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THE
O L D J U D G E ;

OR,

LIFE IN A COLONY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

“SAM SLICK, THE CLOCKMAKER,”

“THE ATTACHÉ,” &c.

[Thomas Chandler Haliburton]

Habeoque senectuti magnam gratiam, quæ mihi sermonis aviditatem auxit,
potionis et cibi sustulit. CICERO DE SENECTUTE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

138828

211 6/16

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN, PUBLISHER,
GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.

1849.

F. Shoberl, Jun., Printer to H. R. H. Prince Albert, 51, Rupert St., Haymarket.

P R E F A C E.

The following sketches of "Life in a Colony" were drawn from nature, after a residence of half a century among the people, whose habits, manners, and social condition, they are intended to delineate. I have adopted the form of a tour, and the character of a stranger, for the double purpose of avoiding the prolixity of a journal, by the omission of tedious details, and the egotism of an author, by making others speak for themselves in their own way. The utmost care has been taken to exclude any thing that could by any possibility be supposed to have a personal reference, or be the subject of annoyance. The "dramatis personæ" of this work are, therefore, ideal representatives of their several classes, having all

the characteristics and peculiarities of their own set, but no actual existence. Should they be found to resemble particular individuals, I can assure the reader that it is accidental, and not intentional; and I trust it will be considered, as it really is, the unavoidable result of an attempt to delineate the features of a people among whom there is such a strong family likeness.

In my previous works, I have been fortunate enough to have avoided censure on this score, and I have been most anxious to render the present book as unobjectionable as its predecessors. Political sketches I have abstained from altogether; provincial and local affairs are too insignificant to interest the general reader, and the policy of the Colonial Office is foreign to my subject. The absurd importance attached in this country to trifles, the grandiloquent language of rural politicians, the flimsy veil of patriotism, under which selfishness strives to hide the deformity of its visage, and the attempt to adopt the machinery

of a large empire to the government of a small colony, present many objects for ridicule or satire; but they could not be approached without the suspicion of personality, and the direct imputation of prejudice. As I consider, however, that the work would be incomplete without giving some idea of the form of government under which the inhabitants of the lower colonies live, I have prepared a very brief outline of it, without any comment. Those persons who take no interest in such matters, can pass it over, and leave it for others who may prefer information to amusement.

I have also avoided, as far as practicable, topics common to other countries, and endeavoured to select scenes and characters peculiar to the colony, and not to be found in books. Some similarity there must necessarily be between all branches of the Anglo-Saxon family, speaking the same language, and living under modifications of the same form of government; but still, there are shades of difference which,

though not strongly remarked, are plainly discernible to a practised eye.

Facies non omnibus una nec tamen diversa.

This distinctive character is produced by the necessities and condition of a new country, by the nature of the climate, the want of an Established Church, hereditary rank, entailment of estates, and the subdivision of labour, on the one hand, and the absence of nationality, independence, and Republican institutions, on the other.

Colonists differ again in like manner from each other, according to the situation of their respective country; some being merely agricultural, others commercial, and many partaking of the character of both. A picture of any one North American Province, therefore, will not, in all respects, be a true representation of another. The Nova Scotian, who is more particularly the subject of this work, is often found superintending the cultivation of a farm, and building a vessel at the same time;

and is not only able to catch and cure a cargo of fish, but to find his way with it to the West Indies or the Mediterranean; he is a man of all work, but expert in none—knows a little of many things, but nothing well. He is irregular in his pursuits, “all things by turns, and nothing long,” and vain of his ability or information, but is a hardy, frank, good-natured, hospitable, manly fellow, and withal quite as good-looking as his air gives you to understand he thinks himself to be. Such is the gentleman known throughout America as Mr. Blue Nose, a *sobriquet* acquired from a superior potato of that name, of the good qualities of which he is never tired of talking, being anxious, like most men of small property, to exhibit to the best advantage the little he had.

Although this term is applicable to all natives, it is more particularly so to that portion of the population descended from emigrants from the New England States, either previously to, or immediately after, the American

Revolution. The accent of the Blue Nose is provincial, inclining more to Yankee than to English, his utterance rapid, and his conversation liberally garnished with American phraseology, and much enlivened with dry humour. From the diversity of trades of which he knows something, and the variety of occupations in which he has been at one time or another engaged, he uses indiscriminately the technical terms of all, in a manner that would often puzzle a stranger to pronounce whether he was a landsman or sailor, a farmer, mechanic, lumberer, or fisherman. These characteristics are more or less common to the people of New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Cape Breton, and the scene of these sketches might perhaps to a very great extent be laid, with equal propriety, in those places as in Nova Scotia. But to Upper and Lower Canada they are not so applicable.

The town of Illinoo, so often mentioned in this work, is a fictitious place. I have selected it in preference to a real one, to prevent the

possible application of my remarks to any of the inhabitants, in accordance with the earnest desire I have already expressed to avoid giving offence to any one. Some of these sketches have already appeared in "Fraser's Magazine" for the year 1847. These have been revised, and their order somewhat transposed, so as to make them blend harmoniously with the additional numbers contained in these volumes. Having made these explanations, I now submit the work to the public.

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THE OLD JUDGE;

OR,

LIFE IN A COLONY.

CHAPTER I.

THE OLD JUDGE.

A few days ago two strangers were shown into my study: one of them, stepping aside, pointed to his companion, and said, "This, sir, is the Reverend Gabriel Gab of Olympus." The other performed the same kind office for his friend, saying, "And this, sir, is the Reverend Elijah Warner, of the Millerite persuasion, from Palmyra, United States of America."

The former, whose name was by no means inappropriate, explained, with great volubility, the object of their visit, which he said was twofold: first, to pay their respects to me; secondly, to make some inquiries about the great bore in the river in my neighbourhood.

Had there been a mirror in the room, I should have been tempted to have pointed to it, as they would have there seen two much greater bores in their own persons; for, if there is any one subject more than

another, of which I am heartily tired, it is the extraordinary tide of this remarkable river. It attracts many idlers to the village, who pester every one they meet with questions and theories, and seldom talk of anything else. If, however, the visit of these gentlemen wearied me, in consequence of the threadbare subject of our discourse, it amused me not a little by the whimsical manner of its introduction; it not only had novelty to recommend it, but its brevity enabled them to enter *in medias res* at once. I shall therefore imitate their example, by introducing myself and explaining my business.

I am, gentle reader, a traveller, and my object also is twofold: first, to pay my respects to you, and, secondly, to impart, rather than solicit, information. When I left England, my original destination was New York and the far West, after which I purposed making a rapid tour over our North American Colonies. In pursuance of this plan, I took passage on board of one of the British mail-steamers for America.

It is well known that these ships touch at Halifax on their way to and from New York and Boston; this apparently circuitous route being actually thirty-six miles shorter than the direct course.¹ In twelve days after leaving England I found myself in Halifax.

Of my voyage out I shall say nothing. He must

¹ See the second series of *The Clockmaker*, chapter xxii., in which this route was first suggested, and the actual distance given.

be a bold man indeed who would attempt to describe the incidents of a common passage across the Atlantic, with any hope whatever of finding a reader. It was, like all similar trips, though as comfortable as such an affair can be, anything but agreeable, and, though short, tedious to a landsman. Off the Port of Halifax we encountered a thick fog, and were obliged to slacken our speed and use the lead constantly, when we suddenly emerged from it into bright clear dazzling sunshine. Before us lay the harbour, as calm, as white, and as glittering, as if covered with glass; a comparison that suggested itself by the beautiful reflections it presented of the various objects on shore; while behind us was the dense black mass of fog, reaching from the water to the heavens, like a wall or cloud of darkness. It seemed as if Day and Night were reposing together side by side.

The first object that met our view was the picturesque little church that crowns the cliff overlooking the village and haven of Falkland, and, like a *stella maris*, guides the poor fisherman from afar to his home, and recalls his wandering thoughts to that other and happier one that awaits him when the storms and tempests of this life shall have passed away for ever. The entrance to this noble harbour, the best, perhaps, in America, is exceedingly beautiful; such portions of the landscape as are denuded of trees exhibit a very high state of cultivation; while the natural sterility of the cold, wet, and rocky soil of the background is

clothed and concealed by verdant evergreens of spruce fir, pine, and hemlock. On either hand, you pass formidable fortifications, and the national flag and the British sentinel bear testimony to the power and extensive possessions of dear old England.

On the right is the rapidly increasing town of Dartmouth ; on the left, Halifax, situated *in extenso* on the slope of a long high hill, the coné-like summit of which is converted into a citadel. The effect from the water is very imposing, giving the idea of a much larger and better built place than it is—an illusion productive of much subsequent disappointment. Still further on, and forming the northern termination of the city, is the Government Dockyard, of which I shall speak elsewhere. Here the harbour contracts to a very narrow space, and then suddenly enlarges again into another and more sheltered body of water, eight or ten miles in length, and two or three in width, called Bedford Basin.

On a nearer approach to the Quay, old dingy warehouses, trumpery wooden buildings, of unequal size and disproportioned forms, and unsubstantial wharfs, in bad order and repair, present an unpromising water-side view, while the accent of the labourers and truckmen who are nearly all Irishmen form a singular combination of colonial architecture and European population. The city itself, which has been greatly improved of late years, does not, on a further acquaintance, altogether remove the disagreeable impression.

Although it boasts of many very handsome public as well as private edifices, it is well laid out and embellished with large naval and military establishments ; it has not the neat or uniform appearance of an American town, and it is some time before the eye becomes accustomed to the card-board appearance of the houses, or the singular mixture of large and small ones in the same street. The general aspect of the city is as different from that of any other provincial town, as it is from a place of the same size either in Old or New England. The inhabitants, who are composed of English, Irish, Scotch, and their descendants, are estimated at twenty-two or twenty-five thousand. It is a gay and hospitable place, and, until recently, when agitation and political strife made their baneful appearance, was a united and happy community.

It is not my intention to describe localities—my object is to delineate Life in a Colony. There is such a general uniformity in the appearance of all the country towns and villages of these lower provinces, and such a similarity in the character of the scenery, that details would be but tedious repetitions, and, besides, such topographical sketches are to be found in every book of travels on this continent. I have said thus much of Halifax, because it is not only the capital of Nova Scotia, but, from its proximity to Europe, has lately become a most important station for English and American Atlantic steamers, as it always has been for the British navy. A few words will suffice for Nova

Scotia. The surface is undulating, seldom or never exceeding in altitude five hundred feet above the level of the sea. It is greatly intersected with rivers and their tributary brooks, on the margins of which are continuous lines of settlements, and the coast is everywhere indented with harbours more or less capacious, in most of which are either towns or villages. In the background, the forest is everywhere visible, and penetrated in all directions with roads. Although extensive clearings are made yearly in the interior, principally by the children of old settlers, in which backwood life is to be seen in all its simplicity, yet the country has passed the period of youth, and may now be called an old colony.

Of the habits, manners, and modes of thought of the people, few travellers have had such an opportunity of becoming acquainted as I have. At the suggestion of Mr. Barclay, a member of the provincial bar, with whom I accidentally became acquainted on my arrival at Halifax, I abandoned for a time my intention of proceeding to New York, and from thence to the South and West, and remained in this country for a period sufficiently long to acquire that knowledge of Anglo-American character without which rapid travelling on this continent is neither convenient nor instructive. By him I was conducted to Illinoo, an interior town, about fifty miles from Halifax, and there introduced to Mr. Justice Sandford, a retired Judge of the Supreme Court of Judicature. By the

LIFE IN A COLONY.

considerate kindness of these two gentlemen, I was enabled to see all that was desirable to be seen, and to understand many little points in the character of the people, which, without their valuable explanations, would have either escaped my notice, or have been unintelligible.

Illinoo is situated at the head of the navigation of the Inganish river, and is a neat, thriving town, consisting of about a hundred and fifty wooden houses, painted white, after the prevailing American taste, most of them being decorated with green Venetian blinds, and all enclosed by board fences of different patterns. The glare of the glossy white is somewhat relieved by the foliage of the gardens that everywhere surround the houses, and supply the inhabitants with fruit and vegetables. Such is Illinoo, the description of which will answer for any other rural village, the difference in general being one of situation, rather than appearance and of size, more than beauty.

Three miles further up the river, and above the influence of the tide, is Elmsdale, the residence of Judge Sandford. The house stands on a rising piece of ground in the centre of an extensive island, formed by two branches of the river, one of which is a small brook of about twenty yards in width, and the other the main stream. The island consists principally of alluvial soil, but is interspersed here and there with gently swelling knolls of loam, covered with oaks,

maples, and yellow birches, while the meadow land is decorated with large single elms of immense size and great beauty. The margin is secured against the effects of the current by the roots of the shumach, the wild flowering pear, and dwarf rowan tree, and the still stronger network of the roots of the giant elms that enclose the place on all sides. On the south-west and east, this valley is sheltered from the wind by a mountainous ridge, through a winding and almost concealed gorge, of which the river precipitately issues, previously to its forming the bifurcation that converts Elmsdale into an island.

The house, which was built by the present proprietor's father, an American Loyalist, is a large commodious cottage of one story in height, covering a great deal of ground, and constructed after the manner of the German settlers on the Hudson, having long projecting eaves, and an extensive, elongated range of buildings protruding from the back part, devoted to the use of domestics and farm purposes, and which is effectually concealed from view by an almost impenetrable hedge-row of spruces. Two noble, primeval elms, at either side of the hall-door, rejoice in their native soil, and with their long, umbrageous, pendent branches, equally deny admission to the rain and sun. The interior of the house corresponds, to a great extent, with its outward appearance. The furniture is in general old, solid, and heavy, like that used in our former colonies before the rebellion, which contrasts

oddly with an occasional article of lighter form, and later and more fashionable manufacture. They are types of the old and the present generation; for, alas, it is to be feared that what has been gained in appearance has been lost in substance, in things of far more value and importance. It is a place of great beauty at all seasons of the year; but, in spring, when vegetation first clothes the mountains, and in autumn, when the frost tinges it with innumerable hues before it disrobes it, it is pre-eminently so. The forest, to which you are attracted in summer by its grateful shade, is rendered still more agreeable and cool, by the numerous rapids and cascades of the river; and even winter, dreary as it is everywhere in the country, is here stripped of half its rigour, by the barrier the hills present to the stormy winds.

To this hospitable and charming mansion I was so fortunate as to be invited by the Judge, at the suggestion, no doubt, of his nephew, my friend Mr. Barclay. "He will be delighted to see you," he said, as we drove thither from the village. "He is one of those persons with whom you will feel at home and at ease at once. Such is the force of professional habit, that there is something of judicial gravity in his manner when abroad, or among those he does not know, but there is not the least of it about him when at home, or among his friends. Although far advanced in years, he is still as active in body and mind, as quick of perception, and as fond of humour, as when he was at

the bar. He abounds in anecdote; is remarkably well informed for a lawyer, for their libraries necessarily contain more heavy learning than light reading; and he has great conversational powers. In religion he is a Churchman, and in politics a Conservative, as is almost every gentleman in these colonies. On the first subject he never speaks as a topic of discussion, and on the latter very rarely, and then only to those who, he knows, entertain similar opinions with himself. He will press you to make his house your home, as far as is compatible with your other arrangements, and I hope you will not fail to do so, for he is fond of having his friends about him, and in this retired place considers it a great piece of good fortune to have an opportunity of conversing with a person whose ideas are not all bounded by this little province. On the other hand, you will find a kind, frank, but plain hospitality, that is comfortable without being oppressive; and, as your object is information about colonial life, I know of no man in this country so well qualified or so willing to impart it as he is. There is capital shooting and fishing on his grounds; and, when you feel inclined for a ride or a drive, either he or his niece (for he is an old bachelor) will be happy to accompany you, while I am always on hand, and at your service. Don't be afraid of my fair cousin," he continued; "though not too old to be agreeable, (for my uncle is an instance of the difficulty of deciding when that period of life commences) she is of a cer-

tain age, when she may be considered no longer dangerous.”

Leaving the highway, we crossed the brook that separates the island from the main land over a rustic arch, so constructed between clumps of large French willows growing on the banks as to have the effect of a natural bridge. The road wound round the base of a knoll, through a forest of elms, from which, with an easy sweep, it suddenly terminated in front of the house. From thence we proceeded to the garden, where we understood the Judge was superintending some improvements. This enclosure covers about two acres of land, and embraces the fruitery, shrubbery, kitchen and flower garden ; thus combining useful with ornamental cultivation, and keeping both within the limits of moderate means. In summer, he spends most of his time here, when the weather permits.

As soon as he perceived us, he advanced, and cordially welcomed me to Elmsdale, which, he said, he hoped I would make my head-quarters and consider my home, as often and as long as I could, while in this part of the country.

Though thin, his frame was strong, and well put together, and therefore, though short in stature, he could not be called a small man. In figure, he was erect, and in motion active, while his quick bright eye, notwithstanding the snowy whiteness of his hair, and a face in which the traces of care and thought were

deeply marked, suggested the idea of a much younger person than he really was—an illusion not a little aided by the sprightliness of his conversation, and the singular smoothness and expansion of the upper part of his forehead.

In a few moments we were joined by Miss Sandford, who entered the garden by a glass door from the library, that opened upon the verandah where we were standing, and admonished her uncle that, as everybody was not quite as interested in gardening as he was, it might not be amiss to recollect that it was the hour of luncheon. From the age as well as the affection of these relatives, brother would have seemed to be a more appropriate term for her to have used than uncle ; but there was, in reality, a much greater disparity between them in years, activity, and strength, than there appeared to be at first sight. She was admirably well qualified to preside over his establishment, and be his companion ; for she was a remarkably well-informed and agreeable woman, and, what could scarcely be expected, and is rarely found in a new country like this, was highly accomplished, which latter advantage she owed to a long residence and careful education in England.

Such was the place where I resided, and such the people among whom I was domesticated so often and so long. Having, like Boswell, kept a copious journal of the conversations I had with the Judge, I shall in all instances let him speak for himself, as his power of

description far exceeds mine. When he was not present, I shall endeavour to delineate the scenes I witnessed myself, without embellishment on the one hand, and, as far as practicable, without prolixity on the other.

CHAPTER II.

HOW MANY FINS HAS A COD ?

OR, FORTY YEARS AGO.

For several days past, nothing else has been talked of at Illinoo but the approaching term of the Supreme Court. At all times, this is a great event for a quiet village, where there is but little to diversify the monotony of life ; but the arrival of the Judge and the circuit lawyers is now looked forward to with great interest, as there is to be a man tried for murder, who, in all probability, will be convicted and executed. I have much curiosity to see the mode of administering justice in this country, because the state of the courts is a very good criterion by which to estimate the state of the province. The Bench and the Bar usually furnish fair samples of the talent and education of the gentry—the grand jury of the class immediately below them, and the petit-jury of the yeomanry and tradesmen. In a court-house, they are all to be seen in juxtaposition, and a stranger is enabled to compare them one with the other, with the condition of the people and similar institutions in different countries.

The Judge informs me that the first courts esta-

blished in this province were County Courts, the Judges of which were not professional men, but selected from the magistrates of the district, who rendered their services gratuitously. The efficiency of these courts, therefore, depended wholly upon the character and attainments of the Justices of the Peace in the neighbourhood. In some instances, they were conducted with much decorum, and not without ability; in others, they presented scenes of great confusion and disorder; but, in all cases, they were the centre of attraction to the whole county. The vicinity of the court-house was a sort of fair, where people assembled to transact business, or to amuse themselves. Horse-swapping or racing, wrestling and boxing, smoking and drinking, sales at auction, and games of various kinds, occupied the noisy and not very sober crowd. The temperance of modern times, the substitution of professional men as judges, and an entire change of habits among the people, have no less altered the character of the scenes within than without the walls of these halls of justice. In no respect is the improvement of this country so apparent as in its judicial establishments. As an illustration of the condition of some of these County Courts in the olden time, the Judge related to me the following extraordinary story that occurred to himself:—

Shortly after my return from Europe, about forty years ago, I attended the Western Circuit of the Supreme Court, which then terminated at Annapolis, and remained behind a few days, for the purpose of ex-

aming that most interesting place, which is the scene of the first effective settlement in North America.

While engaged in these investigations, a person called upon me, and told me he had ridden express from Plymouth, to obtain my assistance in a cause which was to be tried in a day or two in the county court at that place. The judges were at that period, as I have previously observed, not professional men, but magistrates, and equally unable to administer law, or to preserve order; and the verdicts generally depended more upon the declamatory powers of the lawyers than the merits of the causes. The distance was great—the journey had to be performed on horseback—the roads were bad, the accommodation worse. I had a great repugnance to attend these courts under any circumstances; and, besides, had pressing engagements at home. I therefore declined accepting his retainer, which was the largest that at that time had ever been tendered to me, and begged to be excused. If the fee, he said, was too small to render it worth my while to go, he would cheerfully double it, for money was no object. The cause was one of great importance to his friend, Mr. John Barkins, and of deep interest to the whole community; and, as the few lawyers that resided within a hundred miles of the place were engaged on the other side, if I did not go, his unfortunate friend would fall a victim to the intrigues and injustice of his opponents. In short, he was so urgent, that at last I was prevailed upon to con-

sent, and we set off together to prosecute our journey on horseback. The agent, Mr. William Robins (who had the most accurate and capacious memory of any man I ever met), proved a most entertaining and agreeable companion. He had read a great deal, and retained it all; and, having resided many years near Plymouth, knew every body, every place, and every tradition. Withal, he was somewhat of a humourist. Finding him a person of this description, my curiosity was excited to know who and what he was; and I put the question to him.

“I am of the same profession you are, sir,” he said.

I immediately reined up.

“If that be the case,” I replied, “my good friend, you must try the cause yourself. I cannot consent to go on. The only thing that induced me to set out with you was your assertion that every lawyer, within a hundred miles of Plymouth, was retained on the other side.”

“Excuse me, sir,” he said, “I did not say I was a lawyer.”

“No,” I observed, “you did not; but you stated that you were of the same profession as myself, which is the same thing.”

“Not exactly, sir,” he said. “I am a wrecker. I am Lloyds’ agent, and live on the misfortunes of others; so do you. When a vessel is wrecked, it is my business to get her off, or to save the property. When a man is entangled among the shoals or quicksands of

the law, your duty is similar. We are both wreckers, and, therefore, members of the same profession. The only difference is, you are a lawyer, and I am not."

This absurd reply removing all difficulty, we proceeded on our journey; and the first night after passing through Digby reached Shingle Town, or Spaitsville, the origin of which, as he related it to me, was the most whimsical story I ever heard. It is rather long for an episode, and I will tell it to you some other time. The next morning we reached Clare, a township wholly owned and occupied by French Acadians, the descendants of those persons who first settled at Port Royal (as I have just related), and other parts of the province into which they had penetrated, previous to the occupation of the English. I will not trouble you with the melancholy history of these people at present; I only allude to them now on account of a little incident in our journey. As we approached the chapel, we saw a large number of persons in front of the priest's house, having either terminated or being about to commence a procession. As soon as Robins saw them, he said—

"Now, I will make every man of that congregation take off his hat to me."

"How?"

"You shall see."

He soon pulled up opposite to a large wooden cross that stood by the way-side, and, taking off his hat, bowed his head most reverently and respectfully down

to the horse's neck, and then, slowly covering again, passed on. When we reached the crowd, every hat was lifted in deference to the devout stranger, who had thus courteously or piously saluted the emblem of their faith. As soon as we had escaped the wondering gaze of the people, he observed—

“There, lawyer, there is a useful lesson in life for you. He who respects the religious feelings of others, will not fail to win indulgence for his own.”

In the afternoon we arrived at Plymouth. As we entered the village, I observed that the court-house as usual was surrounded by a noisy multitude, some detached groups of which appeared to be discussing the trials of the morning, or anticipating that which was to engross the attention of the public on the succeeding day. On the opposite side of the road was a large tavern, the hospitable door of which stood invitingly open, and permitted the escape of most agreeable and seducing odours of rum and tobacco. The crowd occupied and filled the space between the two buildings, and presented a moving and agitated surface; and yet a strong current was perceptible to a practised eye in this turbid mass, setting steadily out of the court-house, and passing slowly but constantly through the centre of this estuary into the tavern, and returning again in an eddy on either side.

Where every one was talking at the same time, no individual could be heard or understood at a distance, but the united vociferations of the assembled hundreds

blended together, and formed the deep-toned but dissonant voice of that hydra-headed monster, the crowd. On a nearer approach, the sounds that composed this unceasing roar became more distinguishable. The drunken man might be heard rebuking the profane, and the profane overwhelming the hypocrite with opprobrium for his cant. Neighbours, rendered amiable by liquor, embraced as brothers, and loudly proclaimed their unchangeable friendship ; while the memory of past injuries, awakened into fury by the liquid poison, placed others in hostile attitude, who hurled defiance and abuse at each other, to the full extent of their lungs or their vocabulary. The slow, measured, nasal talk of the degenerate settler from Puritanical New England, was rendered unintelligible by the ceaseless and rapid utterance of the French fisherman ; while poor Pat, bludgeon in hand, uproariously solicited his neighbours to fight or to drink, and generously gave them their option. Even the dogs caught the infection of the place, and far above their masters' voices might occasionally be heard the loud, sharp cry of triumph, or the more shrill howl of distress uttered by these animals, who, with as little cause as their senseless owners, had engaged in a stupid conflict.

A closer inspection revealed the groupings with more painful distinctness. Here, might be seen the merry, active Negro, flapping his mimic wings and crowing like a cock in token of defiance to all his sable brethren, or dancing to the sound of his own musical voice, and

terminating every evolution with a scream of delight. There, your attention was arrested by a ferocious-looking savage, who, induced by the promise of liquor, armed with a scalping-knife in one hand and a tomahawk in the other, exhibited his terrific war-dance, and uttered his demoniac yells, to the horror of him who personated the victim, and suffered all the pangs of martyrdom in trembling apprehension that that which had begun in sport might end in reality, and to the infinite delight of a circle of boys, whose morals were thus improved and confirmed by the conversation and example of their fathers. At the outer edge of the throng might be seen a woman, endeavouring to persuade or to force her inebriated husband to leave this scene of sin and shame, and return to his neglected home, his family, and his duties. Now, success crowns her untiring exertions, and he yields to her tears and entreaties, and gives himself up to her gentle guidance; when suddenly the demon within him rebels, and he rudely bursts from her feeble but affectionate hold, and returns, shouting and roaring like a maniac, to his thoughtless and noisy associates. The enduring love of the agonized woman prompts her again and again to renew the effort, until at last some kind friend, touched by her sorrows and her trials, lends her the aid of his powerful arm, and the truant man is led off captive to what was once a happy home, but now a house of destitution and distress. These noises ceased for a moment as we arrived at the spot, and were super-

seded by a command issued by several persons at the same time.

“ Clear the road there ! Make way for the gentlemen ! ”

We had been anxiously expected all the afternoon, and the command was instantly obeyed, and a passage opened for us by the people falling back on either side of the street. As we passed through, my friend checked his horse into a slow walk, and led me with an air of triumph, such as a jockey displays in bringing out his favourite on the course. Robins was an important man that day. He had succeeded in his mission. He had got his champion, and would be ready for fight in the morning. It was but reasonable, therefore, he thought, to indulge the public with a glimpse at his man. He nodded familiarly to some, winked slyly to others, saluted people at a distance aloud, and shook hands patronisingly with those that were nearest. He would occasionally lag behind a moment, and say, in an under but very audible tone—

“ Precious clever fellow that ! Sees it all—says we are all right—sure to win it ! I wouldn't be in those fellows the plaintiff's skins to-morrow for a trifle ! He is a powerful man, that ! ” and so forth.

The first opportunity that occurred, I endeavoured to put a stop to this trumpeting.

“ For Heaven's sake,” I said, “ my good friend, do not talk such nonsense ; if you do, you will ruin me ! I am at all times a diffident man, but, if you raise such

expectations, I shall assuredly break down, from the very fear of not fulfilling them. I know too well the doubtful issue of trials ever to say that a man is certain of winning. Pray do not talk of me in this manner."

"You *are* sure, sir," he said. "What, a man who has just landed from his travels in Europe, and arrived, after a journey of one hundred miles, from the last sitting of the Supreme Court, not to know more than any one else! Fudge, sir! I congratulate you, you have gained the cause! And besides, sir, do you think that if William Robins says he has got the right man (and he wouldn't say so if he didn't think so), that that isn't enough? Why, sir, your leather breeches and top-boots are enough to do the business! Nobody ever saw such things here before, and a man in buckskin must know more than a man in homespun. But here is Mrs. Brown's inn; let us dismount. I have procured a private sitting-room for you, which on court-days, militia trainings, and times of town meetings or elections, is not very easy, I assure you. Come, walk in, and make yourself comfortable."

We had scarcely entered into our snuggerly, which was evidently the landlady's own apartment, when the door was softly opened a few inches, and a beseeching voice was heard, saying—

"Billy, is that him? If it is, tell him it's me; will you? that's a good soul!"

"Come in—come in, old Blowhard!" said Robins;

and, seizing the stranger by the hand, he led him up, and introduced him to me.

“ Lawyer, this is Captain John Barkins!—Captain Barkins, this is Lawyer Sandford! He is our client, lawyer, and I must say one thing for him: he has but two faults, but they are enough to ruin any man in this province; he is an honest man, and speaks the truth. I will leave you together now, and go and order your dinner for you.”

John Barkins was a tall, corpulent, amphibious-looking man, that seemed as if he would be equally at home in either element, land or water. He held in his hand what he called a nor'-wester, a large, broad-brimmed, glazed hat, with a peak projecting behind to shed the water from off his club queue, which was nearly as thick as a hawser. He wore a long, narrow-tailed, short-waisted blue coat, with large, white-plated buttons, that resembled Spanish dollars, a red waistcoat, a spotted Bandanna silk handkerchief tied loosely about his throat, and a pair of voluminous, corduroy trousers, of the colour of brown soap, over which were drawn a pair of fishermen's boots, that reached nearly to his knees. His waistcoat and his trousers were apparently not upon very intimate terms, for, though they travelled together, the latter were taught to feel their subjection, but, when they lagged too far behind, they were brought to their place by a jerk of impatience that threatened their very existence. He had a thick, matted head of black hair, and a pair of whiskers that

disdained the effeminacy of either scissors or razor, and revelled in all the exuberant and wild profusion of nature. His countenance was much weather-beaten from constant exposure to the vicissitudes of heat and cold, but was open, good-natured, and manly. Such was my client. He advanced and shook me cordially by the hand.

“Glad to see you, sir,” he said; “you are welcome to Plymouth. My name is John Barkins; I dare say you have often heard of me, for everybody knows me about these parts. Any one will tell you what sort of a man John Barkins is. That’s me—that’s my name, do you see? I am a parsecuted man, lawyer; but I ain’t altogether quite run down yet, neither. I have a case in court; I dare say Mr. Robins has told you of it. He is a very clever man is old Billy, and as smart a chap of his age as you will see anywhere a’most. I suppose you have often heard of him before, for everybody knows William Robins in these parts. It’s the most important case, sir, ever tried in this county. If I lose it, Plymouth is done. There’s an end to the fisheries, and a great many of us are a going to sell off and quit the country.”

I will not detail his cause to you in his own words, because it will fatigue you as it wearied me in hearing it. It possessed no public interest whatever, though it was of some importance to himself as regarded the result. It appeared that he had fitted out a large vessel for the Labradore fishery, and taken with him

a very full crew, who were to share in the profits or loss of the adventure. The agreement, which was a verbal one, was, that on the completion of the voyage the cargo should be sold, and the net proceeds be distributed in equal portions, one half to appertain to the captain and vessel, and the other half to the crew, and to be equally divided among them. The undertaking was a disastrous one, and on their return the seamen repudiated the bargain, and sued him for wages. It was, therefore, a very simple affair, being a mere question of fact as to the partnership, and that depending wholly on the evidence. Having ascertained these particulars, and inquired into the nature of the proof by which his defence was to be supported, and given him his instructions, I requested him to call upon me again in the morning before Court, and bowed to him in a manner too significant to be misunderstood. He, however, still lingered in the room, and, turning his hat round and round several times, examining the rim very carefully, as if at a loss to discover the front from the back part of it, he looked up at last, and said—

“ Lawyer, I have a favour to ask of you.”

“ What is it ?” I inquired.

“ There is a man,” he replied, “ coming agin me to-morrow as a witness, of the name of Lillum. He thinks himself a great judge of the fisheries, and he does know a considerable some, I must say ; but, d—— him ! I caught fish afore he was born, and know more

about fishing than all the Lillums of Plymouth put together. Will you just ask him one question?"

"Yes, fifty, if you like."

"Well, I only want you to try him with one, and that will choke him. Ask him if he knows 'how many fins a cod has, at a word.'"

"What has that got to do with the cause?" I said, with unfeigned astonishment.

"Everything, sir," he answered; "everything in the world. If he is to come to give his opinion on other men's business, the best way is to see if he knows his own. Tarnation, man! he don't know a cod-fish when he sees it; if he does, he can tell you 'how many fins it has, at a word.' It is a great catch that. I have won a great many half-pints of brandy on it. I never knew a feller that could answer that question yet, right off the reel."

He then explained to me that, in the enumeration, one small fin was always omitted by those who had not previously made a minute examination.

"Now, sir," said he, "if he can't cipher out that question (and I'll go a hogshead of rum on it he can't), turn him right out of the box, and tell him to go a voyage with old John Barkins—that's me, my name is John Barkins—and he will larn him his trade. Will you ask him that question, lawyer?"

"Certainly," I said, "if you wish it."

"You will gain the day, then, sir," he continued,

much elated; "you will gain the day, then, as sure as fate. Good-by, lawyer!"

When he had nearly reached the foot of the staircase, I heard him returning, and, opening the door, he looked in and said—

"You won't forget, will you?—my name is John Barkins; ask anybody about here, and they will tell you who I am, for everybody knows John Barkins in these parts. The other man's name is Lillum—a very decent, 'sponsible-looking man, too; but he don't know everything. Take him up all short. 'How many fins has a cod, at a word?' says you. If you can lay him on the broad of his back with that question, I don't care a farthing if I lose the case. It's a great satisfaction to nonplush a knowin' one that way. You know the question?"

"Yes, yes," I replied, impatiently. "I know all about it."

"You do, do you, sir?" said he, shutting the door behind him, and advancing towards me, and looking me steadily in the face; "you do, do you? Then, 'how many fins has a cod, at a word?'"

I answered as he had instructed me.

"Gad, sir," he said, "it's a pity your father hadn't made a fisherman of you, for you know more about a cod now than any man in Plymouth but one, old John Barkins—that's me, my name is John Barkins. Everybody knows me in these parts. Bait your hook with that question, and you'll catch old Lillum, I know.

As soon as he has it in his gills, drag him right out of the water. Give him no time to play—in with him, and whap him on the deck; hit him hard over the head—it will make him open his mouth, and your hook is ready for another catch.”

“ Good night, Mr. Barkins,” I replied; “ call on me in the morning. I am fatigued now.”

“ Good night, sir,” he answered; “ you won’t forget ?”

Dinner was now announced, and my friend Mr. Robins and myself sat down to it with an excellent appetite. Having done ample justice to the good cheer of Mrs. Brown, and finished our wine, we drew up to the fire, which, at that season of the year, was most acceptable in the morning and evening, and smoked our cigars. Robins had so many good stories, and told them so uncommonly well, that it was late before we retired to rest. Instead of being shown into the bed-room I had temporarily occupied for changing my dress before dinner, I was ushered into a long, low room, fitted up on either side with berths, with a locker running round the base, and in all respects, except the skylight, resembling a cabin. Strange as it appeared, it was in keeping with the place (a fishing port), its population, and the habits of the people. Mrs. Brown, the landlady, was the widow of a sea-faring man, who had, no doubt, fitted up the chamber in this manner with a view to economize room, and thus accommodate as many passengers (as he would

designate his guests) as possible in this sailor's home. A lamp hung suspended from the ceiling, and appeared to be supplied and trimmed for the night, so as to afford easy access and egress at all hours. It was almost impossible not to imagine one's self at sea, on board of a crowded coasting-packet. Retreat was impossible, and therefore I made up my mind at once to submit to this whimsical arrangement for the night, and, having undressed myself, was about to climb into a vacant berth near the door, when some one opposite called out—

“ Lawyer, is that you ?”

It was my old tormentor, the skipper. Upon ascertaining who it was, he immediately got out of bed, and crossed over to where I was standing. He had nothing on but a red nightcap, and a short, loose check shirt, wide open at the throat and breast. He looked like a huge bear walking upon his hind-legs, he was so hairy and shaggy. Seizing me by the shoulders, he clasped me tightly round the neck, and whispered—

“ ‘ How many fins has a cod, at a word ?’ That's the question. You won't forget, will you ?”

“ No,” I said, “ I not only will not forget it tomorrow, but I shall recollect you and your advice as long as I live. Now let me get some rest, or I shall be unable to plead your cause for you, as I am excessively fatigued and very drowsy.”

“ Certainly, certainly,” he said ; “ turn in, but don't forget the catch.”

It was some time before the hard bed, the fatigues of the journey, and the novelty of the scene, permitted me to compose myself for sleep; and just as I was dropping off into a slumber, I heard the same unwelcome sounds—

“ Lawyer, lawyer, are you asleep ? ”

I affected not to hear him, and, after another ineffectual attempt on his part to rouse me, he desisted; but I heard him mutter to himself—

“ Plague take the sarpent ! he’ll forget it and lose all : a feller that falls asleep at the helm, ain’t fit to be trusted no how.”

I was not doomed, however, to obtain repose upon such easy terms. The skipper’s murmurs had scarcely died away, when a French fisherman from St. Mary’s Bay entered the room, and, stumbling over my saddlebags, which he anathematized in bad French, bad English, and in a language compounded of both, and embellished with a few words of Indian origin, he called out loudly—

“ Célestine, are you here ? ”

This interrogatory was responded to by another from the upper end of the room—

“ Is that you, Baptiste ? Which way is the wind ? ”

“ Nor’-nor’-west.”

“ Then I must sail for Halifax to-morrow.”

While Baptiste was undressing, an operation which was soon performed (with the exception of the time lost in pulling off an obstinate and most intractable

pair of boots), the following absurd conversation took place. Upon hearing the word Halifac, (as he called it) Baptiste expressed great horror of the place, and especially the red devils (the soldiers) with which it was infested. He said the last time he was there, as he was passing the King's Wharf to go to his vessel late at night, the sentinel called out to him, "Who come dare?" to which impertinent question he gave no answer. The red villain, he said, repeated the challenge louder than before, but, as he knew it was none of his business, he did not condescend to reply. The soldier then demanded, in a voice of thunder, for the third time, "Who come dare?" "to which," to use his own words, "I answer him, 'What the devil is that to you?' and ran off so fast as my legs would carry me, and faster too; but the villain knew the way better nor me, and just stuck his 'bagonut' right into my thigh, ever so far as one inch. Oh!" said Baptiste (who had become excited by the recollection of the insult, and began to jump about the floor, making a most villanous clatter with the half-drawn boot), "Oh! I was very mad, you may depend. I could have murder him, I was so vexed. Oh! I was so d—— mad, I ran straight off to the vessel without stopping, and—jumped right into bed."

Célestine expressed great indignation at such an unprovoked and cowardly assault, and advised him, if ever he caught that soldier again, alone and unarmed, and had his two grown-up sons, Lewis and Dominique,

with him, to give him a sound drubbing, and then weigh anchor, and sail right out of the harbour. He congratulated himself, however, that if the soldier had run the point of his bayonet into his friend, he had lately avenged it by making a merchant there feel the point of a joke that was equally sharp, and penetrated deeper. He had purchased goods, he said, of a trader at Halifax upon this express promise—

“ If you will trust me this spring, I will pay you last fall. The merchant,” he observed, “ thought I was talking bad English, but it is very good English; and when last fall comes again, I will keep my word and pay him, but not till then. Don’t he hope he may get his money the day before yesterday?”

Baptiste screamed with delight at this joke, which, he said, he would tell his wife Félicité, and his two daughters, Angélique and Blondine, as soon as he returned home. Having succeeded at last in escaping from his tenacious boot, he turned in, and, as soon as his head touched the pillow, was sound asleep.

In the morning when I awoke, the first objects that met my eye were the Bandanna handkerchief, the red waistcoat and blue coat, while a goodnatured face watched over me with all the solicitude of a parent for the first moments of wakefulness.

“ Lawyer, are you awake?” said Barkins. “ This is the great day—the greatest day Plymouth ever saw! We shall know now whether we are to carry on the fisheries, or give them up to the Yankees. Every-

thing depends upon that question ; for Heaven's sake, don't forget it !—‘ How many fins has a cod, at a word ?’ It is very late now. It is eight o'clock, and the courts meet at ten, and the town is full. All the folks from Chebogue, and Jegoggin, and Salmon River, and Beaver River, and Eel Brook, and Polly Crossby's Hole, and the Gut and the Devil's Island, and Ragged Island, and far and near, are come. It's a great day and a great catch. I never lost a bet on it yet. You may win many a half-pint of brandy on it, if you won't forget it.”

“ Do go away and let me dress myself !” I said, petulantly. “ I won't forget you.”

“ Well, I'll go below,” he replied, “ if you wish it, but call for me when you want me. My name is John Barkins ; ask any one for me, for every man knows John Barkins in these parts. But, dear me,” he continued, “ I forgot !” and, taking an enormous key out of his pocket, he opened a sea-chest, from which he drew a large glass decanter, highly gilt, and a rummer of corresponding dimensions, with a golden edge. Taking the bottle in one hand and the glass in the other, he drew the small round gilt stopper with his mouth, and, pouring out about half a pint of the liquid, he said, “ Here, lawyer, take a drop of bitters this morning, just to warm the stomach and clear your throat. It's excellent ! It is old Jamaiky and sarsy-parilly, and will do your heart good. It's an antifogmatic, and will make you as hungry as a shark, and as lively as a thrasher !”

I shook my head in silence and despair, for I saw he was a man there was no escaping from.

“You won’t, eh?”

“No, thank you, I never take anything of the kind in the morning.”

“Where the deuce was you broughten up,” he asked, with distended eyes, “that you haven’t lost the taste of your mother’s milk yet? You are worse than an Isle of Sable colt, and them wild, ontamed devils suckle for two years! Well, if you won’t, I will, then; so here goes,” and holding back his head, the potion vanished in an instant, and he returned the bottle and the glass to their respective places. As he went, slowly and sulkily, down stairs, he muttered, “Hang him! he’s only a fresh-water fish that, after all; and they ain’t even fit for bait, for they have neither substance nor flavour!”

After breakfast, Mr. Robins conducted me to the court-house, which was filled almost to suffocation. The panel was immediately called, and the jury placed in the box. Previous to their being sworn, I inquired of Barkins whether any of them were related to the plaintiffs, or had been known to express an opinion adverse to his interests; for if such was the case, it was the time to challenge them. To my astonishment, he immediately rose and told the judges he challenged the whole jury, the bench of magistrates, and every man in the house,—a defiance that was accompanied by a menacing outstretched arm and clenched fist. A

shout of laughter that nearly shook the walls of the building followed this violent outbreak. Nothing daunted by their ridicule, however, he returned to the charge, and said,

“ I repeat it ; I challenge the whole of you, if you dare ! ”

Here the Court interposed, and asked him what he meant by such indecent behaviour.

“ Meant ! ” he said, “ I mean what I say. The strange lawyer here tells me now is my time to challenge, and I claim my right ; I do challenge any or all of you ! Pick out any man present you please, take the smartest chap you’ve got, put us both on board the same vessel, and I challenge him to catch, spit, clean, salt, and stow away as many fish in a day as I can,—cod, polluck, shad, or mackerel ; I don’t care which, for it’s all the same to me ; and I’ll go a hogshead of rum on it I beat him ! Will any man take up the challenge ? ” and he turned slowly round and examined the whole crowd. “ You won’t, won’t you ? I guess not ; you know a trick worth two of that, I reckon ! There, lawyer, there is my challenge ; now go on with the cause ! ”

As soon as order was restored the jury were sworn, and the plaintiff’s counsel opened his case and called his witnesses, the last of whom was Mr. Lillum.

“ That’s him ! ” said Barkins, putting both arms round my neck and nearly choking me, as he whispered, “ Ask him ‘ how many fins a cod has, at a

word?" I now stood up to cross-examine him, when I was again in the skipper's clutches. "Don't forget! the question is"

"If you do not sit down immediately, sir," I said, in a loud and authoritative voice (for the scene had become ludicrous), "and leave me to conduct the cause my own way, I shall retire from the Court!"

He sat down, and, groaning audibly, put both hands before his face and muttered,—

"There is no dependence on a man that sleeps at the helm!"

I commenced, however, in the way my poor client desired: for I saw plainly that he was more anxious of what he called stumping old Lillum and nonplushing him, than about the result of his trial, although he was firmly convinced that the one depended on the other.

"How many years have you been engaged in the Labrador fishery, sir?"

"Twenty-five."

"You are, of course, perfectly conversant with the cod-fishery?"

"Perfectly. I know as much, if not more, about it than any man in Plymouth."

Here Barkins pulled my coat, and most beseechingly said,—

"Ask him"

"Be quiet, sir, and do not interrupt me!" was the consolatory reply he received.

“ Of course, then, after such long experience, sir, you know a cod-fish when you see it ?”

“ I should think so !”

“ That will not do, sir. Will you swear that you do ?”

“ I do not come here to be made a fool of !”

“ Nor I either, sir ; I require you to answer yes or no. Will you undertake to swear that you know a cod-fish when you see it ?”

“ I will, sir.”

