remarks on the occasion, as appropriate to our present purpose—in the hope that the perusal may serve as a stimulus to an enlarged support in this our present attempt, to furnish another "Literary Garland" in provincial literature. That it may be made decidedly successful, the present is the proper period for the display of a friendly recognition wherever the impulse of patriotism is felt. But to the notice in the words of the Spectator, on the discontinuance of

"THE LITERARY GARLAND.—We regret to learn that this useful and instructive Magazine, the only one published in British North America, after an existence of fourteen years, is now to be discontinued. The *Garland* has always been a favorite with a certain class of readers, but it appears that class has greatly diminished during the past year, and the publisher is at length compelled, from want of due support, to discontinue its publication. We regret this the more, from the fact that it has never had a rival. The number for the current month is before us, containing the publisher's valedictory, from which we take the concluding paragraph:

The announcement is made, yet we linger reluctantly over this page. We feel saddened when we think that we are bidding adieu to so many esteemed friends, who have long lent us their cheering countenance and kindly interest. To them, each and all, and to those friends who have contributed often and well to our pages, we tender our hearty thanks, and our sincere wishes for their welfare, and we bid them earnestly and sincerely, what we feel to be indeed 'a lonely sound,' "FAREWELL."

If this sound is to be uttered between the public and ourselves, we have hopes that it may be only on the part of the former, and that speedily. But let it be in two words disunited and written, fare, well! and let the words be accompanied by the necessary deeds—subscribing and paying!

With regard to events of provincial importance, the past month has furnished to the newsmongers, the Assembling of the Legislatures of New Brunswick on the 7th—that of Prince Edward Island on the 22nd, and that of Nova Scotia on the 29th. The meeting of the latter has been distinguished by the presence of a deputation from Canada and New Brunswick for consultation by members of the several governments, on the subject of inter-colonial Railways. These were the Hon. Francis Hincks, Inspector General, Canada;* The Hon. John Young, Chief Commissioner of Public Works, Canada; the Hon. E. P. Tache, Receiver General, Canada, and the Hon. E. B. Chandler, Attorney General of New Brunswick. The proposition made by the Delegates to the Executive Government of Nova Scotia in consequence of recent adverse despatches from the Colonial office was submitted to a Committee of the Legislative Assembly who reported to the House, declining its acceptance, on the last day of the month. Any further Legislative action on this interesting and important subject, will, therefore, remain as the subject of notice for next number of the PROVINCIAL.

* A local journal furnishes the following personal description of these gentlemen of which we make a note as a matter of general Provincial interest.

Mr. Hincks—leader of Lord Elgin's Government (of Scottish extraction) about fifty years of age, has a light complexion, wears large greyish whiskers, has an easy manner, but looks excitable. His eye is keen and restless, traversing its socket quickly, scanning and apparently measuring everything within its range.

Mr. Young (a Canadian by birth) is a gentleman of dark complexion, tall and of athletic frame. His brow is broad and massive. He looks like a good thinker, and has a staid, sober and pensive manner.

Hon. E. P. Tache is a Canadian (French extraction). He has a fine proud bearing in his features, with strong distinctive traits of nationality. His complexion is light, his countenance seemingly beaming with good nature. He saw some service in the last American war, and obtained a militia Colonelcy—a distinction by which he is still familiarly designated.

Mr. Chandler, is a small man with light hair and light complexion. He seems to possess a very unassuming manner and an easy address; blue eyes and of a quick active manner and step.

By the Steamer America, of the Cunard line of Mail Steam Packets, that perform their trips between Liverpool and Halifax, with remarkable regularity and safety, which vessel reached the latter port on the 24th, was received the melancholy intelligence of the loss, by fire on the 4th, of the Steam Packet Ship Amazon, on a first voyage from Southampton bound to the British and Foreign West Indies and Gulf of Mexico. The catastrophe was caused by the friction of new machinery or other accident, and by reason of strong breezes was so sudden and destructive, as to occasion the total loss of the ship and boats with the exception of three, in which ten of the passengers and forty-seven of the crew, with difficulty effected their escape. Among the 104 persons missing by fire and water, we regret to record the name of Elliott Warburton, the talented author of the Crescent and the Cross—Darien, &c., whose writings have been long and favorably known in these Colonies and in the old world.

There is little of interest to note in European affairs. Since the revolutionary *coup d'etat* of Louis Napoleon on the 2nd of December, he has maintained his usurped position in France with little apparent difficulty, backed by the power of the army; but has nevertheless exercised a system of extreme severity in reference to political opponents, by deportation of all persons of inferior note, suspected of disaffection to his authority, to the settlement of French Guiana, in South America,* and by the banishment from French territory of more considerable opponents as Generals of the Army and members of the popular Assembly. In Britain the retirement of Lord Palmerston from the office of Secretary for Foreign Affairs, who is succeeded by Lord Granville, has attracted much attention, and the public mind has been further excited by the accounts from the Cape Colony of a disastrous nature—the rebel Kaffir tribes having not only maintained their ground, but inflicted severe loss in officers and men, upon the British force despatched against them. In the United States the latest absorbing topic has been the visit of the Magyar Louis Kossuth, ex-Governor of Hungary, in seeking sympathy and aid for the re-establishment of a Republic in his native country. The reports of his numerous eloquent public speeches, during his previous tour in Great Britain, and through the daily and weekly press of this continent, exhibit him as one of the most able and extraordinary men of the age. Our limits warn us that we must now close our brief review of the past month, but we hope to record periodically hereafter such leading events of the day, as while they are un-political as regards parties, may not be uninteresting as matters of current history to our provincial readers.

DIED.—At Ship Harbour, County of Halifax, on the 29th of December, Mr. DANIEL WEEKES, in the 117th year of his age. Mr. Weekes was born on Long Island, near New York, on the 3rd December, 1735, and served in the British army in which the gallant Wolfe fell, September 12, 1758, at which time he was 24 years old. He adhered to the Royal cause at the time of the American Revolution, and received a grant of land at Ship Harbour, on which he has since been settled. He brought up a family of 21 children, whose offspring to the third and fourth generation, are settled around him, or scattered in many parts of the world, numbering some hundreds. In 1838 he enjoyed his second sight, and up to a couple of years ago, went daily bare-headed into the woods to cut wood and timber, an occupation he preferred above all others.

* The sentence of deportation designates Cayenne, a peninsular island of four times the extent of the peninsula of Halifax, viz.: fifteen leagues in circumference. It is reputed to be very unhealthy from the miasma of marshes and the extreme heat—being within four degrees of the Line.