Here Barkins rose and struck the table with his fist a blow that nearly split it, and, turning to me, said,—

“ Ask him”

“ Silence, sir !” I again vociferated. “ Let there be no mistake,” I continued. “ I will repeat the question. Do you undertake to swear that you know a cod-fish when you see it ?”

“ I do, sir, as well as I know my own name when I see it.”

“ Then, sir, how many fins has a cod, at a word ?”

Here the blow was given, not on the deal slab of the table, but on my back, with such force as to throw me forward on my two hands.

“ Ay, floor him !” said Barkins, “ let him answer that question ! The lawyer has you there ! How many fins has a cod, at a word, you old sculpin ?”

“ I can answer you that without hesitation.”

“ How many, then ?”

“ Let me see—three on the back, and two on the

belly, that's five ; two on the nape, that's seven ; and two on the shoulder, that's nine. Nine, sir !”

“ Missed it, by Gosh !” said Barkins. “ Didn't I tell you so ? I knew he couldn't answer it. And yet that fellow has the impudence to call himself a fisherman !”

Here I requested the Court to interfere, and compel my unfortunate and excited client to be silent.

“ Is there not a small fin beside ?” I said, “ between the under jaw and the throat ?”

“ I believe there is.”

“ You believe ! Then, sir, it seems you are in doubt, and that you do not know a cod-fish when you see it. You may go ; I will not ask you another question. Go, sir ! but let me advise you to be more careful in your answers for the future.”

There was a universal shout of laughter in the Court, and Barkins availed himself of the momentary noise to slip his hand under the table and grip me by the thigh, so as nearly to sever the flesh from the bone.

“ Bless your soul, my stout fresh-water fish !” he said ; “ you have gained the case, after all ! Didn't I tell you he couldn't answer that question ? It's a great great catch, isn't it ?”

The plaintiffs had wholly failed in their proof. Instead of contenting themselves with showing the voyage and their services, from which the law would have presumed an *assumpsit* to pay wages according to the

ordinary course of business, and leaving the defendant to prove that the agreement was a special one, they attempted to prove too much, by establishing a negative; and, in doing so, made out a sufficient defence for Barkins. Knowing how much depended upon the last address to the jury, when the judge was incompetent to direct or control their decision, I closed on the plaintiff's case, and called no witnesses. The jury were informed by the judge, that, having now heard the case on the part of the plaintiffs and also on the part of the defendants, it was their duty to make up their minds, and find a verdict for one or the other. After this very able, intelligible, and impartial charge, the jury were conducted to their room, and the greater part of the audience adjourned to the neighbouring tavern for refreshment. The judges then put on their hats, for the air of the hall felt cold after the withdrawal of so many persons, and the president asked me to go and take a seat on the bench with them.

“That was a very happy thought of yours, sir,” he remarked, “about the fins. I don't think another lawyer in the province but yourself knows how many fins a cod has. A man who has travelled as much as you have, has a great advantage. If you had never been in England, you never would have learned that, for you never would have crossed the banks of Newfoundland, and seen the great fishery there. But this is dull work; let us retreat into the adjoining room, and have a smoke until the jury returns. They will

soon be back, and I think I may venture to say you are sure of a verdict. You displayed great skill in that matter of the fins."

Just as we were about retiring, our attention was arrested by a great noise, occasioned by a constable endeavouring to remove a turbulent and drunken fellow from the court. The judge promptly interfered, fined him five shillings for his contemptuous conduct, and directed the prothonotary to lay it out in purchasing a bottle of wine wherewith to drink the health of the Stranger Lawyer. Having settled this little matter to his satisfaction, he led the way to the anteroom, where pipes were provided, and the officer soon appeared with the wine and some glasses. Filling a tumbler, the prothonotary apologized for not being able to remain with us, and drank respectfully to the health of the Court.

"Stop, sir!" said the judge; "stop, sir! Your conduct is unpardonable! I consider your behaviour a great contempt in helping yourself first. I fine you five shillings for your indecent haste, and request you to pay it immediately in the shape of a bottle of brandy; for that wine," of which he took a tumbler full by way of tasting, "is not fit for a gentleman to drink."

"A very forward fellow that prothonotary!" said the legal dignitary, as the officer withdrew.

"Instead of being contented with being the clerk of the court, he wants to be the master of it, and I find it necessary to keep him in his place. Only think of his

confounded impudence in presuming to help himself first ! He would drink the millpond dry if it was wine, and then complain it didn't hold enough ! For my own part, I am obliged to be very abstemious now, as I am subject to the gout. I never exceed two bottles of late years, and I rectify the acidity of the wine by taking a glass of clear brandy (which I call the naked truth) between every two of Madeira. Ah, here is the brandy, lawyer ! Your very good health, sir—pray help yourself ; and, Mr. Prothonotary, here's better manners to you in future. *Seniores priores*, sir, that's the rule."

Here the constable knocked at the door, and announced that the jury were in attendance.

"Don't rise, Mr. Sandford," said the judge ; "let them wait : haste is not dignified. Help yourself, sir ; this is very good brandy. I always like to let them appear to wait upon me, instead of their thinking I wait upon them. What with the prothonotary treading on my toes and the jury on my heels, I have enough to do to preserve the dignity of the court, I assure you. But *Tempus præterlabetur est*, as we used to say at Cambridge, Massachusetts ; that is, John Adams, senior, and our class, for I was contemporary with that talented and distinguished—ahem—stingy rebel ! Help yourself, sir. Come, I won't leave any of this *aqua vitæ* for that thirsty prothonotary. There, sir," he said, smacking his lips with evident delight, "there is the *finis* and his *fine*. Now let us go into court. But

give me your arm, sir, for I think I feel a slight twinge of that abominable gout. A dreadful penalty that, that Nature assesses on gentility. But not so fast, if you please, sir! true dignity delights in *otium*, or leisure; but abhors *negotium*, or hurry. Haste is the attribute of a prothonotary, who writes, talks, and drinks as fast as he can, but is very unbecoming the gravity and majesty of the law. The gait of a judge should be slow, stately, and solemn. But here we are, let us take our respective seats."

As soon as we made our appearance, the tumultuous wave of the crowd rushed into the courthouse, and, surging backward and forward, gradually settled down to a level and tranquil surface. The panel was then called over, and the verdict read aloud. It was for the defendant.

Barkins was not so much elated as I had expected. He appeared to have been prepared for any event. He had had his gratification already. "Old Lillum was floored," the "knowing one had been nonplushed," and he was satisfied. He had a duty to perform, however, which he did with great pleasure, and I have no doubt with great liberality. The jury were to be "treated," for it was the custom of those days for the winning party to testify his gratitude by copious libations of brandy and rum. As soon as the verdict was recorded, he placed himself at their head, and led the way to the tavern with as much gravity and order as if he was conducting a guard of honour. As soon as they were all in the street, he turned about, and walking

backwards so as to face them, and at the same time not to interrupt their progress to that mansion of bliss, he said,

“ A pretty fellow that Lillum, ain't he ? to swear he knew what a cod was, and yet couldn't tell how many fins it had, at a word ! Who would have thought that milksop of a lawyer would have done so well ? He actually scared me when I first saw him ; for a feller that smokes cigars instead of a pipe, drinks red ink (port wine) instead of old Jamaiky, and has a pair of hands as white as the belly of a flat fish, ain't worth his pap, in a general way. Howsumdever, it don't do to hang a feller for his looks, after all, that's a fact ; for that crittur is like a singed cat, better nor he seems. But, come, let's liquor ! ”

I did not see him again till the evening, when he came to congratulate me upon having done the handsomest thing, he said, as every body allowed, that ever was done in Plymouth,—shown the greatest fisherman in it (in his own conceit) that he didn't know a cod-fish when he saw it.

“ It was a great catch that, lawyer,” he continued, and he raised me up in his arms and walked round the room with me as if he were carrying a baby. “ Don't forget it, ‘ How many fins has a cod, at a word ? ’ Yaw never need to want a half-pint of brandy while you have that fact to bet upon ! ”

The next day I left Plymouth very early in the morning. When I descended to the door, I found both

Robins and Barkins there, and received a hearty and cordial farewell from both of them. The latter entreated me, if ever I came that way again, to favour him with a visit, as he had some capital Jamaica forty years old, and would be glad to instruct me in the habits of fish and fishermen.

“ I will show you,” he said, “ how to make a shoal of mackerel follow your vessel like a pack of dogs. I can tell you how to make them rise from the bottom of the sea in thousands, when common folks can’t tell there is one there, and then how to feed and coax them away to the very spot you want to take them. I will show you how to spear shad, and how to strike the fattest salmon that ever was, so that it will keep to go to the East Indies ; and I’ll larn you how to smoke herrings without dryin’ them hard, and tell you the wood and the vegetables that give them the highest flavour ; and even them cussed, dry, good-for-nothing all-wives, I’ll teach you how to cure them so you will say they are the most delicious fish you ever tasted in all your life. I will, upon my soul ! And now, before you go, I want you to do me a good turn, lawyer. Just take this little silver flask, my friend, to remember old John Barkins by, when he is dead and gone, and when people in these parts shall say when you inquire after him, that they don’t know such a man as old John Barkins no more. It is a beautiful article. I found it in the pocket of a captain of a Spanish privateer that boarded my vessel, and that I hit

over the head with a handspike, so hard that he never knew what hurt him. It will just suit you, for it only holds a thimble-full, and was made a purpose for fresh-water fish, like Spaniards and lawyers. Good-by ! God bless you, sir ! A fair wind and a short passage to you !”

I had hardly left the door, before I heard my name shouted after me.

“ Mr. Sandford !—lawyer ! lawyer....”

It was old Barkins. I anticipated his object ; I knew it was his old theme,—

“ Lawyer, don’t forget the catch, ‘ How many fins has a cod, at a word ? ’ ”

CHAPTER III.

ASKING A GOVERNOR TO DINE.

The arrival of an English steamer at Halifax, and the landing of a Governor-general for Canada, have formed an all-engrossing topic of conversation during the past week at Illinoo. In the winter season, when but few vessels enter the port, and during the period that intervenes between seed-time and harvest, when the operations of agriculture are wholly suspended, politics are ably and amply discussed, and very sapient conjectures formed as to the future, in those interesting and valuable normal schools for statesmen—the debating societies, taverns, blacksmiths' shops, tap-rooms, and the sunny and sheltered corners of the streets. Every one, however humble his station may be, is uncommonly well-informed on affairs of state. A man who can scarcely patch the tattered breeches of a patriot, can mend with great facility and neatness a constitution, and he who exhibits great awkwardness in measuring a few yards of riband manifests astonishing skill in handling the measures of a government. Indeed, provincials have a natural turn for

political economy, as the Germans and Italians have for music; and it is the principal source of amusement they possess.

If Lord John Russell were to spend an evening at the public room of the Exchange in this town, he would find such topics as the corn-laws, free trade, responsible government, and repeal of the union, disposed of to his entire satisfaction, in a manner so lucid, so logical and conclusive, that he could not fail to be both astonished and edified. He would be convinced that the Colonial Office should be removed from Downing Street, London, to Shark Street, Blueberry Square, Illinoo, where there are master minds capable of directing, reconciling, and advancing the complicated interests of a vast and populous empire. To such a zealous statesman discussions of this kind would, no doubt, be exceedingly interesting; but, as they are too deep and difficult for my comprehension, I prefer listening to the graphic, though rather ascetic, "Sketches of Life in a Colony," by my friend Barclay:—

Two such important and simultaneous arrivals, sir, he said, as those of a steamer and a governor, always create great interest in this country—the one for wonders achieved, and the other for wonders to be performed. Indeed, they are so identified one with the other, that the reception and farewell they severally receive are precisely similar. The approach of both is regarded with intense curiosity, and witnessed with great anxiety by the whole population, on account of

the novelties they are expected to bring with them ; and both the great ship and the great man depart, so noiselessly and so quietly, as not even to disturb the dulness of that drowsy town Halifax, for, alas ! their sojourn here is a tale that is told. The formal landing and final embarkation of a Governor present such a singular contrast, that they are well worth describing.

As soon as it is known that this high functionary is on board, all the little world of Halifax rush with impetuous haste, like a torrent, into Water Street, and from thence through a narrow passage like an arched tunnel, down an abrupt declivity, to a long, narrow, dingy, and unsafe wharf, the extremity of which is covered (with the exception of a footpath of about nine feet wide) by a low miserable shed, that is dignified with the name of the "Customs' Warehouse." The whole of the surface of this dangerous place is crowded to excess, by a mixed and motleyed multitude of black and white of both sexes—porters, truckmen, and cabmen, vociferously demand or enforce a passage, while those on the outer edge, pressed to the extremity of the docks, utter loud screams of terror from the impending danger of instant death by drowning.

Amid such a confused and moving throng it is not easy to distinguish individuals, but any one acquainted with the town can see that the heathen who worship the rising sun are there, and the Pharisees, who

waiters on Providence, the restless and the discontented, the hungry and needy place-hunters, and, above all, the seekers for position—not a safe position on the Quay, because, in such a crowd no place is safe—but for an improved social position, which the countenance of the Governor is expected to confer. This holiday is claimed and enjoyed by the people and their leaders. There is no place allotted for persons of another class, and, if there were, they would soon be compelled to leave it by the intolerable “pressure from without.” Many an anxious face is now illumined by expectations of better times; for hope, like the Scottish fir, takes root and flourishes in a cold and sterile soil, that refuses nutriment to anything less vivacious. Far above the heads of the gaping multitude rises the huge Leviathan, the steamer, equally crowded with the wharf with strange-looking people, habited in still stranger-looking foreign costumes, staring with listless indifference at the idle curiosity of the idle mob beneath. The descent from the deck, which is effected by a few almost perpendicular planks, without railing, hand-rope, or any security whatever, like the descent to the grave, is common to all, from the viceroy, with his gay and numerous staff, to the stoker with his sooty and cumbrous sack of coals, who, reversing the order of things, imparts more than he receives.

The thunder of artillery from the citadel and the flag-ship of the Admiral announce to the world the

important event that the Governor has now landed ; and the national anthem from the band of the guard of honour, and the cheers of the free and enlightened citizens of Halifax, are the first strains of welcome that salute his ear. On his way to the palace he stops for a few moments at the " Province Building," where, among the fashion, beauty, and gentry of the town, and surrounded by the executive councillors, he takes the usual oaths of office, and assumes the reins of Government. Legislative and civic bodies now present to him addresses, expressive of their heartfelt gratitude to their most gracious Sovereign for having selected, as a particular mark of favour to themselves, such a distinguished man to rule over them, which they cannot but attribute to their own unquenchable and unquestionable loyalty, and to the kind and good feeling they ever exhibited to his predecessors. They do not forget to remind him that they have always felt as affectionately as they have expressed themselves decorously towards every Governor of this province, none of whom they have ever placed in a position of difficulty, or deserted when they found him so situated ; and conclude with an offer of their cordial and strenuous support.

The Governor, on his part, a gentleman by birth and education, is much affected with this flattering reference to himself, and the kind and generous greeting with which he has been received. He naturally supposes that such respectable looking people mean

what they say; and as they have, with a delicacy above all praise, made no mention of any difference of opinion among themselves, he augurs well of his success among a united population, whose leaders express themselves so well and feel so warmly. Touched by a behaviour that appeals directly to his heart, and unwilling to be outdone in such magnanimous conduct, he assures them that it will be his pleasure, as it is his duty, to co-operate with them in any measure that has for its object the benefit of the province; and that they may confidently rely upon his untiring efforts to develop the vast resources, both mineral and agricultural, of this interesting and beautiful appendage of the British Empire.

As soon as these ceremonies are terminated, immediate reference is made by some of his new and sincere friends to the army list or peerage books for the purpose of ascertaining his services or his pedigree, but never, I am happy to say, for the credit of our population, for discovering some blot in his escutcheon, or some failure in his conduct wherewith to vilify or abuse him hereafter; for such is the resource only of low and ignoble minds. But, alas! colonial addresses are commonly but unmeaning compliments, and the promises of support they contain are always accompanied by a mental reservation that a valuable equivalent is to be rendered in return. As soon as he finds it necessary to call for the fulfilment of this voluntary engagement, he finds to his astonishment that this

harmonious and happy people are divided into two parties, Conservatives and great Liberals. What that term Conservatism means, I do not exactly know; and it is said that in England Sir Robert Peel is the only man that does. But in a colony it would puzzle that wily and cameleon-like politician even to conjecture its signification. I take it, however, to be an abandonment of all principle, and the substitution of expediency in its place; a relinquishment of any political creed, and the adoption of a sliding-scale whereby tenets rise or fall according to popular pulsation. Great Liberalism, on the other hand, is better understood, for it is as ancient as a republic. It rests in theory on universal suffrage and equal rights; but in practice exhibits the exclusion and tyranny of a majority.

The real objects of these two amiable and attractive parties are so well masked under high-sounding words and specious professions, that the limited period of gubernatorial rule is generally half expired before a stranger understands them. When, at last, he attempts to reconcile these conflicting factions, and to form a mixed government, that shall combine all the great interests of the country, the Conservatives inform him, in very moderate and temperate language, and with much complacency, that they are both able and willing to govern the province themselves, the prosperity of which has been greatly advanced by their sound and judicious policy. They admit that they

have conferred several important appointments of late upon their own relatives, but entreat him to believe that affinity never entered into their consideration ; for, as they are the best qualified themselves to form an administration, so are their connexions the most suitable for public offices. At the same time, they proclaim their extreme anxiety to carry out his views, and promote the peace and harmony of the country ; and, as a proof of the great sacrifice they are willing to make, offer to him a resignation of one seat at the council board, which is attended with great labour and unaccompanied by any remuneration, and also one legal appointment, to which the large salary of eighty pounds sterling a-year is attached.

The Great Liberals, on the other hand, with a vast display of learning (for they have some distinguished jurists among them), treat him to a long dissertation on the British Constitution, the principles of which they have derived, with infinite industry and research, from the notes of an American edition of “Blackstone’s Commentaries,” and inform him that they are ready to take office, if he will turn out all the present incumbents for their benefit, or create an equal number of situations of equivalent value, to support them while thus engaged in their disinterested labours for the public good. They frankly state to him that work requires food, that they are sturdy men and have a good appetite, and, moreover, that bread and honey will not appease their hunger. He therefore finds

himself, to his amazement, in what the Americans with some humour, but more elegance, call "a considerable fix."

But this is a painful subject, and I will not pursue it, for I have nothing in common with either Conservatism or Great Liberalism, which I believe to be mere modifications of the same thing. I have done with politics long since. When I did think or talk of them, I belonged to a party now nearly extinct in these colonies—the good old Tory party, the best, the truest, the most attached and loyal subjects her Majesty ever had, or ever will have, in North America. There are only a few of them now surviving, and they are old and infirm men, with shattered constitutions and broken hearts. They have ceased to recruit, or even to muster for several years; for who would enlist in a body that was doomed to inevitable martyrdom, amid the indifference of their friends and the derision of their enemies? Hunted and persecuted by rebels and agitators, they were shamefully abandoned to their cruel fate by those for whom they had fought and bled, and whole hecatombs of them were at different times offered up as a sacrifice to appease the sanguinary wrath of the infidel deities of sedition. Of late, they have enjoyed comparative repose, for they have neither influence nor numbers now to render them objects of proscription or insult. Let us, however, throw a mantle over these disgusting ulcers in the body politic, and amuse ourselves by shooting Folly as

it flies. Let us pass over the intervening space of the Governor's rule. I have described to you his landing; we will now proceed to the wharf again, witness his embarkation for his native land, and mark the agreeable change.

The steamer has arrived from Boston *en route* for England. She has no passengers for Halifax; and a few bagmen and a subaltern or two, whom nobody knows, are the only persons to be taken on board. The rabble are not there, the Governor's patronage has been small, and he has not been able to find offices for every applicant. The naked have not all been clothed, and many of the hungry have been sent empty away. They have seen him continually; he is no longer a novelty; his day is past, his power is gone, and they have now nothing to hope or receive from his bounty, and nothing to fear or endure from his disapprobation. Groups of gentlemen and ladies, gay carriages containing many a familiar face, heads of departments, and the respectable part of the community (many of whom are personal friends, and warmly attached to him), occupy the wharf, which now appears to afford sufficient space for the purpose. Instead of the noisy and vulgar cheer with which he was received, the tremulous voice, the starting tear, the silent but eloquent pressure of the hand, convince him that, if he has not received all the support that was so spontaneously and insincerely offered to him, he has secured more of affection and regard than he could have expected in so short a time;

and that his honest endeavours to benefit the country have been duly appreciated by all those whose good opinion is worth having.

Such is the usual course of events here ; but sometimes the same idle and turbulent crowd attend a Governor at his embarkation that honoured his arrival, and when that is the case, and they form his exclusive escort, he has good grounds for self-examination, and he may, with propriety, ask himself what he has done to deserve such a degradation.

Considering a Governor, apart from his political opinions, as the head of society at Halifax, it is amusing to hear the inquiries and conjectures as to the probable manner in which he will receive his guests, or whether he will contract or enlarge the circle of people to be admitted at the palace. There is no little anxiety among the mammas, to know whether he is married or single, and who the persons are that compose his staff. The young ladies are not less interested in ascertaining whether he is likely to enliven the tedium of winter by giving balls, for, on this important subject, the practice has not been uniform.

Tradition has preserved, and affection has cherished, the memory of dear old Governor Lawrance, who lost his life in the service of the fair sex, by overexertion in attempting to fulfil a vow to dance with every young lady in the room. For this voluntary martyrdom, he has been very properly canonized, and

St. Lawrence is now universally considered as the patron saint of all Nova Scotia assemblies.

Among another class, there is an equally important inquiry: Will he dine out? On this point also, as on the other, there are many conflicting precedents, from Governor Parr, who preferred dining anywhere to being at home, to his Excellency Governor *Im-par*, who, in my opinion, very properly dined nowhere but at home. As the distributor of rank and patronage, and the arbiter of fashion, the course to be adopted by one who is to administer the affairs of the country for five years is a matter of great importance to people who are desirous of acquiring a position in society; for, until recently, any person whom a Governor countenanced by accepting his invitation, became thereby a sort of honorary member of the higher class.

My attention was first directed to this peculiarity many years ago, in the time of Sir Hercules Sampson. A merchant of the name of Channing, who had begun life with a small property, which, by great industry, and a long course of upright and honourable dealing, he had increased into a large fortune, was very anxious that the Governor should impress the Tower mark of his approbation upon himself and his silver by dining with him. He had looked forward to this period with much anxiety for many years, and had built a large and commodious house, which he filled with rich and expensive furniture. Upon the arrival of Sir Hercules, he waited upon him with slow and hesitating

steps, and, according to the usual etiquette, solicited the honour of his dining with him, and naming a time for that purpose. The Governor, who was a considerate, kind-hearted, affable old man, readily acceded to his wishes, and proposed that day week for conferring happiness upon him.

Channing returned, with a lighter heart and quicker pace, to communicate the overpowering news to his agitated wife. They were an affectionate and domestic couple, and had always lived in perfect seclusion. Great were the fears and many the conferences that preceded this eventful day. Poor Mrs. Channing was lost in a sea of doubts and perplexities. None of her acquaintances were better instructed on these matters than herself, for they were all in the same class of life, and equally ignorant of what she desired to be informed ; when, by great good fortune, she discovered an able counsellor and valuable assistant, well versed in all the forms and usages of the royal party, in the butler of a former viceroy.

It was an anxious and trying week, and the longest, in her apprehension, she had ever passed ; but weeks and months, as well as years, come to an end at last, and the long-expected and dreaded day had now arrived. Chairs were uncovered, curtains unfolded, grates polished, and all the finery and *bijouterie* of the house displayed to the greatest advantage. Every contingency had been provided for ; every order given, repeated, and reiterated, and her own toilet completed ;

when, fatigued, exhausted, and alarmed, she descended to the drawing-room, and awaited with her husband the awful announcement of her distinguished guests. The hands of the clock appeared to be stationary. It was evidently going, but they did not seem to advance. The arrival of myself and several others, at the same time, was a great relief to her mind, as it diverted her thoughts from her harassing anxieties. At last, heavy and long-continued knocks, like the rub-a-dub-of a drum, that made the side of the house vibrate, announced the approach of the Government-house party.

In those days the magnetic telegraph of the door-bell had not been introduced into the country, and it is subject of great regret to all reflecting minds that it ever has been imported. It is one of those refinements that have debilitated the tone of our nerves, and, by depriving them of exercise, rendered them so delicate, that they are excited and shocked by the least noise. Nor is the language it speaks by any means so intelligible as that which is uttered by that polished, deep-toned, ornamental appendage of the hall-door, the good old brass knocker. At the same time that that intelligent watchman gave notice of an application for admission, it designated the quality and sometimes the errand of the visitor. A timid, single beat bespoke the beggar, whose impatience was very humanely allowed to cool while he was studying the form of his petition. A stout, bold, single blow

announced a footman, who was immediately admitted for the mutual privilege of an interesting gossip. An awkward, feeble double knock was proof positive that a poor relation or shabby acquaintance was there; and a slow and reluctant attendance operated as a useful hint to wear better clothes, or carry a heavier purse in future. But there was no mistaking the sledge-hammer blows that made the door tremble for its panels, as it did at present. They had a voice of authority, a sort of bear-a-hand command, as sailors call it; their tones were those of fashion, rank, and dignity. They were well understood, from the mistress, who fidgeted uneasily on the sofa in the drawing-room, to the lady's-maid, who flew from the servants' snuggery with the lightness and fleetness of a fairy to receive the Governor's lady and daughter, and ascertain with her own eyes whether these divinities were decorated with ermine and diamonds, or only cat and paste, as she had heard it whispered, with a contemptuous sneer, by her confidant at the Admiralty-house.

At last, the door flew open with such impatient haste as nearly to demolish a gouty foot that had protruded itself with careless ease within its fearful reach, and the servant announced Sir Hercules and Lady Sampson, Miss Sampson, Lord Edward Dummkopf and the Honourable Mr. Trotz (the two aides-de-camp), and Captain Howard (the military secretary). It was a large and formidable party from one house;

and the clatter of swords, and jingle of spurs, and the glitter of gold lace and epaulettes, and the glare of scarlet cloth and blaze of jewellery, was quite overpowering to the timid and unaccustomed senses of poor Mrs. Channing.

The Governor was a tall, gaunt, iron-framed man, with an erect and military bearing, that appeared to increase a stature naturally disproportioned. His head was bald ; the hand of Time, or of the Philistine woman his wife, having removed his hair, which gave a more striking appearance to an enormous nose that disfigured a face which would otherwise have been called handsome. His manner was kind without condescension, and his conversation agreeable without humbug. Lady Sampson, had she not inherited a large fortune, might have been supposed to have been selected by her husband on that principle that so many men appear to make choice of their wives, namely, for being the very opposite of what they are themselves. She was a short, but uncommonly stout person—unwieldy, perhaps, would be a more appropriate term, and very vulgar. Her dress was a curious and rather complicated mass of striking contrasts, which, notwithstanding her size, awakened the idea of an enormous salmon-fly. “ Rich and rare were the gems she wore,” and from their dimensions, in excellent keeping with the circumference of her huge arms and neck. Her charms had been duly appreciated by her discerning husband when on duty with his regi-

ment at Birmingham; and her heart was besieged with such military skill and ardour, that she soon surrendered herself and her treasure at discretion to the conquering hero.

Miss Sampson was an only child. Her glass, and the admiration of her friends, convinced her she was handsome; her mother had informed her of her large fortune, and she saw the station, and knew the high reputation of her father. Unlike him, she was well proportioned; and, unlike her mother, she was graceful. Her complexion, which once boasted of the pure red and white of England, had slightly suffered from the climate of the West Indies; the colour, like that of a portrait of Sir Joshua Reynolds, being somewhat impaired. Young and beautiful, it is not to be wondered at if she exhibited a little of the pride and haughtiness of a belle. She lisped a little, either naturally or affectedly, and “danthed only with her own thett,” or with a few officers of good family belonging to the “thixty-thixth” regiment, whom she condescended to honour with her hand. Still, though she talked more, perhaps, than was agreeable to colonial ears of her “own thett,” it was evident she considered herself among them, but not of them; for, notwithstanding the rank of the gentlemen on her father’s staff was superior to his own, which was merely local, she would sometimes speak of the aides with a slight curl of her pretty lip as “our daily bread.”

Lord Edward Dummkopf was decidedly the hand-

somest man in Halifax; which, considering that it contains a remarkably good-looking population of 25,000 inhabitants, three regiments, and the officers of several men-of-war, is bestowing no small praise upon him. He was tall, rather slight, graceful, remarkably well got up, and had an air of fashion and elegance about him, which is alone acquired in that high and polished society of which he was such a distinguished member. He had a beautiful head of hair, the value of which was evidently well appreciated by the care bestowed upon it; also a moustache and an imperial of the most approved form and unexceptionable colour. His pale complexion gave the idea of a poetical turn of mind. His forehead was high, though rather narrow, and slightly receding; the oval of his face was well defined, but the centre was somewhat concave, which, to a critic, perhaps, would suggest the idea of the inside of a spoon. It did not, however, to a casual observer, impair its general beauty, which was illuminated by eyes so bright as to glisten, and ornamented with teeth of unrivalled whiteness. With respect to his talents, a physiognomist could be at no loss; for it was evident that the brilliancy of his eyes arose from their peculiar texture, and not from that which usually produces animation. But this secret was well concealed from the world by his great reserve, for he was seldom heard to utter anything beyond "How very good!" a remark which every occurrence elicited. In one respect,

he evinced a little humour, by adding the syllable "bus" to words—as dogibus, horsibus, and catibus. So distinguished a man could not fail to have imitators; and many a pretty young lady was heard to speak of her pin-a-bus, thread-a-bus, and book-a-bus, as Lord Edward says. Take him altogether, he was without a rival for personal appearance, if we except the exquisite drum-major of the before-named "thirty-thixth" regiment, who divided the empire of hearts with the aristocratic lieutenant; the one leading captive the mammas and their daughters, and the other their maids. On entering the room, he bowed condescendingly, though somewhat formally, to Mrs. Channing; the inclination of the body being from the hip-joint like that of a wooden doll.

The Hon. Mr. Trotz, on the contrary, was more distinguished for a form that exhibited a singular compound of strength and activity. He was the *beau ideal* of a light infantryman. He was the boldest rider, the best swimmer, the most expert pugilist and swordsman, an irresistible billiard-player, and the best shot in the garrison. His habits were temperate, which, with continued and systematic exercise, enabled him to be always ready, or on hand, as he called it, for anything. He was a good economist, and understood how to make the most of the small allowance of a younger son. He sported the best-appointed tandem of any man in the place, which he kept jointly with another officer, who paid more than his share of the expenses,

in consideration of being relieved from the trouble of using it. He had also a beautiful and very fast yacht, which he sustained upon the same friendly and equitable terms. The Governor, perhaps, was not aware how admirably well calculated he was to aid him in conciliating the affections of the people; for, in his absence, he was very fond of informing colonists, for whom he had a profound contempt, how much he was interested in the Negroes and Indians of Nova Scotia, who alone could boast of purity of blood, and were the only gentlemen in it. He would inquire, with an innocent air, when the province first ceased to be a penal colony; and, when informed it had never been one, would affect great surprise, as he thought he could trace the debasing effects of the system in the habits and morals of the people. He was indignant at the local rank of Honourable being conceded to people filling certain public offices, whom he called honourable carriboos; and requested that that prefix might be omitted in any written communication to him, lest he might be supposed to belong to such an ignoble herd. When he entered the room, he was evidently suffering from cold, for he proceeded directly to the fire, turned his back to it, and put his hands behind him to warm them. It was an advantageous position, as it enabled him to take a cool and leisurely survey of the company, and to be seen to advantage himself.

Captain Howard, the military secretary, was a philanthropist, and a pious and zealous member of the Low

Church party. He was a distributor of tracts, and talked very eloquently and learnedly of such books as "The Drunkard's Grave," "The Sinner Saved," "The Penitent Thief," "Prodigal Son," and "The Last Dying Confessions of a Convict." He was a great enemy to private balls and amusements, and to public assemblies and theatres. The only pleasures to which he was indulgent were the pleasures of the table, being a capital judge of wine, of which he drank freely. He abhorred beggars, whom he threatened to send to Bridewell, and orthodox clergymen, whom he devoted to a worse place. He disapproved of indiscriminate charity as encouraging idleness, and preferred seeking out objects for his benevolence to their obtruding themselves; as it enabled him, when he gave a sixpence, to accompany it with that which was far more valuable, a long lecture.

Some of the party, following the example of his Excellency, now took their seats; but the Governor, who had sat down on a small ottoman near Mrs. Channing, was restless and uneasy. At first, he drew himself a little further forward, and then removed as far back as possible; and, finally, rose up and turned to ascertain the cause of the inconvenience he had experienced. He immediately exclaimed—

"Good God, I have killed this cat! Was there ever anything so awkward or so shocking?"

Mrs. Channing said the cat was only worsted.

"Pardon me," he answered; "I wish with all my heart it was only worsted, for then there would be

some hope of its recovery; but it is as dead as Julius Cæsar!"

"I raised it myself, Sir Hercules!" she continued; "and...."

"Oh, if you raised it yourself, madam, it must have been a pet!" he replied; "and so much the worse for me. I beg ten thousand pardons! It is quite dreadful!"

Mrs. Channing explained again—"It is only a bad piece of work, your Excellency, and I...."

"A very bad piece of work, indeed!" said the inconsolable offender. "But the truth is, my eyes have never recovered the injury they received in Egypt."

"It will rise again, I assure you, Sir Hercules! A good shake...."

"Never! never, my dear madam!" he persisted. "Cat though it be, if it had fifty lives instead of nine, it will never rise again!"

Here Lady Sampson came to the rescue. Taking an enormous eye-glass set with brilliants out of her bosom, she examined the defunct cat, and pronounced it a most beautiful piece of rug-work; and, on a nearer inspection, exclaimed—

"But where did you get those beautiful eyes of yours, my dear Mrs. Channing? and those bright and sharp claws? They are the most magnificent I ever saw! I used to think my eyes and claws perfection, but they are not to be compared to yours! Where in the world did you get them?"

“At Storr and Mortimer’s,” replied the delighted hostess, who had spent so much time and valuable materials in this valuable employment.

Lady Sampson was an enthusiast in the art, and pressed her friend to accept a pattern of a real Angola cat, which she would send her in the morning. It had, she said, a splendid tail, like that of a spaniel dog; and a bushy tail was, in her opinion, one of the most beautiful things in the world. She then asked a lady who sat near her if she was fond of rug-work; but she said she was sorry to confess her ignorance or awkwardness, for she had never raised but one cat, and that she had killed in shaving.

“How very good!” said Lord Edward; “only think of shaving a little catibus!”

But Trotz, who never lost an opportunity of being impertinent, asked her if it was the custom in this country to shave cats; and observed that it would be a capital employment for the young monkeys of the town, whom he had seen grimacing a few evenings ago at a public assembly at the Masons’ Hall. Lady Sampson, whose perceptions were none of the quickest, very gravely explained to him that shaving a cat was a term of art, and meant the close and uniform shearing of the irregular and protruding ends of the worsted.

The door now opened, and several persons (not necessary to enumerate or describe) were announced, among whom were the Bishop of the Isle of Sable, recently arrived from England on his way to his diocese,

and Colonel Percy, of the "thixty-thixth." There was nothing remarkable about the former. One bishop is very like another bishop. Their dress is similar, and their conversation generally embraces the same topics. You hear a little too much of what they are pleased to call church architecture, though why I could never quite understand ; and you are somewhat fatigued with prosy dissertations on towers, spires, transepts, galleries, and buttresses. This, however, is a matter of taste, and they have as good a right to select "church architecture" for their hobby, as a sportsman has his dog and his gun. He was, however, a new one ; and it is singular that these *novi episcopi* bear a still more striking resemblance to each other than the senior class do. Besides the never-ending topic just mentioned, which they have in common with all their brethren, they have a great deal to say about themselves—a subject no less interesting than the other. New dignity, like a new coat, is awkward and inconvenient. It is stiff and formal, and has not "a natural set." Time takes off the vulgar gloss of both, and directs your attention from things that annoy yourself, and are apt to excite remark in others. They have also (I mean, colonial bishops) one grand object in view from the moment of their landing in a colony ; and that is, the erection of a cathedral so large as to contain all the churchmen of the province, and so expensive as to exhaust all the liberality of their friends ; and this unfinished monument of ill-directed zeal they are sure

to place in a situation where it can be of no use whatever.

His Lordship, Job Sable Island, as usual, had his model, his plans, and his subscription-list; and, as usual, though warned that no suitable foundation for such a massive structure could be found on that enormous accumulation of sand, was determined to persevere and exhibit another melancholy instance of failure, to warn the Christian public how careful they should be into whose hands they entrust their donations.

This, as I have said, was a characteristic of his order; but there was one peculiarity that concerned himself as a man, and entitled him to my warmest sympathy. He had no doubt supposed, when he left his native land, that all he would have to do in his diocese would be to discharge the ordinary episcopal duties, onerous as they might be, and responsible as they undoubtedly are, but that there his labours would end. To his astonishment, however, he had not been ten days in Halifax before he found that he would have everything to do. He discovered that colonists, although natives of the country, and accustomed to its climate, knew nothing of either. They knew not how to build houses, or to warm or ventilate them, to cultivate their fields, clear the forest, or even how to manage their own affairs. With a zeal that did his head and heart great honour, he resolved not to content himself with merely showing his people the road to Heaven, but also how to make, use, and enjoy

roads on earth, while permitted to remain there. But there was one consolation to be drawn from his misfortunes, and that was, that time would lessen his labours ; for he who attempts to teach another that which he does not know himself, cannot fail to acquire some information in his endeavours to advance his pupil.¹

Colonel Percy, of the “ thixty-thixth,” just mentioned, was one of the most delightful men I ever met ;

¹ A bishop for any of the North American provinces should *in all cases* be selected from the colonial clergy, most of whom are natives, and all of whom are well educated ; while the great majority, I am happy to say, are not only scholars and gentlemen, but pious, laborious, and most exemplary men. These persons, from their thorough knowledge of the state of the country ; the habits, feelings, prejudices, and means of the people ; the peculiar relation subsisting between the rector and his parishioners, and the Church and Dissenters in this part of the world ; the extent to which episcopal authority ought to, or can be pushed with safety ; and many other things of no less importance, are infinitely better qualified than any English clergyman can possibly be (for this information can only be acquired from long experience, and, after a certain period of life, is very difficult to be attained at all). In other respects, to say the least, they are quite equal to the episcopal specimens we have been honoured with. I am quite aware that, in high quarters, where a better feeling should exist, and where it is most important they should be better informed, it is heresy to say colonial clergymen are not only qualified, but they are the most suitable persons to fill the higher offices of their profession in their own country ; but *magna est veritas*.

cheerful, humorous, filled with anecdote, well-informed and well-bred, he was, in reality, what Miss Sampson called him, a "hotht in himthelf."

The guests having now all arrived with the exception of Captain Jones of the Navy, Channing was in great perplexity about ordering dinner. He would like to wait for the gallant captain, but the Governor was remarkable for his punctuality. What was to be done? He argued it over in his mind, for he never did anything without a sufficient reason. Jones was notoriously the most absent man in the service. He was as likely to forget his invitation as to remember it, and was sure to make some blunder about the hour; and time, tide, and Governors wait for no man.

The dinner was ordered; and, when the folding-doors were opened, Channing, with a palpitating heart, offered his arm to Lady Sampson, and conducted her to her place, while his Excellency honoured his better half in a similar manner. It was a moment of pride and pleasure to them both. They had attained a long-cherished object of ambition. They had "asked a Governor to dine," and had thereby taken another and higher step in life. They were now people of "a certain position." Channing asked the bishop to say grace, but he had repeated that formulary so often for "the squire" in Kent, when rector, that, now he was a lord of a manor himself, he was unwilling to perform the duty any longer, and bowed (or rather nodded, for there is more palpable meaning in a nod than a

bow) to his chaplain, who was but too happy to gratify his excellent friend and patron.

The soup was capital, conversation became general, and everything seemed to be going on remarkably well; but the hostess was dying with apprehension, for a critical part of the entertainment had arrived, the thoughts of which had filled her with terror during the whole day.

At the period I am speaking of, no person could venture to give a large dinner-party at Halifax (such was the unskilfulness of servants) without the assistance of a professional cook, a black woman, whose attendance it was necessary to secure before issuing cards of invitation. Channing had not forgotten to take this wise precaution; but the *artiste* had prepared some side-dishes, of which, though she knew the component parts, she did not know the name. By the aid of a *Housewife's Manuel*, Mrs. Channing judged them to be "Côtelettes à l'Italienne," "Chartreuse d'un Salpiçon de Volaille," "Boudins à la Richelieu," "Quenelles de Volaille," "Croquets," &c. &c.; but she was uncertain. They were too difficult to remember; and, if remembered, unpronounceable. She was afraid of having her knowledge tested and her ignorance exposed by Trotz, who was noted for his malicious impertinence. Fortune, however, favoured her, and she owed her escape to the tact of a servant, who found himself in a situation of similar difficulty. The first of these mysterious dishes that he presented to

the troublesome aide, called forth the dreaded inquiry, "What is the name of it?" Equally ignorant with the rest of the household, he affected not to hear the question, withdrew the dish, passed on to the next person, and never offered him another until he found one he knew by name as well as by sight. The crisis was now passed, the lady's fever instantly subsided, and she breathed freer. At the mention of moose-meat, Lord Edward, to the astonishment of everybody, commenced a conversation himself, a thing almost unknown before. He asked the young lady who had amused him so much by saying she had killed a cat in shaving, what the plural of moose was.

"Mice," she replied, with great readiness.

"Miceibus!" he repeated. "How very good!" and relapsed again into his usual taciturnity.

The two favourite wines at Halifax at that period were champagne at, and Madeira after, dinner. Trotz therefore, of course, voted them both vulgar, called them kitchen wines, and, when pressed by the host to take a glass with him, and asked which he would take,—

"Anything *but* champagne, sir," he said.

Channing was shocked; he had imported it himself, he had spared no expense, was a good judge of its quality and flavour, and he could not understand how it could be rejected with such evident disgust. He prudently asked no questions, but smiled, bowed, and talked to some one else.

Miss Sampson observed to the bishop that Trotz was like a " thithle, he therathed tho thockingly !"

Which was honoured with the usual remark from another person, " How very good !"

Captain Jones now made his appearance, and a very odd one it certainly was. He was one of the most eccentric men in the navy. In roughness of manner and disregard of dress, he was of the old Benbow school ; in practical skill and science he was at the head of the modern one. He was so dreadfully absent that he unintentionally said and did the most awkward things imaginable ; and the only redeeming point in his absurd behaviour was, that it was entirely free from affectation. He was dressed in an old shabby frock-coat with a pair of tarnished epaulettes, his hands bore testimony to their familiarity with the rigging, and he had not submitted himself to a barber for two days, at least. He took his seat near me, and then for the first time appeared to be conscious that he was late for dinner ; but he applied himself without loss of time to remedy the defect. The arrival of such a man in such an attire naturally occasioned a pause, by attracting everybody's attention to him.

" Pray," said Trotz (who sat nearly opposite to us) to his neighbour, but loud enough to be distinctly heard, " who is that old quiz ? Is he a colonist ?"

" Captain Jones, of H.M. ship Thunderer, sir ; very much at your service !" said the sailor, with a very unmistakable air and tone.

Trotz quailed. It was evident that, though a good shot, he preferred a target to an antagonist, and wanted bottom. True courage is too noble a quality to be associated with swaggering and insolent airs.

“How very good!” said Lord Edward.

“Very,” said the charming Colonel; “very good, indeed! He may be an oddity, but he is a fine manly old fellow; and your friend had better be cautious how he wakes up that sleeping lion.”

The Captain ate heartily, though rather inconveniently slow, which protracted the removals, and kept us all waiting. It was a matter of business, and he performed it in silence. Once, however, he looked up, complained there was a draught in the room, and, drawing a soiled black silk cap with a long pendent tassel from his pocket, put it on his head, and resumed his employment. Although Mrs. Channing was unacquainted with the names of many of her dishes, there was one she rather prided herself upon—a pudding, which, when the Governor declined, she pressed upon his attention, saying, that she had made it herself. This was too good an opportunity for Trotz to pass unnoticed; he, therefore, begged Miss Sampson to partake of it, as the hostess had made it with her own hands: laying an emphasis on the latter words, which produced, as he intended, an involuntary smile. Channing saw and winced under the ridicule, although he was unable to discover whether it was excited by the pudding or his wife. To make matters worse,

Captain Jones, whose appetite was now satisfied, and who had only heard the word pudding, to which he had just been helped, added to their mortification by one of his blundering remarks. He said that it was capital, and that he had never tasted but one like it before, and that was in Mexico.

“I went there,” he said, “with the Admiral, to settle some little difference we had with the government of that country, and the President asked us to dine with him. What makes me recollect the pudding is his wife made it herself. He had two beautiful daughters; one about eighteen, and the other twenty years of age, who were covered with jewels of a size, brilliancy, and value far beyond anything I ever saw in Europe. I asked him where madam his wife was. ‘To tell the truth,’ he replied, ‘she is in the kitchen superintending the cookery for the dinner.’”

The Governor, with his usual tact and good-nature, turned the conversation to another topic. He adverted to his recent government in the West Indies, and was speaking of some very unreasonable request of the people, the refusal of which had made him very unpopular at the time. Jones, with his customary intention, thought he was speaking of some one else, and said:—

“Your friend was a devilish lucky fellow, then, that they did not serve him as I once saw the Chinese punish one of their gods. They had been praying to

him for rain for thirty days, and at the end of that period, seeing no appearance of a shower, they sent three of their mandarins to him and gave him a sound drubbing. Indeed it is a wonder that they did not Lynch him, as they did the Governor of Antigua in 1710. Colonel Park having rendered himself extremely obnoxious, the whole white population rebelled, and, besieging his house, put him to death, and killed and wounded thirty-six people whom he had assembled for his defence.”¹

“How very good!” said Lord Edward.

Jones, to whom this remark had been several times applied, was somewhat in doubt as to its equivocal meaning. He had already repressed the insolence of one aide-de-camp, and was quite prepared to avenge that of the other.

“Gad, sir,” he replied, “you would not have thought it is so very good if you had been there, I can tell you, for they hung his staff also !”

¹ The Governor, Ensign Lyndon, and thirteen or fourteen soldiers, were killed on this occasion; and Captain Newel, Lieutenant Worthington, and twenty-six soldiers, wounded; besides a number of the Governor’s friends, who were dreadfully beaten and bruised. On the part of the assailants, Captain Piggot and thirty-two persons were killed or wounded. In the thirty-sixth volume of the “Universal History” (part Modern), page 276, a full account is given of this atrocious affair; it is also to be found in Bryant Edwards’s “History of the West Indies.” Not the least extraordinary part is, that no one was punished for it.

Then turning to me, he said, in an under tone,—

“ Who is that gentleman opposite, who did me the honour to call me an old quiz, for I intend to have the pleasure of making his acquaintance to-morrow ?”

“ T-r-o-t-z,” I said, spelling his name, so that the familiar sound might not strike his ear.

“ Trotz ! Trotz !” he slowly repeated ; “ does he enjoy the title of honourable ?”

On my answering in the affirmative, he remarked,—

“ I know him ! he is a son of that old scoundrel, Lord Shoreditch, who sold his party and his reputation for a peerage, and the contempt of all mankind ! The reptile is beneath my notice !”

Here there was a pause. To use the expressive language of the country, there was a thaw ; the sleighing had gone, and we had stuck in the mud, when an old servant of Channing’s entered the dining-room, and, holding the door in his hand, either confounded at the sight of such an unusual party, or waiting to catch the eye of his mistress, hesitated awhile, and then said, in a loud voice :—

“ Bears has no tails, ma’am !” and very deliberately retired.

There was something so comical in this unconnected and apparently useless piece of information that laughter was irresistible. As soon as any one could be heard, Mrs. Channing, with more coolness and self-possession than I had given her credit for, explained that as all sleighs were covered with furs, and of late

decorated with the tails of foxes and other animals, she had thought in her simplicity that bears' tails would admirably contrast with the grey wolf-skins with which her sleigh was clothed, and for that purpose had sent the groom for a furrier to procure some, which caused this communication that "bears has no tails." Having extricated herself so well from this awkward affair, she rose and retired, accompanied by Lady Sampson and the rest of the fair sex. As soon as we had resumed our seats, the Governor started as a topic of conversation the great improvement that had taken place of late years in the soldier's dress. He spoke of the inconvenient practice of using soap and flour on the hair; of their absurd and useless queues; of their troublesome breeches and long gaiters, the care of which occupied the time and destroyed the comfort of the men, all which he illustrated by amusing anecdotes of the olden time.

"I quite agree with you, sir," said Captain Jones; "but there is great room for improvement yet, especially in the dress of the medical men of the army. What a monstrous absurdity it is to put these people in the uniform of soldiers, who have no fighting whatever to do, and whose arms and accoutrements are emblems of a service they never perform! If it is necessary for the sake of appearance that they should be habited like other officers, I would make their dress subservient to the objects of their profession. For instance, I would have the gold band that goes down

the seam of their trousers to be gilt strips of diachylon plaster; their spurs should contain lancets; their scabbard a case of instruments instead of a sword, the handle of which should be a pliable syringe. I would give them a sabertash, and fill it with splints and bandages; their sword-belt should be so constructed as to be made useful as a tourniquet, and their sash as a sling for a wounded arm. They might also have a cartouche-box, filled with opiates, pills, and styptics; while the cushion of the epaulette might be composed of blisters and strengthening plasters. They would then be always ready for immediate service, and would be provided on the spot for every emergency. I cannot conceive anything more perfect than this arrangement. With his library in his head, and his dispensary in his clothes, what more efficient man would there be in the service than a military surgeon?"

This very droll suggestion put every one in good humour, and was followed by some capital stories from the Colonel; until the Governor having passed the wine (for he was the first that curtailed the period spent over the bottle), Channing proposed that we should join the ladies in the drawing-room. The dinner had been a good one, though rather too abundant; and the cook had introduced some dishes of her own that were new to the Government House party, and occasioned remarks that annoyed poor Channing excessively. Among these was one containing a number of small baked pears, the long and slender stalks of which were

bent backward and extended the whole length of the fruit. Lord Edward had asked permission to help Miss Sampson to one of these baked mice, as he called them, to which they certainly bore a very striking resemblance.

“Mithibus! Oh! you! thocking! quithe!” was her reply.

Notwithstanding this and other mortifications that he had endured, Channing was, on the whole, elated and pleased. He knew that a man who steps out of his proper sphere in life must inevitably provoke ridicule, and although good breeding may suppress it in his presence, it cannot fail to find vent at his expense afterwards. He remained behind in the dining-room a few minutes. His property had been acquired by care and economy, and could only be preserved by the same means. He was now enabled to be liberal, but liberality does not necessarily include extravagance; he therefore locked up the wine and the dessert, and then followed his guests into the drawing-room.

Here the attention of the company was engrossed by a beautiful and precocious little boy, the child of his eldest daughter, who was then living at Bermuda with her husband. The moment he saw his grandfather (which word he had abbreviated into Danny), he ran up to him, and claimed the reward of his good behaviour. It was evident he had been drilled and bribed into silence upon the subject of the defect in the face of Sir Hercules, for he said—

“ Danny, give me the orange you promised me, for I did not say the Governor had a great big nose.”

Even the terror of his relatives and the politeness of the company were overcome by the absurdity of this remark. Every one laughed, and among the rest none more heartily and good-naturedly than his excellency himself.

“ Come here, my little man,” he said ; “ it is a very big nose, a very big nose, indeed : but it has had too many jokes cracked upon it not to be able to bear another from such a pretty little boy as you.”

As the Governor advanced the little fellow receded, until his progress was stopped by the corner of the room. His terror now became insupportable, and he called to his grandfather for assistance.

“ Kick him, Danny !” shouted the child. “ Throw a stone at him, Danny ! Make the dog bite him, Danny !”

He then threw himself on the floor, and kicked, and screamed most furiously, until he was carried out of the room by the nurse.

“ How very good !” said Lord Edward.

“ Capital, by Jove !” said Trotz.

But Miss Sampson, knowing the unfortunate cause of it all, thought “ it wath thocking.”

Lady Sampson, who prided herself upon her singing (as every one does upon what they cannot do), was now induced to take a seat at the piano and favour the company with a song, which she executed, if not to the delight of all present (for her voice was very

false), at least to her own entire satisfaction. I have often observed, that most people, however pleased they may be with themselves and their own personal appearance, prefer to sing of beings and characters wholly different. A pale, consumptive, diminutive-looking little man, delights in the loud and rough song of a sailor or pirate, that speaks of thunder, and forked lightning, and mountain waves. A grenadier-sort of person idolizes little Cupid, and wishes to be thought to resemble him. If asked for a song, he begins—

I'm the Cupid of flowers—

A merry light thing ;

I'm lord of these bowers,

And rule like a king.

There is not a leaf

Ever thrilled with the smart

Of Love's pleasant grief,

But was shot through the heart,

By me—by me—little mischievous sprite,

Kindling a love-match is all my delight.

Stout and well-developed women warble of elfs, sylphs, and beings of aërial lightness.

The Governor's lady, under the influence of this inscrutable law, sang—

Thine ear I will enchant,

Or, like a *fairy*, trip upon the green—

and one or two others of a like nature, and was loudly applauded ; for a little gubernatorial circle at Halifax has its courtiers and parasites as well as that of the Tuileries or Buckingham Palace. After this magni-

ficent display of taste and talent, Miss Sampson followed the great enchantress. She would have liked to have sung Italian, as most young ladies do who neither understand the language nor know the pronunciation, for they very properly imagine they can give a greater effect to it on that account, and, besides, there is something beautifully mystical in the strains of an unknown tongue ; but Lord Edward was a judge of music, and always applauded her singing : she therefore appealed to him to select a song for her.

“ Oh, that charming little songibus,” he said, “ you sing so sweetly, so divinely. It begins, ‘ Sing me those gentle strains again. ’ ”

Sweetly and divinely are strong but most agreeable words when applied to one’s voice. She was pleased, and consoled for having given up the horrid Italian, and began, “ Thing me thothe gentle thtrains again.” With the exception of the air of absurdity given to it by lispng, she sung it tolerably well, for ladies generally do well when they are pleased.

“ How very good ! ” said his Lordship. “ Thank you, thank you—it is exquisite ; but there is a beautiful little songibus called ‘ Sing me those strains again. ’ Would you favour us with that ? ”

Miss Sampson looked at him to see what he meant, but, alas, the unalterable face told no tales ! Cold, and bright like moonlight, it wore its usual calm and interesting expression. Still it was very odd, she had just sung it ; but then he always expressed himself

oddly. Was he quizzing her, or was he really so pleased as to desire to hear it repeated? Sweet-tempered young ladies, like Miss Sampson, generally adopt that interpretation where they can that is most agreeable to their wishes; and she sung it over again in her best manner, and with very good effect.

“How very good!” he said, approvingly; “but, ah, pray don’t leave us yet! It is quite refreshing to hear such sounds. There is a little songibus I think I heard you once sing; it is a beautiful thing.”

“What is it?” said the delighted fair one, looking up at her gallant and charming friend, and at the same time executing a chromatic run on the piano, “What is it?”

“Perhaps I can recollect it. It begins, ‘Sing me those gentle strains again.’”

Her eyes became suddenly dim, there was a total eclipse of those beautiful orbs, and for a moment she was in utter darkness, she was so near fainting. There could be no mistake now, he had not heard a word of it; and was so completely absorbed in contemplating himself in a large mirror, that he had even forgotten the phrases of unmeaning compliment he had so mechanically used. Exerting herself to conceal her vexation, she rose and returned to her seat. This painful disclosure of total indifference had dissolved in an instant some little airy fabrics her imagination had been rearing during the past year; and what rendered it the more provoking was, that the slight was offered in public, and by one of her own “thett.”

The Bishop, meanwhile, had taken but little part in the conversation. The topics were new to him, and he was thrown out. Now he made an effort to draw it towards the subjects that filled his heart, namely, himself and his projects. He described the agreeable voyage he had made with Captain Jones from England, extolled his kindness in offering to land him at the Isle of Sable, and expressed his wonder that clergymen should in general be so unpopular with sailors.

“I will tell your Lordship,” said the Captain. “I am inclined to think, although you are better informed on these subjects than I am, that Jonah must have been a very troublesome passenger before such good-natured fellows as seamen would have handled him so roughly as to throw him overboard. But, talking of the Isle of Sable, reminds me of what I ought to have mentioned to your Lordship before, that we sail for that charming little island—that Paradise of the Gulf Stream, that scene of primitive innocence, to-night, at eleven o’clock. If you will be on the King’s Wharf at half-past ten, sharp, with your traps, I will have some of my ‘little lambs’ there to attend you. I will answer for their being there at that moment, for they know I am the most punctual man in the world.”

The Bishop was disconcerted. It was a short notice—too short, indeed, to be at all agreeable; but eccentricity knows no limits, and recognises no laws: so, making the best of it, he departed with his friend, who took his leave contrary to all colonial etiquette,

which restrains any one from retiring until the Governor sets the example.

“What a very odd man Captain Jones is!” said his Excellency.

“Very,” replied the Colonel; “but, at the same time, he is one of the most valuable officers in the service, although I confess his indulgence to his men is sometimes very perplexing to his friends. He is an exact and rigid disciplinarian, but shows them every kindness compatible with a strict observance of duty. He calls them ‘his lambs,’ and they are allowed to come on shore in very large parties, and have got up a very pretty quarrel with my fellows. Sometimes the soldiers charge them, and drive them into their boats, but oftener they have the best of it themselves; yet, in all cases, he complains that those dare-devils (his lambs) have a hard time of it, and are ill used. Eccentricity is often the accompaniment of great talent, and that is the reason so many blockheads affect it. His, however, is genuine, although he is not to be compared, in that respect, with a gentleman of my acquaintance in one of the adjoining provinces. I took shelter from a thunder-shower one day in a country inn, to which others had fled for the same purpose, and, among the rest, one of the most eminent men of the bar of the colony. Every one was tired and bored to death by the continuance of the rain, but he was at no loss for amusement. He made a small bow of whalebone, and, procuring a large needle (which the

landlady called a darning-needle), for an arrow, he put on a pair of spectacles, and commenced shooting mosquitoes, as they flew by or about him, to the great danger and infinite annoyance of every one in the house. I never saw a more eager sportsman, or one more delighted when he made a good shot. His shouts of laughter came from his very heart."

Here the conversation was enlivened by a very absurd incident. Among the guests was a rough old Commissary-General, who was exceedingly deaf. A merchant, a vulgar acquaintance of Channing, taking pity on his infirmity, sat down beside him for the purpose of talking to him. The old gentleman, taking up his trumpet, asked his friend why his wife was not of the party.

"One of 'our brats' is ill," replied the merchant.

"Then I know how to pity you," said the Commissary. "They are a great nuisance; I am plagued to death with them, I have so many."

"It has the croup," answered the other, raising his voice.

"A coop!" replied the deaf man; "that is not a bad idea, if you could only manage to coax them into it, but I never could."

"They have nearly eat me out of house and home."

"How shocking!" said the other, in great amazement. "Shocking, sir!" he continued, becoming animated with his subject: "there never was anything like it in the world. But I'll tell you how to get rid

of them quietly. Don't use arsenic, because you might poison yourself, but steep some bread in prussic acid, and give them as much of that as they can eat, and you will soon find a difference in your baker's and butcher's bill, I can tell you."

"What in the world," asked the merchant, with unfeigned astonishment, "are you talking of?"

"Rats, to be sure," was the answer.

"And I was telling you," rejoined the other, slowly, distinctly, and loudly, "that one of my children had the croup."

The effect was electrical; everybody was convulsed, except the unruffled aide-de-camp, who contented himself with merely observing—

"How very good!"

Here the Governor's sleighs were announced, which was a signal for the breaking up of the party. The play was now concluded, and the actors withdrew to their homes; but there was an afterpiece enacting elsewhere, the humour of which was broader than was agreeable, either to the host or his guests.

Channing escorted his company to the hall, where were deposited their cloaks and wrappings, but led the Governor and his staff into his study, where they had disrobed. The door, though shut, was not closed sufficiently for the action of the lock, and, pushing it open, he found to his amazement another "thett," enjoying themselves infinitely more than that which had been assembled in the drawing-room. The black

cook had belted on the Governor's sword, and decorated her woolly head with his military hat and plumes, which she wore jauntingly and saucily on one side; while three black, supernumerary servant-men, who had been hired for the day, having mounted those of the two aides and the military secretary, were dancing a reel, with their arms akimbo, to the great amusement of a boy, who hummed a tune, in an undertone, for them, and beat time with his fingers on the crown of his master's hat. So wholly engrossed were they with their agreeable pastime, that they did not immediately notice our entrance. I shall never forget the appearance of the cook when she first discovered us. She stood instantly still in her dancing attitude, her feet widely extended, and her fists resting on her hips, as if suddenly petrified. Her eyes enlarged rapidly in size, while all the colour fled from them, and they assumed the appearance of two enormous pieces of chalk. Her mouth, which was partly open, exhibited a long transverse streak of ivory; and the strong contrast of black and white in her face would have been extremely ludicrous, had it not also been very fearful. Her nostrils, like those of an affrighted horse, expanded themselves to their utmost extent; and respiration and animation seemed wholly suspended, when she suddenly sprang up from the floor, perpendicularly, nearly two feet, and screamed out—

“Gor-ormighty! de Gubbenor!”

Instantly the hats flew, with the rapidity of shuttle-

cocks, on to the table, and the usurpers of the trappings of royalty sought safety in immediate flight. But the poor cook, in her hasty and discomfited retreat, forgot the sword, and, stumbling over it, pitched forward, and struck with great violence against the stomach of Trotz, whom she overthrew in her fall, and rendered speechless from the weight of her body, and nearly insensible from the concussion of his head against the marble column that supported the mantelpiece. A shout of laughter from every one present followed this summerset, in which the voice of the good-natured Governor was most conspicuous, for there is but little use in having aides-de-camp living at your expence, if you cannot occasionally enjoy a joke at theirs. Even Lord Edward smiled at the ignoble overthrow of his coadjutor, and said—

“How very good!”

Trotz was seriously injured, and, for awhile, unable to recover his breath, and, of course, even to attempt to rise, or to remove the superincumbent weight of the unsavoury cook; while the unfortunate and affrighted woman, catching the contagion of the general laugh, was seized with hysterics, and grinned horribly over the prostrate Tartar, whom she had so unwillingly made a captive.

The first intelligible ejaculation of Trotz was, that he was poisoned; and he called, with many oaths and imprecations, for instant aid to preserve his life. This only excited fresh merriment, and awakened anew the

almost convulsive shrieks of the sable *artiste*, who, meanwhile, refreshed her nearly inanimate victim with the balmy air of a breath redolent of gin and raw onions, with which she supported her strength and spirits on days of great exertion like the present. Poor creature ! though deeply versed in the mysteries of her art, she was not well read. Her knowledge was derived from experience, and not from books ; and she knew not that Swift had cautioned cooks—

“ But lest your kissing should be spoil'd,
The onion must be throughly boil'd.”

A blow on the ear from the unmanly fist of the prostrate aide-de-camp operated like a draught of water on spasmodic hiccup ; it cured her hysterics immediately, and restored her to her senses. Raising herself on her knees, which in her haste she planted on his stomach, and again nearly endangered his life, she arose and fled from the room. Trotz now managed to get upon his feet, and, putting one hand to the back of his head, made the agreeable discovery of a large contusion, and the other to his hip, was not less annoyed to find a rent of sufficient size to admit of a far freer action of his limbs. The presence of the Governor repressed the repetition of language that had already shocked the religious ears of Channing, but he rendered his indignation quite intelligible by signs and low mutterings. After enveloping himself in his cloak, he drew out a cambric handkerchief, and placed it over his head, and then, taking up his hat,

looked at it and shuddered (as a man labouring under hydrophobia does at the sight of water), and arranged it so that it should not contaminate his hair. As soon as the Governor descended the steps and was out of hearing, Trotz, before he left the hall, said aloud—

“Dummkopf, this is too bad! If the Governor chooses to perform a part in the vulgar farce of *High Life Below Stairs*, to make himself popular, you may attend him if you like, but I won't.”

“How very good!” were the last words of the party heard within the walls of the mansion that night.

Channing, though he could not help laughing at the absurd scene in the study, was hurt and mortified at the occurrence. He felt that it might be told to his disadvantage, and subject him to ridicule; but he consoled himself with the reflection that it was one for which he was not answerable, and might have happened anywhere else. It was also a comfort to him to think that Trotz was the only man injured by it, and that it might be considered not an inapt retribution for his insolence. On the whole, he was gratified, not at the occurrences of the day, but that the day was over, and an important object gained, and a disagreeable duty performed. He knew that he who passes securely over the shoals and the alarming eddies of a rapid and dangerous river, has more reason to rejoice at his safety, than grieve over any little damage his bark may have sustained.

He therefore returned to the drawing-room with a cheerful face. Both himself and his wife breathed freer, like people relieved from the weight of an oppressive burden. Patting his wife affectionately on her shoulder, he said—

“Well, Betsy, notwithstanding some blunders and mistakes, I think it went off very well, on the whole, as lawyer Reynard said, when he returned from the funeral of his wife.” Then, passing his arm round her waist, he observed to me (whom he had requested to remain)—

“Doesn’t she look well to-night, Barclay? I never saw her look better since the day we first.....”

“Don’t talk foolishly, Channing!” said his partner, disengaging herself from his embrace, but looking well pleased with the compliment (for ladies of a certain age never hear with indifference that time has dealt leniently with their charms). “Don’t talk foolishly! I am afraid you have taken too much wine to-night!”

He then turned to me, and rubbing his hands, said—

“Well, Barclay, that is a very nice, sensible, affable old man, the Governor. Is he not? What do you think of Lord Edward Dummkopf?”

“I think,” I replied, “that there is an uncommon affinity between himself and his name. He belongs to one of the oldest families in England. He is of Saxon origin, and in the German language his name signifies Blockhead. There is no harm in him; indeed, there is no harm in an empty room; but the air

is apt to be so uncomfortably cold, as to induce you to withdraw from it as soon as possible."

"But Trotz?" he inquired.

"He," I remarked, "is probably descended from some low retainer on the Dummkopf estate, for his name is also Saxon, and signifies Insolence. In the olden time, most names had a pertinent meaning, and both these people seem to have inherited the qualities to which they are indebted for their ancestral cognomen."

"I quite agree with you," he said, "in your estimate of them; and Sir Hercules, I fear, will add another name to the long list of governors whose personal staff have rendered themselves and the Government-house distasteful to the public. But come with me to the study, and let us have a glass of whiskey-punch and a cigar, for it is not often we have the pleasure of seeing you at Halifax."

When we were quietly ensconced in this snuggerly, he passed his hand slowly and strongly over his face, as if to repress a feeling of pain, and said—

"My good friend, Barclay, pray do not let the folly of this day lower me in your estimation. This is no idle vanity of either myself or my wife. I am contented with the sphere in life in which Providence has placed me; and am far happier in it than I ever can be in one for which I am not qualified, either by my talents or previous habits. But I have acquired a large property, and have an only son, to whom, with

the blessing of God, I intend to give as good an education as this country can afford. I am anxious, therefore, to acquire a certain position for his sake, for which I am willing to pay the penalty, the first painful instalment of which you have seen produced to-day. I am not such a blockhead as not to know that I am unacquainted with the modes and usages of society, and that I am, what some people have been so anxious to inform me, a vulgar man. But, thank God," he said, rising from his chair, and standing with an erect and proud bearing, "I have also the good sense to know and to feel, that on this occasion, with the exception of the Governor himself, we have entertained a far more vulgar party from Government-house than ourselves."

"Spoken like yourself, my friend," I said ; "and now for the punch and the cigars."

Alas ! poor Channing is since dead, and his son, who inherited his fortune, inherited also his sound good sense and excellent qualities. His father fulfilled his intentions as to his education, and sent him to King's College, Windsor, where, under the paternal instructions of its excellent principal,¹ he was made

¹ The gentleman here alluded to is the Rev. Dr. Porter, who, during an exile of thirty years in this country, educated nearly all the clergy of this and the adjoining colony of New Brunswick, many of the judges, and most of the conspicuous lawyers in both provinces, besides many others, who are filling various offices of importance, here and elsewhere, with credit

a scholar and a gentleman. He is now one of the greatest ornaments of the bar in the colony; and, if he think proper to do so, can “ask a governor to dine” without occasioning a remark.

to themselves and advantage to the public. He is still living near Exeter in his native land, to which he retired some few years ago for the benefit of his health, carrying with him the respect and esteem of a people upon whom he has conferred the most incalculable benefit. Should these lines meet his eye, he will recognise the hand of an old pupil, who hopes that this unauthorized use of his name will find a palliation in the affection and gratitude that inserted it.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TOMBSTONES.

After divine service yesterday, we sauntered about the churchyard, examining the tablets erected by the affection or vanity of the living, to perpetuate the virtues or record the rank of the dead. In this stroll, we were joined by Mr. Barclay. He is one of a numerous class of persons in these colonies, who, though warmly attached to British connexion, feel that they are practically excluded from imperial employment and the honours of the empire; and that no service rendered the Government in a province opens the door to promotion out of it, or ensures due consideration within it, in any department not entirely local in its object and management. A brother of his, an officer of distinguished merit, who, by accident, had been enabled to enter the naval service in his youth, had recently died a lieutenant of more than forty years' standing.¹

¹ The London *Times*, of November 8th, 1846, contains a biographical notice of the late Lieutenant William Pringle Green, R.N., a native of Halifax, Nova Scotia. After enumerating his eminent services, and valuable nautical inventions, it

His skill, his unblemished character, and his valuable services had been repeatedly acknowledged, but as often forgotten; and his case, which had been much commented upon of late in the English papers, as one of extreme hardship, had created great sympathy at a time when, alas! sympathy was unavailing. He will not, however, have served his country in vain, if the dreadful sacrifice he has offered of a life of unrequited toil shall remove this distinctive badge of humiliation, and ameliorate the condition of his brave and loyal countrymen, the colonists of North America.

Disappointment and grief at the unmerited neglect of his broken-hearted brother had soured a temper naturally cynical, and given a bitterness to Mr. Barclay's language, which the Judge, however, assured me was indicative rather of his habits than his feelings. He is one of those anomalous characters we sometimes meet, whose sarcastic tone and manner of conversation disguise a kind and good heart.

“Here,” said my eccentric friend, Lawyer Barclay, as he is universally called, “here, as elsewhere, the goes on to say:—“From 1842 until the time of his death, a few days since, he was not only unemployed, but unrewarded and neglected, though still devoting his time to the maturing inventions for the improvement of that service in which he was so ill-treated. He died at the age of sixty-one, more from the want of the common necessaries of life, than from a decay of nature; and has left a widow and seven daughters to subsist (if they can) upon the pitiful pension of a lieutenant's widow—a lieutenant *of forty-one years !!*!”

receipt which the grave gives for a human being is written in a prescribed form. The name, the age, and the date of his death, are minutely and accurately entered. If he has filled an office of importance, or belonged to a learned profession, or served in the Assembly, and, above all, if he has been a member of the Upper House of the Legislature, and borne the title of Honourable, it is recorded at large; while, on the other hand, if he has derived his support from an honest trade, the dishonest tombstone refuses to mention it, lest it might wound the aristocratic feelings of his aspiring posterity.

“ It is said that truth is to be found in the wine-butt and the depths of a well. If revealing the secrets of others be truth, wine may be the element it loves. The well can only give it when exhausted, and then the fact it has to communicate is found to be scarcely worth the trouble of the search, namely, that the well is empty. Wherever it is to be sought for, one thing is certain, it is not to be found on a tombstone. The broken-hearted husband who erects a monument to record his inconsolable grief for the loss of his wife, ere one short year has passed, or the sound of the sculptor’s mallet has ceased, refutes the pompous falsehood by a second marriage; and eyes as bright and voice as sweet as those that are closed by death seduce him into a disavowal of his own words, ‘ Here lieth the best of wives,’ and compel him to acknowledge ‘ Here the husband lies.’ The disconsolate widow

whose affections are buried in the grave of her dear husband, near whom she desires soon to repose in death, feels her heart reanimated with the genial warmth of returning spring. It rises from the earth with the primrose, shakes off its wintry torpor, and re-appears with renewed life and vigour after its short seclusion. The admired of all admirers no longer refuses to be comforted. The churlish miser receives the homage of insincerity from his heir even after death, when his cold and mouldering ear can no longer listen to its flattering accents. A chaste and beautiful allegorical figure of Affection is seen weeping over his urn, which rests on a pedestal that resembles a money-chest; you are lost in doubt whether the tears so copiously shed are caused by unexpected legacies to others, or by the protracted delay of possession. This is a double fraud. It represents the dead as worthy of love, and the living as capable of loving. It is not gratitude, but a decent observance of a hypocritical custom.

“ But why are men so shocked at the mention of that on a tombstone which the deceased published throughout his life to all the world? In this churchyard, numerous as the graves are, no man is designated as tailor, barber, butcher, baker, or shoemaker; yet, doubtless, there are scores of each who placed these ominous and forbidden words on their signs in the largest letters, and the most attractive and conspicuous form. There is, indeed, one exception, if such it can be called. This marble was erected to a man who is

described as 'a servant,' but it was raised at the expense of 'a friend,' that styled himself his master, who, in enumerating his excellent qualities, has not forgotten to proclaim his own liberality, nor been ashamed to inform us that he has expended more money in extolling his services than in rewarding them. It has been said that the grave knows no distinctions. The rule is now reversed, it seems. All are not reduced by it to a level, for the level is on a summit, and all are elevated to it. Be it so ; but then strike out all your degrees, your D.D.'s, your M.D.'s, the words Judge, Councillor, Barrister, Esquire, and let the rank of the dead be uniform. Of all places in the world, a graveyard, at least, should be consecrated to truth. As it is, it seems devoted to flattery, vanity, ambition, ostentation, and falsehood. All sects retain their peculiarities here, and endeavour to perpetuate them. A little more taste, and a little more expense in the monument (but with a contemptuous disregard of veracity in its record), indicate that a churchman is deposited there (for the Church in the colony embraces the greater part of the upper class of society). A neat, plain, substantial one, with the modest assurance that the soul of the deceased was immediately conveyed to heaven, proclaims the saint to have been a Dissenter.

“ The common Christian emblem of the Cross is more in use among Romanists than others, but you may identify them by their pious horror of Protestants. It would be dangerous to be found in such bad com-

pany, for the Pope has declared they cannot be saved; and who can question such high authority? They, therefore, very wisely lie apart from the dust that is polluted by heresy. If you are still in doubt, read one of the inscriptions, and a scrap of Latin sets the matter at rest. It is an appropriate tongue, for it is "a dead language." In this curtilage, then, which is the common burial-place of all, sectarianism and fashion have found their way and offered their distinctive badges to their followers. The highway of life has been extended into the churchyard, and is thronged in its usual manner. Here are the handsome equipages and expensive trappings of the rich, the sobriety of the middle classes, and the destitution of the nameless and unknown poor. The scale of colonial precedence survives mortality. The mitred bishop still regards, with a condescending and patronising air, the poor curate; and the grocer looks down from his marble monument upon his quondam labourer with his turf covering, and maintains his relative position in the society of the dead. The iron railing boasts of its quality and durability, and regards with pity or contempt the temporary and trumpery wooden enclosure. The classic urn appeals only to the hearts of scholars, and the bust to the man of taste; while all look up to him who represented his King, and whose titles are almost as long as his eulogium—the old Governor—the fountain of honour, and the distributor of patronage and of rank.

“ Amid all this vanity—here and there is to be found some consistency—the antiquated virgin preserves her acidity of temper to the last. She is one of those of whom vulgar people so idly and flippantly predict ‘that they dry, but never die.’ Accustomed to hear such agreeable compliments, she anticipates the sneer or the smile of youth upon finding the word ‘Miss’ associated with seventy-four years of age ; and as in life she maintained the privilege of the last word, so in death she claims a right to the first ; and youth and beauty are admonished that ere long they must undergo the penalty of the law of their nature, and be humbled in the dust like herself. She thus avenges the slights and injuries of an unfeeling world, and, consistent to the last, evinces her fondness for disagreeable truths.

“ The houses of this silent city are of various sizes. There are fashionable squares, there are streets of less pretension, and there are suburbs that are but little frequented, for they are the abodes of the lower orders. If you must dwell among the latter, it would be best to preserve a strict *incognito*. A mansion in St. Giles’s would prove your habits to have been dissolute, your associates depraved, and your means exhausted. It would disgrace your posterity for ever. A respectable address is a letter of credit, but the occupant of mean lodgings is cut by his acquaintance and disowned by his family. If you would be regarded as a gentleman, you must associate with fashionable people, and

reside among them. The churchyard, strange as it may seem, is a true but painful picture of life—ostentation without, corruption within; peace and quiet on the surface, but the worm at the heart. Ah, poor human nature! your last resting-place, the grave, would be eloquent, if you did not stifle its voice. Do not read these inscriptions, my friend,” he continued, “there is no dependence to be placed on anything but the figures; the tale they tell is not true. But come with me, and I will show you a grave that bears that upon it that carries conviction to the heart.”

On a little mound, in a distant corner of the churchyard, was a grove of spruce-trees, enclosing a verdant spot of small dimensions. Here was a solitary grave, having at the foot a common field-stone to mark its termination; and, at the head, another of the same kind, one side of which was dressed with a chisel, and bore the inscription “Mary Merton, 1840.” The whole of this little plat of ground was enclosed by a rough rustic railing, having a small gate for the purpose of access. The grave was not covered with sods, but decorated with patches of forget-me-not and other simple flowers, emblematical of the feeling and the object with which they were placed there, and was encircled by white rose-bushes. At the upper part of the enclosure, but outside of the railing, stood a weeping willow, the light pendent tracery of which fell like the dishevelled hair of a mourner whose head was bending over the body it loved and lamented.

The little spot was kept in perfect order, and tended with the most careful neatness.

“There, sir !” he said, “there, at least, is truth. That simple and natural embellishment is the votive offering of a poor widow to her only child. Those flowers are weeded by her hands, and watered with her tears. Where is the sting of death, or the victory of the grave, when, like that little innocent and helpless victim, the dead survive decay, and rise again to dwell in the hearts and affections of the living? It is refreshing to see simplicity and truth amid so much that is false and unnatural. This is a strange world. Take man individually, and there is much that is good and amiable in him ; but take men collectively, and they are always rapacious or unjust. Parties are but combinations, under plausible pretences, to deceive the people ; public departments are stern and cruel ; governments are ungrateful ; patronage is either blind and cannot distinguish, or selfish and capricious. A man who serves his country with ability and zeal is too apt to find at last, to his cost, that his country, like a corporate body, has neither a soul to think, a heart to feel, a head to remember, or a spirit of liberality to reward.”

“Come, come, my friend,” said the Judge, well knowing the cause of this bitter ebullition, “you have too much reason to complain, I fear, to do so calmly. Let us not enter into these speculations on this day and in this place. Let us rather yield to the influence

of the objects around us. I, too, am fond of this spot for the lasting affection it exhibits. Fathers may forget their offspring, and children lose the remembrance of their parents; husbands and wives may be replaced, and brothers and sisters be to each other as strangers and even as foes, but the love of a mother endureth for ever. A father supplies the wants of his child from his purse, a mother from her bosom. Even the grave itself cannot extinguish her devotion. She mourns over her deceased infant in solitude and in silence. It is always before her. Its voice is in her ear, and its smile is in her heart. Memory raises up the little idol to her admiring eyes by day, and the too vivid dream reanimates it by night. Her maternal affections regard it as a living being, and she longs to fondle and embrace it, while the divinity within her sympathizes with it as celestial, and invests it with the attributes of a ministering angel. She holds strange and mysterious communings with it, for love such as hers has an ideal world of its own. Her wounded spirit flutters against the barriers of its human prison, and strives to escape and join that which has 'put on immortality;' and at last, when wearied with its ineffectual struggles, it yields in timid submission to the law of its nature—it indulges the hope that that which is imperishable may be permitted to revisit the object of its love, and illumine, by its mystical presence, the depths of its gloom. Her grief, therefore, produces at last its own solace, and

she cherishes it with an humble but a firm reliance upon the mercy and goodness of God, that her child shall be fully restored to her in another and a better world, where they shall dwell together in unity for ever.

“ There is something, as you say, about this little grave that is very attractive ; for youth is innocent, and innocence is always an object of interest and of love. Age, on the contrary, is venerable, but not loveable. I see nothing in the termination of a ripe old age to occasion grief, unless there has been a mis-spent life. There is nothing to regret where all, or more, has been given than was promised—

‘ *Lusisti satis, edisti satis atque bibisti,
Tempus abire tibi est.*’

But youth, prematurely cut off, awakens many a painful reflection. I recollect being greatly struck with a monument erected to a young officer at Shelburne, who perished under very peculiar circumstances. The story itself is short and simple, but, as it is connected with the rise and fall of that ill-fated and melancholy town, I will give you the history of both together. Let us sit down on this tombstone, for it is a fitting seat from which to tell a tale of mortality.

“ Last summer I made a tour of the province, and revisited the scenes of my former judicial labours. The growth and improvement of the country far exceeded my expectations. In many places where the road ran, a few years ago, through an unbroken forest,

it was now bordered on either side by a continuous line of farms; and substantial houses and large herds of cattle evinced the condition of the new population. The towns and villages were greatly increased, and an improved system of husbandry had changed the whole appearance of the country. The habits of the people also had undergone an alteration for the better no less striking and gratifying. Still it was by no means a journey of unmixed pleasure. A generation had passed away, if not from life, from its business and duties. Many whom I had known I could not at first recognise: care, time, and disease, had not been idle. The young had become men, the men had grown old, and the old had died or withdrawn from view. I was a stranger among strangers. The houses I had frequented during the circuits were either enlarged, remodelled, or rebuilt. A new race of people welcomed me, and the well-known voice and the well-known face were nowhere to be heard or seen. My local interest was the same, but my personal interest had gone, and gone for ever.

“ At home, these changes are so gradual that they are almost imperceptible. The vacant place soon collapses, or is occupied by another, and harmonises with all around. It becomes incorporated with the rest, and cannot be distinguished from it. In this manner, an entire revolution is effected, and yet that revolution is so slow and so gradual in its growth, and contains so much to which we are daily accustomed, that the

eye cannot discern where the old ceases or the new begins. But, when we return to past scenes, after an absence of many years, the whole change bursts on our astonished view at once. We knew it as it was, we see it as it is, and we feel and know it is not the same. We are painfully reminded, at the same time, that we have been ourselves no less under the influence of this universal law of mutability : we return to our own, and our own knoweth us no more. The face of Nature, though here and there partially transformed by the hand of man, was in the main unaltered. The mountains, with their wavy outline distinctly marked against the clear blue sky, or their summits enveloped in mists, were the same as when my youthful eye first rested on them. The rivers, the valleys, the murmuring brooks, the wide-spread alluvial meadows, covered with grazing herds, the sheltered and placid lakes, and the rugged cliffs and bold promontories that invaded the sea, or resisted its assaults, were all unchanged. The road also on the sea-shore wore the same familiar aspect, and the ceaseless roar of the ocean saluted my ear with the same voice that first awakened my adventurous hope to pass to that fatherland that lies beyond the great deep. At night, as I walked out meditating on the past, the pale silver moon and its starry host proclaimed that they also were unchanged, and recalled many a long-forgotten scene in years by-gone, before all that has been was, or reflection came to teach us that youth has its shadow, that increases as the day

declines, and that that shadow is death. These visible objects of nature, therefore, become dearer and dearer to us as we advance in years. They are our early, our constant, and sole surviving friends, the same to-day and to-morrow as they were of old. They are typical of Him who knoweth no change.

“ As far as Shelburne, all was progressive or rapid improvement, but that unfortunate town was in ruins. It arose in the wilderness like a work of magic, but had hardly been erected before it was in a state of decay. Twelve or fourteen thousand emigrant loyalists from New York sought shelter in this remote place at the close of the war of rebellion, in the year 1784, and built a large, commodious, and beautiful wooden town, at the head of the magnificent harbour of Roseway. In their haste, or their necessity, they overlooked the fact, that a town requires a country to support it, unless a trade which has grown with its growth supplies its wants upon equal terms. Remote from the other settlements of the province, surrounded by a trackless forest, that covers a poor and stony soil, situated too far from the entrance of the harbour to reap the advantages of the fishing-grounds, and filled with a population unaccustomed to the mode, and unequal to the fatigues, of settling in a wilderness, it was impossible that a town so constituted could long exist. Some returned penniless and destitute to their native land, others removed to various parts of Nova Scotia, and the grave-yard, from year to year, received great

numbers of those that were left behind, to mourn with broken hearts over their ruined fortunes, their hopeless and helpless condition, and their dreary exile. When I had last seen it, the houses were still standing, though untenanted. It had all the stillness and quiet of a moonlight scene. It was difficult to imagine it was deserted. The idea of repose more readily suggested itself than decay. All was new and recent. Seclusion, and not death or removal, appeared to be the cause of the absence of inhabitants. But now the houses which had been originally built of wood had severally disappeared. Some had been taken to pieces, and removed to Halifax, or St. John's; others had been converted into fuel, and the rest had fallen a prey to neglect and decomposition. The chimneys stood up erect, and marked the spot round which the social circle had assembled; and the blackened fireplaces, ranged one above another, bespoke the size of the tenement and the means of its owner. In some places they had sunk with the edifice, leaving a heap of ruins; while not a few were inclining to their fall, and awaiting the first storm to repose again in the dust that now covered those who had constructed them. Hundreds of cellars, with their stone walls and granite partitions, were everywhere to be seen, like uncovered monuments of the dead. Time and decay had done their work. All that was perishable had perished, and those numerous vaults spoke of a generation that had passed away for ever, and, without the aid of an inscription, told a

tale of sorrow and of sadness that overpowered the heart.

“ A few new houses had recently been erected, and a very few of the old had been snatched from decay and repaired ; but, of the thousands of inhabitants that this town once contained, four or five survivors alone remained, and the entire population did not exceed two thousand souls. They were all attached to the place, and spoke confidently of its revival, fondly of its noble harbour, and proudly of its former prosperity. Every spot had its little history. Here the pilgrims first landed, and this spacious street was the first that was cut out through the woods. On that bridge the bands of the regiments assembled on a summer’s evening to play the tunes of their fatherland. In the house which once stood over this large cellar, Field-Marshal Beresford was quartered when a young officer in the garrison, and in that sedgy piece of ground was wounded in the face by an accidental discharge from the gun of a brother sportsman. On that eminence, on the opposite side of the harbour, stood extensive barracks, capable of accommodating three regiments ; and on the point of land that terminates King’s Street was a heavy battery, the guns of which, corroded by time, lie half-buried in the earth ; for, alas ! there is nothing now to defend. At this corner stood the great hotel of Shelburne, where the weekly balls were held, and the beauty and fashion of the old colony of New York (for the Loyalists were

principally gentry) assembled for the last time. Driven into exile by their rebel countrymen, and environed in the country of their adoption by poverty, and a dim and lowering future, they vainly sought to fly from regret, and lose the painful memory of the past in festivity and amusement. That spacious church, which is now so far from the village, was once in the centre of this large town ; and the number of the graves in the cemetery bear a frightful disproportion to the present population.

“ While strolling one afternoon through the deserted and grass-grown street that passes in front of this building, my attention was attracted by a very handsome and apparently new monument, which appeared to have been just erected,—probably to one of the last of this ill-fated emigration. It was built of the beautiful granite that abounds in the neighbourhood, and its fresh-chiselled surface glistened in the sun, as its rays fell on the bright and polished particles of mica embedded in its indestructible substance. It was a costly structure, not in keeping with the means of the present inhabitants, and evidently could not have been executed by any workman then resident at Shelburne. It occurred to me that, perhaps, the affection or the piety of a child had erected this tribute to the memory or misfortunes of a parent who had found rest at last in this secluded spot. My curiosity was excited, and, opening a little gate, I entered the yard to ascertain, from the inscription, the name and history of this

venerable patriarch. I was, however, astonished to find that it was nearly as old as the town, and designed, not for one of the pilgrims, but for a young officer who had been drowned in the harbour. The inscription was as follows:—

Sacred
to the Memory of
PATRICK MAXWELL, Esq.,
Ensign in His Majesty's 61st or First
Warwickshire Infantry,
and Son of
Sir William Maxwell,
of Spring Hill, Bart., N.B.,
who was unfortunately upset
in a Sail-boat,
10th July, 1790, and
drowned,
Ætat. 19,
deeply regretted by
his afflicted parents,
and all who knew him.

“ Such an untimely and melancholy death is unhappily one of daily occurrence, and his was only distinguishable from others of the same kind by a trait of generous manliness that deserves to be recorded. I have just told you there was a large battery and guard-house at the termination or commencement of King's Street, and very extensive barracks on the opposite side of the harbour—an arrangement which had, probably, been adopted for the greater seclusion

and better management of the troops. Between these two stations boats were constantly passing and repassing, either on business or pleasure. On the day mentioned on the tablet, a victualling-barge, containing a party of soldiers and two officers, was struck about the centre of the harbour by a heavy squall, and upset, and every soul on board perished, with the exception of the sergeant. Young Maxwell was one of the unfortunate sufferers.¹ The sergeant, who was an expert swimmer, generously took him on his back, and struck out boldly for the shore. Miscalculating his power, however, he swam too hastily, and had not proceeded far before his strength began to fail. Maxwell, as soon as he perceived him falter, expressed his determination to relieve him of the burden he had so kindly assumed. He exhorted him to be cool and collected, to proceed slowly, but, above all things, to persevere on account of his wife and children; and then, bidding him adieu, relinquished his hold, and sunk to rise no more.

“ My first feeling on reading the inscription was one that is common to us all when we hear of the untimely death of the young, but reflection soon took another turn. If now living, he would have been seventy-five years of age—a tottering, decrepit old man like myself,

¹ On the reverse side of this monument was an inscription of a similar nature to Lieutenant Nicholas Ball, of the same regiment, who perished on this occasion. Both bodies were deposited in one grave.

full of years and infirmities. Had he been then spared, I asked myself, would he have survived till this day? Or would disease have put in its claim, or the battle-field held him as a victim? Was ignominy avoided or honour lost by that event? Would his career in life have been unmarked, or has a name perished that was destined to grace the pages of his country's history? All, alas! is hidden in impenetrable mystery. But reason and religion alike teach us this great consolatory truth, that a wise and merciful Providence orders all things for the best.

“As regards monuments, however, I agree with you, Barclay. I neither approve of the imagery, emblems, or language we use. Less flattery and more truth, less reference to worldly vanities and more resignation to the will of God, a total exclusion of heathen allegories and the introduction of such only as are of Christian origin, would be infinitely more appropriate and becoming. If we are to be addressed from the grave, it should be in language calculated to make us wiser and better men; for we do not seek these solitudes to gratify our tastes, but to purify our hearts, and to enable us, by a contemplation of the fate of others, to prepare for the inevitable approach of our own.”

CHAPTER V.

A BALL AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE.

On our return to Illinoo, our recent visit to Halifax and its incidents naturally became the subject of conversation, and, among other things, Government House and its inmates were adverted to.

“The situation of a Governor,” said the Judge, “is by no means an enviable one. He is insufficiently paid, seldom properly supported by the Colonial Office; and no sooner becomes acquainted with the people and the country than his term of service expires. The province is then again entrusted to a stranger, who goes through the same process of acquiring experience, with great personal labour, annoyance, and inconvenience to himself, and with some danger, and no little alarm, to the inhabitants; while his best exertions and intentions are often frustrated, and his domestic comfort destroyed, by the petty insolence and insignificant intrigues of the little leaders of little political factions about him.

“Recent democratic changes in the constitution of the colonies have rendered his position still more difficult, by limiting the prerogative, transferring much of

his authority to his council, and making public offices not the reward of merit, but of agitation. With politics, however, I have nothing to do. I not only take no interest in them, but I even dislike to hear them discussed. A Governor, however, if he be a man of honour, and a gentleman, is really an object of pity. As far as we have been concerned ourselves, we have been extremely fortunate in the selection that has been made for us, and are enabled to enumerate a long list of very clever as well as very amiable men; but as my experience extends over a long series of years, and is by no means limited to our North American possessions, I have been sometimes amused at them as a class, and at the different manner in which they severally attempt to accomplish the object they all have in view; namely, to conduct their administration satisfactorily to their employers, and to the people committed to their charge. To secure the approbation of the authorities at home, it is merely necessary to keep things quiet, for they have themselves made every concession for this purpose, to every troublesome party, until there is little left now but total independence to concede. To preserve this tranquillity, therefore, necessarily involves the same policy on the part of a Governor, and, consequently, the necessity for a certain degree of personal popularity. It is the pursuit of this popularity that calls forth the peculiarities and character of the man: some resting it, where it ought to be, on the honest

and inflexible discharge of duty ; others on tact, a knowledge of character, or some personal qualification, that renders them agreeable. As a class, therefore, they naturally present a great variety.

“ For instance, there is ‘ your man-of-business Governor,’ accessible at all times, punctual in the performance of his own duty, and strict in requiring a corresponding exactness in others—affable, cautious, but decided. Then there is your ‘ scheming Governor,’ a man before his age, who delights in theories—has visions of greatness for his little empire, desires to have the people habited in garments, which, if they do not fit, are admirably well calculated to admit of an extended growth of the body and limb ; who talks of systems, heads of departments, and boards, and will neither see nor hear of difficulties, as, in his opinion, there never are any that are insurmountable, and who treats the Secretary of State to long reports, for the amusement of the clerks to report upon. Next comes your ‘ entertaining Governor,’ who keeps an hospitable table, gives numerous parties, is full of anecdote, and tells his stories well, pays due attention to country members and their fashionable and agreeable wives and daughters, takes care that his staff are attentive to those who stand in need of attentions, and dance with those who cannot command partners, and who arranges his dinners so as to bring together people who know each other and are agreeable. As for business, he obeys orders from home, interferes personally

as little as possible, and suffers things to take their course.

“Then, there is your ‘humberging Governor,’ who bows and smiles to all, says civil things to everybody, and of everybody, makes long speeches, and writes long messages, adopts no side warmly, has no decided opinions, is with the majority, but lives with the minority, so he can co-operate with them, too, if they become strong enough; is attached to the Church, for he was born and bred in it; is fond of the Romanists, for they are numerous, and devoted to British connexion; to the Baptists, because freedom of opinion is the right of all, especially of those who form so large a body; and of the Scotch Dissenters, on account of their abhorrence of democratic principles, and because he has often witnessed and admired their amiability at home, and the brotherly love they exhibit to the church abroad. In short, he is ‘all things to all men’—a hand for all, a word for all, and a fig for all.

“Then, there is your ‘dashing Governor,’ a regular politician, who believes that every man has his price, regards all provincials as scoundrels, and thinks their price small; will carry his measures *coûte qui coûte*; has a strong smack of English Radicalism, and flatters the vanity of colonial Liberals; knows the little points of little men, and talks of the vast resources of the colony, the important geographical, relative, and political position of it; the able views and great scope of intellect of its statesmen; advocates a united legis-

lature for all the colonies, the creation of a Viceroy, and the construction of a railroad to the Pacific, and other gigantic projects—tubs for the whale.

“There are also your ‘purely civil,’ or ‘purely military Governors.’ The former has no command, and, of course, is by no means so well paid as the other; is subject to some inconvenience from the want of this control, and is in occasional collision with the Commandant, not in matters of importance (for then it seldom or never occurs), but in insignificant, and, therefore, more annoying affairs. He procures the attendance of a regimental band at his parties as a favour, and tolerates their airs as an unavoidable evil. Although familiar with, and hospitable to, the officers of the garrison, he never enjoys their sympathies like an old General. Unless he is a man of rank himself, the Admiral, it is observed, is more apt to stand on etiquette and rights with him than if he were a soldier, for they again both pertain to the profession of arms, although not to the same branch of the service. The latter, or purely military man, delights rather in the appellation of General than that of Governor; is fonder of assembling his troops than his legislature, and is more at home with the officers of his brigade than with the officers of his colony. He would rather talk of the Punjaub than the Maddawaska, and the heads of columns than the heads of departments. He says but little, promises less; but does what he says. He refers every thing to the department to which it

belongs, and acts on the report of the principal. He takes no responsibility. If the assembly flares up, so does he; begs them to accept the assurance of his most profound indifference, and informs them that he was a General before he was a Governor. If they petition the Sovereign, he thanks them for it; tells them he is an old and faithful servant of the Crown, and has been so long abroad he is in danger of being forgotten; that their memorial will call attention to the fact that he is still living, and serving his King with zeal and fidelity.

“These peculiarities are either generated or disclosed by the duties and necessities of the station, and are the various effects on the human mind of a morbid desire for applause. Under any circumstances, this high functionary can now personally effect but little good, in consequence of the restrictions and limitations imposed upon his authority: but he is by no means equally powerless for evil, and, if he should, unfortunately, be surrounded by a needy or unprincipled council, and be deficient either in a knowledge of his duty, or in firmness of purpose, the country may suffer incalculable injury.

“One of my predecessors on the bench, a man of great humour and eccentricity, used gravely to maintain, that the only person fit for the situation was a wise man or a fool. ‘If he really is a wise man,’ he used to say, ‘he will govern by himself, and not by favourites; if he is a fool, he will not think of holding

the reins at all, but entrust them wholly to the constituted authorities.' Your indifferent Governors, generally speaking, are your clever men, or, according to the cant phrase of modern times, your 'talented men,'—people who are intelligent enough to be conceited, and yet have not sufficient ability to dispense with advice.

“These great guns, therefore, as my friend Barclay calls them, are, as a matter of course, of different calibre and weight, and their effect is in proportion. Some carry as true, and are as unerring, as a rifle; others, though they hit the mark, have no power of condensation, and do mischief by scattering. This one overshoots the object, and that falls short of it. Some hang fire from indecision, and others go off unexpectedly from impetuosity. All these failures arise from want of previous preparation, either by having served in one or other of the houses of Parliament, or filled some of the higher offices in a colony. Suitable persons, I admit, are not easily found; but, confining the selection to general officers increases the difficulty, inasmuch as a military education, and the life and habits of a soldier, have a tendency to unfit them for constitutional government. Indeed, some difficulty will be experienced in future, in inducing gentlemen to accept an office, the emoluments of which are insufficient to defray the ordinary expenditure, and the duties, both onerous and responsible—many of them excessively disagreeable, and all accompanied by the most offensive

abuse and misrepresentation of an unbridled and licentious press.

“ Much of this, if not all, may be regarded with pity or contempt by a well-regulated mind ; but, unfortunately, custom has sanctioned, until time has converted into a duty, the practice of indiscriminate hospitality, whereby the privacy of his house, and the comfort of his family, are effectually destroyed. Men are to be seen at a Governor’s table who are to be met with nowhere else ; and people are brought together whose previous intercourse has extended no further than purchases made through the intervention of a servant at the market-place. The consequence is, that, instead of exhibiting the best, Government House affords the worst specimen of society in the province. Independently of the annoyance to which all are subject by such an association, the Governor, his staff, and strangers, naturally infer that this anomaly is the general condition of colonial society. The ignorance, awkwardness, and presumption thus displayed, are taken as characteristics of the whole ; and many anecdotes are in circulation to the disadvantage of Halifax and other provincial capitals, that are chargeable alone on the extraordinary mixture that this ill-regulated hospitality produces.

“ You have seen the Governor under more favourable circumstances ; for you have merely dined with him and some of his friends, and, fortunately, at a time when the town was not filled with the ‘ gentlemen

from the rural districts,' and, of course, when he was enabled to escape from their intrusion. There are times when the 'palace' may be said to be out of season, it is so distasteful; and it is necessary that you should see it, and the balls given at that period, fully to understand what I mean. The most amusing part of this folly is, that people who are excluded for their misconduct (although not admitted elsewhere) formally complain of it as a grievance, and actually maintain that the Governor is not only bound to extend his invitations to those that are unfit, but even to those that are unworthy. One cannot but feel for the indignity and annoyance he must continually endure from this cause. It reminds me of an anecdote told me by Sir John Sherbrooke, when he commanded here.

“ He had given permission to his house-steward and butler—two of the tallest and largest men in Halifax—to give an entertainment to their friends, and invite as many as they thought proper, in their own apartment at his house. A day or two after the party, a diminutive but irascible barber, who was in the habit of attending upon him, complained, in the course of his professional duty, that his feelings were greatly hurt by his exclusion from the festivities of Government House, by the steward and butler, as it had a tendency to lower him in the estimation of his acquaintances; and, if it had not been for the respect he owed his Excellency, he would most assuredly have horsewhipped them both.

“ ‘ Would you?’ said Sir John, who was excessively amused at the pugnacious little man. ‘ Would you? By Jove! then, I give you my leave. Horse-whip them as long as you can *stand over* them.’

“ ‘ This is the manner,’ he observed, ‘ in which the good people here censure me. It appears that I occasionally omit to ask some person who thinks he is entitled to a card as a matter of right. I really thought, at first, the fellow was going to complain to me of myself, for, in fact, he has just as good a right to come as some others who are admitted.’

“ So far, therefore, from a Government house exercising a salutary influence on the community, its effects are in fact injurious. People who go from the country, and procure, through their representatives, admission to the palace, when they return to their homes, contrast the facility with which this honour has been obtained, with the utter impossibility of being introduced to the families of gentlemen in their own neighbourhood, attribute the difference to pride or injustice, and naturally attempt to vindicate their rights, by striving to reduce to their own level those who maintain this invidious reserve. It is natural for them to think, if the first officer in the colony—he who represents his sovereign, is willing to admit that there are no distinctions of stations, or to waive the consideration, that it is neither right nor expedient that subordinate people should maintain a different course. It is, therefore, the prolific parent of that

respectable, as well as amiable and attractive, virtue known as ‘ Colonial Patriotism.’

“ It is some years since I was at a ball at Government House. My age and infirmities render them irksome to me, and, of course, unfit me for enjoying them. The last time I was there, was during the administration of Sir Hercules Sampson. I need not describe him, or his lady and daughter, or his two aides, Lord Edward Dummkopf and the Honourable Mr. Trotz, for, if I recollect aright, Barclay has done that already, much better than I could, in his graphic sketch of ‘ Asking a Governor to Dine.’ It was on the first day of January, there was a levée in the morning, a dinner party in the afternoon, and a ball in the evening. A custom prevailed then, and still does, I believe, at Halifax, as well as elsewhere in the country, for the gentlemen to call that day on all the ladies of their acquaintance, who are expected to be at home to receive visitors, to whom cake and wine are offered. Of course, there is at every house a constant succession of people, from mid-day till the hour of dinner ; and, at the time I am speaking of, these morning libations to the health of the fair sex increased not a little towards afternoon the difficulty, that always exists in winter, in walking over the slippery and dangerous streets of the town. Although generally considered a very troublesome ceremony, it is not without its beneficial effects, inasmuch as it induces or compels a renewal of relations that have

suffered from neglect or misunderstanding during the preceding year, and affords a good opportunity for reconciliation without the intervention of friends, or the awkwardness of explanations. Indeed, it is this consideration alone that has caused this rural practice to survive the usages of the olden time.

“ Many absurd anecdotes are in circulation relating to the accidents and incidents of the ‘ New Year’s Calls,’ among the drollest of which is the sudden irruption into a house of the greater part of those persons who had attended the Governor’s levée, and their equally sudden departure, amid shrieks of affright and roars of laughter, as the cracking of the beams of the floor gave notice of the impending danger of a descent into the cellar, and the subsequent collective mass of fashionables in one confused and inextricable heap at the foot of the very icy steps of the hall door. Ah, me ! those were days of hilarity and good humour, before political strife had infused bitterness and personality into everything. *We were but too happy before we became too free.* The dinner was an official one ; the guests were the various heads of departments in the place ; and it passed off much in the same manner as similar ones do elsewhere.

“ Of the ball, it is difficult to convey to you a very distinct idea, such entertainments being so much alike everywhere. There may be more fashion and more elegance in one assembly than another ; but, if the company are well-bred people, the difference is one of

appearance, and not of character ; and even when the company is mixed and motleyed, as on the occasion I am speaking of, still, when the greater part of them are gentry, the difference between it and one more exclusive, though perceptible to the eye well defined and clearly distinguishable, is one of colouring ; and if, in delineating it, the shades are made too strong, it becomes a fancy sketch rather than a faithful picture, and the actors appear in caricature, and not in natural and faithful portraiture. To give you the proprieties would be insipid, as all proprieties are, and to give you only the absurdities would be to make them too prominent, and lead you to suppose they were samples of the whole, and not exceptions. You must bear this in mind, therefore, or you will think the account exaggerated, or the party more exceptionable than it really was.

“ When I first knew Government House, the society to be met with there was always, as I have before said, the best in the place. In time, each succeeding Governor enlarged the extent of his circle ; and, at last, as a corrective, two were formed for evening entertainments : one that was selected for small parties, and for frequent intercourse with the family ; and a second, designed for public nights only and rare occasions, and so arranged as to embrace all within, as well as most people beyond, the limits of the other. The effect of this arrangement was, to draw the two classes apart, to create invidious distinctions, and to

produce mutual dislike. Subsequently, the two have been merged into one, which has consequently become so diluted as to be excessively unpalatable. The best part have lost their flavour, without imparting it to others; and the inferior, being coarser and stronger, have imbued the rest with as much of their peculiarities as to neutralize their effect, while they have retained enough to be as disagreeable and repulsive as ever.

“ The evening to which I allude being a public one, the invitations were very numerous, and embraced the military, navy, and staff, the members of the legislature, which was then in session, and all the civilians whose names were to be found on the most extended list that had been formed at the time. Having dined at the palace that day, I happened to be present at the arrivals. The guests were shown into the drawing-room, and courteously, though ceremoniously, received by the Governor, his lady, and staff. Those who were wholly unknown, and the least acquainted with the usages of society (as is always the case with awkward people), arrived long before the rest, and were not a little surprised and awed at finding themselves alone in the presence of the ‘royal party.’ The ladies were unable or afraid to be at ease, or to appear at home, and sat on the edges of their chairs, stiff, awkward, and confused. The utterance of the gentlemen, who were no less conscious of being out of their element, was thick, rapid, and unintelligible;

while they appeared to find hands and feet an intolerable nuisance. The former felt into every pocket of their owners for a secure retreat, but were so restless, they had hardly secreted themselves before they made their escape into another hiding-place, when they put a bold face on the matter, advanced and clasped each other in agony in front, and then undertook the laborious task of supporting the skirts of the coat behind. The latter, like twin-brothers, entered the room together, and stood on a footing of perfect equality ; but it was evident ambition was at work among them, for the right first claimed precedence, and then the left, and then rudely crossed before each other, and, at last, as if ashamed of this ineffectual struggle, when their master sat down, hid themselves under the chair, or embraced each other lovingly on the carpet.

“ Lord Edward could not, and Trotz would not, talk. Sir Hercules, with great good humour, tried every topic ; but he no sooner started one, than it fled in affright at the cold and repulsive monosyllable ‘ Yes,’ or ‘ No,’ and escaped.

“ ‘ How very icy the streets are !’ he said ; ‘ they are really quite dangerous.’

“ ‘ Very, sir.’

“ ‘ Does your harbour freeze over ?’

“ ‘ No, sir——oh, yes, often, sir !——that is, very rarely——when the barber rises, sir....’

“ ‘ Perhaps, madam, some of these prints would

amuse you ! Here are some of the latest caricatures ; they are capital....’

“ ‘ No, thank you, Sir Hercules—not any, sir.’ ”

“ ‘ Are you fond of driving in a sleigh ?’ ”

“ ‘ Some, sir.’ ”

“ ‘ Do you play ?’ ”

“ ‘ I never touch cards, sir.’ ”

“ ‘ No, but upon the piano ?’ ”

“ ‘ No, but my Anna Maria does ; and master says she has a most grand ear, sir.’ ”

“ ‘ Perhaps you would like to hear some music ? If so, Lady Sampson will have great pleasure in playing for you.’ ”

“ ‘ For *me* ! Oh, dear, no—not for the world ! I couldn’t think of it for *me*, sir.’ ”

“ ‘ What a pity it is there is no theatre at Halifax !’ ”

“ ‘ Yes, sir—very, sir—for them as sees no harm in ’em, sir—yes, sir.’ ”

“ The Governor gave it up in despair, and offered me a pinch of snuff, with an air of resignation that would have done honour to a martyr. They were afraid of him, and knew not how to address him ; and, besides, who could talk amid general silence, and subject their chit-chat to the critical ordeal of strangers ? ”

“ Announcements now became more frequent, and relieved the embarrassment of both parties. Major and Mrs. Section ; Mrs. and the Misses de Laine ; the Hon. Mr. Flint (a privy councillor) ; Mr. Steel (the Speaker), Mrs. and Miss Steel, and Miss Tinder ;

Colonel Lord Heather; Vice-Admiral Sir James Capstan; Lady Capstan; Captain Sheet; Lieutenant Stay; and so on. The room was soon filled, and it was amusing to witness the effect this reinforcement had on the spirits of the advanced party, who had hitherto sustained, unaided and alone, the difficult conversation, and to watch the eagerness with which they recognised and claimed an acquaintance with whom they could be at ease and talk freely. An incipient attack of the gout compelling me to take a chair, I sat down near the table on which were the prints and caricatures, but soon became more interested in the scene before me than in those over-drawn pictures of life, and was excessively amused at the scraps of conversation that reached me from detached groups in my neighbourhood.

“ ‘ Ah, Mrs. Section!’ said Trotz, as he gave her, very condescendingly, one finger, ‘ how do you do? And how is my friend, the major?’ ”

“ ‘ The major is poorly, thank you,’ she replied; ‘ he caught a bad cold in going those ’orrid grand rounds last night.’ ”

“ ‘ Ah,’ said Trotz, ‘ he should have had a four-post bedstead put upon runners, and driven in that manner to visit the posts! The orderly could have accompanied him, turned out the guards for him, and, when all was ready, opened the curtains.’ ”

“ ‘ How very good!’ said Lord Edward.

“ ‘ What a droll fellow Trotz is!’ observed the lady

to her neighbour: 'but those grand rounds really are a great nuisance, and I get dreadfully frightened when Section is out. Last night I wanted to have Sergeant Butter to sleep in the 'ouse; but the major said, 'Enrietta, don't be foolish!' So I put my maid Hann in the dressing-room. Presently I 'eard a noise, and called to Hann, and we examined every place—and what do you think it was? an howl tapping against the heavens of the 'ouse!'

“ ‘ I am afraid,’ said the Admiral to his flag-captain, ‘ that Sampson will find himself in a scrape this winter. I don't see how he is to get over the rupture of the last session; where it was tongued then, it has again given way, I understand, and nothing holds it now but the cheeks and back fish.’

“ ‘ Dear me, Sir James,’ said Mrs. Section, ‘ 'ow very 'orrid! do, pray, recommend to him 'Olloway's 'Ealing Hointment—it's hexcellent! But what did you say it was that 'ung by the Governor's cheeks?’

“ Their sense of the ludicrous overcame their sense of propriety, and they both laughed heartily; when the Admiral said—

“ ‘ Nothing, my dear madam—nothing in the world but his whiskers!’

“ Moving a little further off, their place was soon supplied by another set, among whom was the pretty Mrs. Smythe.

“ ‘ Ah, Mrs. Section, how do you do to-night? You really look charmingly! Let me introduce dear Mrs.

Claverhouse to you!.....How glad I am to see you, Miss Schweineimer! When did you come to town? Has your father taken his seat in the council yet?— Stop, my dear, there is nobody looking just now; your dress is unhooked at the top; let me fasten it. What a lovely complexion! I would give the world for such a colour as you have. I suppose you ride a great deal a-horseback in the country?’

“ ‘ No, I never ride; father hasn’t a beast fit for the side-saddle.’

“ ‘ Call it a horse, dear; we call nothing a beast in Halifax, dear, but Colonel Lord Heather, who won’t allow his band to play at private parties. Do you know Lady Capstan? I will introduce you.’

“ ‘ Oh, dear, no, not for the world, before so many folks! I shouldn’t know whether I was standing on my head or my heels, if you did.’

“ ‘ Don’t talk of standing on your head, dear; women never do it here, except at a circus.’

“ ‘ It’s allowable to have one’s head turned a little sometimes, though, ain’t it?’ retorted the young lady. ‘ But who is that old fellow at the table?’

“ ‘ Don’t call him a fellow, dear—fellows are only found at colleges and workhouses: call him ‘gentleman,’ and leave the word ‘old’ out; nobody is old here but the devil. It is Judge Sandford, dear. Shall I introduce you? I think he knows your father.’

“ ‘ Oh, no, pray don’t; he looks so horrid cross and grumpy!’

“ ‘ Who is to be the new Legislative Councillor ? ’
inquired a member of the Assembly of another.

“ ‘ Morgan, I believe.’

“ ‘ Morgan ! why, he can’t write his name ! You don’t mean to say they intend to put in Morgan ? Why, he ain’t fit to be a doorkeeper—and, besides, his character is none of the best, they say.’

“ ‘ It will conciliate all the clergy of ...’

“ ‘ Conciliate the devil ! Well, you do astonish me ! Did you get your vote through for the Shinimicash Bridge ?’

“ ‘ Yes.’

“ ‘ I wish you’d help me, then—log-roll mine through, for an over-expenditure I have of five hundred pounds.’

“ ‘ I will, if you will support the academy in my county. I was put in on that interest.’

“ ‘ Done !’ and the parties shook hands, and separated.

“ As they turned to depart, one of them struck his elbow against a musical instrument, that gave out a loud and long-continued sound.

“ ‘ What’s that ?’ he asked.

“ ‘ They call it a harp,’ was the reply.

“ ‘ The devil it is ! I wonder if it is like the harp of Solomon !’

“ ‘ I never heard of Solomon’s harp.’

“ ‘ Well, it’s much of a muchness, then, for I never saw it ; so we are about even, I guess.’

“ ‘ I say, Bill, that’s a devilish pretty craft with a rainbow on her catheads, ain’t she?—there, that one with pink streamers and long-legged gloves,’ said one little middy to another. ‘ I’m blowed if I don’t go and ask her to dance with me!’

“ ‘ Why, Black, what are you at, man! You haven’t been introduced to her.’

“ ‘ The uniform’s introduction enough to her ; there’s no harm in trying it, at any rate. So I’m off in chase of the strange sail, and will speak her, at all events.’

“ ‘ How was dry cod at Berbice?’ inquired a little, cold, calculating man, of another (who, from his enormous bulk, appeared to have fed upon something much better than his favourite export)—‘ how was cod, when the brig Polly left Berbice? And lumber—was the market good? What a grand government contract Longhead got for the supply of the army and navy! That fellow don’t entertain the commissary people for nothing ; that’s a fact! There’s no use to tender where he’s concerned.’

“ ‘ How late the officers of the 10th are in coming to-night!’ whispered a very pretty young lady to her companion. ‘ There is nothing but those horrid black coats here, and they look like ill-omened birds. I can’t bear them ; they take up so much room, and, I fancy, soil my gloves.’

“ ‘ I can’t say I have any objection to them,’ said the other ; ‘ but I wish they were not so fond of dancing. But just look at Ann Cooper, what a witch

she has made of herself; she actually looks like a fright! I wonder what Captain Denham can see in her to admire! Come this way: there is that horrid Lawyer Galbanum seeking whom he can devour, for the next quadrille: I shall say I am engaged.'

“ ‘ So shall I, for I have no idea of figuring with him. Look at Major Mitchell, how he is paying court to Lady Sampson! They say he is attentive to Miss Sampson. They are moving this way; let us go over to Mrs. Section, she always has so many people about her that one knows.’

“ ‘ What a magnificent screen!’ exclaimed Major Mitchell to the great enchantress, Lady Sampson. ‘ How beautifully it is executed! It is the most exquisite piece of embroidery I ever saw. I am at a loss which most to admire,—the brilliancy of the colouring and delicate shading, or the skilful way in which it is worked in; for it has a richer and softer effect than anything of the kind I ever beheld. Where in the world did you get it?’

“ ‘ I hardly like to tell you, after such extravagant praise; but it is the joint production of myself and daughter. One has to resort to some such occupation to pass the time in this horrid country; and,’ looking round cautiously, and lowering her voice, ‘ among such horrid cariboos of people, too.’

“ ‘ Exactly,’ said the major; ‘ I know how to pity you.’

“ ‘ When I was in the West Indies, I used to amuse myself by embroidering by way of killing time. The weather was so extremely hot, it was impossible to use any exercise.’

“ ‘ Got this place made a free port, you see, Sir Hercules,’ said a man, who appeared to have had an interview on some occasion at the Colonial and Home Office. ‘ I told the Secretary of State refusal was out of the question, we must have it ; and threatened to have a committee moved for on it in the House of Commons,—regularly bullied him out of it. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, who is a particular friend of mine, told me before I went it was the only way at Downing Street. Bully them, says he, and you’ll get it. But Peel, he said, was a different man : self-created—a new man—important—feels himself—stands before the fire with his back to it, and his hands in his pockets. He knows who he is, and so must you appear to know. I took the hint, pitched into him about the confidence of the colonies in his great grasp of intellect, comprehensive mind, and so on. Don’t say another word, my good fellow, it shall be done. *I* say it, you know, and that’s enough. I had a conversation with John Russell, too ; and, between you and me, they tell me his Lordship is a rising man. Plumbstone, said he, Halifax is a very important place,—a very important place indeed. I really had no idea of it until you explained to me its capabilities ; and then, tapping me on the shoulder,

he said, and it has some very important men in it, too!—a handsome compliment, wasn't it? And then he quoted some Latin; but I've grown so rusty—hem!—so long since I've had time—hem!—I couldn't follow him.'

“ ‘ Stop a minute, Sarah; let me pull out your flounce, and fix your sleeves and braids for you,’ said an anxious mother to her daughter. ‘ There, now, that will do; but hold yourself up, dear. In a ball-room, people look shorter than they are, and must make the most of themselves; and don't dance with those horrid little midshipmen, if you can find any other partners.’

“ ‘ Why, ma?’

“ ‘ Exactly,’ said Mrs. Smythe, who appeared to be endowed with ubiquity, ‘ your mother is right. Do you know Captain Beech, or Lieutenant Birch, of the Jupiter? I will introduce them to you; they are both well connected, and have capital interest. Take my arm, but don't look at those country members, dear, and then you won't have to cut them, for Sir Hercules don't like that. Appear not to see them, that's the most civil way of avoiding them. Recollect, too, that walls have ears—especially when they are covered with flowers, as they will be to-night. Now, I'll tell you a secret, dear; Major Macassar is engaged in England, so don't waste your time in talking to him this evening. Keep close to me, now, and I'll take you among the right set, and introduce you to

good partners, for I see preparations making for moving out.’

“ Here Sir Hercules gave his arm to Lady Capstan, Lord Heather following with Lady Sampson, and led the way to the ball-room. It was a large and handsome apartment, tastefully decorated and well lighted; and the effect produced by the rich and various uniforms of the military and navy was gay, and even brilliant—more so, indeed, than is generally seen in a provincial town in England; for the garrison consisted of three regiments, and the greater part of the fleet upon the station was in port at the time. At the upper end of the room were the Governor, Lady Sampson, the Admiral and his lady, and the heads of the civil and military departments of the place and their families. Those next in rank adorned the sides of the room; and groups of those who made no pretension to that equivocal word ‘ position ’ occupied and filled the lower end.

“ The indiscriminate hospitality that had thus assembled together people of the same community, wholly unknown to each other except by name, had the effect of causing a restraint in the manner of the upper class, in a vain and weak desire not to be thought on a footing of equality with those beneath them; and, on the other side, a feeling that this difference was purposely rendered palpable, and maintained, if not with incivility, at least, with a total want of courtesy. Where such was the condition of

things, the whole naturally suffered from the conduct of a few individuals; and those who exhibited or assumed airs of superiority, on the one part, or resented them coarsely, on the other, naturally involved the right-thinking people of both in the censure that belonged peculiarly to themselves.

“ ‘ Who is that beautiful girl?’ asked a person near me, of a lady belonging to the place.

“ ‘ I don’t know her.’

“ ‘ And that extremely interesting young lady?’

“ ‘ I am not aware; I never met her before; she is not of our set.’

“ And yet it was manifest she knew her name; had seen her frequently, though not, perhaps, in the same room; and was well acquainted with the condition and respectable character of her parents. If any allowance could be made for this absurd fastidiousness, some extenuation might be found for female vanity in the fact, that what the lower end of the room lost in station was more than compensated for in beauty. Trotz, who had observed this littleness, did not fail to use it, to the annoyance of those who had been weak enough to exhibit it. He affected great astonishment at their not knowing people so distinguished for beauty, ease of manner, and agreeable conversation. The lower they were in the scale of society, the more he extolled them for these qualities, and pronounced them decidedly the finest women in the country.

“ In a short time, the quadrilles were formed, and all (that is, all the younger part of the company) were in motion ; and, whatever the undercurrents and unseen eddies of feeling might have been, all appeared gay and happy. Indeed, some of the young ladies from the country danced with a vigour and energy that showed their whole hearts were engaged in displaying what they considered most valuable qualities, exertion and endurance. The effect of the sudden cessation of music in a ball-room is always ludicrous, as the noise compels people to talk louder than usual ; and, when it terminates, the conversation is continued for awhile in the same key.

“ ‘ My heart is as free as the eagle, sir,’ were the first words I heard from a fair promenader.

“ ‘ Father is shocked at a waltz. I must wait till he goes into supper.’

“ ‘ Ma says she’s a sheep in lamb’s clothing ; she recollects her forty years ago, dancing with a boy, as she is to-night.’

“ ‘ I say, Bill, look at the old ladies a-starboard there, how they haul in their claws, like lobsters, when the promenading commences !’

“ ‘ Hush, there’s Captain Sheet !’

“ ‘ I hope he’s not in the wind ! Who is that he has got in tow ? She looks like a heavy sailor.’

“ ‘ Hush, he’ll hear you !’

“ ‘ It’s a great shame, now, to wear spurs in a ball-room ! Major Macassar has torn my dress, and

scraped my ankle dreadfully. I'm really quite lame. The gold wire, too, has made my neck smart as if it was stung with nettles.'

“ ‘ Well, if it's any satisfaction to retaliate, you have certainly punished that Highland officer nicely, for the beetle-wing trimming on your dress has scratched his knees most unmercifully ! But, oh, Sarah ! look at Captain Denham ! if his epaulette hasn't drawn off a false curl, and there he carries it suspended from his shoulder as a trophy ! Well, I never ! He needn't think it will ever be claimed ! I wonder who in the world it belongs to ? How glad I am it isn't the colour of my hair ! ’

“ ‘ Oh, sir, if you haven't seen Carriboo Island, sir, near Pictoo, you haven't seen the prettiest part of Nova Scotia ! I never beheld anything so lovely as Carriboo Island. We have such pleasant clam-parties there, sir, especially when the timber-vessels arrive. ’

“ Lady Sampson had but one topic, which, though it had lasted since October, was likely to endure through the winter season. She had visited the Falls of Niagara in the autumn, and was filled with wonder and amazement. She was now describing them to a circle of admiring friends.

“ ‘ It was a mighty cataract ! ’ she said.

“ ‘ It might be removed by couching, ’ remarked a deaf staff-doctor, who thought she was talking of her eyes, which greatly distended at the time with the marvellous story.

“ ‘ The Falls !’ she said, raising her voice.

“ ‘ Ah ! the effect of a fall—that will render the operation doubtful.’

“ ‘ Water-fall !’

“ ‘ Ah, exactly ; the lachrymal gland is affected.’

“ ‘ Ni-ag-a-ra !’ she said, raising her voice still higher, and pronouncing the word slowly.

“ ‘ I beg your pardon, madam,’ he replied, putting his hand to his ear, and advancing his head much nearer ; ‘ I beg your pardon, but I didn’t hear.’

“ ‘ Trotz ! do, pray, take that horrid man away, and explain to him,’ said the lady, and then continued. ‘ I saw the pool at the foot of the rock where the Indian warrior rose after going over the Fall, and was whirled round and round in the vortex for a great many days, in an upright position, as if he were still alive ! They say it was a fearful sight ; at last, the flesh dissolved, and the frame parted and sunk !’

“ She then led the way to the drawing-room, to show a sketch of Niagara, that the military secretary had prepared for her. Trotz detained the doctor a minute behind, and I heard him say,—

“ ‘ Though the cataract was not, that story of the Indian really was, all in my eye.’

“ ‘ So I should think,’ was the reply.

“ The ante-rooms through which we passed were filled with persons playing cards, or taking refresh-

ments. At a small table sat my friend, the midshipman, with the little strange sail with pink streamers, to whom he had given chase in the early part of the evening, and, as he said, brought to. They were just commencing a sociable game of chess.

“ ‘ Suppose,’ said the jolly tar to his fair friend — ‘ suppose that we strip as we go? It’s great fun.’

“ ‘ I don’t understand you,’ said the young lady, with an offended toss of her pretty head.

“ ‘ What! not know what strip as we go is?’

“ ‘ I don’t know what you mean, sir!’

“ ‘ Why, this is the rule. Any thing you *can* take, you are *bound* to take, and strip the board as you go on. It shortens the game amazingly.’

“ Lady Sampson now opened a large book, containing the promised sketch, and unfolded and extended out a narrow strip of paper of immense length, painted green, and resembling an enormous snake, and explained it all in detail.

“ ‘ There is the Gulf of St. Lawrence,’ she said; ‘ and there’s Quebec; and there’s Montreal; and there are the lakes; and there—just there—no, not there—a little higher up—just between your thumb and finger—is Niagara,—vast, mighty and grand Niagara! Don’t you see the grand Falls, Mr. Section? There, that little white speck—that’s it! It’s so mighty, that neither the eye nor the mind can take it all in at once! Captain Howard drew it! Ain’t it

beautifully done ? He draws so well ! He can draw any thing !’

“ ‘ I must introduce him to you,’ whispered Mrs. Smythe to Miss Schweineimer.

“ ‘ Yes,’ said Trotz to Lord Edward, ‘ he can draw any thing,—a long bow, a long cork—any thing but a bill, and that he won’t draw for any one !’

“ ‘ How very good !’ replied Lord Edward.

“ ‘ Here is an epitome of it—an abridgment—the ideas, as it were, itself, though not developed ;’ and she exhibited a very good and accurate sketch taken by her daughter, infinitely better done, and more intelligible, than the other. ‘ What do you think, Mrs. Smythe, of my transferring this to embroidery—working it for a screen, or a cushion ? No, a cushion wouldn’t do, either ; it’s inconvenient to have to rise every time you wish to show it. But for a screen, eh ?’

“ Another party, an exploring one, that was reconnoitering what was going on in the drawing-room, now arrived ; and the loud prolonged sound of Niagara was again heard in the distance, amidst the confused hum of many voices, as I returned to the ball-room. The dancing being about to be resumed, I took a seat near a Mrs. Blair, an old lady who came for the purpose of chaperoning her daughter that evening. I had known her in her youth, but had not met her of late years, and was shocked to see the change that time had effected both in her appearance and disposition.

The playful humour, for which she was remarkable when young, had degenerated into severe sarcasm; the effects, probably, of ill health, or of decreased fortune.

“ ‘ Who would have thought of seeing you here, Judge?’ said she.

“ ‘ The truth is, my dear Mrs. Blair,’ I replied, ‘ I have not been at a ball for many years, and probably never shall be again; and, as I dined here to-day, and was in the house when the company arrived, I thought I would stay and take one last long look at a scene which recalls so many recollections of bygone days; and, besides, it always does me good to see happy faces about me.’

“ ‘ Happiness in a ball-room!’ she ejaculated, with some bitterness of feeling; ‘ I thought you were too much of a philosopher, to believe in such a deception! Look at that old wall-eyed colonel, now (excuse the coarseness of the expression, but I have no patience with people of his age forgetting their years),—look at that wall-eyed colonel, with an obliquity of vision, and the map of Europe traced in red stains on his face! Happy fellow, is he not? See, he is actually going to dance! It will puzzle those two sisters to know which he is addressing.’

“ She had scarcely uttered the words, when both the young ladies rose at once, each thinking he had asked for the honour of her hand.

“ ‘ How happy he must feel,’ she continued, ‘ in

having such an ocular proof of the want of unity or expression in his eyes! Oh! look at that old lady, with a flame-coloured satin dress, and an enormous bag hanging on her arm, with tulips embroidered on it, and a strange-looking cap, with a bell-rope attached to one side of it, fanning a prodigious bouquet of flowers in her belt, as if to keep them from fainting with the heat, and losing their colour! Oh, observe that member woman, that lady from the rural districts, habited in a gaudy-coloured striped silk dress, trimmed all over with little pink bows, having yellow glass buttons in the centre; a cap without a back, stuffed full of feathers, like Cinderella's godmother; and enormously long gloves, full of wrinkles, like the skin of an elephant! They are both happy, but it is the happiness of fools! Happiness in a ball-room! Ah, Judge, you and I are too old for such twaddle! I wish you had been here when the yellow-fever was raging! In a garrison town, the young ladies have the scarlet-fever all the year round; but last year the yellow-fever predominated; for, you know, two diseases cannot exist in the constitution at one time. At a sale of wrecked goods, a fashionable milliner bought a lot of maize-coloured satins so cheap, as to be able to sell them for a mere trifle; but disposed of them skilfully, by exhibiting only a few at a time. The consequence was, a great number of young ladies made their appearance here in what each one considered a rare fabric; and, to their horror, found the room full

of them ! I christened it then, and it has ever since been known as the bilious ball. Do you suppose those maize-coloured satins covered happy hearts that night ? There is Ella M'Nair, now, dancing with her awkward country cousin, whom she is afraid to refuse, yet unwilling to accept, as a partner, alarmed for the horror of Lord Heather, the sneers of Trotz, and the triumph of the Shermans. Sweet girl ! how joyous she looks, does she not ? Oh, look at that supercilious little fellow near the fireplace, whose elbow is resting on the mantelpiece ! The education his foolish father gave him spoiled him for the kitchen, without fitting him for the parlour. Instead of being a cheerful, thrifty tradesman, he has been metamorphosed into a poor, shabby, discontented gentleman. He looks like a grasshopper on half-pay.

“ ‘ You see the same thing every where. Observe that very pretty and remarkably well-dressed lady opposite. She is a widow of large fortune and good connexions. Her affections are all absorbed by that lout of a boy she is talking to, who is her only child. His bent knees and stooping shoulders give you the idea of a ploughboy, while his fashionable dress would lead you to suppose he had clothed himself, by fraud or mistake, from his master's wardrobe. She is beseeching him to stand properly, and behave like a gentleman ; and, above all, to dance ; to all which he is becoming more and more rebellious ; and now he has jerked away his arm, and is diving into that crowd of

men near the fire, to escape from her importunities and the observation of others. Her wealth and station have given her but little happiness, and her maternal cares and devoted affection are the torment of her son. Did you use that word happiness, therefore, Judge, as a common-place phrase, or did it express what you really meant ?

“ ‘ I meant what I said,’ I replied. ‘ Happiness is rather a negative than positive term in this world, and consists more in the absence of some things than in the presence of others. I see no harm in assemblies where they are not the business, but the relaxation of life, as they certainly are in this country. People come together for the purpose of pleasing and being pleased, of seeing and being seen, to be amused themselves, and to contribute their share to the amusement of others. They come with a disposition and a hope to be happy. Music and dancing exhilarate the spirits, hilarity is contagious, and, generally speaking, people do enjoy themselves, and I derive great gratification in witnessing their happiness. That was what I meant, for I never supposed there could be an assemblage of two or three hundred people, without there being some individuals unable or unwilling to partake of the gaiety about them.’

“ Just then Miss Schweineimer, the young lady that called her horse a beast, and myself an ugly old fellow, passed, hanging on the arm of a subaltern officer, into whose face she was looking up with evi-

dent satisfaction, while listening to his flattering accents.

“ ‘Oh, charming!’ she said. ‘If I haven’t enjoyed myself to-night, it’s a pity, that’s all! How do you feel? I feel kind of all over. It’s the handsomest party I ever saw in all my life! How I like Halifax! I wish father lived here instead of the Blueberry Plains!’

“ ‘There, madam,’ I said, ‘let us abide by the decision of that unsophisticated girl. I forgive her nasal twang and her ignorance, for the simplicity and truthfulness of her nature;’ and I effected my escape from my cynical companion.

“ Conversation such as hers is depressing to the spirits, and lowers one’s estimate of mankind. It puts you out of sorts; for such is the mysterious effect of sympathy, that a discontented person soon infuses a portion of his own feeling into the mind of his auditors. I did not, however, derive much benefit from change of place, for the gentleman who next accosted me was imbued with much of the same captious spirit.

“ ‘I have been pitying you for some time, Judge,’ he said. ‘How could you think of remaining so long with that bitter specimen of humanity, Mrs. Blair? She speaks well of no one, and has been amusing herself by feeling the silks and satins of her neighbours this evening, so as to find fault with their texture, if thin, and the extravagance of their owners, if otherwise. She has been grumbling to every one that the

room is so badly lighted, good dresses are lost in the dim and gloomy apartment. I shall propose to Sir Hercules to have shelves put up on the wall for those old chaperons, with chandeliers in front of them to show off their velvets to the best advantage ; when they will be out of all danger themselves from heels and spurs, and be deprived of the power of annoying others. Capital idea, isn't it ? A very vulgar party this, Judge ? When the guests that are invited do come, it's not fair to send to the highways and byways for others. In the olden time, we are told, it was only when a man's friends declined, that a press-warrant issued to man the tables with the first poor devils that could be found going to bed supperless.'

“ The party now began to move towards the supper-room, which generally presents more attractions to persons who stand less in need of refreshments than those who have been fatigued or exhausted with dancing. The tables were tastefully and beautifully arranged ; but the effect was much injured by the profuse and substantial character of some of the viands, which the number and quality of the guests rendered necessary. Whatever doubt there might have been as to the possibility of a ball conferring happiness, there could be none as to the enjoyment derived from the supper. In approving or partaking, nearly all seemed to join ; few claimed exemption from age, and no one objected to a *vis-à-vis* ; and, if some had danced with all their hearts, an infinitely greater number eat and drank

with as much relish as if eating and drinking were as unusual a thing as waltzing.

“ I looked, but in vain, for my cynical companion, Mrs. Blair, to draw her attention to my friend, the midshipman, who had evidently made a prize of the strange sail, and was behaving with the utmost generosity and kindness to the vanquished. He insisted upon filling her plate with every thing within reach ; and when it could hold no more, surrounded it with tenders, deeply laden with every variety of supply. Nor did he forget champagne, in which he drank to the fair one’s health, to their better acquaintance, and to a short cruise and speedy return ; and then, protesting it was all a mistake to suppose he had already done so, apologized for his neglect, and repeated the draughts till his eyes sparkled as bright as the wine. He cut the large cake before him, and helped his partner to a liberal share, complaining all the time that the knife was desperately dull ; that it was the severest cutting-out service he was ever employed in ; and vowed that the steward ought to have three dozen for his carelessness. He succeeded, however, at last in effecting the incision, and brought away several folds of a three-cornered piece of napkin, exactly fitting the slice, which had impeded the progress of his knife. As he deposited this trophy of his skill and strength on the plate, he said, in an under tone, ‘ It only wanted a ring to make it complete ;’ whereat the lady’s face was suffused with blushes and smiles, and, holding

up her glass, she said, ‘ A very little wine, if you please.’ Complying with this request, and filling his own, they pledged each other again ; and something was looked, and something was thought, and something was felt, though not expressed on that occasion, that, notwithstanding Mrs. Blair’s theory to the contrary, looked to me uncommonly like happiness.

“ Miss Schweineimer was no less pleased, though she thought that the sandwiches were rather bitey ; and the little red things in the pickles, to which Trotz had helped her, the hottest, not to be a fire, she had ever tasted, for they burned her tongue so as to make tears trickle down her cheeks.

“ ‘ Do look !’ said a young lady near me to Mrs. Smythe—‘ do look at that strange creature covered with pink bows, and yellow glass buttons in them ; she is actually eating her supper backwards ! She began with fruits, and then proceeded to confectionary and jellies, and so on, and is now winding up with the breast and leg of a turkey ! Who is she, and where does she come from ?’

“ ‘ Her name is Whetstone ; I will introduce you to her, by and by.’

“ ‘ No, thank you ; I’d rather not.’

“ ‘ The place is unpronounceable. It is Scissiboomish-cogomah, an Indian word, signifying The Witch’s Fountain.’

“ ‘ Ah, indeed ! she is a fit representative.’

“ The inventor of shelves for the chaperons now accosted me again.

“ ‘ I should have liked, Judge, to have had the pleasure of taking wine with you, but really Sampson’s wine is not fit to drink ; he seems to have lowered his standard of taste to suit the majority of his guests. Did you ever see any thing so disgusting as the quantities of things with which the tables are loaded, or the gross appetites with which they were devoured ? It is something quite shocking ! He is ruining the state of society here. These people realize our ideas of the harpies :—

*Diripuuntque dapes, contactuque omnia fœdant
In mundo.*

By the way, a little man, with a face like a squeezed lemon, has done me the honour to notice me once or twice to-night, with a half familiar and half obsequious nod, whom I have been at a loss to make out. The supper-table has betrayed him at last ; for its resemblance to his own counter, (for he keeps a confectionary-shop in the country) put him at ease in a moment. He is the most useful person here.’

“ A message from Sir Hercules to his aide, Mr. Trotz, brought him to his feet, muttering, as he rose, his discontent in very audible tones. The renewal of the music in the ball-room at the same time intimated that the last dance was about to be commenced.

“ ‘ You ain’t going, Mr. Trotz, are you ? ’ said Miss

Schweineimer, who had unconsciously been the object of many impertinent remarks during the last half hour. ‘Pray try one of those custards before you go; they are so good! Do, just to please me. You know I ate those fiery pickles, because you asked me;’ and she handed him a liquid one, contained in a small circular glass.

“To the astonishment of every body, he complied with her request; but, being in a hurry to attend to the Governor’s wishes, drank it off without the aid of a spoon, and replaced the glass on the table. In a moment he became dreadfully pale, and, putting his handkerchief to his face, exclaimed—

“ ‘Good heavens, the mustard-pot!’ and left the room in convulsive agony from the effects of this powerful emetic, and disappeared amid the malicious laughter and uproarious delight of all those whom he had at one time or another annoyed by his insolence.

“ ‘Well, I never!’ said the young lady: ‘it looks as like a custard-glass as two peas, don’t it? and it’s the identical colour, too? I am sorry it’s done; but I’d rather it had happened to him than any one else; for I believe in my soul he gave *me* the red hot pickles a-purpose. I am up sides with him, at any rate.’

“ ‘So would I, my dear,’ said Mrs. Smythe; ‘but don’t say so; here, you must always appear to be sorry for an accident. Let me introduce you to Mr. Able, assistant-surgeon of the Jupiter; for this is the last dance, and he’ll tell you where the red pickles

grow. I really love you, for putting that trick upon that horrid Trotz.'

" 'I assure you it was a mistake....'

" 'That's right, dear; look innocent, and say it was a mistake.'

" 'But I assure you....'

" 'Oh, of course! you really do it very well. You are a capital scholar!'

"The last dance lasted for a long time; for the termination of every thing agreeable is always deferred to the utmost moment of time. At length the band played 'God save the King!' which was the signal for parting, and the company took leave and disappeared in a few minutes, with the exception of the awkward squad that first arrived. Owing to their having made a mistake in the hour, or forgotten to give orders as to the time their carriages were to come for them, they were again doomed to annoy the gubernatorial party, and to be no less perplexed and bored themselves.

"Such were my last reminiscences of Government House; and, from what I hear, it has not at all improved of late years. Don't let me be misunderstood, however. I do not give you this as a sketch of society at Halifax, but of a promiscuous ball at Government House: nor are the people whom I have described samples of the whole company; but some of them are specimens of that part of it who ought never to have been there."

CHAPTER VI.

THE OLD ADMIRAL AND THE OLD GENERAL.

The quiet inn in which I have been domiciled ever since I arrived at Illinoo was yesterday the scene of the greatest disorder and confusion. Shortly after breakfast, a party of midshipmen, mounted on horseback, dashed into the courtyard during a violent thunderstorm, with the speed and clatter of a charge of cavalry. The merry crew at once dispersed themselves over every part of the house, which rang with their loud and long-continued peals of laughter. Their number was soon increased by the addition of three or four young women, who joined in their play with equal noise and delight, chasing their tormentors, or flying in affright at their rudeness, or quietly enjoying with them a game of leapfrog in the passages.

My landlady, Mrs. Smith, was in despair. All her remonstrances were met either with the response that she was a beauty without paint, an angel, a cherub, and a divine creature, or an invitation to join in their sport. An officer's wife, who was awaiting the arrival of her husband from Fredericton, was so alarmed and

annoyed at the indecent behaviour of the juvenile party, that she summoned the hostess, and announced her intention of immediately leaving the house.

“ I am shocked and frightened beyond measure,” she said, “ at your permitting those young gentlemen to make such a riot ; but, more than all, am I horrified at the behaviour of your housemaids, who are the most forward, romping, and shameless young women I ever beheld. I just now rang my bell, which was answered by the one who calls herself Charlotte, the pretty girl with the curly head of golden hair. ‘ Fasten my dress,’ said I. ‘ Yes, ma’am,’ she replied ; and before I knew what she was about, or could find words to express my surprise, my stays were nearly undone, and my clothes unfastened. ‘ Oh ! I beg your pardon, ma’am,’ she said, on being reprimanded for the mistake ; ‘ I thought you said unrig. I’ll reave it up in a minute.’ When this was effected, she said, ‘ I’m blowed if I can find the hooks ! are they on the larboard or starboard side ?’—‘ Don’t use those dreadful words,’ I replied : ‘ you have learned them from those rude young midshipmen, who appear to have turned your head. Take care of yourself ; for they are reckless creatures—here to-day, and gone to-morrow, and do not care what they say or do.’ What do you think, Mrs. Smith, was the reply of that bold, impudent creature ? I could scarcely believe my ears. ‘ Oh, ma’am,’ she said, ‘ they are such nice young gentlemen, and so handsome, too, a body can’t refuse

them any thing ; and, besides, I don't see any great harm in kissing. If you were to try....'—' Leave my presence directly,' I said ; ' how dare you address me in that manner ! Where is your mistress ?'—' Up aloft, ma'am.' ' Aloft again ! poor lost creature, dead to all sense of shame, whatever ; I pity you, from the bottom of my heart. Send your mistress to me.' Now, Mrs. Smith, I have never been so vexed and insulted in my life, and I have sent for you to inform you I shall remove to another inn."

My poor unoffending landlady excused herself as well as she was able for an occurrence which she could neither foresee nor control. She said she was happy to say, for the credit of her household, that she had no such maid as Charlotte, nor one female in her establishment that would think of acting or talking as she had done. That that person must been the Honourable Mr. Hawson, who, with two others, borrowed female attire, while their own was drying at the fire, as they had no clothes with them but what they had on when they arrived ; and that the romping girls who played leapfrog were, in fact, no other than midshipmen. She added, that nothing of the kind could occur again, as they had just set out on their return to Halifax ; and she hoped that nobody would be ridden over or killed, for they started at full gallop, waving their caps and cheering each other as they went.

The Judge was a good deal amused at the story, and laughed heartily over it.

“I am a good sailor,” he said, “and fond of the sea, and so well acquainted with the manly bearing and noble qualities of our seamen, that I make every allowance for the irrepressible delight and inexhaustible fun and frolic of these youngsters, when just landed from a cruise. Whatever croakers may say about the condition of the navy, it is in as efficient a state as ever it was, and, when occasion requires, will give as good an account of itself. The Lieutenants are, in my opinion, as a class, in reference to their numbers, the most active, intelligent, and valuable body of men to be found in any branch of public service in any country in the world. In former years, I used to see a great deal of the navy, but, alas! all my old friends are now either superannuated or dead.

“During the war, when the whole fleet of one hundred sail rendezvoused at Halifax, such scenes as you have described were of constant occurrence, and the town was daily amused or disturbed by pranks of the sailors. I remember one piece of absurdity that occasioned a good deal of laughter at the time. At the period I am speaking of, before the expensive underground reservoirs were cut out of the rock on which the town stands, the streets were sometimes rendered almost impassable, from standing pools of water. A sailor, seeing a lady contemplating in despair one of these lagoons, took her up most gallantly in his arms, and, wading through it, safely deposited her on the other side. Alarmed at the suddenness of the trans-

portation, she scolded her escort, in no measured terms, for the liberty he had taken, when he mounted her again on his shoulders, and, carrying her back, replaced her where he had found her, humbly begging pardon, and hoping he had rectified his error.

“The story of the man who laid a drunken shipmate at the feet of Captain *Coffin*, saying, ‘Here’s a *dead* man for you!’ was one that that eccentric officer was always very fond of relating, as illustrative of the humour of poor Jack.

“Nova Scotia was then the principal naval station on this side of the Atlantic, but now shares that honour with Bermuda; the Admiral residing in the summer at the former, and during the winter months at the latter place. The noble harbour of Halifax is one of the best, perhaps, in the world: its contiguity to Canada and the United States, its accessibility at all seasons of the year, and its proximity to England, (being the most Eastern part of this continent) give it a decided advantage over its rival; while the frightful destruction of stores at Bermuda, from the effects of the climate, its insalubrity, and the dangers with which it is beset, have never failed to excite astonishment at the want of judgment shown in its selection, and the utter disregard of expense with which it has been attended. The dockyard at Halifax is a beautiful establishment, in excellent order, and perfect of its kind, with the singular exception of not having the accommodation of a dock from which it derives its name. This deficiency

was severely felt during the late war, and even in these peaceable times is a source of great inconvenience, expense, and delay. The arrival of the Admiral, in the spring, is always looked forward to with anxiety and pleasure, as it at once enlivens and benefits the town. Those common demonstrations of respect, salutes, proclaim the event, which is soon followed by the equally harmless and no less noisy revels of sailors, who give vent to their happiness in uproarious merriment. The Admiral is always popular with the townspeople, as he often renders them essential services, and seldom or never comes into collision with them. He is independent of them, and wholly disconnected with the civil government. ‘Lucky fellow!’ as Sir Hercules Sampson, the Governor, once said; ‘he has no turbulent House of Assembly to plague him.’

“On an eminence immediately above the dockyard is the official residence, a heavy, square, stone building, surrounded by massive walls, and resembling, in its solidity and security, a public asylum. The entrance is guarded by two sentinels, belonging to that gallant and valuable corps, the marines, who combine the activity of the sailor with the steadiness and discipline of the soldier, forming a happy mixture of the best qualities of both, and bearing very little resemblance to either. ‘These amphibious troops,’ my old friend, Sir James Capstan, used to say, ‘are very much in the way on board of a ship, except in an action, and then they are always in the right place.’

“ This was no mean praise for a man who thoroughly detested them, for an insult his dignity once suffered from them, which he never forgot or forgave. Upon one occasion, I attended divine service with him, on board of his magnificent flag-ship, the *Graball*. The discipline, in those days, was dreadfully severe, and, I may add, unmerciful. The men were punished so often and so cruelly, that they became desperate, and mutiny and desertion were things of frequent occurrence. Scarcely a day passed without the loss of a man ; and even the extreme penalty of death, which was the inevitable consequence of such crimes, did not check their desire to escape from the service. The chaplain took the opportunity to preach against desertion, and selected, for his text, the eleventh verse of the sixth chapter of *Nehemiah*—‘ And I said, should such a man as I flee ?’ He enlarged upon the duty of sailors to be obedient to those who were set in authority over them, and to continue true to their engagements, and enforced every exhortation by a repetition of his text. He then concluded, by an eloquent appeal to their feelings ; first eulogizing their coolness and intrepidity in danger, and then calling upon them to stand by their king and country, and maintain the honour of both, and slowly and emphatically reiterated, ‘ And I said, should such a man as I flee ?—’ ‘ No,’ said a voice, which arose from among the marines, and was evidently the effect of ventriloquism—‘ no, d—n you ! you are too well paid for that !’ A

loud, long-drawn breathing, was audible among the men, who, feeling that something atrocious had been done, which, in all probability, would be followed by some terrible retribution, while an ill-suppressed titter was heard among the junior officers, at the suddenness and quaintness of the retort. The chaplain paused, and looked at the Admiral, and the Admiral glared at the men, as if he could annihilate them all. Immediate inquiry was made, and the strictest examination of every individual instituted, accompanied by a positive declaration that the whole ship's company should be whipped, unless the culprit was given up. The secret, however, was never divulged, nor the threat of indiscriminate punishment carried into effect.

“ More attention to the comfort of the men, greater regularity, and less caprice in their management, and a scale of punishment more proportioned to offences, have rendered flogging almost unnecessary, and executions of very rare occurrence. Poor fellows ! their lives are hard and perilous, but their hardships and perils are occasionally aggravated by the tyranny of their superiors. Admirals, though they vary in size, temperament, and talent, all, more or less, bear the same characteristic stamp. The difference is one of class. For instance, there is your Admiral that is sent out to die. Rising alone and unaided in the service, it is late in life before he attains to the honours of his profession, and, when he does, his palsied hand can scarcely grasp his commission. Poor man ! his reign

is short ; for his life expires before his period of service has terminated.

“ Then there is your Admiral that comes out to make money. He has noble connections, or parliamentary interest, and his services through life have consequently been duly appreciated and promptly rewarded. Though he entered the navy many years after the aged man who preceded him in the command, he is in fact scarcely his junior in rank, so rapid has been his promotion. He has come to make money—but, alas ! money is no longer to be made. The steamers carry all the coin and bullion which were formerly transported by men-of-war, and the Admiral, like others, is reduced to his pay, his rations, and his grog.

“ Then comes an Admiral, because it cannot be helped. He is old, and has been long since forgotten, especially as he never performed any services worth remembering : but his name is on the list, and he cannot be passed over. He is accordingly traced to his agents, and from thence to Cheltenham, and again to a cottage surrounded by every plant of every part of the world that will endure the damp and sunless climate of England. The gate of this museum of relics and curiosities is opened by a servant, dressed in a pair of loose duck trowsers, a check shirt, and white canvass shoes, who gives a twitch with both hands to his waistband, a knowing nod with his head, and, looking at the postman with a mischievous air, as if he would de-

light in tripping up his heels and scattering his letters in the street, says, 'Well, master, what cheer now?' Closing the door on the impatient visitor, he reads on the letter the words, 'On His Majesty's Service;' and says, musingly, 'Some musty old return, I suppose; for, as for service, we are hardly seaworthy now.' He then proceeds into a little room hung round with charts, spy-glasses, swords, and pistols, and shelves on which are exhibited South Sea war-clubs, idols, ostrich eggs, and curious feathers, the mantelpiece being garished with an extensive collection of the pipes of all nations: at one end of the apartment is a hammock, in which reposes the unconscious commander-in-chief of the North American and West Indian station. In a short time, the little occupant of the little cottage is transported to Portsmouth, where he hoists his flag as Admiral on board of one of the noble seventy-four gun ships in that harbour, and sets sail for Halifax or Bermuda. He comes, because it couldn't be helped.

"Fighting Admirals are, happily, not required; and, when the day of need comes, they will no doubt be found, as they always have been, among that numerous class of officers who enjoy the benefit of experience without the infirmities of age. Admirals again, even of the same classification, notwithstanding this strong family-likeness to each other, equally differ in peculiarities, which, however, affect their subordinates rather than civilians. They are generally uncomfortable inmates on board ship. There is your Admiral

who never reads ; he is an intolerable bore to the flag-captain, whom etiquette requires to attend him on deck and amuse him. He acts the part of dry nurse, and longs to be relieved from his charge.

“ Then, there is your married Admiral, whose ladies will violate all rules, by sitting on forbidden parts of the ship, and insisting on his ordering sail to be shortened unnecessarily to appease their fears, while their horses, carriages, cows, cats, dogs, birds, and furniture, encumber the ship to the annoyance of everybody. They are very ungallantly styled live lumber by Jack, and voted a nuisance, a term of reproach which is somewhat compensated for by the evident admiration with which even the plainest of their sex are regarded in a place where women are such a rarity that a petticoat is looked upon as the attribute of Divinity.

“ Then, there is the Admiral who does everything, and he who does nothing. The first is adored by the whole fleet, for a sense of justice pervades all his acts : services are rewarded, grievances redressed, and every body and everything kept in their place. Where the secretary rules all and does all, favouritism is discovered or suspected ; and, like all favourites, he is exceedingly unpopular with everybody but his master. Such are the men who so rapidly succeed each other in the command on this station.

“ The old Admiral and the old General (for the Governor is almost always a military man) are the two

highest officials in the colony; each have their staff and their guards, and each their little empire to rule. The one is a despotic and the other a constitutional monarch, and severally participate in the convenience or disadvantage of their respective systems. The one promulgates his own laws, and issues his orders on his own responsibility, which are implicitly obeyed. The other summons a parliament, and assembles around him his little Lords and Commons, and receives rather than gives law. He is not the machinery itself, but only a part of it—a sort of pendulum, that, by an equal vibration, balances and regulates the motions of both sides. They reside at different ends of the town, and love to reign apart from each other; a united service being incompatible with the habits and discipline of both. There is a marked difference in their bearing.

“The Admiral is a plain, unaffected man, with a frank and cordial manner, somewhat positive in his language, and having a voice that carries authority in its very tones. He is always popular, for he converses so freely and affably with every one, especially with the chronometer-maker, whom he visits daily, and instructs in the mysteries of taking observations of the sun. He delights in hoisting a mast into a disabled merchantman, provided the skipper will stand out of the way during the operation, and hold his tongue about matters of which it is impossible he can know anything; or in sending a hundred men to

warp a vessel out of a place of danger ; or in exhibiting the agility and boldness of his sailor in extinguishing a fire that defies the efforts and appals the courage of landsmen. He is liberal in his expenditure, and subscribes munificently to every object of public charity.

“ The old General is erect and formal, and is compelled to be ceremonious in defence of his prerogative and station. He is also reserved and cautious, afraid to commit himself by promises or opinions, and, whenever practicable, shelters himself behind generalities. There is an apparent object in his condescension ; he is desirous of standing well with the community, for much of his success depends upon his personal influence. The public have a claim upon and an interest in him ; for, though appointed by the Crown, he is their Governor, and they take the liberty of criticizing him. The one, therefore, naturally and unconsciously wins the good will of people, and the other labours to conciliate it. Popularity follows one, and is wooed by the other. Their mode of life and style of entertainment, too, are equally dissimilar.

“ The Admiral has nothing to do with the legislature, a sort of *imperium in imperio*, which he is not altogether able to understand, and whose remonstrances look very like mutiny to him, and always suggest the idea of arrest and court-martial. The country members, therefore, are not seen at his table, nor do their wives and daughters grace his evening

parties. He is free and unfettered in the choice of his society, and can select his associates from such portion of the community as he pleases. His household is principally composed of his attendants at sea, who know his habits and humours, and can accommodate themselves to them. His favourites, unlike those of the other, who are always courtiers or politicians, are a large Newfoundland dog, or a frolicksome goat, called the Commodore, who knocks over the unwary intruder, to the infinite amusement of the numerous domestics. The only part of his establishment that is refractory are his sheep, which, notwithstanding that the boatswain, boathook in hand, has been transformed into a shepherd, are constantly breaking bounds, leaping the stone walls, and scampering over the country. His kitchen-garden is the best in the place, and he prides himself not a little on his heads of cabbages and lettuces, which, he says, are the whitest and hardest that ever were seen; and in his poultry-yard, where white ducks, polar geese, guinea-hens, peacocks, and Portugal fowls, sailor-like, are enjoying a run on shore, and vie with each other in making the most discordant sounds. His carriage bears the same striking dissimilarity to the General's. The latter is a state affair, displaying gay trappings and liveried servants; the former an unpretending, convenient, little low-wheeled covered waggon, drawn by one stout horse, and driven at a slow pace by his secretary, in which he daily perambulates the unfrequented streets

as well as the thoroughfares of the town. His dinner parties, also, are less formal. People are expected to speak above a whisper, or they cannot be heard, and to be at home, or they cannot be agreeable. The dinner itself has a smack of the sea; the dishes have a higher seasoning and a stronger flavour of vegetables, while the forbidden onion lurks stealthily concealed under the gravy. It is more abundant and substantial, and the decanters have a quicker pace and travel, as if time were short, and a walk on deck was soon apprehended. The servants move faster, though more noisily, and retain a sidelong motion, bracing out their feet, and hold fast the dishes as if they momentarily expected a lurch, and were prepared to maintain their equilibrium. Their apparel, too, is in character—slightly varied, in some instances, and in others not at all, from the regulation dress; while the butler (who is occasionally heard to order, in an undertone, Boy George to bear a hand, and Bill Gibson to stow away the dishes), instead of looking like his landlubber brother at Government House, heavy, corpulent, and rosy, is a thin, sunburnt, weather-beaten man, who has visited all parts of the world, and undergone the vicissitudes of every climate, and appears to have selected his wines in the region in which they were made. The conversation, also, is unlike that at the palace, having no reference whatever to local matters. You hear nothing of the Merygomish Bridge, the election at Port Medway, or the

alteration of the road at Aspatangon, to which the Governor is compelled to listen, and, at each repetition, appear as much interested as ever.

“The sea is the sailor’s home, and his topics are drawn from every part of the globe. When at the Admiral’s table, therefore, you forget you are in Halifax. The following scraps of conversation that reach your ear convince you that you are not among provincials, but men of the world.

“ ‘ You drive a wild horse into the stream, whom the electric eel immediately attacks ; after a few shocks, he exhausts his muscular powers, and you may seize him with impunity. They are occasionally found six feet in length.’

“ ‘ The Canopus was one of Napoleon’s ships. She was built of Adriatic oak, and, old as she is, is one of the soundest and fastest vessels in the navy.’ ‘ I don’t think any thing of her age, and, as for the timber, it is not to be compared to English oak : last year, I saw in the harbour of St. John a merchantman, that was employed by General Wolf, as a transport, at the siege of Quebec.’

“ ‘ A double-bedded room does not mean, in the States, a room with two beds, but a bed with two persons in it. During the great embargo, I happened to be at Charlestown, South Carolina, when the landlord proposed to me to sleep with a dirty-looking foreign officer. If I cannot have a separate bed, I said, I prefer sitting before the fire all night to sleep-

ing with that d—d Russian ! Is he a Russian, sir ? said a tall, thin, inquisitive Yankee, that stood listening to the conversation — is he a Russian ? I'll take him, then, if it convenes you, stranger. I should rather like it, for I never slept with a Russian.'

“ ‘ Cape Breton was once a separate government, and that little village, Sidney, was the capital. When I commanded the Linnet, I put in there for a supply of coal. The Governor, who was the most extraordinary person I ever met, told me his Chief Justice had passed him in the street without touching his hat to him, and asked me if I did not think such insolence would justify him in removing him from his office. Upon my answering in the negative, he said, I'll tell you what I'll do. By Jove, I will declare martial law, try him at the drum-head, tie him up, and give him three dozen !’

“ ‘ The Chinese regard these matters very philosophically. When Elliot was cannonading the forts above Canton, an officer came off with a flag of truce to one of the ships, and told the Captain that he thought the effusion of human blood both useless and wicked. If you no fire iron plumbs, then I no fire iron plumbs. You bang away powder for half an hour, and so will I ; then I will run away, and you come and take the fort.’

“ ‘ It depends upon what part of the coast you are on. The Gambia is by no means unhealthy, unless, perhaps, at the rainy season. It is a magnificent

country ; I penetrated three hundred miles into the interior, and the forest is like a vast umbrageous park. I recollect riding one moonlight night through where I was struck by the sound of the tinkling of innumerable little silver bells, which appeared to be attached to all the trees. It was the African nightingale, with which the forest was filled. I shall never forget the effect ; it was the sweetest and most charming thing I ever heard.'

“ ‘ He told me very gravely he saw a man breaking a horse at Rio, upon which he had fastened a monstrous pair of magnifying glasses, and, on inquiring of the fellow what was the object of putting spectacles on a horse, he replied that it was done for the purpose of giving him a good action, for, by enlarging every object on the road, it made him step high to avoid it. He told the story so often that he began to believe it himself at last.’

“ All this might as well have been said at Portsmouth or Plymouth as at Halifax, but is more agreeable at the latter place than elsewhere, because it is a relief to the monotonous conversation of a provincial town.

“ The evening parties are much the same as those at Government House, which I have already described to you, but have more naval and fewer military officers, which, in a ball-room, is a decided improvement. Your subaltern, when he has taken his first lesson in ‘ soldiering ’ in England, of which, by the by,

he is rather ashamed, for it is by no means the most fashionable amusement in that country, and lands in a colony, is rather a supercilious young gentleman, that finds nothing good enough for him. He talks to young ladies of Almacks, where he has never been; of the Opera, to which his mamma took him in the vacation; and La Blache, Catalani, or Grisi, whom, if he has not seen, he has often heard of. He thinks it beneath his dignity to dance—the 10th never dance—why should he? But the days of puppyism soon pass away, when their eyes are opened and they see as well, and become as agreeable as other people. The dear little middy is a different sort of person altogether: he does not try to play the man—for he actually is one, a frank, jolly, ingenuous fellow. The cockpit is no place for affectation and nonsense, and, if by any chance they find their way there, they are expelled forthwith by common consent. There is no pity or sympathy, even for the real distress of an ‘exquisite.’

“I recollect an anecdote of poor Theodore Hook’s on this subject. I never knew, he said, but one instance of real sympathy. I was in an outward bound man of war off the Cape of Good Hope: the weather was very stormy, the sea ran mountains high, and the ship laboured dreadfully. One night I put on my dreadnought coat and norwester hat, and went on deck. It was so dark, and the rain falling in torrents, it was difficult at first to distinguish objects. The

boatswain was pacing to and fro as usual on his watch, and I held on by the rigger, for the purpose of ascertaining his opinion of the probability of a change of weather, when I heard a voice like that of a child crying. The sailor and I both approached the spot together whence the sound issued, where we found a little midshipman weeping bitterly, as he clung to the weather bulwarks to protect himself from the storm. ‘Hullo! who are you that are blubbering like a baby there?’ said the veteran, in a voice that resembled the roll of a drum. ‘Lord Windlas, sir,’ was the reply. ‘Who the devil sent you here?’ ‘My father, sir.’ ‘More fool he for his pains!—he ought to have kept you at school. Did you cry when you left home?’ ‘Yes, sir,’ said the little fellow, releasing his hold, and putting both fists to his eyes, as if to stop the gushing tears. ‘And your mother, did she cry?’ ‘Ye-es, sir.’ The old tar paused for a moment as if touched by this instance of maternal tenderness, and at last said, in a voice of great feeling, ‘Poor old devil!’ and, twitching up his waistbands, resumed his walk. Now that, said Hook, was the only instance of real sympathy I ever saw. ‘Poor old devil!’ how much those words convey when they come from the heart!

“But to return to what I was talking of. A man-of-war is a capital school to train a youngster in. Take a military man out of his profession, and to a certain extent he is a helpless being. A sailor, on the

contrary, is self-relying, bold, hardy, and well acquainted with everything that is useful for making his way in the world. This is the reason why a soldier seldom succeeds, and a seaman rarely fails, when they retire from their respective services and settle in the colonies. The Admiral again is at home at a regatta ; he is once more afloat and in his own element. The first one that was ever held at Halifax was patronised by my friend Sir James Capstan. He and I had been boys together at school, and even, at that early period, I was always known as ‘ Old Sandford,’ an appellation probably derived either from the sedateness or awkwardness of my manner. We had lost sight of each other for many years, when I was surprised and delighted at hearing that he had arrived at Halifax as Commander-in-Chief on this station. ‘ Good heavens ! here is Old Sandford,’ he said, as he saw me advancing towards him. Alas ! what had begun in jest time had turned into reality. I had, indeed, become an aged man. ‘ My good friend,’ he said, ‘ your country has had more than its share of your time and attention. I must monopolize you now while you are in Halifax, for we have our mutual histories to relate, and much to say to each other. To-morrow we are to have a regatta. I suppose it would be *infra dig.* for the old Judge and the old Admiral to dance a jig together, before the youngsters, but I’ll tell you what, old boy, I don’t know what you can do—but I could dance one yet, and, by Jove ! when we are alone this

evening, we will try. It will remind us of old times. What has become of the Smiths?—monstrous fine galls those—I have often thought of them since.’ ‘Dead!’ ‘Dead! the devil they are! how shocking! and those two romping little Browns? married, I suppose, and have romping little daughters.’ I shook my head. ‘Gone, too,’ I said. ‘You forget that forty years have passed since they were young, and that the greater part of that generation has passed away.’ ‘Well, thank God, you and I, old fellow, have not passed away! I don’t know what you intend to do, but I have no idea of going yet, if I can help it. I am worth a dozen dead men, and so are you.’ While active employment had kept him so busy that he appeared not to have been aware of the lapse of years, time also had passed him without notice: his spirits were as buoyant and joyous as ever.

“The following day was as brilliant and as propitious as could be desired, and at an early hour the harbour was covered with boats filled with light hearts and merry faces. The noble ship, the *Graball*, was tastefully decorated with flags of every variety and colour, and presented a gay and beautiful appearance. Every convenience that ingenuity could invent, or delicacy suggest, was provided for the comfort and accommodation of the guests; every arrangement was perfect, with the single exception, as a young lady observed, with some degree of regret, that there was not a single pin on the toilet-table of the dressing-room.

“ Soon after the company arrived, and while the Admiral was surrounded by a numerous assemblage of ladies, a little flotilla of canoes was observed advancing from the opposite shore of Dartmouth, led by a rival officer, the Commander-in-Chief of his own navy, Admiral Paul, the Indian. He was a tall, well made, active man, in the prime of life. He was dressed in a frock-coat with red facings, secured round the waist by a sash of scarlet wampum ; his feet were ornamented with a pair of yellow moccasins, with a white and blue edging, curiously wrought with the quills of the porcupine. A military cap (a present from some officer of the garrison) completed his equipment. He approached the quarter-deck with an ease and elegance of motion that art can never supply, and, addressing Sir James, said, ‘ Are you the Admiral ? ’ ‘ Yes ! ’ ‘ So am I : I am Admiral Paul—all same, you see, as one brudder.’

“ Paul, notwithstanding that his manner was so natural and unaffected, was a great rogue withal, and found it convenient to invest himself with two commissions. With the officers of the navy he was an Admiral, and with Sir Hercules Sampson he was a Governor. He was, therefore, to use his own language, ‘ all same as one brudder ’ with both ; and, standing on such a footing of intimacy, was enabled to receive fraternal assistance without any diminution of his dignity. He also had the misfortune to take ‘ very big drinks,’ which, though they did not lower

the respect of his tribe for him, had the effect of setting them a very bad example. Upon one occasion, when he was soliciting a loan from the Governor, (for he never condescended to beg), he was unhappily intoxicated; his wants were liberally supplied upon condition that he should never appear at 'the Palace' again, unless he was perfectly sober, an agreement into which he very readily entered. About a fortnight afterwards he required another loan, but the Governor refused it. 'Didn't you promise me never to let me see you tipsy again?' he said. 'Sartin!' he replied. 'Why didn't you keep your word, then?' 'Sartin, I keep my word.' 'Why, you are drunk now, man.' 'Sartin,' he replied, very coolly, 'sartin, but it's the same old drunk, though—Paul not been sober since—all same old drunk, Mr. Gubbernor.' The drollery of the reply has caused it to pass into a bye-word in this country. Uniform occupations, or frequent repetitions of the same thing, are constantly denominated 'the same old drunk.' Having established his relationship to the Admiral, Paul thought the opportunity for obtaining a loan not to be omitted. 'All same as one brudder, you see, Mr. Admiral, so please lend me one dollar.' The novelty of the application pleased my friend amazingly, and he gave him several, adding, very needlessly, that there was no necessity for returning them. Paul received them with an easy bow, and deliberately counted them, one, two, three, four, five, six; and then, taking a fur

pouch from the back part of his belt, in which were his flint, steel, punk, and tobacco, he deposited them safely in it, and replaced it as before, merely observing, 'Sartin, white Admiral makun money bery easy.' As he turned to depart, his countenance suddenly became very fierce. 'Mr. Admiral,' he said, 'do you know that man?' pointing to a young officer of the ship. 'Yes,' he replied, 'I know him; he is one of my midshipmen.' 'Sartin he one d—d rascal!' 'Tut, tut, tut!' said the Admiral. 'Sartin, Mr. Admiral, he one d—d rascal! he kissum my squaw yesterday.' 'Tut, tut, tut!' he replied again, waving his hand to him at the same time to go away, lest the further continuance of the conversation might prove inconvenient. 'Ah, Mr. Admiral,' he said with much animation, and he advanced a little, and bending forward held out his arm, in an attitude of elegance that a sculptor might envy, 'ah, Mr. Admiral, if I kissum your squaw' (pointing to Lady Capstan) 'you no say Tut, tut, tut, man!' and he retired, not quite satisfied that justice had been done him.

"Of the regatta, you will perhaps be surprised to hear that, in common with the young ladies, I saw but little. I have always regarded a boat-race as a very stupid, and a horse-race a very cruel thing. I never could take any interest in them, and to describe either would be to tell a thrice-told tale. The Admiral, however, entered into it with all his heart, and was delighted that the fishermen of Herring Cove and

the eastern passage beat (as they always do) the barge of the man-of-war. He said it would take the conceit out of the lubbers, make them mind their eye for the future, for there was not a man in the ship could pull an oar properly.

“ I was more amused myself at what was passing around me. A dance on board ship is always more pleasant than in a ball-room, not that the latter is less commodious or convenient, but because the former is a novelty. The decorations are different, and even the natural obstacles of the place are either concealed with taste, or converted into objects of use or ornament. The effect is produced by great trouble and ingenuity, and who are there who do not personally appropriate much of this as a compliment to themselves? The part of host is played not by one, but by twenty, for every officer is interested in the honour of the ship, and the reputation of her hospitality; and what cannot many hands, heads, and hearts accomplish? The dance (for, after all, though the regatta was the professed object, this was the real attraction, which was on the main deck), from the hour, the place, and the occasion, partook more of the character of a private party than a public entertainment, and was accordingly more agreeable, in proportion as it was less formal.

“ ‘ Ah, Sandford,’ said the Admiral, who was delighted beyond measure, ‘ I wish you had your robes on—we would try that jig now; wouldn’t we astonish

the boys, eh? D—n them! they look as solemn, and dance as heavily, as if they were stamping their feet to keep them warm at a funeral in winter! Look at that dandy—it is half-past twelve o'clock with the navy, when you see such fellows as that on the quarter-deck. It was a bad day for the service when the king sent his son to sea. It made it fashionable, and fashion plays the devil with a ship. We should always keep up the distinctions between the services. *Let the army be fashionable, and the navy manly*, and if they stick to that, they may keep their troops at home for parades and reviews, and we will do all the fighting for them:’ and, lowering his voice, said, ‘I don’t know what you intend to do, but the sun is over the fore-yard, and I am going to have a glass of grog. I suppose it would horrify Sampson to ask him, for he is too fashionable for that, and, if he wasn’t, his stock is buckled so tight, he couldn’t bend his head back sufficiently to swallow it. He is not a bad fellow, though, after all, but he is one of the old school of pipeclay and pomatum soldiers, and is as stiff and starched as a shirt collar.’

“ In the midst of gaiety there is always sadness. The chords of pleasure are so interwoven with those of melancholy in the human mind, that it is difficult to touch the one without causing a vibration of the other. Like the strings of an Æolian harp, they all awaken to life under the influence of the same whispering breeze, and blend their joyous notes and pensive

wailings together. The Admiral seemed to be sensibly affected by this mysterious feeling. But it was a mere sudden emotion, as fleeting and as transitory as a cloud passing over the sun.

“ ‘ Sandford,’ he said, ‘ the other day—for it appears no longer ago—I was a midshipman in this port—I am now commander-in-chief at the same place: that was my first, and this will be my last cruise in life, for, when I return home, I shall be put on the shelf, or perhaps converted into a sort of hulk, or receiving ship, an old port admiral: it is a short run we make of it in this life, after all, ain’t it? How sad a thing? Hullo, sir!’ he said, calling out aloud to a servant, ‘ if you don’t know better than that, by Jove, I’ll have you taught in a way you won’t forget! I’ll give you three dozen, as sure as you are born. D—n that fellow! he has knocked all the sentimentality out of me. And yet, I don’t know but what I ought to thank him for it, for a man that talks foolishly, may soon begin to act foolishly. But come, old boy, let us have that glass of grog.

“ ‘ Talking of giving that fellow three dozen,’ he continued, ‘ puts me in mind of a prank of my uncle, Sir Peter’s. Previous to the American rebellion, he commanded a frigate on the Boston station: having put into one of the Puritanical ports of New England, he happened to dine on shore, and, as usual with him when not on board, got tipsy. The select men, who affected to be dreadfully shocked at such a bad example

being set by people in high places, apprehended him, and put him in the stocks as a terror to all evil-doers. For once in his life (for he was a violent tempered man), he uttered no threats, and made no complaints, but quietly submitted himself to the inevitable insult. On the following day he called upon the committing magistrates, applauded their zeal and impartiality in administering the law, and invited them to come and dine on board with him, as a proof that they no longer harboured any resentment against him for the heinous offence he had perpetrated. This they readily agreed to do, and were accordingly most kindly received and hospitably entertained, and enjoyed themselves exceedingly. As the time approached for their departure, a servant entered the cabin, and whispered to the custos that there was a gentleman above who desired to speak to him for a moment on urgent business. As soon as the Justice made his appearance on deck, the boatswain seized him, stripped him, and, tying him up, gave a dozen lashes. Each of the others were severally summoned, and punished in a similar manner, when they were set on shore—the anchor was hoisted, and the vessel put under weigh for England.’

“ But to return to the party ; the company was a mixed one, every officer having invited his own friends, and some of them having made rather strange acquaintances.—I heard one of the young ladies object to a tune which she said was as old as ‘ three grand-

mothers ago,' and another observe that Lord Heather had his 'high and mighty boots on;' and was quite 'high-cock spotty' to-day. The sentiment was old, though the phraseology was novel, and it must be admitted that if there were nothing but proprieties in this life, we might, perhaps, lose in insipidity as much as we gained in refinement. The maxim that extremes meet was fully verified, for the smallest midshipman seemed to pride themselves on having the tallest partners. I heard one little fellow, who threw back his head and looked up at his *chere amie*, as if he were addressing the man at the mast-head, say, 'I hope you will keep a good look-out, or we shall run foul of the captain.' 'Starboard, Milne,' said one.—'Larboard, Skipsey,' said another, while a third advised his friend, who appeared to be steering wildly, to 'port his helm.'

“ The great object of attraction was an American heiress of immense fortune, a young lady from New Orleans. She was the daughter of an undertaker in that city, which was the best stand in the Union, as he boasted, for a man in his line of business. His coffins were made in Massachusetts by machinery, and served the double purpose of conveying 'New England notions' to the Mississippi, and the dead to the churchyards. But, alas, for human expectations! the delicate girl of a sickly climate, who had been enriched by the toll-house of the grave, vampire-like, was plethoric and heavy. She looked like an hospital nurse

that faithfully delivered the medicines to the patients, and appropriated the wine and porter of the convalescents to herself. Never was there such a disappointment; for, after all, it is easy to invest with divinity the being that presides over funeral obsequies, and there is sublimity as well as poetry in the grave, but reptiles alone fatten on corruption. ‘Stay, Bill,’ said a little humourist to his companion, ‘she may have a million of money, but I’m blowed if she is worth a d—n, after all!’

“If, however, she had thriven by caring for the dead, there was one of the company who was nearly worn out by caring for the living. He was an active little old man, with a benevolent though remarkably ugly face, and, judging by his dress, belonged to some public department. His head was uncommonly bald, and very nearly round, which, with the yellow tint of the skin, suggested the idea of a ball of soap that had fallen on the floor, and, rolling on the carpet, had gathered a few hairs. He attended at the ladder, and assisted the ladies in their ascent to the deck; cautioned them against portholes and hatches, which, though closed, might open of themselves, and precipitate them either into the hold or the harbour; pointed out the cannon, and entreated them not to stumble over them, as they might fracture their limbs; and, above all, advised them not to stand in draughts, or take ice-creams when they were heated. He had a long catalogue of accidents wherewith to illustrate every

caution, and several ingenious inventions to counteract the effects of damps or chills.

“ The Admiral, whose attention was directed to him while he stood bowing to the ladies, and rubbing his hands, asked who that ‘ little wash-my-hand sort of a person was, and, on being informed that his name was Davis, recognised him as a barrack-master whom he had known at Malta, and immediately addressed him, complimenting him upon having ‘ worn so well.’ ‘ Ah, my dear Sir James,’ he said, ‘ my good looks have ruined me. It is the worst thing in the world to have a juvenile face. The medical board refused to superannuate me last year, saying I was an active man yet, and fit for service. Most men like to look young, or to be thought young, but, alas! my good looks have been a great misfortune to me. They have broken my heart—yes, yes! they will be the death of me yet. But don’t let me detain you here, sir, in the draught of this awning; it is very dangerous, very liable to give cold, or bring on rheumatism—they are the cause of half the illness in the country.’ ‘ You should have stood in one of them yourself, then, my old friend,’ was the good-humoured reply, ‘ before you applied to the board for your superannuation.’

“ The lunch, which was a capital one, was a merry affair, and everybody seemed to enjoy themselves uncommonly. But where was there ever a midshipman without a practical joke attesting his presence? The Governor’s hat had exchanged its plume for a sprig of

spruce, and a commissary-general, whose sword-belt had been shortened so that it would no longer buckle round him, was heard to exclaim, ' Good heavens ! is it possible, the luncheon could have made all this difference in my size ?'

" While roaning about the ship, I was a good deal surprised at the apathy of a sailor, who was sitting with his back turned to the gay scene, quietly stitching a pair of shoes, with the most philosophical indifference to all that was passing around him. In reply to some remark I made on the subject of the party, he said, ' Ah, sir, I have seen enough of them in my day—our part of the entertainment will come to-morrow, when we have to clear up the ship, which will be in a devil of a mess when it's all over.'

" The big-wigs, as the naval and military commanders-in-chief were called by the youngsters, were now preparing to go on shore, and the former pressed me to accompany them. As they were about to descend the side of the ship, our old friend Paul made his appearance again. ' Ah, Mr. Gubbernor,' he said, ' sartain me lose very much yesterday—my camp all burned up—Paul very poor now.' ' I am very sorry for you,' was the reply. ' Yes, brudder, but how much are you sorry ? Are you sorry one pound ?' The ruse was successful, and the contribution, as a measure of grief, was paid to him. ' And you, Mr. Admiral, how much you sorry ?' Another pound rewarded this appeal also. ' Thank you, brudders—sartain white

man's pocket, like brook, keep run all the time, and never get empty. Indian man's pocket all same as glass of rum, one drink, and it's all gone.'

“ We now left the ship ; and at the dockyard gate, where their respective carriages were in attendance, the *old Admiral* and the *old General* cordially shook hands with each other, and parted.”

CHAPTER VII.

THE FIRST SETTLERS.

Nothing astonishes the inhabitants of these colonies more than the poverty, ignorance, and degradation of the people who are landed upon their shores, from the passenger ships that annually arrive from Europe. The destitution of these unfortunate emigrants so far exceeds any thing ever seen among the native population, that they cannot understand how it is possible that human beings can voluntarily surrender themselves as willing victims to starvation, who have the bodily strength to work, and the opportunities of earning their bread, as it is well known they have in their own country. Although they are too often the dupes of demagogues themselves, they are too proud to receive alms, live in a country too poor to feed wilful idleness, and no man has ever yet had the hardihood to incite them to rapine and murder.

Though neither frugal nor diligent, they cannot conceive a people being satisfied with less than a decent maintenance, or being so debased as to beg, or so wicked as to take by violence what they can earn by

labour. They are a kind and affectionate people, and hear with horror of the atrocious crimes with which, alas ! so many of these strangers are familiar at home.

A group of these unfortunate and misguided people, arriving at Elmsdale this morning, sought, or, I should rather say, demanded, pecuniary aid, for their tone was more exacting than supplicating. As they were all able-bodied men, they received an offer of employment, which, they were informed, was the course usually adopted at that place, as best suited to the means of the proprietor, and the object they had in view, of earning a subsistence. This they refused, not only with incivility, but with a distinct avowal that, if they were in their own country, they would take a very summary mode of enforcing compliance with their wishes.

“ Oh,” said the Judge, “ what a change has come over this continent ! These men, who begin by begging or stealing, end by governing. Political power is possessed by the mass, and this stream of pauperism increases and pollutes it ; and, whatever our neighbours may say to the contrary, civilization is retrograding, and not advancing. In this province, all our emigrants of late years have been poor and illiterate. The first settlers were scholars and gentlemen. You may recollect I related to you, some time ago, the particulars of a singular trial I was concerned in at Plymouth, in which one Barkins was my client, and the reluctance I had to go there, in consequence of an interesting exa-

mination I was making of the scene of the first effective settlement made in this continent at Annapolis. The people who discovered and colonized this country were so different from those who come to us in the present day, that it may amuse you to hear the result of my investigations.

“ During one of my visits to Paris, I had accidentally met with the Journal of Mark Lescarbot, a French lawyer, who had accompanied the exploring party that first visited this part of America. With this book in my hand (which was published as early as 1609) I traced their movements from place to place, in their attempt at colonization. On the 8th of November, 1603, Henry IV. of France granted to the Sieur de Monts, a gentleman of his bed-chamber, a patent, constituting him Lieutenant-General of L’Acadi, (now Nova Scotia) with power to conquer and Christianize the inhabitants. On the 7th of March, having equipped two vessels, he set sail from Havre de Grace, accompanied by the celebrated Champlain and Monsieur Poutrincourt, and arrived on the 7th of May at a harbour (Liverpool) on the south-east shore of the province. From thence they continued coasting the country, until they arrived at the Bay of Funday. On the eastern side of this bay they discovered a narrow strait, into which they entered, and soon found themselves in a spacious basin, environed with hills, from which descended streams of fresh water. Between these high lands ran a large navigable river, to

which they gave the name of L'Equille. It was bordered by fertile meadows, and filled with delicate fish. Poutrincourt, charmed with the beauty of the place, gave it the name of Port Royal (now Annapolis). After exploring the neighbourhood, and refreshing themselves, they ascended the river Saint John, as far as Fredericton, and then, visiting the coast of Maine, spent the winter of 1604-5 at the island of Saint Croix, the identity of which has lately been the subject of so much discussion between the governments of Great Britain and the United States. The weather proved very severe, and the people suffered so much from scurvy, that thirty-six of them died. The remaining forty, who were all invalids, lingered on till the spring, when they recovered, by means of the fresh vegetation.

“ After an ineffectual attempt to reach a more southern climate, they recrossed the bay to Port Royal, where they found a reinforcement from France of forty men, under the command of Dupont. They then proceeded to erect buildings on the spot where Annapolis now stands, with a view to a permanent occupation of the country. De Monts and Poutrincourt, having put their affairs in as good order as possible, embarked in the autumn for France, leaving Pontgragè Commandant, with Champlain and Champdore as Lieutenants, to perfect the settlement and explore the country. During the winter, they were plentifully supplied by the savages with venison, and a great trade was carried on for furs. Nothing is said of the

scurvy ; but they had a short allowance of bread, not by reason of any scarcity of corn, but because they had no means of grinding it, except a hand-mill, which required hard and continued labour. The savages were so averse to this exercise, that they preferred hunger to the task of grinding, though they were offered half of the flour in payment. De Monts and Poutrincourt were at that time in France, preparing, under every discouragement, for another voyage.

“ On the 13th of May, 1606, they sailed from Rochelle, accompanied by Lescarbot, who has left us a record of their proceedings ; and, on the 27th of July, arrived at Port Royal. To their astonishment, they found but two persons remaining. The rest, conjecturing from the long absence of succour, that the settlement had been abandoned by De Monts, compelled the officer in charge to sail for Canseau, in order that they might obtain a passage to France in some of the fishing vessels that frequented that port. Two men, however, having more courage and more faith than the others (La Taille and Mequelet), volunteered to remain and guard the stores and the buildings. These faithful retainers were at their dinner, when a savage rushed in and informed them that a sail was in sight, which they soon discovered to be the long-expected vessel of their chief. Poutrincourt now began his plantation ; and, having cleared a spot of ground, sowed European corn and several kinds of garden vegetables.

“ But, notwithstanding all the beauty and fertility of Port Royal, De Monts had still a desire to make discoveries further towards the south. He therefore prevailed upon Poutrincourt to undertake a voyage to Cape Malabarre (Cape Cod), and, on the 28th of August, the ship and the barque both put to sea. In the former, De Monts and Dupont returned to France, while Poutrincourt, Champlain, Champdore, and others, crossed the bay to Saint Croix, and then continued their survey of the coast. In the mean time, Lescarbot, who remained behind at Port Royal, was busily employed in the cultivation of the garden, harvesting the crop, completing the buildings, and visiting the encampments of the natives in the interior.

“ On the 14th of November, Poutrincourt returned from his exploring voyage, which had proved disastrous, and was received with every demonstration of joy by the party at the fort. Lescarbot had erected a temporary stage, which he called the ‘ Theatre of Neptune,’ from which he recited a poetical address to his friend, congratulating him on his safe arrival, probably the first verses ever written in North America. Over the gate were placed the royal arms of France, encircled with evergreens, with the motto,—

‘ DVO PROTEGIT VNVS.’

“ Above the door of the house of De Monts were placed his arms, embellished in a similar manner, with the inscription,—

‘ DABIT DEUS HIS QUOQUE FINEM.’

“ Poutrincourt’s apartments were graced with the same simple decoration, having the classical superscription, —

‘ INVIA VIRTUTI NVLLA EST VIA.’

“ The manner in which they spent the third winter (1606-7) was social and festive. Poutrincourt established the order of ‘ Le Bon Temps,’ of which the principal officers and gentlemen, fifteen in number, were members. Every one was *maître d’hôtel* in his turn for one day, beginning with Champlain, who was first installed into the office. The president, (whom the Indians called Atoctegi) having superintended the preparations, marched to the table, baton in hand, with the collar of the order round his neck, and napkin on his shoulder, and was followed by the others successively, each carrying a plate. The same form was observed at every meal ; and, at the conclusion of supper, as soon as grace was said, he delivered, with much gravity, his insignia of office to his successor, and pledged him in a cup of wine. The advantage of this institution was, that each one was emulous to be prepared for his day, by previously hunting or fishing, or purchasing fish or game of the natives, who constantly resided among them, and were extremely pleased with their manners. The chiefs of the savages were alone allowed the honour of sitting at their table ; the others partook of the hospitality of the kitchen. The abundance and variety of the fare this winter was a subject of no little boasting to Lescarbot, on his

return to Europe, where he taunted the frequenters of la Rue aux Ours de Paris, (where was one of the first eating-houses of the day), that they knew nothing of the pleasures of the table who had not partaken of the beavers' tails, and the mouffles of the moose of Port Royal. The weather, meanwhile, was particularly mild and agreeable.

“ On the 14th of January, on a Sunday, they proceeded by water two leagues, to a corn-field, where they dined cheerfully in the sunshine, and enjoyed the music of their fatherland. You will observe, therefore, my dear sir, that, from the earliest account we have of this climate, it has always had the same character of variableness and uncertainty. The winter but one preceding this (when they were at St. Croix) was extremely severe; and, we are informed, that that which succeeded it was remarkable for the most intense cold the Indians ever recollected. Their time, however, was not devoted to amusement alone. They erected more buildings, for the accommodation of other adventurers, whom they expected to join them the following year, in making pitch for the repairs of their vessels, and, above all, in putting up a water-mill to grind their corn. In this latter attempt they completely succeeded, to their own infinite relief and the great amusement of the savages. Some of the iron work of this first North American mill is yet in existence, and another of the same kind (Easson's Mill) still occupies the ancient site.

“ You will, perhaps, smile at the idea of antiquities in a country which is universally called a new world ; but America has a great advantage over Europe in this respect, that it has a record of its birth, while the origin of the other is to be sought for in the region of fable. I am a native of this country, and this little settlement has always had great attractions for me, who am an old Tory, from its primogeniture being two years older than James Town, in Virginia, and three years senior to Quebec, which was settled twelve years before the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers in Massachusetts.”

CHAPTER VIII.

MERRIMAKINGS.

The shooting season having commenced most favourably this autumn, Barclay and myself spent a few days at Foxville, where the snipe are very abundant, and on our return tried, with great success, the copse that skirts the meadow between Elmsdale and Illinoo for woodcock. While crossing a little wooded promontory that intersected the alluvial land, and interrupted our sport, I heard the shrill voice of a female at some little distance, in great apparent distress; and, stopping a moment to ascertain the direction from whence the sound came, I distinctly heard the following extraordinary dialogue.

“ Oh, John! my head! my head!—let me die! I’d rather die!—oh, John, do! How can you act so? Oh, let me die!”—to which the person appealed to so pathetically replied—

“ Oh, no, Sally, don’t be scared—it won’t hurt you—live a little longer.”

“ I tell you, I’d rather die—I will die!”

“ There, then, if you must die, die!”

“ Yes, but not so suddenly, John. Let me die easy !”

Rushing forward with what speed I could, I suddenly caught a view of a young woman, seated in a swing, suspended between two trees, having a rope attached to the seat, by means of which her companion forced her backwards and forwards, in her pendulous motion. The alarming language she had used, it appeared, was merely the technical term applied to the cessation of the impulse given by the ropes that regulated the movement. And dying, I found, to my surprise, meant not to cease to live, but to cease swinging. The fair one who had so unconsciously terrified me by her screams of affright, and, as I thought, by her threats of suicide, was a stout, strong, blooming country girl, of about eighteen years of age ; and her attendant a good-natured, awkward, rustic admirer, but little older than herself. She had died, as she desired, by the time I had reached the spot, the swing being nearly motionless, and was ready to be safely deposited on and not in the ground, as I had feared, an office which I performed for her, to the surprise and evident disappointment of her companion.

“ I was properly scared, you may depend,” she said ; “ that’s a fact : a body that ain’t used to carry their head so low, and their feet so high, is apt to get kind of dizzy, and haven’t ought to be throwed up so hard, all of a suddent, lest the seat might sort of turn bottom upwards.”

Seeing a number of tables with baskets upon them, in an open glade, at some distance before us, and a great concourse of people assembling, I asked her what was the occasion of it.

“It is a pickinick stir, sir,” was the reply.

“A pickinick stir!” I inquired; “what is that?” although, from the preparations that were making, the meaning was perfectly obvious, but I wanted to hear her definition yet, as I had no doubt she would express herself in the same droll language.

“Lawful heart!” she said, “I thought every body knew what a pickinick stir was. Why, it’s a feed, to be sure, where every critter finds his own fodder.”

“Ah,” I said, “then I fear I am an intruder, for I have no fodder; and, what is worse, I am neither invited nor expected. I regret this the more,” I added, “as I should like very much to see a pickinick stir.”

“Ah, you are funning now, ain’t you? Would you, though, in rael, right down earnest?”

“Certainly,” I said, “I should be delighted.”

“Well, that’s very easy fixed, any how. John,” she said, “go and bring your basket, and look into sister Hannah Dowler’s waggon, and fetch the wooden pail, with the birch bark cover, and no handle to it; and, if we can’t find enough for the stranger, it’s a pity, that’s all.”

John hesitated for a moment, standing before her with a very sorrowful expression of countenance, as if

to catch an assurance from her eye that he was not to be deserted for another.

“ Why, what ails the critter ?” she said, “ that you stand starin’ and a gapin’ there, as vacant as a spare room, looking as if you couldn’t hear, and had never seed a body afore ;” and then, altering her manner as if the truth suddenly flashed upon her, she added, in a milder and more conciliatory tone, “ Go, John, that’s a good soul, and don’t be all day about it :” words that inspired new life and most rapid motion into the jealous swain. She then seated herself on the grass near the declivity of the sloping knoll, and, leaning back, supported her head with her hand, by resting on her elbow.

“ Sit down,” she said ; “ sitting is as cheap as standing, when you don’t pay for it, and twice as easy.” Obeying her command, I assumed the same attitude, and there we were, who, a few moments before, had never seen each other, in this singularly easy position, conversing face to face as unceremoniously and as freely as if we had known each other for years. “ Dear me,” she said, as her eye fell on my disengaged hand, for the other was concealed by my hair, “ what a small hand you have, and how white it is !—what do you do to make it so white ?—washin them in buttermilk, they say, is grand ;—what do you do ?”

“ Nothing,” I replied ; “ wearing gloves produces the effect.”

“ Ah !” she said, “ I see, you belong to the quality,

I suppose, or keep a store, or sell doctors' means—and haven't to use your hands. Mine" (and she held up one of hers, and examined it minutely) "are horrid hard, ain't they?—all crinkum crankum like, and criss-crossed every which way—sort of crisped and chapped; but it can't be helped, I do suppose, for they are in and out of hot and cold water for everlasting."

"It is lucky it doesn't affect the lips," I remarked.

"Well, so it is," she replied, and added, in the most artless manner possible, "I vow, I never thought of that before. So you never see a pickinick stir, sir."

"No, not here."

"What, are you an entire stranger in these parts?"

"Yes."

"Lawful heart, you don't say so! So be I. I live to the mill-ponds to Yarmouth, where I am to home; but now I am on a visit to sister Hannah, who is married to the cross roads. Then, perhaps, you never see a Bee stir?"

"No."

"Nor a raising?"

"No."

"Nor a quilting?"

"No."

"Nor a husking?"

"No."

"Nor a berrying?"

"No."

"Scissors and pins!—why, you hain't seen nothing

of our ways yet! Well, I've been to 'em all, and I'll tell you what, I like a rolling frolic better than all on them. There is always fun at the end of the roll—if you'll—but here's John; he's generally allowed to be the greatest hand at a roll in these clearings—the critter's so strong! No, it ain't John, neither. Creation! how vexed he would be if he knowed he was taken for that scarecrow, Norton Hog, who looks, for all the world, like a suit of clothes, hung on a bean pole stuck out to air; he is so horrid thin! Well, there's no accounting for taste—what do you think now?—he was married last week to Betsy Spooner, as likely a gall as you will see any where, I know—fact, I assure you, she is twenty and he forty—exactly twice her age; and so, as sister Hannah says, when she is fifty, he will be a hundred. Isn't it a horrible, scandalous match?"

"Pray, who is John?" I inquired, as I saw him approach.

"Old Mr. Thad Rafuse's son."

"Is he to be the happy man?"

"Well, the critter is happy enough, for all I know to the *contrary*."

"If I am in the country, may I come to the wedding, and offer a bridal present in return for your kindness to-day?"

"Wedding!—oh, my!—well, I never!—now I understand you. Marry John Rafuse! Lord love you, no! not unless I can't do no better, I can tell

you. He's well enough, and won't want, seeing his father is well to do; but he ain't got no force—he wants a head-piece—he's sort of under-baked. I ain't in no hurry to splice neither, at any rate, though I won't just say I won't take John Rafuse at no time, neither; for, as Hannah says, a poor husband is better than none; and it's handy to have a man about the house, for they can do little chores to home, and run of errands. Are you married?"

"No."

"Why don't you!"

"Who would have me?"

"Ah! you are fishing for compliments now, but

Praise to the face

Is open disgrace;

and I won't humour you, for men are so awful consaited! I guess the will, and not the way, is wanted. Why, John," she exclaimed, on looking up, and observing him without his basket and pail, "what on airth have you done with all those chicken-fixings, ham-trimmings, and doe-doings, besides the pies, notions, and sarces; has any thing happened to them?"

"Squire Barclay told me to thank you, and say he had made provision for his friend and himself, and here he is."

Having arranged matters so as to have the young lady, Miss Sally Horn, as our neighbour at the table, Barclay and I left the young couple together, and strolled through the crowd, and mingled with the

various groups that were scattered on the green, or dispersed in the woods.

“ This,” said Barclay, “ is a pic-nic, given by the owner and builder of the large timber-ship, of one thousand tons, we saw launched at Illinoo yesterday, to the families and friends of those who have in various ways been engaged either in gathering or preparing the materials, or putting them together; for the construction of a vessel of such magnitude gives employment to a vast number of people, who cut, hew, or haul the timber. The owner is also desirous of ingratiating himself with the people, over whom he has some design of acquiring political influence, being a violent democrat. If you took any interest in such subjects, it would amuse, or rather I should say disgust you, to see how men and not measures, office and not principle, is at the bottom of our colonial politics. As it is, his harangue would appear to you like a foreign language, and really the idiom is not worth acquiring. Come and look at the vehicles; such a strange collection is worth seeing.”

Hay-carts filled with temporary seats, waggons furnished with four posts and a tester-like awning resembling a bedstead, carts ornamented with buffalo robes, or having their rude timbers concealed by quilts, together with more ambitious gigs, cabs, cars, and britzschkas of every variety, form, and colour, occupied the field near the main road, to the fences of which were fastened the horses, many of which, having huge

pillions attached to the saddles, appeared to have carried several persons on their backs.

“ A large temporary table, you observe,” continued Barclay, “ is spread at one end of the Green, and several of nearly equal size occupy the other; a division rendered necessary by the scruples of the advocates of total abstinence from all vinous or fermented liquors, who, not contented with exercising the right of doing as they please themselves, are determined to force others to follow their example, and will not permit the use of wine in their presence. How often does it happen in this world that the most strenuous advocates for liberty in theory are the most exclusive and tyrannical in practice !”

Here a man wearing a badge to distinguish him as a manager proclaimed, in a loud voice, “ All ye invited guests, fall into the precession, and come to the platform !” This was a sort of circular scaffold erected in the centre of the glade, formed around and supported by the trunk of a large elm. Three or four speakers soon made their appearance, and, ascending this elevated stage, addressed the company much in the same style and upon nearly the same topics. The ship whose launch they had come to celebrate was eulogized as one of the largest, fastest, best built, and beautifully modelled vessels ever seen in this or any other country. The builder was said to have done honour to the province in general, and his native town in particular, and was adduced as one of many instances to prove

that Nova Scotians only wanted opportunities to be afforded them to excel all mankind, the humblest of them being fitted for the highest offices of state at home, or abroad ; but that, unhappily, during the long Tory rule in England, the aristocracy engrossed every situation of honour or emolument in every part of the empire. The company were assured that the Legislative Council of this province contained as many learned, and the House of Assembly as many able statesmen, as the Lords or Commons' Houses of Great Britain, and that their integrity and honour were equal, if not superior.

The colonies, it was said, were filled with mineral wealth, so near the surface as to be exhumed with very little outlay ; and all that was required was for England to open their native treasures at her own expense, and give all the returns to the people—an act of justice which, ere long, she would be compelled to perform, and which would long since have been spontaneously done, had it not been for certain influential persons in this country, who wanted the proceeds to be given exclusively to them. It was confidently predicted that a railroad would be immediately constructed by the mother country between Halifax and Illinoo, and another between the former place and Quebec ; as the local legislature had most liberally done its part by giving permission to any company to be formed for that purpose, to pass through the land of the crown, and take as much of it as was necessary, which they had a per-

fect right to do, the Queen being a mere trustee for the public, and, of course, having no interest whatever of her own. And much to the same purpose.

Mothers were then implored to look upon their children with pride as having the honour to be Blue Noses; and were assured that Latin and Greek, which had hitherto been upheld by Tories, to create a distinction between the rich and the poor, were exploded, or, as it was quaintly expressed, "reformed out"; and that now, all speaking one language, (and it was well known that they pronounced English better than the British, for who could understand a Yorkshire or Cornish man, or the Yankees, who were too lazy to use their mouths and spoke through their noses?)—now that great object had been obtained, there was an open field and fair play for all, and their children had a high destiny before them, and honour and wealth were their portion.

Here the herald again proclaimed, "The bankit is now ready, and all ye invited guests will please to fall *to* in your places."

Few people are unconsciously flattered, however delicately the incense may be offered; and this agreeable and prophetic language I have related, although artfully veiling any thing like broad compliment, was, notwithstanding its skilful disguises, thoroughly understood by some of the male part of the audience, for I heard one old man pronounce it all moonshine, and another, addressing his little boy, say, "Well,

Zacky, you have a-most a grand inheritance—that's a fact. Don't you hope you may live to get it? Tell you what—your lot and your luck is, your lot will be hard work, and your luck to zave what you make. I hate all fortin-tellers—when they put their hands on your ribs to tickle you, they are sure to slip their fingers into your pockets and pick it—they are all cheats. Look out always for number one, Zacky, my boy. Now, here's a hint for you—do you go and set by your mother, for the men always give the women the best, and the women always help the children before they eat themselves: so you may guess who gets the tid bits, Zacky. I have done my part now, by helping you to advice. Jist you go and ask your mother to help you to something to eat.”

Having found my fair friend, Miss Sally Horn, we proceeded to the table at the upper end of the Green, and took our seats, placing her between us, when a servant of Judge Sandford's spread before us the contents of a basket he had brought from Elmsdale, and we enjoyed a capital luncheon. Poor Mr. John Rafuse, not at all approving of the young lady's behaviour, and determined to make her feel sensible of the danger of losing an admirer by such levity of manner, refused to make one of the party, and, offering his arm to another of his fair acquaintances, led her off to the other end of the field. Miss Horn observed that “pickinick stirs” were stupid things, for a lady had nothing to do but walk up and down, and stare, which

warn't wholesome for weak eyes ; and as for preaching, as she called the speeches, she could hear enough of that of a Sunday, but pronounced the repast the best part of the entertainment, and evinced the sincerity of what she professed by the justice she did to every thing placed before her.

“ Well, I declare,” she exclaimed, “ if I haven't dined well, it's a pity, for I have been helped to every thing twice, and five times to blueberry pudding.”

“ Squire,” said a man seated on the opposite side of the table, and addressing himself to Barclay, “ Squire, may I trouble you for a piece of that 'are apple-pie to your left there ?” pointing to a large tart, the top of which had been accidentally crushed.

“ With great pleasure,” he replied ; and applying a knife and fork to it, remarked, “ I believe you are under a mistake, sir—this is, I rather think, a pigeon-pie, and this one must have been the father of the flock, for my knife makes no impression on him. I will give you the whole bird, and you must dissect it for yourself—here it is ;” and he raised on his fork, amid roars of laughter, during which the table was nearly overturned, a child's shoe, that had been accidentally thrust into it, and lost in the deep and capacious dish.

“ Well, I declare,” said Miss Sally, “ if that ain't little Lizzy Fink's shoe ! She has been hopping about all day with only one on, like a land gosling. If she hain't put her foot in it, it's a pity !—don't it beat all

natur that? I wonder what business children have to pickinick stirs; they are for everlastingly a-poking their noses, or fingers, or feet, into something or another they hadn't ought to."

"Well," continued the old yeoman, with philosophical indifference, "that pumkin-pie to your right will do as well, for, arter all, I guess pumkin is about the king of pies; but, Squire, how is the Judge's potatoes? have they escaped the rot? mine have got something worse."

"What's that?"

"They are actually destroyed by curiosity. Every critter that passes my field says, I wonder if neighbour Millet's potatoes have got the disease; and he pulls and pulls ever so many hills to see, and then says, well, that's strange too; he is the luckiest man in these parts, he hain't lost one, and the next one that comes by just does the same thing, and so on till I have lost just half my crop. I vow I will shoot the first fellow I catch there, and hang him up to scare away the curious. Thank fortin, it hain't effected the Indian corn!" (maize.)

This exclamation was occasioned by the introduction of a number of dishes of this delicious vegetable. In a moment, every one took an ear, and, raising it to his mouth with a hand at each end of it, began to eat. The colour of the corn, and the manner of holding, gave the whole company the appearance of a band playing on the flute. It was the most ludicrous sight

I ever beheld. It was a sort of practice in dumb show.

After Miss Sally had finished two ears of it, she drew breath, and rested a moment. "Why don't you eat?" she said; "you had better begin soon, or it will all be gone;" and then, looking at the long white cob from which she had so expeditiously removed the grain with her teeth, and holding it admiringly by the end before she deposited it on the plate, she continued, "Them cobs are grand for smoking hams or herrings—nothin' in nature gives the same flavour; and as for corking bottles, they are better than boughten ones. Will you hand me the dish?"

"With great pleasure; but had you not better take a little wine first?"

"Well, I don't care if I do," she replied; and, holding a tumbler instead of a glass, observed, "I like wine better than cider for consart; it has more body, and is a more cheerfuller drink, unless the cider be first frozen down, and then bottled tight with corn cobs. Here's to you, sir, and wishing you luck. When you bottle cider, it must be always upended on its neck, for bottoms are thicker than heads, and ain't so apt to go off onexpected; and cider is a wicked thing to burst. Have you been to Yarmouth lately?" she asked, abruptly.

"Yes, last week."

"Oh, Solomon," she said, "you don't say so! How glad I am I fell in with you! Did you see any-

thing of old Mr. Sam Horn's folks down to the mill-ponds?"

As a matter of course, I neither knew nor had heard of old Mr. Sam Horn or his family, but, wishing to hear her out, I replied evasively—"Not recently."

"Well, when you return," she continued, "I wish you would tell them I feel kind of homesick and lonesome, at the cross-roads—will you? I think I shall make tracks homeward soon."

"Why, your folks think you are a-going to be married," I said.

"Oh," she replied, with a piteous face, "there is no such good news, I can tell you. A lady has no chance of seeing folks there, unless, maybe, such a chap as John Rafuse, and the likes of him, is no great catch for any likely gall that's got a home of her own. It's kinder dull there, and there ain't no vessels, nor raisings, nor revivals, nor camp meetings, nor nothing. I'd rather go back."

"Well, that's what old Mr. Sam Horn said; he remarked that he knew you would sooner be among the bull-frogs in the mill-ponds at Yarmouth, than among the owls of the cross-roads."

"Did he, though? well, there's a great deal of fun about the old gentleman, too—ain't there? But, as I am a living sinner, if here ain't a fiddle—ain't it grand?" and, extricating herself from the table, she was on her feet in a moment.

Shortly afterwards, the whole company rose, and a

benevolent matron present proposed that what was left of the viands should be given to the negroes who were in attendance.

“ I guess,” said Miss Sally, “ you might as well then butter the table-cloth then, for, excepting the shoe-pie, which ain’t fit for no christian to eat, unless it’s a darkey, I don’t see there is anything else left.”

“ It would be just as well,” retorted the other, with an offended toss of her head, and not at all relishing the general laugh raised at her expense, “ it would be just as well perhaps if some young folks know what was due to their elders and betters, and didn’t talk quite so fast and so pert.”

The black musician, to whose superior knowledge and authority in such matters all deferred, now summoned the young people to take their places on the green.

“ Will you dance ?” said my fair friend.

I replied, “ I am sorry I am obliged to bid you good bye, and leave you, for I have an engagement elsewhere, this being altogether an unexpected pleasure to me. But pray dance with your friend Mr. Rafuse, who I see has returned : he seems hurt at your neglect.”

“ Who cares ?” she said ; “ if he don’t like it, he may lump it. Tell you what—if John Rafuse was down to the mill-ponds to Yarmouth among the ponders, they would call him *Refuse*, and that’s the poorest sort of boards they have in all their lumber.

Well, I am sorry you are a-going, too. There is grand shooting to the cross-roads, I have hearn Hannah's husband say, only people are too lazy to shoot. If you will come there, I will get him to give you a rolling frolic, for he has got one on hand, and promised me a treat before I go home. I'll hold back for you. Oh, it's fun alive, you may depend!—but pickinick stirs are as heavy as dough—more trouble to come and to go and to carry things than they are worth, and dancing on the ground is hard work, and, besides, it don't seem kinder natural in the day-time, and so many folks looking on, and making their remarks, who have nothing to do with it kinder, puts a wet blanket on it. Oh, a rolling frolic is just what you would like, for it's sociable and onformal ; or, if you can't come, next time you go to Yarmouth, just give us a call to old Mr. Sam Horn's to the mill-ponds. It's a most a beautiful place. It's generally allowed to take the shine off this province, I tell you. You won't forget to give us a call, will you? The old gentleman will be very proud to see you, and I'll.....”

The order of the musician was imperative ; and Mr. Rafuse several times reminded the talkative lady that she was keeping the company waiting.

“ Don't be in such a plaguy pecky hurry,” she answered sharply. “ If you can't wait, get another partner. Don't you see, I am bidding good bye to the stranger ? manners before measures.”

“ Pray don't detain him,” I said. “ Mr. Barclay and I will be at the cross-roads next week, if the weather is favourable, and spend a day or two there shooting.”

“ And the rolling frolic ?” she inquired doubtfully.

“ Oh, certainly, I shall be delighted to accept your kind invitation. Good bye, till we meet again.”

“ Then, I may depend ?”

“ Certainly, I shall only be too happy.”

“ Come, now, I like that,” she said, “ you are the rael grit, every inch of you. Seeing you're a touch above common, I was afraid you would be too proud, maybe, to come among the like of us poor folks. Thank you, sir. Good bye ! mind next week. And now, John, how sorry I am I kept you waiting so long ! What's become of Nabby Frisk I seed you with just now ? She looks as yaller as a kite's foot. What's that tune, Pompey, you are a-playing ? Is it ‘ Off she goes to Mirimishee ?’ ”

“ No, miss, it's ‘ Come tickle my nose with a barley straw.’ ”

“ Oh, my !” she replied, pressing both her hands on her sides, and laughing most immoderately— ‘ Tickle my nose with a barley straw !’ well, if that name don't bang the bush !—it caps all.”

The young people were now all in motion ; but such a dance ! It was a serious business affair. Everybody maintained a profound silence, and the only voice to be heard was that of the black fiddler, who

gave out the figures in a loud tone, that was distinctly audible over the screaming notes of the violin, while the dancers seemed most anxious to execute such steps as they knew with the greatest exactness and agility. In describing this scene, I have preferred giving the greater parts of the dialogue with Miss Horn to recording the general conversation of the tables, because, as this sketch is faithfully drawn from nature, it will convey to the reader an accurate idea of the class to which she belonged.

Taking Barclay's arm, I now strolled to the other end of the glade previous to returning to Elmsdale. This portion of the company had also left the tables, and were scattered in detached groups ; some packing up preparatory to leaving the place, and others listening attentively to a man who was denouncing those who had profaned the place with wine and dancing. He was a tall, thin, cadaverous-looking man, whose long black hair, falling wildly over his shoulders, gave his face a ghastly appearance, while his wild and wandering eye imparted to it a fearful expression. He appeared to be labouring both under great excitement and a considerable impediment of speech which affected his respiration, so as to contract and expand his cheeks and sides, and make the indraught and exit of his breath distressingly audible. Nothing could be more painful than to witness his convulsive utterance, unless it was to hear his dreadful language. He consigned all those who were not members of Temperance

Societies to everlasting perdition, without the slightest compunction, and invoked an early fulfilment of his imprecations upon them. Occasionally, he would terminate a period with a long unmeaning alliteration, calling dancing a profanation of an ordination that led to damnation, or point his harangue against wine-drinkers, by observing, that they think it fine to drink wine like swine; but they'll repine, they'll repine.

Turning in disgust from this profane and uncharitable discourse, we crossed the lawn in the direction of the post road. On our way, we met two young women looking about them in great trouble and perplexity. As soon as they perceived us, one of them approached, and, addressing herself to me, said, "Pray, sir, did you see a beast down there?" pointing to the part of the lawn we had just left. Although I should never have thought of the word brute, or beast, as applicable to the wretched man I had been listening to, I was not at all surprised at the terrified girl using it, knowing that the population of rural districts derive most of their epithets from the objects about them.

"I have indeed seen a strange animal there," I said.

"Was he a black beast, sir?"

"Long black hair," I replied, "and a wild and wicked expression of eye."

"Did you take notice of his feet, sir?" she inquired anxiously.

I now perceived, by this reference to the cloven foot, that the poor girl either thought he was the devil in *propria personâ*, or was possessed of one. "Don't be alarmed," I said. "I didn't observe his feet."

"Had he a long black tail, and a cushion strapped on behind for carrying a gall on?"

Here Barclay, who had been enjoying my mistake, came to the rescue. "You have lost your horse, I suppose."

"Yes, sir, our beast has broke his bridle, and made tracks. I only hope he ain't raced off home."

"Had he four white feet?"

"Yes, sir."

"Ah, then, he's quietly grazing below the crowd. Where is the bridle?—Ah, here it is. Make yourself easy ; I will restore him to you in a moment."

On his return, the two girls were adjusted into their seats ; one riding in front on a man's saddle, the other behind, but on the opposite side of the horse.

"I agree with your friend, Miss Sally Horn," said Barclay ; "pic-nics are stupid things, under any circumstances, but doubly so, when attempted by country people, who do not understand them, are destitute of the resources furnished by education for conversation and amusement, and to whom unoccupied time is always wearisome. Merrimaking in America, except in towns or new settlements, is a sad misnomer, when applied to such matters ; the religion of the country, which is puritanical, is uncongenial to it ; dissent is cold and

gloomy, and represses the cheerfulness of youth, and the buoyancy of healthful spirits. The people are not fond of music, and are strangers to theatrical amusements; and, being dispersed over a great surface of country, instead of dwelling in villages or hamlets, as in Europe, have little opportunity for convivial intercourse; while the exigencies of a northern climate, and the hardships and privations of forest life, leave but little time for relaxation. They are a business and matter-of-fact people. 'Raisings,' which mean the erection of the frames of wooden houses, are everywhere performed by mechanics, except in new settlements. 'Log rolling,' which is the process of heaping together the trunks of trees that have been felled preparatory to being burned, so as to clear the land for cultivation, and 'the Bee,' which is the gathering of people for the purpose of chopping down the forest, or for harvesting, or some other friendly act for a neighbourhood, are all, in like manner, peculiar to remote places.

"When any of these occasions occur, they are followed by festivities of a totally different character from those in the old settlements. In proportion as the country becomes more densely peopled, these acts of mutual assistance, rendered necessary in the first instance by the individual weakness and mutual wants of all, become more and more rare, and finally cease altogether, and with them, merrimakings cease also. Festive assemblies occur now only in towns, or the

midst of the woods: so true in all things is the old maxim—‘extremes meet.’ In that portion of the country where these good old ‘Raisings,’ ‘Bees,’ ‘Log-rollings,’ and other cordial and friendly meetings have died out, nothing has arisen in their place to induce or require a celebration. The formal manners of the town sits awkwardly on the farmer; its customs and fashions neither suit his means nor his condition. Unwilling to be thought rustic and vulgar, he has abandoned the warm-hearted junketing of old; and, unable to accommodate himself to city usages, which he sees so seldom as not thoroughly to understand, he has little or no recreation to give his family; a cold hospitality that acquires ostentation, in proportion as it loses cordiality, gradually supervenes. The character and appearance of the man undergo a sad change; the jolly, noisy yeoman, becomes a melancholy-looking man; his temper is gradually soured by the solitude and isolation in which he lives, and, resorting to politics and religion for excitement, he rushes to the wildest extremes in both, howling for nights together in the protracted meetings of revivals, or raving with equal zeal and ignorance about theories of government.

“The injurious effects upon the health, occasioned by the absence of all amusement, and the substitution of fanaticism, or politics in its place, is not confined to the male part of the population. It falls still heavier on the females. The former have their field labours

to detain them all day in the fresh air; the latter are confined to the house and its close and unwholesome atmosphere, and suffer in proportion. No merry laugh rings on the ear of the anxious mother, no song gladdens her heart, no cheerful dance of joyous youth reflects the image of the past, or gives a presage of a happy future. Sadness, suffering, or discontent, is legible on the face. Silence or fretfulness pervades the house. The home is not happy.

“I am glad you have arranged to go to the cross-roads next week. You will at once see the effect of merrimakings and cheerfulness, not only on the health and looks, but upon the bearing and character of the population. The Judge says ‘Exercise is health,’ but he is mistaken; cheerfulness is an essential ingredient, and where that does not spring from a well-regulated mind, as it does among educated people, amusement, in some shape or other, is absolutely indispensable.”

CHAPTER IX.

THE SCHOOLMASTER ;

OR, THE HECKE THALER.

On our return to Elmsdale, the absurd scene of the morning was adverted to, and the extraordinary manner in which the people were flattered and lauded by the orators of Illinoo.

“That,” said the Judge, “is the inevitable result of the almost universal suffrage that exists in this province. People accommodate themselves to their audience ; and, where the lower orders form the majority of electors, their vanity is appealed to, and not their judgment—their passions, and not their reason ; and the mass, instead of being elevated in the scale of intelligence by the exercise of political power, is lowered by the delusion and craft, of which it is made the willing victim. Nova Scotians have been so often assured that they are the ablest, the wisest, and best of men, though their rulers are both ignorant and corrupt, and that they have a rich and fertile country, blessed with a climate more salubrious and agreeable than that of any other part of the world, they begin to think that law and not industry, government and not enterprise, is all that is wanting for the full enjoy-

ment of these numerous advantages. If any man were to say to them that their winters are long and severe, their springs late, cold, and variable, while much of their soil is wet, stony, or unproductive, and that toil and privation are the necessary incidents of such a condition; or venture to assert that, although the province abounds with mineral wealth, skill, capital, and population are necessary to its successful development; or, that, although the innumerable streams that intersect the country in every direction are admirably adapted for manufactories, the price of labour is yet too high to render such speculations safe or profitable; and, above all, to tell them that they are idle, conceited, and ignorant; and, so long as they maintain this character, they merit all their poverty and all their wretchedness; these demagogues, to whom you listened yesterday, would call him a rabid tory, a proud aristocrat, an enemy to the people, a vile slanderer, and a traitor to his country.

“ It is a melancholy condition of things; and, so long as education is so grievously neglected as it is at present, there appears to be no hope of a change for the better. The British Government, with that foresight and liberality which has always distinguished it in its treatment of the colonies, founded, many years ago, a college at Windsor, an interior town, situated about forty-five miles from Halifax, which has been of incalculable advantage, not merely to Nova Scotia, but to British North America. The

system of common school instruction, on the contrary, which depends upon ourselves, is founded chiefly on the voluntary principle, which has proved as defective in education as it always has in religion. When a man fails in his trade, or is too lazy to work, he resorts to teaching as a livelihood, and the school-house, like the asylum for the poor, receives all those who are, from misfortune or incapacity, unable to provide for themselves. The wretched teacher has no home ; he makes the tour of the settlement, and resides, a stipulated number of days, in every house—too short a time for his own comfort, and too long for that of the family, who can but ill afford either the tax or the accommodation. He is among them, but not of them. His morning is past in punishing the idleness of others, his evening in being punished for his own ; for all are too busy to associate with him. His engagement is generally for a short period. He looks forward to its termination with mingled feelings of hope and fear—in alternate anticipations of a change for the better, or destitution from want of employment. His heart is not in his business, and his work prospers indifferently. He is then succeeded by another, who changes the entire system, and spends his whole time in what he calls rectifying the errors of his predecessor. The school is then unhappily too often closed for want of energy or union among the people ; the house is deserted and neglected, the glass is broken by the children, who regard it as a prison. The door, after

a long but unsuccessful struggle with the wind, falls, at last, in the conflict; the swine then enter, for protection, from the violence or heat of the weather, and retain possession until expelled by the falling roof, or the rod of a new master. It is evident, therefore, that 'the greatest, wisest, and best of mankind' either do not need instruction, having the wonderful good fortune to possess knowledge intuitively, or else the rest of the human family, whom they are so often told they far excel, must indeed be in a state of hopeless and wretched ignorance."

The following day, as we were strolling through Bridge Port, a small, straggling village, situated about a mile and a half above Elmsdale, the subject was again accidentally renewed by our hearing the piercing cries of a poor little urchin, who was undergoing the punishment of the rod in the schoolhouse. As Bridge Port aspires to the honour of being called a town, and its ambitious inhabitants entertain sanguine hopes that it will one day rival Illinoo in importance, this building exhibits much pretension, having a belfry surmounted by a gilt weather-vane, which, though it does not indicate the direction of the wind, being stationary, either from accident or for the purpose of displaying the broad, glittering side of a golden quill at its top, fulfils all that it was designed for, by ornamenting the village. So handsome a structure, deserving a classical name, is dignified by the appellation of Academy. It was from this seat of learning

that the young student's voice was heard complaining of the thorny paths of literature.

“Ah, my good friend, Mr. Enoch Pike,” said the Judge, soliloquizing in reference to the teacher, “if you had ever been in the army, you would have become more indulgent by learning that the tables are sometimes turned, and the master punished himself. I recollect,” he said, addressing himself to me, “when the Duke of Kent was commander-in-chief at Halifax, going to the barracks to see an officer of the Fusileers, and, as I passed the regimental school-room on my way upstairs to the quarters of my friend, I found all the children vociferating at the top of their voices, almost wild with excitement and delight. ‘Ah! my little fellows,’ I said, ‘so you have a holiday to-day, have you?’—‘Oh, yes, sir,’ several of them answered at once, ‘oh, yes, sir, master has been flogged to-day; he has just received three hundred lashes.’”

“He who needs forgiveness himself ought to be merciful to others. I have several times spoken to Pike about his severity, and recommended to him more forbearance, but he always has one answer. Thinking to pacify me by avowing himself a conservative, he invariably commences: ‘Ah, Judge, when I first took charge of this Academy, I was a Radical, a thorough-going Radical; but I soon found a school required a good strict Tory government. Freedom and equality sound prettily in theory, but they don't work well in practice. You, who have presided in

courts of justice, and I, who have presided in seats of learning, know that nothing but a stern air and a strong arm will preserve order.'—'Oh, yes,' I reply, 'that is all very well—but strictness is one thing, and severity another. You must be moderate. Patience is a cardinal virtue in an instructor.'—'Oh, sir,' he says, 'I am the most patient man in the world, but there is a point—there is a line, you know, sir, beyond which, ahem!—there is a limit—a bound—a terminus you may call it—a place where you must stop. They talk about the patience of Job, Judge. I have read every thing about that illustrious man with great care, sir; and, in my humble opinion, his patience was never fairly tried. Job never was a schoolmaster, Judge—oh, no! oh, no! he can't be said to have been fairly tried. Job never kept a school. Corporeal punishment, Judge, either in schools or the army, cannot be dispensed with. We say, and say truly, the *rod* of the empire! I have often asked myself with Virgil, *Quid domini facient*—What shall masters do without the birch? and answer with Ovid, *Principiis obsta*—Nip an offence in the bud; or with Horace, *Quicquid præcipies esto breve*—Let it be a word and a blow. All antiquity is in its favour, and Solomon recommends a liberal use of it. Spare it, says he, and you spoil the child. The quantity of flogging is very properly left to the discretion of the master; the true rule, perhaps, is, *Nocturnâ versate manu versate diurnâ*—Turn them up and whip them

by day or night when needed, not urging them too fast, but keeping a steady rein. *Festina lentè*—An even travelling gait is the proper course. In this manner, he runs on, making the most absurd application possible of his quotations, and regularly talks me down, so that I am glad to drop the subject, and quit the house.

“ They have had a strange set of masters here : one was a universal genius, and converted his school into a sort of workshop. He painted signs and sign-boards, gilded frames, repaired watches and guns, made keys in place of missing ones, veneered bones and tables, cut and lettered tomb-stones, and was devoted to carving and turning. He prided himself upon being able to execute any difficult little job, that exceeded the skill of anybody else in the country. He preferred every thing to teaching, and his scholars preferred him to every other master ; for it seemed to be a fixed principle with him not to trouble them if they would observe the same forbearance towards him. But the parents, not approving of this amicable treaty, refused to ratify it, and he was discharged, to the great grief of the young men, and the infinite loss of all young ladies who had brooches, lockets, or bracelets to mend.

“ Universal Smith was universally regretted. His successor, though equally engaged for others, was a totally different person. Instead of mending and patching up things for his neighbours, he made more

breaches than Universal Smith could have soldered or welded together again in a long life. He set the people by the ears ; and, when he failed in an attempt to separate friends, got up a little quarrel with them on his own account. He piqued himself on his knowledge of law, and advised tenants to overhold, and landlords to distrain, and, being a talebearer, was a great promoter of actions of defamation, in which he was generally a witness, and attested to different words from those laid in the declaration, whereby his friends were nonsuited, and his foes escaped. He induced several persons who were indifferently honest to expose their roguery by endeavouring to evade the payment of their just debts, by availing themselves of the benefit of the statute of limitations. Even his boys were set against each other, so that scarcely any two of them were upon speaking terms.

“ At that time, there was a female school held in one end of the apartment, which was divided into two rooms by a temporary wooden screen. This afforded too good an opportunity for hostilities to be neglected, and he, accordingly, attempted to drive away the teacher and her children by resorting to every petty annoyance and insult in his power ; but, finding their endurance superior to his patience, he commenced a regular system of encroachment. He was always at his post an hour before the school commenced, during which time the partition was advanced a few inches,

until he succeeded in thrusting them out and engrossing the whole building.

“He was a constant contributor to a scurrilous newspaper, published at Illinoo, in which he misrepresented the motives and conduct of every gentleman in the neighbourhood, and, as is always the case with people of this description, seemed to take peculiar pleasure in abusing those to whom he was most indebted for personal or pecuniary kindness. At last, he managed to quarrel with the boys, their parents, and, finally, the trustees of the school; which ended, first, in his dismissal, and then in a lawsuit, that terminated in his ruin and sudden disappearance from the place.

“After this, the school was closed for some time, for want of a master, when a stranger presented himself as a candidate, and was accepted. Mr. Welcome Shanks (for such was his name) was one of the most extraordinary-looking men I ever beheld. He was very tall, and, though his frame was large and muscular, exceedingly thin. His back, either from the constant habit of stooping, or from a rheumatic affection so common in this country, was almost circular, and had the effect of throwing his long bony arms forward, which looked as if they were still growing, and in time would reach the ground, and enable him to travel upon all-fours. His face was hard, hollow, and pale, having an anxious and careworn expression, that indicated either mental or bodily suffering. His eye

was bright and intelligent, but restless, as was his head, which he kept continually but slowly moving from side to side. He was attired in a suit of old, rusty black, which, though almost threadbare, and showing evident marks of successive repairs, was scrupulously neat. He wore a white, Quaker-looking hat, having a brim of more than usual dimensions, the front of which was bent downwards, so as effectually to protect his face, and especially his eyes, from the strong light of the sun. His queue gave an inexpressibly droll effect to his figure, for he carried his head and neck so much lower than his shoulders, that it could not reach his back, but, resting on the cape of his coat, stood up almost in a perpendicular direction, and suggested the idea of its being the handle of the protruding arms, or the root to which they were indebted for their extraordinary length.

“His manner was shy and reserved; he held but little intercourse with any one, appearing to have but two topics of conversation in which he took any interest, namely, piracy, and the history of the early settlement of the province by the French, their subsequent expulsion, and cruel dispersion in the other colonies, to every detail of which he listened with the greatest eagerness. He was accustomed to take long and solitary walks, upon which occasions it was observed he was armed with a huge club, which was accidentally discovered to be hollow, and to contain something of a smaller size within it, generally sup-

posed to be a rapier, or dagger. He also carried about with him, wherever he went, a thin, but broad tin case, containing a pocket-book, which he would often take out during school hours, and attentively study, occasionally altering or making additions to what appeared to be written in it.

“ The story of the hollow cane, or sword-stick, filled the school with wonder and fear, which the mysterious case and black book raised to the highest pitch. His scholars, however, soon perceived the danger of approaching him when thus engaged ; for, though at other times the gentlest and most patient of beings, he became furious, and almost frantic, if disturbed in the apparently abstruse calculations of this magical book, seizing the thoughtless offender by the collar, with his giant arm, and swinging him round and round in the air with fearful rapidity, gnashing his teeth the while, and accompanying these gyrations with dreadful threats of vengeance. These outbursts of passion were of a violent character, but happily of short duration. They ceased as suddenly as they arose, when he would place the culprit on his feet, and, patting him tenderly and affectionately on his head, say, ‘ Don’t interrupt me, my son, when I am at my studies—it agitates me.’ His size, his strength, his generally calm and imperturbable temper, and occasional fits of fury, ensured implicit obedience, and the silence, order, and diligence, observed in his school, excited the astonishment of everybody.

“One day, just as he had finished a diagram, and entered it in his pocket-book, he was suddenly sent for by a passenger in the mail-coach that passed through Bridge Port, who desired to see him for a few minutes at the inn. In his haste to join his friend, he forgot his mysterious manuscript and its case, both which lay on his table, in full view of the boys. In a moment, all eyes were turned on those objects of wonder. ‘The book — the book!’ was whispered round the school; but, such was the awe inspired by the man, and everything that belonged to him, that for a time no one ventured to leave his seat. At last, a sentinel was placed at the door, in order to give notice of his return; a consultation held; and one more bold than the rest, with palpitating heart and trembling hands, opened the fearful volume. ‘Ah!’ he exclaimed, ‘it’s all magic — look here, boys! Ah! you are afraid, are you! — then keep your places: it’s filled with magical figures, and the writing and all is in magic. I can’t make head or tail of it!’ Then, taking up the tin case, he drew, from the opposite end to that which usually contained the book, a measuring tape, a long cord, with a bullet fastened to the end of it, a box of phosphorus-matches, and a small travelling pocket-compass. ‘Here’s the things to make the magic ring with, boys! — wouldn’t you like to see him do it? Who’s afeerd? I ain’t. I’d give anything to see the Devil.’ — ‘Here he is!’ said the sentinel. ‘Who? Who?’ shouted the boy, in great alarm. ‘Why, the

master, to be sure,' replied the other; 'who did you suppose it was?' — 'Oh, my sakes!' said the little boaster, 'how you scared me! I actilly thought it was the Devil himself agoing to take me at my word!' and, hastily replacing the things where he had found them, he withdrew to his seat.

"When Shanks returned to his desk, and saw the book and the case lying exposed on the table, he turned suddenly pale. He clinched his fist, and strode up and down the room with great rapidity, glaring on the boys like a tiger, with a searching look, as if selecting a victim for pouncing upon. In a few moments, the paroxysm, as usual, passed off. He sat calmly down, and, taking up the book, examined it carefully page by page, when he suddenly paused, and, looking attentively at something that attracted his attention, held up the writing to the light, first in one direction and then in another, and finally applied a magnifying-glass to it, when he pointed to the boy who had called him a magician, and said, 'John Parker, come forward. How dare you meddle with my property, sir, in my absence?'—'I didn't,' replied the boy, with the greatest assurance. 'I haven't been off my seat.'—'You did, sir!' rejoined the master, in a voice of thunder. 'I appeal to every scholar present; and if they all were to lie as you have done, and say that you did not touch this book, I wouldn't believe them. The name of Two Thumb Parker is written here in your own hand. You are your own accuser,

and have borne testimony against yourself. Leave me, sir—leave me, instantly, while I am calm, and don't return again! Go!" and, raising his voice, and stamping passionately on the floor, he shouted out, 'Go! go!' when the terrified boy, recovering from the stupefaction into which he had been thrown by the marvellous discovery of his name and guilt, suddenly bolted out of the room, without waiting for his hat or coat, and hurried homeward, with all possible speed. The truth is, the unfortunate urchin had a very remarkable thumb on his right hand. It was only half the usual length, and was divided from the last joint outwards into two parts, each being perfect, and having a nail upon it, from whence he was called 'Two Thumb Parker.' While holding the open book in his hand, he unconsciously left the impression of his deformed and soiled thumb on the leaf, which the master not inaptly denominated 'his name written by his own hand.'

"The secret was known only to Shanks; but the story of the magical book, of the Devil entering the boy's name in it, and of the tin case, with its contents, circulated far and wide over the whole country. Other peculiarities in his conduct increased and confirmed the general suspicion with which he was surrounded. He had a remarkable-looking old silver dollar, that he called his '*Hecke Thaler*,' two magical words, of which he never could be induced to explain the meaning. He would often take it from his pocket, and ex-

amine it with as much care and minuteness as if he had never seen it before, and then poise it on the point of one of the fingers of his left hand, strike it with the blade of a knife, or ring it on the stove, and listen to its tones, with the greatest delight. Whenever he saw dollars in other people's possession, he invariably entreated to be permitted to examine them, and compare them with his own, expressing the greatest anxiety to procure one exactly similar, in all respects, to that to which he was so much attached, and offered a large sum to any one that would procure him its counterpart.

“ All schools throughout the country are closed at twelve o'clock on Saturday, which is invariably considered a half holiday. He deviated from this custom, by giving the boys the entire day; and, whenever the weather permitted, always left the village on Friday afternoon, habited in a suit of strong, coarse homespun, carrying a large and heavy knapsack on his shoulders, and the ominous hollow walking cane in his hand—a useless and inconvenient thing in the woods, and one with which no other man would encumber himself. Whither he went, or how he occupied himself, no one could tell—all that was known was, that he invariably took the same route into the forest, walking at a rapid rate, and never returned again until Monday morning, about eight o'clock, in time to open his school, greatly fatigued and exhausted.

“ I have already observed that, when he presented himself as a candidate for the situation of master of the academy at Bridge Port, he was a stranger. No one knew who or what he was, or whence he came, although, from his accent, manner, and habits, it was thought probable that he was either a Nova Scotian, or a native of the New England States. A residence of several months among the people did not enlighten the curious upon these points, and public opinion was much divided as to the real nature of his character. Some thought him to be a spy in the employment of France, a suspicion encouraged by the fact that he had several French books descriptive of British North America, and one in particular, written by a Jesuit priest, (Charleroix) containing numerous maps of the harbours, coasts, and rivers of the country, and also by the minute inquiries he made about the removal of the Acadians. Others believed he was engaged in devising or executing some extensive plan of robbery; for his landlady, unable to endure the oppression of her curiosity, had opened, by the aid of a neighbour's key, a wooden chest of his, while he was absent at school, and discovered in it a dark lantern, a crowbar, a cold chisel, and a hatchet, as well as other tools suitable for breaking into houses. But the better opinion appeared to be that he was a magician, and was in league with the powers of darkness. His pocket-book, the contents of the tin case, the *Hecke Thaler*, and, lastly, a crucible and some charcoal, found

in his chest, together with some extraordinary-looking fossils, which were no doubt ‘Philosopher’s Stones,’ seemed to put the matter beyond all dispute. If further corroboration were needed, his face furnished it, by the expression it wore of care and anxiety ; for, as it was shrewdly observed, although the Devil imparts knowledge and wealth to his votaries, he is a stranger to happiness himself, and cannot confer it upon others.

“ No man was ever so unconscious of the feelings and suspicions he had given rise to as poor Welcome Shanks : loving solitude, and avoiding society, he was not aware that he was avoided himself. The awe with which he was regarded rather flattered his vanity than awakened his apprehensions, for he mistook it for respect for his great erudition and unimpeachable character. Poor man ! he thought if he had a secret, it was his own, and he had a right to keep it. Had he mixed more with the world, he would have found that it is an offence against society at large, for a man to presume to have a secret at all, unless the fact of his having it be carefully concealed also.

“ No avowed secret ever was permitted to be retained inviolate ; even the freemasons have had theirs disclosed. A lady once told me, she had discovered it, after years of anxious perseverance ; and, as it was one of the most singular mysteries in the world, she would communicate it to me. She said she had given her husband no peace by day or night, until he re-

vealed it. She had coaxed him with endearments, teased him with importunities, tormented him with annoyances, and entrapped him when unguarded; and, finally, extorted from him the disclosure, which was, that in reality there was no secret, after all, there being, in fact, nothing to tell. Many consultations were held by the people, as to the best mode of making him give some account of himself; and at last it was decided to have him apprehended, and examined before a magistrate, but the difficulty was to find a charge that would justify his arrest. While this embarrassing subject was under consideration, he saved them the trouble of proceeding any further in the matter, by relinquishing the school and quitting the place.

“ A few evenings previous to his departure, he called at my house, and, sending in his name, begged the favour of a private interview. After carefully closing the study-door, and looking round the room, to ascertain that we were alone, and out of the hearing of others, he said, ‘ Judge, I have discovered that there is a treasure buried in this estate.’—‘ I know it,’ I said.—‘ Ah,’ he replied, his countenance beaming with joy, ‘ ah, I am right, then ! I knew I could not be mistaken. When, and by whom was it hidden, sir ?—I will not ask you where, for that I have discovered already.’—‘ By my father and myself: we have sunk more money, in clearing, cultivating, and improving Elmsdale, than would purchase it twice over ; but that money neither you nor I will ever my find, my friend.’

“ His face suddenly became overcast with an expression of disappointment and mortification. I had unintentionally, it seemed, wounded his feelings, by subjecting him and his theory to what he considered ridicule. ‘ Will you permit me to dig for the treasure where I know it to be ?’—‘ Certainly,’ I replied ; ‘ you may dig wherever you please, provided you do me no damage, and do not disfigure my grounds.’—‘ What proportion will you require as owner of the soil ?’—‘ You are welcome to all you can find. I only ask the privilege of a friend, to advise you to save yourself the trouble. It is impossible there can be any hidden treasure on this property. It never was inhabited, previous to our occupation, but by Indians, who, we all know, had neither gold nor silver, and by the French Acadians, who were almost equally poor. They were mere peasants, who lived on the productions of their farms, while the little trade they had, either with each other or the savages, was conducted by barter. They had nothing to bury.’—‘ Pardon me,’ he said ; ‘ many had not, but some had money—so my information goes—and I can rely upon it.’—‘ Yes, large sums of money for conducting the fur trade with France ; although I must admit that this district is not rich in treasure.’—‘ But Chester Bay, Judge—Chester Bay, Judge !’ and he straitened himself for the first time, I believe, since he came to Bridge Port ; and exhibited his great height and manly frame to such advantage, that he seemed as if

he had been suddenly transformed into another being. ‘Chester Bay, Judge, is the place for treasure. Millions were buried there by the pirates; whole cargoes of Spanish galleons, coin and bullion, jewels, precious stones, and wealth untold. I am on the track of it at last—a few weeks more, and it is mine: where the rod first pointed, it now bends down as if to touch it. But the propitious time of night is now come, and, by your leave, kind sir, I will go and dig for this Frenchman’s money,’ and, seizing his hat, disappeared from the room.

“Shortly afterwards, we were disturbed by a violent knocking at the door, and my servant was not a little alarmed at finding the unwelcome visitor seeking admission again at so late an hour. ‘Show me into your master’s study,’ he said. ‘Judge,’ he exclaimed, ‘I have found it! I have found it! it was concealed under the root of an old tree. Here it is!—but you were right, sir, in saying the Acadians were generally peasants. This was the saving of a poor man, for it is chiefly in small silver pieces.’

“He then unstrapped his knapsack, and, taking from it a rusty old tin kettle, removed the cover, and exposed to view a quantity of silver shillings, sixpences, Spanish pistareens, and quarter and half dollars, amounting, in all, to about seventy-five pounds.—‘This is not the property of the French,’ I said, after examining a number of the different coins: ‘the Acadians were transported from this country in the year 1755; but

nearly all this money bears a subsequent date ; I think that I know to whom this package belonged.’— ‘ Ah,’ he observed, with a sad but decided tone, and an air of grievous disappointment, ‘ if there is an owner, I will restore it : treasure-trove—I think that is the word, Judge—treasure-trove in this country, where the King makes no claim, is the property of the finder, but treasure lost belongs to the owner—it must be restored.’

“ ‘ About thirty years ago,’ I said, ‘ there was a knife-grinder wandering about the country, who was always in the habit of getting drunk on Saturday night, on which occasion his wife very prudently hid his money, lest he should squander more of it than he could afford. Once she hid it so effectually, that she could never find it again, and loud and long were the lamentations of the poor people over their lost property. She always believed that it had been stolen by some person who had observed her concealing it. The following year they were both drowned, by the upsetting of a ferry-boat, where the bridge now stands at the village. They were strangers unconnected with, and unknown to, anybody in the province, and have long since been forgotten. Can you show me the spot where this money was found ?’— ‘ Certainly,’ he replied ; and, taking out the mysterious pocket-book, he showed me a sketch of the stump.— ‘ I always mark places,’ he observed, ‘ where the hazel wand points to metallic substances, and take their bearings by measurements

to other objects, so that I can find them again. My observations are all entered in a cipher of my own invention, for fear of losing my book and disclosing my secret.’—‘Will you show me your wand?’—‘Certainly; here it is;’ and, unscrewing the top of his cane, he drew out the prophetic hazel—‘Ah, sir,’ he exclaimed, with evident satisfaction and pride, ‘this is a beautiful wand—a real German hazel from Upper Saxony—it is as true as a load-stone.—How truly it indicated this treasure; and it points as decidedly to that of the pirates, which, by God’s blessing and the aid of this little windfall of money, I hope to reach soon. That wand, Judge, and this inestimable *Hecke Thaler*,’ showing me the renowned old silver dollar, ‘cost me a great deal of money—all that I was worth in the world at the time, a very large sum for a poor man, but a mere trifle for such invaluable things—I gave a thousand dollars for them.’

“‘Pray, what is a *Hecke Thaler*?’ I inquired, ‘I never heard the term before.’—‘A *Hecke Thaler*, Judge, is a sympathetic dollar. Everything in nature, animate and inanimate, is endowed with sympathy. In the animal world, it exists in sex; in the mineral world, in kindred, affinity, or identity. This dollar is known to be sympathetic. It has been proved to be so in Germany. If a kindred or identical dollar can be found of equal purity and texture, size, and density, and brought into contact with the sympathy of this one, they can produce a third dollar, and so

on *ad finitum*, from which wonderful power it derives its name of *Hecke Thaler*, or Hatching Dollar. It is one of the mysteries of nature that science cannot explain or imitate—one of the innumerable wonders with which an inscrutable Providence surrounds us on all sides, though, in reality, no more strange or miraculous than we are ourselves. Like begets like—unlike begets unlike: steel and flint produce fire—they are not like, but wheat brings wheat of its own kind, and in its own likeness—so silver produces silver. It is the restorative power of nature that thus counteracts the tendency to decay in all things terrestrial. I bought the Hecke Thaler and the hazel wand from an aged German in Lunenburg, whose father.....’ ‘You have been grossly deceived and shamefully treated, my good friend,’ I said. ‘Is it possible that a man of your good sense can believe in such a palpable absurdity as the Hecke Thaler?’

“He rose hastily, in great agitation, and held up his hand, as if to waive the discussion, and said, ‘I know all you would say, Judge—I know all you think. You imagine that my head is affected, and regard me either as a madman or a fool. It is natural, very natural you should. I have not your knowledge, Judge—I am not so learned nor so wise as you are; but I crave your pardon, good sir—think me not presumptuous if I say there are some things I know which you have not studied. The blind hear more accurately and have a keener sense of feeling, than

those who have eyesight; they have less to distract their attention, and observe more accurately. I have thought deeply on this subject, and must not lose my faith because I cannot explain the mysteries of nature, else am I an unbelieving heathen. I follow my destiny, whatever is, is, and whatever is to be, will come to pass—neither you nor I can alter the decrees of Fate. Next week my term expires at Bridge Port. Will you be so good as to allow this money to remain in your safe till that time, when I will call and take it on my way to Chester Bay, where it is my intention to prosecute my search until I obtain the object of my wishes.’

“In a few days he returned, accompanied by Barclay, who converted his money for him into the more portable and convenient form of gold, and, thanking me for what he called my great condescension and kindness, bade me farewell.

“A month or two after this, I observed a notice in one of the papers of the death of Mr. Welcome Shanks, who lost his life by the collapse of a shaft in which he was working on Tancook Island, in Chester Bay. The object of the excavation, it went on to say, appeared to be so perfectly unintelligible, that it was generally supposed the unfortunate man must have been of unsound mind.

CHAPTER X.

THE LONE HOUSE.

This morning, I accompanied the Judge and Miss Sandford in their sleigh on an excursion into the country. The scene, though rather painful to the eyes, was indescribably brilliant and beautiful. There had been, during last night and part of yesterday, a slight thaw, accompanied by a cold fine rain that froze, the moment it fell, into ice of the purest crystal. Every deciduous tree was covered with this glittering coating, and looked in the distance like an enormous though graceful bunch of feathers ; while, on a nearer approach, it resembled, with its limbs now bending under the heavy weight of the transparent incrustation, a dazzling chandelier. The open fields, covered with a rough but hardened surface of snow, glistened in the sun as if thickly strewed with the largest diamonds ; and every rail of the wooden fences in this general profusion of ornaments was decorated with a delicate fringe of pendent ice, that radiated like burnished silver. The heavy and sombre spruce, loaded with snow, rejoiced in a green old age. Having its massy shape relieved by strong and numerous lights,

it gained in grace what it lost in strength, and stood erect among its drooping neighbours, venerable but vigorous, the hoary forefather of the wood.

The tall and slender poplar and white birch, which here and there had sprung up in the new clearings from the roots of old trees, and outgrown their strength and proportions, bent their heads gracefully to the ground under their unusual burden, and formed fanciful arches, which the frost encircled with numerous wreaths of pearls. Everything in the distance was covered with the purest white, while the colours of nearer objects were as diversified as their forms.

The bark of the different trees and their limbs appeared through the transparent ice; and the rays of the sun, as they fell upon them, invested them with all the hues of the prism. It was a scene as impossible to describe as to forget. To the natives, it is not an unusual sight, for it generally occurs once a year, at least, and its effects are as well appreciated as its beauty. The farmer foresees and laments serious injury to his orchard, the woodman a pitiless pelting of ice as he plies his axe in the forest, the huntsman a barrier to his sport, and the traveller an omen of hard and severe weather; and yet such was the glory of the landscape, that every heart felt its magic, and acknowledged the might and the beauty of this sudden transformation. It was the work of a night. The sun set with chilling showers. It rose in all its splendour to witness and to heighten, by its presence,

the magnificence and brilliancy of the scene. We constantly recurred to this topic after our return, and again and again went to the window, as the day declined, to catch the last parting glimpse of the "silver frost" before it dissolved from view under the gaze of the sun, and vanished for ever. In the evening, winter and its scenery, its festivities and privations, and its effects on the habits, feelings, and tastes of the people, formed the subject of a long conversation, in which the Judge told me the following sad and interesting story:—

On one of the shore-roads, as the highways near the Atlantic are called, in a distant part of the province, there is a lone house, situated in the midst of one of the wildest and most barren tracts of country in these colonies; on either side of it are enormous bogs, stretching away in the distance for miles. Behind it is an undulating country of granite formation, covered with enormous masses of detached rock. In front is a lake, in a deep and sunken hollow, so still, so cheerless, and repulsive, that it looks like the pool of death. Beyond this, a mountain wave of granite rises and shuts out the sea, which is not far distant. The place where the house stands is a small ridge of land in the form of a wedge, which formerly bore beech and birch trees; and not only had a tolerable soil, but was exempt from the incumbrance of loose stone. Beyond this ridge, however, all is barren. The surface is either naked rock or partially covered with moss, the

wild strawberry, and the hardy white clover. Here and there a stunted birch or dwarf larch finds a scanty subsistence in the crevices of the rocks, or in coarse gravel formed by the disintegration that time and the alternations of heat and frost have produced in the granite. In the hollows, which resemble basins or stone reservoirs, a boggy substance has accumulated, that nurtures small groves of ill-conditioned and half-fed firs, which seem to have grown prematurely old, and grey before their time, being covered with white moss, which, climbing up their stems, hangs pendent from their limbs, like hoary locks. The larger bogs on the right and left are in part covered with a long, coarse, aquatic grass (which the moose and carraboo feed upon in winter, when the frost enables them to travel over these treacherous and dangerous places), and in part by the yellow water-lilies, the wild iris, and clusters of cranberry-bushes.

It is impossible to conceive anything more lonely and desolate than this place. Even in summer, when the grassy road is well defined, and vegetation has done its best to clothe the huge proportions of the landscape and conceal its poverty and deformity, when the glittering insects flutter by to withdraw your attention from their dank, stagnant, and unwholesome cradles, to their own beauty, and the wild bee, as he journeys on, whispers of his winter's store of honey, and the birds sing merrily that contentment is bliss; even then, excited by the novelty of the scene, and

interested, as you are, in the little, lone household of the desert, its total seclusion from the world, and the whole human family, overpowers and appals you. A crowd of ideas rushes into your mind faster than you can arrange and dispose of them. Surely, you say, Here, at least, is innocence ; and, where there is innocence, there must be happiness. Where there is no tempter, there can be no victim. It is the “still water” of life. Here, all is calm and quiet, while, on either side, is the rapid or the cataract. The passions can have no scope ; the affections must occupy the whole ground. How can envy, hatred, malice, or uncharitableness find an entrance ? There can be nothing to envy where the condition of all is alike, and where all that is garnered is a common stock. There can be no hatred, where there is no injury or no superiority ; but they can love one another, for they are all in all to each other ; and they can trim their fire for the poor wayfaring man, feed him, and send him on his journey rejoicing. They can hear from him of the houseless stranger, and bless God with thankful hearts that He has given them a home to dwell in. He may tell them tales of war, but they feel they are beyond its reach ; and, what is far better, learn that, if poverty has its privations, it has also its own peculiar privileges and immunities. Thoughts like these naturally force themselves upon you in such a scene. Your feelings are subdued and softened. You behold the family with interest and affection, but still you shrink at a full

view of their situation, and involuntarily regard it with pity as a hopeless exile. You are a creature of habit; you cannot understand it; you feel you have social duties to perform; that grief is lessened when the burden is divided, and happiness increased when it is imparted; that man was not made to live alone; and that natural wants, individual weakness, and common protection require that, though we live in families, our families must dwell in communities.

If such be the feelings that a traveller entertains, even in summer, how must he shudder when he regards this lone house in winter? I have seen many solitary habitations as well as this, and some of them much farther removed from any neighbourhood, but never one so dreary and so desolate. Follow any new road into the wilderness, and you will find a family settled there, miles and miles from any house. But imagination soon fills up the intervening space with a dense population, and you see them in the midst of a well-cultivated country, and enjoying all the blessings of a civilized community. They are merely pioneers. They have taken up their station: the tide of emigration will speedily reach them, and pass on. Go into that house, and you are at once struck with the difference of the two families. The former is still life and contentment; the latter is all hope, bustle, and noisy happiness. The axe is at work on the forest, that is ringing with its regular blows. Merry voices are heard there, and the loud

laugh echoes through the woods, for friends have come from the settlements, and ten acres of wood are to be cut down in one day. Sleighs are arriving with their neighbours and relations, from whom they have lately parted ; and at night there will be a festive assembly at a place which, until the year before, when the road was made and the house built, was in the heart of a howling wilderness. There is nothing about such a dwelling to make you think it desolate, although loneliness is its characteristic. Converse with the forester, a fine, manly, native settler, and you find he has visions of a mill on his brook ; he talks of keeping fifty head of horned cattle in a few years. As soon as his mill is finished, this log-hut is to be superseded by a large framed house ; and that miserable shed, as he calls his stable, is to give place to a spacious barn, seventy feet long and fifty feet wide. He is full of merriment, confidence, and hope. In the former place, a pious resignation, a placid contentment, hearts chastened and subdued into a patient endurance of toil, and a meek but firm reliance on the superintendence of a Divine Providence, form a strong contrast to the more animated and self-relying forest family.

The wintry blast howls round their dwelling, like a remorseless and savage foe. Its hollow, mournful voice appals the heart with painful recollections of its overpowering strength ; and the poor besieged family, as they encircle their little fire at night (drawn still

closer together now by their mutual fears and affections), offer up a silent prayer to the throne of grace, and implore the continued and merciful protection of Him who is always a father to the fatherless. At this season the road is covered, in common with the dreary desert, with deep snow. In the clear light of an unclouded sun, its direction may be ascertained by an experienced traveller, and by him alone ; but, at night, or in stormy weather, it is a vast and trackless field, where the fatigued and bewildered stranger is doomed to inevitable death.

To afford shelter and assistance to the traveller, to furnish him with a guide, and speed him on his way, was the object which John Lent had in view in settling on the "Ridge." He was aided by the subscriptions and encouraged by the personal assistance of those on either side of the desert who were interested in the road, or in the benevolence of the undertaking. A house and barn were erected with much labour and difficulty (for all the materials were brought from a great distance), the Court of Sessions granted him a free tavern license, and the legislature of the province a small sum of ten or twelve pounds a-year, in consideration of the importance of this house to the mail communication to that part of the province.

The Ridge contained about thirty acres of land. These were soon cleared and brought into cultivation, and produced his winter's store of hay, and yearly

supply of wheat and vegetables. His sheep and cows wandered over the plains, and found in summer, in an extended range, sufficient food on the scattered and short, but sweet, herbage of white clover, and the leaves of the dwarf bushes. The bog supplied him with fuel and materials for cultivating his fields, while the proceeds of his little inn enabled him to obtain some of those articles of groceries that habit has rendered indispensable to the poorest people in this country.

Such was the condition of this family. They derived a scanty but a certain provision from the sources I have described. Year followed year with little variation. Their occupations came and ceased with the seasons. Time passed silently away, and, as there were few incidents of importance that interested them, its flight was unperceived and unmarked. The three eldest daughters had severally left home for service in the next town, which was a seaport ; had married and quitted the country ; and the family, at the time I am speaking of, consisted of John Lent, his wife, and three little girls, the youngest of whom was seven years of age. When I arrived at the house last summer, Mrs. Lent did not at first recognise me. Old age had so completely covered my visage with his wrinkled and repulsive mask, that the features of manhood were effectually concealed from view. It had removed my hair, deprived me of my teeth, obscured my eyes, and disfigured my cheeks with unseemly furrows.

These ravages of time, however, are wisely permitted or ordained, to prepare us to leave a world which we can no longer either serve or adorn. In proportion as we lose our personal attractions, mankind recede from us; and, at last, we mutually take leave of each other without a sigh or a tear of regret.

What years had gradually effected for me, misfortune had suddenly and deeply engraven upon her. The young and cheerful woman whom I had known was now a staid and care-worn matron; the light and elastic step of youth had been succeeded by the slow and heavy tread of limbs stiffened with toil, and her hair had blanched under grief and anxiety. My voice first attracted her attention. She said she knew it, and was certain it was that of an old and kind friend, and entreated me not to think her ungrateful if she could not recall my name, for her poor head had been confused of late. On discovering who I was, she communicated to me a brief outline of her melancholy story, the details of which I subsequently heard from others at Shelburne.

During the previous winter, her husband had set out on foot for the nearest town, to procure some little necessaries for the house, and intended to return the next day. The subsequent morning was fine, but the weather, as is often the case in this variable climate, suddenly changed. At noon it began to snow; towards evening the wind had risen to a gale, and clouds of sleet were sweeping over the desert with resistless

fury. Once or twice she went to the door, and looked out, but withdrew immediately, nearly blinded and suffocated by the drifting storm. Her evening meal was prepared for her husband. The table, with its snow-white cover, stood ready for his reception. The savoury stew simmered on the hearth, and the potatoes gave out their steam in token of readiness, while the little earthen teapot and unleavened cake, the never-failing appendages of a settler's meal, were ready to cheer him on his return. " Ah, here he is !" she said, as the outer door suddenly opened, followed by thick volumes of snow that nearly filled the little entry. " No, that is the wind that has forced it open. He won't be here to-night ; we had better go to supper. He saw the coming storm, and remained in town. I often wonder how he can fortel the weather so well. He knows when a thaw, or a frost, or a fall of snow, or a tempest is approaching, hours beforehand. He was too wise to try the barren to-day."

His absence gave her no anxiety whatever ; she had become familiar with the storms, and dreaded them only for others who were strangers and unwary. He had often been away before, and there was nothing unusual in his not arriving now. It was a proof of his sagacity, and not of his danger.

The gale continued unabated throughout the second day, and she neither expected him nor prepared for his reception. The third day was calm and tranquil ; the whirlwind had spent its fury, and, having rolled

up its wreathy pillows, sunk down and reposed in utter exhaustion. The snow-birds came in numbers about the barn, to feed on the hayseed of the stack-yard, and the cattle were set at liberty, to relax their stiffened limbs, and to go to the spring in quest of water. The affrighted and half-famished poultry issued from their hiding-places, and clamorously demanded that attention that had been so long withheld, while the ill-omened crow came at the well-known signal, to enforce his claim to a share of the food, as a houseless and a friendless stranger. The children, too, were released from their prison, and life and animation were again to be seen round the Lone House.

As the mother stood at the door, and looked abroad upon the scene, a little spring bird, the first harbinger of that glad season, carolled merrily from the leafless apple-tree at the side of the cottage.

“Thank God!” she said, “winter is now nearly over, and its storms and trials; we have seldom more than one very heavy gale of wind after that little bird comes to sing us a song of spring. Your father will be at home early to-day.” And she sent the eldest girl to the snares set for catching wild rabbits. “They will be all abroad to-day,” she said; “see if there are any there for his dinner.”

In a short time the child returned, with two of these little animals in her hand, and the table was again spread; but he came not. He would return, perhaps, she thought, in the evening; for, when he

did not arrive at noon, he seldom reached home until sunset. But night came with its accustomed meal, and his place was still vacant. To-morrow would be post-day; he had very properly waited, she said, to come with Ainslow. She was glad of it, for he was lame, the walking was heavy, and he had a pack to carry. Yes, they would both be here early in the day. Doubt, fear, or misgiving, never entered her mind. She had great confidence in his judgment; whatever he decided on was right, and it was prudent and much more agreeable for him to travel in company with the postman, who had all the news, and was a pleasant and obliging man. The next day brought again and again merry faces to the door, to look over the dreary bog, and catch the first glimpse of the sleigh.

At last, a shout proclaimed its approach, and the whole group were assembled to see the little dark speck that was moving forward in the distance, and gradually enlarging into a distinct form. It was anxiously watched, but was slow in coming, as every thing in life is that is impatiently waited for.

The arrival of the postman was an important event at this little habitation. He was a part of that world on either side of them, of which they had heard and formed vague conceptions, but which they had never seen. Their father's return, too, was an affair of great interest. He did not very frequently leave home; and, when he did, he always brought back some little

present to the mother or her children, from some kind persons, whom their attentions and peculiar situation and character had converted from strangers into friends. They were little events, to be sure; but these little incidents constitute "the short and simple annals of the poor." They are all that occur to diversify the monotony of their secluded life. The postman came, but he had no companion. He drove his sleigh to the opposite side of the road, where the barn stood, and, leaving it there, he proceeded to the house. He was met by Mrs. Lent, who shook him cordially by the hand, and said that she had expected her husband with him, but supposed he was not ready to come.

The dinner, however, was now waiting, and she pressed him to go in and partake with the family of their humble meal.

"Have you seen John?"

The truth had now to be told, which Ainslow did in the kindest and most considerate manner. After preparing her mind for the reception of very bad news, he proceeded to inform her, that as he crossed the wooden bridge, at the black brook in the bog, he observed John Lent sitting on the floor, with his back resting against the rail, a stiffened and frozen corpse. He had evidently been overpowered by the storm, which, coming from the eastward, blew full in his face, depriving him at once of his breath and his strength; and, having sat down exhausted to rest his wearied limbs, he had sunk into that fatal sleep in

which the soul, without a struggle or a sigh, passes into another and a better world. He added, that he had taken him up in his arms, and lifted him into the sleigh, where he now was ; and that he had covered him with a rug, and driven to the barn, that she might not be too suddenly shocked by the awful sight of the dead body ; and concluded with those consolatory remarks which, though unheard or unheeded, are usually addressed to those who are smitten down by sudden affliction.

Before he had finished his narrative, a loud, long-continued, and piercing cry of distress arose from the sleigh that thrilled the whole group, and brought them instantly to the door. The poor man's faithful and affectionate dog had discovered his master, and the strong instinct of the animal revealed to him at once that he would never more hear that voice of kindness and fellowship that had cheered him from day to day, or receive his food from that hand which had always been extended to feed or to fondle him. The postman then drove the sleigh to the door, lifted out the lifeless body, which had been frozen in its sitting attitude, and, placing it in the same position on a large chest, in a corner of the strangers' room, rested its back against the wall. It looked like a man not dead, but sleeping. He then withdrew the family into their sitting-room, and, having placed some oats in a bucket before his horse, who ate them as he stood in his harness, he occupied the few remaining minutes of his

time in endeavouring, as he best could, to condole with and comfort the poor widow and her helpless family. He was astonished at her fortitude. Her agony, it was evident, was almost insupportable, but she gave no vent to violent and unavailing lamentations. He was not the first, as he will be by no means the last, to admire this quality of the female mind when roused by great events to deep thought and cool and deliberate action. Weak, timid, and powerless as woman is, in the minor troubles and trials of life, when real danger and great afflictions are to be encountered, she rises superior to fear, calls in the aid of a judgment always good, when confidently relied on, and a moral courage surpassing that of man, because its foundations are not built on the delusive laws of honour, but deeply laid in conscious innocence, in a strong sense of the obligations of duty, and a pious and firm reliance on the might and goodness of God. Thus supported and strengthened, she sustains burdens disproportioned to her sex, and successfully resists afflictions that overpower the vigour and appal the courage of man.

The poor widow heard him calmly and patiently, though words seemed to fail her when thanking him for his kindness. This portentous silence, however, deceived him. There are calamities too heavy to be borne, and misfortunes may overpower by surprise, that could be successfully resisted if their advent were known. Although the blow did not prostrate this miserable woman, it stunned her into insensibility.

Thought and memory seemed suspended. Incapable of action herself, she was passive in the hands of her children. She had but one confused and indistinct idea that remained. She thought her husband was at home, and asleep in the adjoining room, but his long slumber and unbroken silence did not alarm her. When her meals were prepared by her daughter, she would look round and say, "Call your father—tell him we wait for him;" or, at night, she would look into his room and admonish him it was prudent to wake up and go to bed, or he would take cold. The poor children gazed at her, wondered, and shed tears. Helpless, unprotected, and alone in the world, their little hearts failed them; and the inquiry often and often occurred to their minds, What is to become of us? Death, that sat embodied in one human form in that house, and had laid his cold, benumbing hand on another, whom he appeared to have marked for his victim, seemed ready to devour them all. Silence first disclosed to them their solitude, and solitude their danger. On the third evening, they clustered as usual round their mother's chair and prayed; but she was unable to join them. She looked at them, but did not seem to comprehend them. They then tried, with faltering lips and tearful eyes, a verse of a hymn, one that she had always been fond of; but two voices were now wanting, and they were alarmed at the feeble and plaintive sound of their own. The chords of the widow's heart vibrated at the sound of the music, and

she looked about her as one awaking from slumber. Thought, feeling, and sensibility returned ; the fountains of her affections opened, and a flood of tears mingled with those of her children. She inquired of them the day of the week, and whether any person had been at the house since the postman left it, wrung her hands in agony at the thoughts of the length of her stupor, and, having affectionately kissed and blessed her little ones, went to bed to weep unseen, and pour out her griefs and petitions undisturbed to Him who has graciously promised His protection to the widow and the orphan.

In the morning, she rose more composed but sadly changed. Years had revolved in that night, and left their tracks and furrows on her faded cheek ; and the depth, and strength, and acuteness of her mental sufferings had rendered her hair as white as the snow-wreath that death had folded round her husband as a winding-sheet. The struggle had been violent, but successful. She was afflicted, but not subdued—bereft, but not destitute. She was sensible of her situation, and willing to submit with humble resignation ; aware of her duties, and ready to undertake them. She stood between the living and the dead. A fearful debt was to be discharged to the one, subsistence and comfort were due to the other. She commenced the morning with prayer from a church formulary that had been given her by a travelling missionary, and then went about her usual duties. As she sat by her fireside in

the evening, she revolved in her mind the new sphere in which she was placed. As any doubt or difficulty suggested itself, her loss became more and more apparent. How was her husband to be buried! The ground was frozen to the depth of three feet, and she was unable to dig a grave. She dare not go to the next neighbour's, a distance of seven miles, for she could not leave her children. She could not send her eldest daughter, for she did not know the way; and she, too, might be lost. She must wait for the postman; he would arrive in three days, and would assist her. If not, God would send relief when least expected. Everything, however, about her, everything she had to do, and everything she required, mixed itself in some way with recollections of him she mourned, and reminded her of some habit, word, or act of his. Even the weather now made her shudder. The storm, like a giant refreshed with sleep, arose again in all its might, and swept across the desert with such unbroken force that the snow appeared rather like a moving mass of drift than distinct and separate flakes. It was just such an evening as when her husband perished.

She shuddered, and drew her children nearer to her on the hearth. They had always loved each other, but their affection was greatly increased now, for they knew that death was a reality. They had seen it, and felt its effects. It had lessened their number once—it could do so again. They had been told they were mortal, now they knew it. It was an awful disclosure

to them, and yet what was death? It was not annihilation, for the body remained. That which had inhabited and animated it was incorporeal, and had departed unseen. It was that unknown, invisible, and mysterious spirit, they had unconsciously loved, for the corpse shocked and terrified them. They had been instructed that there was a soul that survived the body, but they could not comprehend it. They now saw and shuddered at the difference between the living and the dead. It was palpable, but still it was not intelligible. Poor little innocents! it was their first practical lesson in mortality, and it was engraved on their aching hearts too deeply ever to be forgotten. Their affection now became more intense and far more tender, for solicitude had blended with it and softened it. Yes, their little circle was stronger for having its circumference reduced; it could bear more pressure than before, if the burden were unhappily increased.

The time for rest had now approached, and the widow was weak and unwell. The thought of her unburied husband oppressed her. The presence of death, too, in the house, for so long a time, was a heavy load for her nerves; and, unable to sustain her feelings and her reflections any longer, she resorted to her evening prayers with her little family, and added to the prescribed form a short and simple petition of her own. Her voice was almost inaudible, amid the din and roar of the tempest, to those around her; but it penetrated

far above the elements, and reached the throne of mercy to which it was addressed.

Relieved, refreshed, and strengthened by this devotional exercise, they gathered again around the hearth ere the fire was secured for the night, and were engaged in some little consultation about the daily duties that were to be assigned to each, when they were aroused by a loud and violent knocking at the door. The mother arose and opened it with a palpitating heart. Three strange, wild-looking, haggard men, entreated admittance for God's sake, for they were famished, and nearly chilled to death with the cold. What a contrast for that hitherto quiet and noiseless household! There were these men stamping on the floor, shaking off the snow from their clothes, beating their hands together, throwing down their packs, talking loudly, and all speaking at once—all calling for food, all demanding more fire, and all rejoicing in their shelter and safety. The children huddled together in affright, in the corner of the room, and the poor mother trimmed her lamp, rebuilt her fire, and trembled as she reflected that she was alone and unprotected. Who are these men? she asked herself. Houseless in the storm, her heart replied, "Would to Heaven there had been such a shelter for my poor John Lent! We need not fear, for God and our poverty are our protection." She told them they were in the house of death—that her husband lay dead, and, for want of assistance, unburied in the next room; but that all that could be done for

them she would do, though at such a time, and in such a place, that all, of course, would be but very little. She advised them to keep at a distance from the fire; and, having ascertained that they were not frost-bitten, set about getting them some refreshment.

While at work, she heard all that they had to say to each other; and, with the quickness of observation peculiar to the natives of this country, soon perceived they were not equals—that one of them spoke with a voice of authority; that another called him, Sir; and the third only answered when he was spoken to, and that all three were sailors. They had a fearful tale of trouble and of death, to which frequent allusion was made. They were the captain, mate, and steward of a ship that had been wrecked that day on the coast beyond the hilly land in front of the cottage, and were the sole survivors of ten, who, on that morning, were pursuing their course on the ocean in perfect confidence and safety. A hearty meal was hastily prepared, and more hastily despatched. Liquor was then asked for; she trembled and obeyed. She was a lone woman, it was a dangerous thing, and she hesitated; but a moment's reflection suggested to her that it was impossible that they could either forget her loss or their own.

A fresh difficulty now occurred, to understand which it is necessary to describe the house. The chimney stood in the middle of the building, opposite the front door, which opened into a small entry. On the right,

was the family sitting-room, or kitchen, where they were now assembled, adjoining which were two bedrooms. On the left, three rooms were similarly arranged, and devoted to the accommodation of strangers. In the apartment corresponding to the one they were in, was the frozen body of her husband, resting on a chest, in a sitting attitude, as I have before described. In order to prepare their beds, it was necessary to pass through that room, into which she had not ventured since she had recovered from her stupor. She was perplexed and distressed, but, at last, having stated to the captain her difficulty, he at once ordered the steward to go and make the requisite arrangements. The master and mate having been thus provided for the night, some blankets were given to the steward, who slept on the hearth, before the kitchen fire.

In the morning, the latter was sent to dig a grave for poor John Lent, while the other two, having procured the requisite tools, made him a coffin, into which he was placed with great difficulty, from the rigidity of his limbs. The little pony was then harnessed to the sledge, and the body was followed by the family and their guests to its last resting-place. The beautiful burial service of the church was read over the deceased by the captain, amid the heartfelt sobs of the widow, the loud lamentations of the children, and the generous tears of the sailors. The scene was one that was deeply felt by all present. There was a community of suffering, a similarity of situation, and a sym-

pathy among them all, that for the time made them forget they were strangers, and feel towards each other like members of one family. The mariners had twice narrowly escaped death themselves: first, from shipwreck, and then from the intensity of the weather; while seven of their comrades had been swept into eternity before their eyes. The poor widow, in losing John Lent, appeared to have lost every thing—her friend, her support, her companion, and protector; the husband of her heart, the father of her children. She had afforded them food, shelter, and a home. They had aided her in a most trying moment with their personal assistance, and comforted her with their sympathy and kindness.

The next morning, her guests visited the seashore, in order to ascertain whether any portion of the cargo of their vessel could be saved. When they arrived at the scene of their disaster, they found that the vessel was gone; she had either fallen off from the precipitous cliff upon which she had been thrown by the violence of the sea, or been withdrawn by the reflux of the mountain waves, and had sunk into the deep water, where her masts could just now be discerned under its clear and untroubled surface. The cabin, which had been built upon the deck, had been broken to pieces, and fragments of it were to be seen scattered about on the snow. Some few barrels and boxes from the steward's pantry had been thrown on shore, containing stores of various kinds, and also the captain's

hammock and bedding. These were divided into two small lots, of equal weight, and constituted two sleigh loads, for the travelling was too heavy to permit them all to be carried at once. The captain presented them, together with a purse of ten sovereigns, to the poor widow, as a token of his gratitude for her kindness and sympathy for his distress. She was also recommended to examine the shore from time to time, after violent gales of winds, as many loose articles would no doubt hereafter float to the surface ; and these, by a written authority, he empowered her to apply to her own use.

On the succeeding morning, the postman returned with his mail, and furnished a conveyance for the steward. The captain and mate followed, under his guidance, with Mrs. Lent's little pony and sledge. They now took an affectionate leave of each other, with mutual thanks and benedictions, and the widow and her family were again left to their sorrows and their labours. From that day she said an unseen hand had upheld her, fed her, and protected her, and that hand was the hand of the good and merciful God of the widow and the orphan. There were times, she added, when the wounds of her heart would burst open and bleed afresh ; but she had been told the affections required that relief, and that Nature had wisely provided it, to prevent a worse issue. She informed me that she often saw her husband of late. When sitting by her solitary lamp, after her children had fallen

asleep, she frequently perceived him looking in at the window upon her. She would sometimes rise and go there, with a view of conversing with him, but he always withdrew, as if he was not permitted to have an interview with her. She said she was not afraid to meet him; why should she be? He who had loved her in life would not harm her in death. As soon as she returned to her seat, he would again resume his place at the window, and watch over her for hours together. She had mentioned the circumstance to the clergyman, who charged her to keep her secret, and especially from her children, whose young and weak nerves it might terrify. He had endeavoured to persuade her it was the reflexion of her own face in the glass; that it was a natural effect, and by no means an unusual occurrence. But no one, she added, knew so well as those who saw with their own eyes. It was difficult, perhaps, for others, who had not been so favoured and protected, to believe it, but it was, nevertheless, strictly true; and was a great comfort to her to think that his care and his love existed for her beyond the grave.

She said many people had advised her to leave that place, as too insecure and inconvenient for a helpless woman; but God had never failed them. She had never known want, or been visited by illness, while she and her children had been fed in the wilderness, like the chosen people of the Lord. He had raised her up a host of friends, whose heart He had touched

with kindness for her, and whose hands He had used as the instruments of His mercy and bounty. It would be ungrateful and distrustful in her to leave a place He had selected for her, and He might perhaps turn away his countenance in anger, and abandon her in her old age to poverty and want. And, besides, she said, there is my old man ; his visits now are dearer to me than ever ; he was once my companion—he is now my guardian angel. I cannot and I will not forsake him while I live ; and when it is God's will that I depart hence, I hope to be laid beside him, who, alive or dead, has never suffered this poor dwelling to be to me a “ LONE HOUSE.”

CHAPTER XI.

THE KEEPING-ROOM OF AN INN ;

OR, JUDGE BELER'S GHOST.

NO. I.

The more I see of Nova Scotia, the more I appreciate the soundness of the counsel given me by my friend Barclay, who recommended me, instead of commencing a continuous tour of the provinces, to select some one colony, live in it for the space of a year at least, and study the people, their habits and institutions, and then resume my travels. "The store of knowledge thus acquired," he said, "would enable me to comprehend many things afterwards which would otherwise appear unintelligible." I am now daily reaping the advantage of this judicious advice. Neither the Americans nor the provincials, who differ from each other nearly as much as from the English, are so easily understood as the vanity of a traveller would lead him to suppose. To be known, they must be studied ; and to study them properly requires time and the aid of resident friends. We have lately been spending a fortnight at Halifax, amid the festivities and gaieties of that hospitable town.

The last three days previous to our departure were marked by intense cold. The harbour smoked like a basin of boiling water (the steam of which is not inaptly called the Barber), and then froze into a mass of ice of great depth and solidity. The streets were almost deserted, and the few persons who were to be seen upon them hurried to and fro, as if unable to withstand the severity of the cold. The snow sounded hard and crisp under their feet, and the nails of the wooden houses, yielding to the sudden contraction occasioned by the frost, separated with a noise not unlike the report of pistols. Small and almost impalpable crystalline particles of snow floated in the air like down. The western sky assumed a light, reddish colour, resembling that of a summer's sunset ; and the Dartmouth hills, on the opposite side of the harbour, and all distant objects, appeared, not only more distinctly visible, but very much nearer than usual. Sounds underwent a similar change, and became more audible and more distinguishable. The heated air of our room, when it came in contact with the glass of the window, froze into beautiful, transparent, silvery coatings, exhibiting, in the delicate texture of their brilliant tracery, every imaginable form of landscape, figures, trees, and variegated patterns, like exquisite embroidery. The beauty of this partial encrustation of the glass no language can describe, and I confess to having spent much time in the childish amusement of studying and admiring the

infinite variety of shapes it presented. Our dinner, though colder than was agreeable, smoked as if it were still undergoing the process of cooking. The strong, clear, blazing fire appeared to give out no heat, and our visible breaths painfully reminded us that the frost had penetrated everywhere but into our lungs.

The following day, the weather suddenly relaxed (for it is said that extreme heat or cold seldom continues in this country beyond seventy hours). Its last effort and whole strength were expended, during the night, in a white frost, which, under the rays of a clear and unclouded sun, illumined and beautified every object covered with its white and brilliant mantle. By ten o'clock, the magical transparencies had disappeared from the windows. Large, clear drops of water trickled from the roof, and, as if unwilling to quit a bed on which they had so long reposed, clung with tenacity to the eaves, and congealed again in the form of long and pendent icicles. About noon a shower of tears preceded their inevitable fall, and gave warning of an approaching thaw. The wind, which had blown steadily, but very moderately, from the north-west for several days, gradually diminished until it ceased altogether. A few long-drawn sighs and audible breathings indicated the waking up and subsequent approach of a southerly gale. Meanwhile, the soft and balmy air, and the delicious weather that generally intervenes between the departure and arrival of these two contending winds, had tempted the whole

population of the city to be abroad. The Tandem Club and the four-in-hands of the garrison were out ; and the double and single sleighs of the townsmen, enveloped, as well as their inmates, with furs, and their horses, decorated with bells fancifully arranged, and many-coloured rosettes, enlivened the streets ; while gaily-dressed people on foot and numerous equestrians added to the animated and variegated scene which they themselves had come to admire.

Barclay, who had been only waiting for a change of temperature, now drove up to the door in his tandem, to take me back to Illinoo. His sleigh was a light but compact vehicle, containing accommodation in front for two persons, and a seat behind for a servant. It was the best-appointed and most comfortable one I had seen in the colony, and his horses were noted for their beauty, speed, and docility. In a few minutes, we were on our way to the country.

“ I am in great doubt,” he said, “ how to drive. I should like to proceed slowly, in order to enjoy the charming weather ; but I fear we shall have a heavy fall of snow, and that at no great distance. Observe the singular aspect of the sky. It looks clear, but it is not transparent. Although there is a strong light and a total absence of clouds, the sun is, nevertheless, obscured. Those long, dark, heavy masses assembling in the east, and abiding their time for mischief, are charged with snow ; and the heavens have a yellow, and, what we call in this country, a creamy appear-

ance : all which signs, when they follow intense cold, such as we have experienced these last three days, and a heavy, white frost, like that of the past night, are certain indications of a storm. It is bad philosophy, however, to allow anticipations of the future to mar the enjoyment of the present. We must govern ourselves according to circumstances. Let us proceed leisurely at first ; and, if a gale overtake us, my horses have both bottom and speed to keep pace with it."

There is something very novel and amusing in the scene presented by a main road in winter, in the provinces, when traversed by the extraordinary looking vehicles of the country. Here you encounter a load of hay, of such huge proportions as to occupy, not only the whole track, but nearly the whole highway, drawn by a long, extended line of five or six horses. Nothing can exceed the difficulty and inconvenience of passing one of these moving stacks of hay (for such they appear), an operation always performed at the risk of upsetting, and often occasioning serious injury to the horses and sleighs of the less favoured travellers. In any other part of the world, this is an evil that would soon be remedied, but those who own or drive these teams are the multitude, and the gentlemen whose lives and property are perilled are but few in number ; and, according to every rule of responsible government, it is held to be reasonable that the few should give way to the many. Then you meet another and still more powerful team, drawing the wooden

frame of a house, or an enormous spar, of dimensions suitable for the mast of a seventy-four gun ship, either end of which is supported by a short, massive sled. As soon as you have escaped these dangerous neighbours, your nerves are again tested by a prodigious load of wood, extending eight or ten feet in length, and at least six or seven feet in height, bound together by four small stakes, the ends of which are secured in the runners, and the tops insufficiently and carelessly bound by a rope or chain. Seated on this travelling wood-pile is the driver, who, by the aid of a long whip and the intonations of his voice, without any rein whatever, directs half-a-dozen horses, if not according to your ideas of safety, to his own entire satisfaction.

Having escaped these perils, you have leisure to be amused at a countryman sitting astride on the back of an enormous pig, the uppermost one of some twenty or thirty frozen carcasses of pork which he is carrying to market ; who is followed by a man with a load of empty barrels, piled as high in the air as the tops of the trees, and destined for the fisheries. Behind these are numberless sleds, having bodies like large packing-boxes filled with mutton, poultry, butter, cheese, and other rural productions. Such are the objects you meet in your progress to the country : those that you overtake and pass are loaded with every conceivable variety of supplies for themselves or retail traders. For some distance from Halifax you encounter but

few foot passengers, and they are so poorly clad, and carry such heavy burdens, that you are struck with compassion; which you have scarcely time to entertain or express before your ear is assailed with the loud laugh or cheerful song of the merry, thoughtless Negro. He has secured his food for the day, and doubts not that Providence will provide for him on the morrow, and, therefore, like a true philosopher, never suffers doubt or anxiety to trouble his mind.

While noticing and remarking on these objects, we glided on with inconceivable ease. The snow had slightly melted, and settled into a more compact form; there was neither friction nor resistance, and the runners passed over it as lightly as an oiled substance. Meanwhile, the colour of the road became altered. The pure and unsullied white covering looked yellow and dirty—the usual forerunner of a change of weather. A south wind, which had hitherto blown at intervals in fitful gusts, and moaned heavily through the streets, now arose into a steady gale, and the leafless branches of the forest creaked and laboured under its influence. A few loose, detached, and damp flakes of sleet, of uncommon size, began to fall around us, while the hasty return of all the sleighs that had preceded us bespoke the apprehension of their drivers.

We immediately increased our speed, but the falling of the snow increased faster, and soon assumed, in its rapid and compact descent, the appearance of a dense cloud. The clear and cheerful sound of the

bells became dull and heavy, and finally ceased altogether, and our sleigh and ourselves were soon covered with a heavy, adhesive white coating. As we penetrated further into the country, we found that the road, according to the prediction of Barclay, presented a less hardened surface, and that the travelling was both deeper and more laborious.

“ Now, my friend,” he said, “ while I occupy myself with driving, endeavour, as well as you can, to guard us on the right, while my servant keeps a vigilant watch on the left hand ; for I intend to put my horses to their utmost speed, and am afraid of running into some of the country teams. The flakes are getting smaller, finer, and drier ; the wind has risen higher, and shifted to the east ; and we are going to have a gale of unusual violence.”

The storm, fortunately, was in our backs ; but the rapidity of our motion through the white and dazzling snow nearly deprived us of the power of vision. A sudden turn of the road, which momentarily exposed us to the full sweep of the blast, showed me the accuracy of my friend’s predictions, for we plunged directly through an enormous drift that lay extended across our track like a wave of the sea, particles of which, lifted by the wind, nearly suffocated us and our horses. As soon as we resumed a western course, our route lay for several miles through a wood, and, availing ourselves of its protection, we pressed forward as fast as possible. “ God help those,” he said, “ who are

travelling the other way, and have to face this storm, with poor or jaded cattle ! as for ourselves, we are all right, and shall soon reach Mount Hope. Our only difficulty will be in the last mile of the road, which we shall find, I fear, covered to the top of the fences. Anything that horses can do, mine can effect ; but I am afraid that, in their struggles, they will draw off the shafts or the whipple tree. This is decidedly the worst tempest I have known for twenty years."

When we arrived at this critical part of our journey, he requested me to take my seat in the back part of the sleigh, in the lap of the servant, so as to lighten the front of the vehicle when it pitched into the drifts, and then, standing up himself, he slackened his pace and drove cautiously. At times, our noble animals appeared perfectly buried in snow, and could only proceed by rearing and plunging forward, and we were often compelled to stop and lift up the sleigh, or lighten its weight, and disentangle the traces from the legs of the horses. The last drift terminated like a wall. The wind passing between the house and the outbuildings, which were situated on opposite sides of the highway at Mount Hope, swept all that part of the road perfectly bare, and rolled up the snow on one side into a precipitous bank. Here Barclay got out, and, examining the depth, pronounced it impossible for horses to pass it in harness. Having released them from the vehicle, and procured assistance from the inn, we managed, though not without much diffi-

culty, to remove the fence, and, by a circuitous route, to conduct them in safety to the stables.

When we arrived at the house, we were at first shown into a room warmed by a stove ; and shortly afterwards into another, having one of the large, blazing, glorious, wood fires of Nova Scotia. There is a hospitable profusion about these rural fireplaces, and a hearty welcome in their appearance, that contrasts most favourably with the ingenious city contrivances to administer the exact amount of heat with the least possible expenditure of fuel. After a capital dinner, for the larders of the inns at this season of the year are always abundantly supplied, we drew up to the cheerful fire, and admired the two brass giants, Gog and Magog, (the andirons) who supported with ease the enormous weight of wood.

The gale we had encountered, which still raged wildly and furiously, led the conversation to incidents resulting from similar events. Barclay related to me the particulars of the great storm of 1798, when it is said the greatest quantity of snow fell that was ever known at any one time, and also mentioned a curious occurrence that happened under his own view.

A few years ago, he said, when on his way to Cumberland (N.S.) in the spring of the year, he spent a night on the Cobequid Mountains. For several days previous the weather had been uncommonly fine, and numerous flocks of wild geese were seen pursuing their annual migration to the north. The morning after his

arrival, an enormous flock of these birds, meeting with a storm of hail and freezing sleet, were observed returning on their track in the form of the letter A, a figure which they adopt to enable the stronger and hardier ones to lead the advance. Their sagacity is so great, that they are usually aware of the approach of a tempest, and avoid its effects by seeking out a place of shelter in due time. On this occasion, however, they appear to have been unexpectedly overtaken; and, as the sleet froze on them as soon as it fell, they became so overloaded and exhausted, that they descended into a field immediately in front of the house, where the whole of them were instantly taken prisoners, without being able even to make an attempt to escape. Some were eaten fresh by the family, others were preserved in pickle, and the rest sent to the Halifax market, where, he said, they put their feet to the fire before they went to bed, and gave them a glass of hot whisk—whisk—whiskey and water. The odd termination of the sentence induced me to look up at the face of my friend, and, lo! he was fast asleep. The drowsy effects of the large wood fire had mingled his thoughts or his wants with his story of the birds.

For some time after we reached the house, there were several arrivals from the country, among which was the stage-sleigh from Illinoo, which had been upset more than once, and the top broken to pieces. All the passengers spoke of the latter part of their journey as one of greater difficulty and more danger than any

they had ever experienced. On the following morning we found, to our dismay, that it was not only snowing and drifting as fast as ever, but that there was not the slightest appearance of a change.

“ We must make up our minds,” said Barclay, “ to remain here for a day or two. It is impossible for us to leave this place in the present state of the roads, and equally impossible for any others to arrive. I will go and see who is in ‘ the keeping-room,’ and what amusement it can afford us ; for it would be quite absurd for a traveller like you to be shut up all day at an inn with such an old cynic as me, while there may be many persons here well worth studying and knowing.”

The house at Mount Hope was inconveniently situated, being on the top of rather a high hill, but was very well arranged for the accommodation of the different classes of persons that frequented it. It was a long, narrow, two-story building, forming two sides of a square, and having a double entrance, one at the side and one at the front. Besides the apartments appropriated to the use of those who preferred to be alone, there were two large rooms, one of which was devoted to teamsters, pedestrians, and people of that description, connected with which was the bar. The other was called the keeping-room, and generally reserved for the use of the family, but where old patrons, friends, and acquaintances, were not considered as intruders. In the rear, and attached to this, was the kitchen, larder, pantry, &c.

Barclay soon returned, accompanied by Miss Lucy Neal, the manager of the household, a fine, hearty, blooming, good-natured country girl, of about thirty years of age, to whom he introduced me. After chatting awhile about the storm, and other indifferent matters, she said she feared I must find it dull to be confined so long to the house; and added, that if I felt inclined, she would be glad to see me after dinner in the keeping-room—an invitation which I most readily and cheerfully accepted.

As soon as she retired, Barclay said—

“ I have arranged it all for you. I have ordered dinner at two o'clock, so as to enable us to spend the whole afternoon below, where you will see one of the oddest fellows in this country, Stephen Richardson, of Clements, in the County of Annapolis. There is some drollery about him, inexhaustible good humour, and, amid all the nonsense he talks, more quickness of perception and shrewdness than you would at first give him credit for. Take him altogether, he is what may be called a regular character. If I can manage it, I will set him and others telling stories; for nothing illustrates the habits, manners, and tastes of a population more than their favourite topics.”

About four o'clock we joined the party of travellers assembled in the privileged room of the family. This apartment was about twenty-five feet in length, but disproportionably narrow. The floor was painted, and not carpeted, and the walls covered with a yellow

wash. The fireplace, which was of huge dimensions, was furnished with a back-log that required the efforts of two men to roll it into its bed ; and surmounted by a mantelpiece that was graced with one of Mr. Samuel Slick's clocks, the upper half being covered by a dial-plate, and the lower portion exhibiting a portrait of General Washington mounted on a white charger, with long tail and flowing mane. The sides of the room were ornamented with a sampler worked on canvass, and some coarse gaudy-coloured prints, among which the most conspicuous were two representing George III. and Queen Charlotte, wearing their crowns, and severally holding in one hand a globe and in the other a sceptre, as if playing a game of coronella. In one corner was an open cupboard, fitting into the angle, and exhibiting the best china and glass of the house. In front of each window, was a stand supporting some geraniums, monthly roses, and ivy.

The company consisted of about six or eight persons, besides Miss Lucy and her sister. Mr. Stephen Richardson, to whom my attention had been previously directed, was a tall, muscular, awkward-looking man, with a slight stoop in the shoulder. His manners were free and easy, the expression of his face knowing and comical, and his dress the light blue homespun common to the country.

When we entered, a small, thin man, with a sour, bilious face, and dressed in a suit of black cloth, was entertaining the party with a grievance, for which he

expressed his determination to be avenged upon the government at the next election. He had been at Halifax, it seemed, from whence he was just returning, to solicit some little petty local office at Aylsford, where he resided, to which he thought himself eminently entitled by his valuable political partisan services, but which, to his dismay, he found had been disposed of to an earlier and more fortunate applicant. Loud and long were his denunciations and complaints.

“I don’t pity you a morsel,” said Stephen. “The best office for a farmer is being his own overseer, and the best fees those paid by his orchards and fields. There is nothing so mean in folks like you and me as office seeking, unless it is in wearing broadcloth instead of homespun, as if a man was above his business. Now, look at me,” and he rose up and stood erect; “I am six feet four in my stockings, when unravelled and bolt upright, and six feet five when stretched out on a bench; and, from the sole of my foot to the crown of my head, I am dressed in the produce of my own farm. I raised the flax and hackled it, and bred the sheep and sheared the wool that made the linen and the cloth I wear. I am sort of proud of it, too; for a farmer, according to my ideas of things, ought to be known by his dress, like an officer or a parson; and then, when folks see him, they’ll know he ain’t run up a bill at a shop, and ain’t cutting a dash in things he han’t paid for.

“ I’ve known some very mean men in my time. There was Deacon Overreach, now, he was so mean, he always carried a hen in his gig-box when he travelled, to pick up the oats his horse wasted in the manger, and lay an egg for his breakfast in the morning. And then there was Hugo Himmelman, who made his wife dig potatoes to pay for the marriage license. Lawyer,” he continued, addressing himself to Barclay, “ I must tell you that story of Hugo, for it’s not a bad one; and good stories, like potatoes, ain’t as plenty as they used to be when I was a boy. Hugo is a neighbour of mine, though considerably older than I be, and a mean neighbour he is, too. Well, when he was going to get married to Gretchen Kolp, he goes down to Parson Rogers, at Digby, to get a license.

“ ‘ Parson,’ says he, ‘ what’s the price of a license?’

“ ‘ Six dollars,’ says he.

“ ‘ Six dollars!’ says Hugo; ‘ that’s a dreadful sight of money! Couldn’t you take no less?’

“ ‘ No,’ says he. ‘ That’s what they cost me to the Secretary’s office at Halifax.’

“ ‘ Well, how much do you ax for publishing in church, then?’

“ ‘ Nothing,’ says parson.

“ ‘ Well,’ says Hugo, ‘ that’s so cheap I can’t expect you to give no change back. I think I’ll be published. How long does it take?’

“ ‘ Three Sundays.’

“ ‘Three Sundays!’ says Hugo. ‘Well, that’s a long time, too. But three Sundays only make a fortnight, after all; two for the covers and one for the inside like; and six dollars is a great sum of money for a poor man to throw away. I must wait.’

“So off he went a-jogging towards home, and a-looking about as mean as a new-sheared sheep, when all at once a bright thought came into his head, and back he went, as hard as his horse could carry him.

“ ‘Parson,’ says he, ‘I’ve changed my mind. Here’s the six dollars. I’ll tie the knot to-night with my tongue, that I can’t undo with my teeth.’

“ ‘Why, what in natur is the meaning of all this?’ says parson.

“ ‘Why,’ says Hugo, ‘I’ve been ciphering it out in my head, and it’s cheaper than publishing bans, after all. You see, sir, it’s a potato-digging time; if I wait to be called in church, her father will have her work for nothing; and, as hands are scarce and wages high, if I marry her to-night, she can begin to dig our own to-morrow, and that will pay for the license, and just seven shillings over; for there ain’t a man in all Clements that can dig and carry as many bushels in a day as Gretchen can. And, besides, fresh wives, like fresh servants, work like smoke at first, but they get sarcy and lazy after a while.’

“ ‘Oh, my!’ said Miss Lucy, ‘did you ever hear the beat of that? Well, I never!’

“ ‘Now, that’s what I call mean,’ said Stephen.

“Mean!” said Miss Lucy, who was greatly shocked; “I guess it is mean! I never heard anything half so mean in all my born days!”

“Well, I have, then,” continued Stephen. “It ain’t near so mean as a farmer running about the country, dressed up in superfine broad-cloth, a-looking out for a little office. I’ll tell you what, when *situa-tions* in the country fall vacant, folks to Halifax know it as well as can be, for the town is just like a salt-lick at the full of the moon, it’s filled with stray cattle. When father and I lived on Bear River, and turned the young stock out to browse in the woods, we never took the trouble to hunt them up, for they were always sure to come to the banks at high-water at the full to get a drink of brine, for they are great place-hunters, are stray cattle.”

Here the little man in black, though evidently accustomed to these rough, rustic remarks, appeared to wince under their application before strangers, and made an attempt to turn the conversation, by taking a letter out of his pocket-book, and asking Richardson “if he would do him the favour to allow him to make him the medium of transmitting it to Halifax, having, unfortunately, forgotten to deliver it himself.”

“Which means, in plain English,” said Stephen, “you fetched it back by mistake. Why the devil can’t you talk plain? There is nothing like homespun talk and homespun cloth for a farmer. I’ll take a hundred of them, if you like. Let’s see it!”

He then took the letter, and examined the address, and, reversing it, looked at the seal and returned it, saying—

“Open that letter and read it to me, or I can’t take it. I’ve made a vow never to carry a paper for any man, unless I know what’s in it. I got into an awful scrape, once, by carrying a letter that had a wafer in it to Sir Hercules Sampson, the Governor that used to be here a good while ago. I’ll tell you how it was, so that you may see it ain’t because I don’t want to oblige you, but just to keep out of a scrape myself, when I know I am well off. One fall, just as I was a-starting from home for Halifax in a vessel loaded with apples and cider I raised on my own farm, and the matter of five hundred boxes of smoked herrings (which I caught and cured myself), who should come along but Pete Balcom, with a letter in his hand.

“‘Steve,’ says he, ‘just leave this at Government House, will you, that’s a good fellow, as soon as you arrive in town, and I will do as much for you some other time?’

“‘Certainly,’ says I; ‘but, as my hands are sort of dirty, do you take my pocket-book out of my jacket, and stow it away snug,’ and he did so. Well, one day, after I got to Halifax, and unloaded the vessel, as I was a-going along the street with my working clothes on, who should I see a-galloping along from parade but the Governor and a couple of other officers, with their spurs a-jangling, and their swords a-dangling,

and their plumes a-nodding, talking and a-laughing away like anything. Thinks I, I'll just follow on to Government House, and give Pete Balcom's letter to one of his hired men. So, away I goes into one of the great stone gates, and there was trees, and gravel-walks, and little bushes, and a sort of garden-looking place, and a great big front door. So, I backed out, and went up the hill, and turned into t'other gate, and, as I am a living sinner, there was another pleasure-garden-looking place, and a front door there, too. Thinks I, Goodness me, where's the back porch that common folks like me go into? These places are only meant for great men and office-seekers, like our friend Broadcloth here. So, I took a circuit all round the house, till I came back to where I started from, like a fellow lost in the woods, when I saw a baker drive in. Come, says I to myself, I'll ax no questions, for that looks as if you did not know, but I'll just follow old Dough, for, where the bread goes, he that raises the flour has a right to go also. Well, out he jumps from his cart, and takes a basket of loaves on his arm, and dives down behind an iron railing alongside of the street-door, and I after him. Though he knew the way, and I didn't, I kept close up to him for all that; for a man that can overhaul a moose, ain't easy left behind by a baker chap, I tell you. Well, we no sooner got into the lower regions, than Sixpenny Loaf lays down his basket, up with his whip, knocks at the door, and off like a shot, leaving me and the basket there.

“ ‘Hullo,’ said I, ‘Mister, deliver your own freight yourself, will you, if you please? it’s enough for me to hand in Pete Balcom’s letter; and, besides, I am a stranger here.’

“But crack went the whip, and away went the wheels, and the only answer I got was, ‘Come in.’ So I opened the door, and there was a little, thin old lady, with spectacles on, and her two daughters handsomely dressed. Mother was writing in a big book that looked to me like a merchant’s ledger, and the two young women were making a bit of carpet, with coloured yarns, in a small-sized quilting-frame. Thinks I to myself, I won’t say nothing about that trick the feller played me with the bread. If he don’t choose to stop for his pay, he may go without it. So says I—

“ ‘Marm, I’ve a letter for the Governor, that a neighbour of mine, one Pete Balcom, asked me to leave here for him;’ and I out pocket-book and gave it to her, and she handed it to one of the galls, who went out to hand it to some one else.

“ ‘Take a chair and sit down,’ said old mother, quite sociable-like. ‘Be so good as to wait a moment, perhaps his Excellency the Governor may have an answer for you;’ and then she went on writing as before.

“That must have been the housekeeper you saw,” said Miss Lucy, with the patronising air of a person that thinks they know the world; “and what you call bits of carpet in frames, was rug-work.”

“I don’t know who the plague she was,” said

Stephen, “nor don’t care. I never saw her before, and I never want to see her again.

“Well, as I was a-saying, that gave me time to cast my eye round and think a bit upon things in general ; and when I seed these nice-dressed women, and well-furnished room, and flowers, and what not, thinks I, if this is your kitchen-room, what must your parlour be ? And then I looked at my clothes all covered with dust, a little more nor half-worn, and looking none the better for the tar of the vessel. I won’t say I wished for broadcloth, for I didn’t, but I did long for my new suit of homespun, for I feel sort of proud of it, seeing I raised the stuff, and my old woman wove it and made it, as I said before.

“Well, just then in come a servant with a pair of red breeches on, and gold garters, and white stockings pulled up tight over a pair of legs about as big as —— as big as —— what shall I say ? why, about as big as your drumsticks, Broadcloth. The fellow looked as much like a gentleman, and was as well dressed as an eddy-gong, or chaplain, or whatever they call them, and as impudent too ; for, says he, ‘ Follow me ! ’ quite short, like a chap that has received so many orders that he begins to think at last he has a right to give them himself. Thinks I, natur is natur, whether it’s on a farm or in a Governor’s kitchen-room, for everything gets sarcy that’s well-fed and has nothing to do. Well, he takes me through a long stone passage, as

cold as the nateral ice-house on Granville Mountain, and as dark too, then up a pair of stairs, and then turn to the right, and then to the left, and then to the right again, as folks tell you when you don't know the road. It sort of crossed my mind as I followed the critter, who seemed most too lazy to carry his shoes, I suppose the Governor is going to offer me a glass of grog for fetching that letter, and that I'll take, for that's sociable and civil-like, though I wouldn't take all the money in his house, for that's mean, and don't become Homespun.

“ At last, Breeches showed me into a large unfurnished room, without a carpet or a curtain, as bare as my thrashing-floor, with nothen in it but two unstuffed wooden sofas, and a table with a large writing-book and an inkstand on it. On one side sat a sergeant with his sword on, and on the other a thirteen-penny soldier with his baggonut on, and there he left me standing in the middle of the room, without saying as much as, ‘ By your leave,’ or anything else. In less than half-a-minute out come the Governor, a great, tall, thin, bony man, like myself, with a bald head, a nose as big as a brass knocker, and a pair of eyes as sharp, bright, and wicked, as Lucifer's, (*loup cervier*) with his great big sword by his side, and his spurs on, jist as I saw him in the street, only he had his hat with its white feathers in his hand. As soon as he came in, up jumps the sergeant and the soldier, and stood as straight as two ramrods.

“ ‘ How dare you hand me such a letter as that, Mr. Balcom ? ’ said he.

“ ‘ Governor ! ’ says I.

“ ‘ Silence ! ’ says he. ‘ It admits of no excuse.’

“ I never heard no more after that, I was so taken a-back, and me with my old working-clothes on, looking like Old Scratch himself ; but on he went, foaming and roaring like a freshet, and klomping, klomping round on the board floor, and waving his arms like a windmill. Thinks I to myself, This is what I call an indictment, and they are a-going to send me to the guard-house as sure as the world ; and then I looked first at the sergeant, and then at Thirteenpence, and I seed I could pitchfork them fellows out of the window as easy as a sheaf of wheat : but then there was the Governor. If I was to lay hands on him, even in self-defence, I knew it would be rebellion, besides going agin the grain, for I am a loyal man, and so was my father before me ; and besides that, I warn’t sure I could handle him either if I was to try. Then I thought I’d make a run for it, and if I had known the way, I think I should ; but what in the world can you do in a house that has as many doors in it, a’most, as there are days in the year ? So I made up my mind to face it like a man.

“ ‘ Governor,’ says I, ‘ will you just answer me one question ? ’

“ ‘ Silence, Mr. Balcom ! ’ says he ; ‘ I have nothing to say to you.’

“ ‘Man alive,’ says I, ‘do you call all this saying nothing? Besides, my name ain’t Balcom, and never was, I tell you. You have got in a wrong pew, you may depend.’

“ ‘What the devil is your name, then?’ says he.

“ ‘Why, folks call me Stephen Richardson, when I am at home,’ says I; ‘and I know no more about that letter than the man in the moon. I only brought it just to oblige you and Pete Balcom.’

“ ‘Why didn’t you tell me that before?’ says he.

“ ‘Because you wouldn’t let me,’ says I.

“ With that he half turned and waived his hand, and the sergeant and the soldier sprung forward, and, as I thought they were a-going for to seize me, and I knowed I hadn’t done nothing wrong, except not dressing myself decent, I stepped back as quick as wink two paces, and squared off.

“ ‘Stop!’ says I. ‘The first man that lays a hand on me, I’ll level him as flat as a pancake: so stand clear.’

“ The Governor laughed right out at that, and the two soldiers opened the front door to let me out, instead of leading me all round by the kitchen, the way I came in; and up steps Sir Hercules, and says he—

“ ‘You are a fine, manly fellow, and I admire your spirit. I wish I had a battalion of such men as you are. I am very sorry for the mistake. I beg your pardon,’ and so on.

“ Well, when a great man like a Governor conde-

scends that way to humble himself to a poor man, to say he begs his pardon, it kind of overcomes you, and cools you down as quick as a cup of water does a kettle of boiling maple sap.

“ ‘I don’t blame you a morsel,’ says I, ‘Governor : but I blame Pete Balcom, though : he hadn’t ought to have made a fool of me after that fashion. This is the first office ever I filled in my life, and that was none of my seeking being a letter-carrier ; and when I get home I’ll give Pete Balcom the first quarter’s salary in the shape of as good a licking as ever he got since he was born, and then I’ll resign the commission.’

“ ‘No, no, my good friend,’ said the Governor, patting me good-naturedly on the shoulder, ‘pray don’t break the peace ; I should be very sorry to be the cause of any further annoyance to you.’

“ ‘But I didn’t promise him, for when I promise I keep my word : and, beside, he sort of looked at me as if he wouldn’t care much if I did give him a quilting. Well, the first time I met Mister Pete Balcom after I returned home, I just up and says—

“ ‘Pete,’ says I, ‘what was in that letter of yours that you gave me to take to the Governor?’

“ ‘What is that to you?’ says he.

“ ‘It is a good deal to me,’ I said ; ‘for I want to know what sort of business I was partner in?’

“ ‘Well, ask about and find out,’ said he, quite sarey.

“ ‘I’ll get it out of you as I get my wheat out of

the ear, by thrashing it out,' says I. 'So here's at you;' and I turned to, and I gave such a tanteening as he never had since he was raised, I know. The postage of that letter came to a round sum, you may depend. I got sued for an assault, was dragged through two courts, and got cast in ten pounds' damage, and twenty pounds' cost; and what's more, after all, never found out to this day what was in that letter. Since then I've made a vow never to carry a paper for any man, unless he first shows me what's in it. If you don't think proper, therefore, to break the seal of that one, and read it to me, you may send it by some one else, and there is an end of it."

After some general and desultory conversation, my friend Barclay related the particulars of an apparition that had been much talked of at Halifax lately; and, for the purpose of drawing out a story from Richardson, which he knew he was very fond of telling, asked him if he believed in the existence of ghosts?

"Well, I don't know," said Stephen; "I didn't used to oncet upon a time, but I've larned better now. I am not a man that's easily darnted. A feller that's had a fair stand-up fight with a she-bear weighing six hundred weight, and nothing but a jack-knife in his fist to defend himself with, as I have, and killed her too—ay, and skinned her arterwards, don't deserve to be called a coward, I know. I warn't brought up in the woods to be scared by an owl, I tell you; and, therefore, what I say I'll stand to. I have seed a

ghost, ay, and fit with a ghost, too : and look here," (and, undoing his cravat, he exhibited the back part of his neck), " look here, there's the marks of its teeth ; that I shall carry to the grave with me. It was old Judge Beler's ghost. You have heern tell of old Judge Beler, and how oneasy he was, seein' that he never was buried, haven't you ?"

None of the company had come from that part of the country where Stephen lived, therefore, no one knew of a circumstance which had occurred in the early settlement of the province, and all answered in the negative.

" Not hear of Judge Beler !" he said. " Well, that's strange, too ! I thought everybody had heard of him and his ghost. Well," says Steve, " I'll tell you. There is Digby, do you see, as might be there," pointing with the handle of his whip to the floor ; " well, away up there," pointing to another spot, " is Annapolis, as you might say ; and there they stand, one at each end of the basin, looking at each other, but just twenty miles off by water, like two folks at each end of a long election table. Well, all up this side of the basin is Clements Township, stretching right away from one town to the other. Well, when the country was first settled after the American rebellion, this Clements was laid out for the Dutch and Germans that served in the war. There was three locations : one on the shore, and that the Long Island Dutch lived on ; behind that was another

range given to the Waldeck soldiers ; and behind that another called the Hessian line, because the Hessians had lands laid off to them there.

“ In those days, there were nothing but bridle-roads, because they always rode on horseback when they didn't walk ; but they warn't turnpiked up for wheels as they are now into highways. Well, among the Long Island loyalists, there was one Judge Beler—at least, so they used to call him. He warn't like our supreme judges, regular halter-broke and trained, but a sort of magistrate judge, and in his own country (New York State) belonged to a kind of sheep-skin court, as folks nicknamed them. Still he was called Judge, and was a man well-to-do in the world, and well-known, and liked all through them settlements, and spoke German like a book, and could crack up all the hard lumps of words like a harrow, into powder, as fine as *a b, ab*. Well, he used to be often riding away back into the Hessian line, and spending a few days there. Sometimes they said he was surveying land, and laying off lots. At other times, they said he went to chat at old Milner's (not old Tom's that's there now, but old Tom's father's), and talk and fight over the battles of the rebellion war ; and sometimes they said the Judge—for he warn't by no manner of means up in years—used to go to see Vogler Vroom's daughter, old Mrs. Wagner that was afterwards. Minna Vroom, they say, was a rael fine gall in her day, full of health, and strength, and spirits, as a

four-year old colt, and yet a great housekeeper too. Judging of her as she was when I seed her, which was long after she had lost the mark of mouth”

“ Why, Mr. Stephen, ain’t you ashamed to talk that way of the ladies ?” said Miss Lucy.

“ A body could hardly believe she ever was so uncommon handsome (but then there ain’t a wrinkled old woman in the country they don’t say was pretty oncet); for she must have always been a little too much of the Dutch build for figure, according to my notions; too short, too square about the”

“ Never mind describing her,” said Miss Lucy: “ go on with the story. There is nothing in nature I am so fond of as a good ghost story.”

“ Well, I never knew it fail,” replied Stephen: “ one handsome woman never cares to hear about another handsome woman. Her father, by all accounts, was plaguy well off, and as she was an only child, if the Judge’s mouth watered when he looked on Minna, and thought of the beautiful rolls of yarn and homespun, and fat hams, and smoked beef, that were hanging about so tempting, not to speak of the yellow and white shiners tied up in the long stockings in the big chests,—why it ain’t to be wondered at, that’s all. Maybe he did, and maybe he didn’t; but most likely he went like other folks on his own business, whatever it was, whenever he liked, and whenever he pleased, and gave no account and axed no leave. Well, oncet he went, and, faith, he never returned again. It was

in the forepart of winter 1786, as I have heard tell. Folks down to the shore thought the Judge was paying a long visit, and wondered he didn't come back; and people on the Hessian line road thought it was a long time since he had gone home, and wondered he didn't come to see them again. At last, it was as clear as mud he was missing. Some thought he had got lost in the woods, others thought he had got scalped and killed by the Indians, and some reckoned he had got a cold shoulder from Minna Vroom, and that he had taken it so much to heart he had left the country; and nobody knew anything for sartain.

“ Well, days and weeks passed on and passed on, and no tidings was ever heard of him, and at last folks gave over talking of him, and he was sort of forgot and out of mind. For time, like the big roller of the Agricultural Society, as it rolls on, fetches all things to a level, or presses them into the earth out of sight, so that they don't attract attention no more. And queer sort of farmers books make too: first they plough up land to make it loose and light, and then they roll it as hard as ever, and undo all they have done, and that they call science; and it may be science, but it ain't common sense, and don't stand to reason. But that's neither here nor there, and, as I was a-saying, one day the next spring, just as the lakes had opened, Frederic Crowse was ranging about the woods for a stick to make ox-bows of, when who should he see in the middle of the great lake near the Hessian

road but Judge Beler, seated as quiet and as nateral on his horse as life ! There was a little wind at the time, and a ripple on the water, and the Judge was riding with his head towards home, and his horse making a slow motion like a canter, but not advancing forward a bit. At first, he thought he was swimming the lake, for that would make a very short cut for him, and he stood a while and stared at him ; but seein' that he didn't go ahead, he called out to him as loud as he could call.

“ ‘ Judge ! ’ said he ; but the Judge didn't look round.

“ ‘ Squire ! ’ said he ; but the squire didn't speak.

“ ‘ Mr. Beler ! ’ said he ; but Mr. Beler didn't answer, but just went on rising and bending to every wave like a bow of the body, but still remaining in one spot.

“ ‘ Good gracious ! ’ says Fred to himself ; ‘ the water is so shocking cold at this season of the year, it has almost chilled him to death. What onder the sun shall I do ? ’

“ Well, away he went as hard as he could run for his life, and alarmed all the neighbours, and down they came, with axes, and ropes, and tools, and what not, and made a raft, and put off into the lake to help him. The sun was just then setting as they shoved out from the shore, and when they got about half way to him they saw that his eyes were gone, and his face was all swelled, and his flesh was bleached, and bloated,

and slimy, and that he looked awful bad; and they were dreadfully frightened.”

“ Oh, my !” said Miss Lucy, “ how horrid ! But it’s a beautiful story : go on !” And she drew her chair nearer to Richardson.

“ Well, they were skeered to go up to him,” continued Stephen ; “ and they stopped, awed like, and gazed and gazed, without saying a word ; and when they give over rowing, the judgè and his horse gradually settled down, slowly—slowly—slowly, until nothin’ but his head was above water, and then he remained for a minute or two longer, as if he didn’t like to leave his old friends for ever and ever, and down he went altogether, and sunk to the bottom.

“ It would have been no more than decent and neighbourly, perhaps,” he added, “ to have fished him up, and given him Christian burial. But I won’t say fished him up, neither ; for, poor man, he was passed that, I guess, unless they had baited their hook with Minna Vroom, and that would have made him jump out of the water like a salmon, I do suppose. Many a man has been caught....”

“ Why, Mr. Richardson, how you talk !” said Miss Lucy ; “ it’s actually ondecient that—it’s shocking ! You ought to be ashamed of yourself, so you ought.”

“ Well, grappled him up, then,” he said : “ for folks that are neglected that way by all the world, except by frogs and pollywogs, are oneasy, and walk, and he has terrified the whole country ever since

The old stock of them that knew him never mentioned him without fear ; and some said that they had actually seen him afterwards in that lake (which now goes by the name, and I suppose always will, of Beler's Lake). Well, the next generation, though they began to frighten children, by telling them they would send for the Judge if they behaved bad, soon gave over that sort of idle talk, and said there was no doubt he was up and stirring sometimes. Many people declared that they had heard him, in the winter time, muttering under the ice, in some unknown tongue ; for the German language has long since gone out in those parts. I know my father said he oncest seed him gallop like mad on his old black mare across that lake in a snow squall, and sink through the ice with a report like a cannon. And old Dr. Boéhme said he had known strange noises there, quite near ; and when he'd stop to listen, he would hear the same at the other end of the lake, as if he was trying to get through ; and then he would hear him strike the bottom of the ice with his fist such a blow, that it seemed as if it would crack it clear across, though it was three feet thick.

“ Well, I never met that man yet that I was afraid of ; and as for ghosts, I never see one in all my born days, and did n't believe there was any, and therefore couldn't tell whether I was skeered or not. Still, somehow or another, it was a melancholy, dismal place, for no one would settle near it, and I can't say I much

liked going by there alone, for it ain't pleasant to think of spirits and such things in the dark, if you have no one to talk to. I won't say, nether, I haven't heard those noises myself, especially when the lake is a-going to break up in the spring; and I have heard some of those awful reports, like thunder in the ice, too, but I am not certain I haven't heard the same under other lakes; at all events, though they made me feel kind of serious like, they never skeered me. Well, one night—it was on the 17th of March, I recollect the day, for I was at Pat Doyle's that afternoon at Digby, and he said it was St. Patrick's day, and I drank a considerable some, though not to say I warn't sober, nether—when I came to the lake, it was a little after daylight down, just twilight enough to see the road, and much as a bargain, too, when I heard this rumbling under the ice, a rolling, moaning, hoarse, onnateral kind of sound, and then came one of those cracks that go off like a twelve-pounder.

“ ‘Hullo!’ says I to myself, ‘the old Judge is on-easy to-night; howsumever, I never hurt a hair of his head, and he has no call to me, good or bad; so, dead or alive, I don't fear him.’

“ Just then, I sartainly did hear a most powerful yell. It went through me like lightning, and seemed to curdle my very blood. Oh! it was an awful scream, you may depend, and seemed onearthly like, or as if the devil was in the unburied human that gave it. I stopped a moment, and all was still again, but the hollow, rumblin', echo-like voice under the ice.

“ ‘ What in the world is all this ? ’ says I to myself ; ‘ as sure as fate, Beler’s ghost is no joke, but downright reality. There’s no mistake. I’ll take my oath I heard that scream of his, and I think, Steve, you had better be a-jogging on towards home, or you may hear what ain’t good for your hearing, and see what ain’t good for sore eyes.’ ”

“ So I just gave the beast a tap of the whip, and moved on. Well, as soon as you leave the lake, you come to a sharp pinch of a hill, and then you go down into a steep, heavy-wooded hollow, and then mount another smart hill, and pass on. This happened twenty-five years ago next March, and at that time it was still little more than a bridle-path, and the trees lapped across it in places. Now, in that hollow, two large hemlocks had got canted well over on one side, windfalls like, and were caught by two large spruces on the other ; so there was just room to stoop low down on the saddle, and squeeze under, and much as ever, too—almost a scrape. Having rid that way in the morning, I knew the track, kept to the left, bent forward on the neck of the horse, and went through. Just as I cleverly cleared it, old Beler sprung right on the crupper, seized me round the waist, and yelled just as he did when he got out of the lake, first in one ear and then in the other. Oh, how the woods rung ! His breath was so hot, it most scalded me, and the scream cut me through the head like a knife ; and then he clasped me so tight round the body, he near

about squeezed the wind out of me. If I didn't sing out, it's a pity, and the more I hollered, the louder he shrieked. I won't pretend for to go for to say that I warn't frightened, because that wouldn't be true; I was properly skeered, that's a fact. I expected every minute to be clawed off, and plunged into the lake. I didn't know what to do. Human strength, I knew, was of no avail agin supernateral beings, so I took to prayer.

“ ‘Our Father....’ says I.

“The moment I said that, he let go yellin', and seized me by the nape of the neck with his teeth, and bit right through the grizzle. Oh, it was a powerful nip, that! the pain was enough to drive one mad, and I fairly roared like a bull, it hurt me so.

“In the mean time, the horse began to rear and plunge most furiously; for the poor dumb animal knew, as well as could be, it had a ghost-rider, besides its lawful master, to carry. At last, it kicked so like old Scratch, it sent us both flying heels over head, the Judge on one side, and me on the other side of it. I fortunately held on to the rein, and jumped up like winkin', and the horse stood head to him, snorting and blowing like a porpoise. I shall never forget that scene, the longest day I ever live. The Judge had no hat on; his face was all hairy and slimy; his eyes looked some wild animal's, they had such a fiery, restless, wicked glance, which I expect was the ghost looking out of the dead sockets of the unburied skele-

ton—at least, that's my idea of it; and his teeth was the only white-looking thing about him: but then, teeth last a long time, particularly when kept from the air, under water, in the long matted grass and lily-roots. I hardly got a real good look at him, before he rolled himself up into a ball, like a porcupine, and shrieked—oh, how he shrieked! I heard him afterwards, for the matter of three or four minutes, (for you may depend I didn't stay to keep him company longer than I could help) while I was galloping off as hard as ever my horse could lay legs to the ground. I wouldn't encounter that old Judge agin, for anything in this blessed world. That's the first, and the last, and the only time I ever see a ghost; and I never desire to see another."

"What did your neighbours think of that story?" said Barclay.

"Well, I didn't want to brag," said Stephen; "but, since you've axed the question, this I will say for myself—there never was a man in the whole county of Annapolis, that so much as even hinted that he didn't believe it, except old Parson Rogers, of Digby; and plague take me if I think them ministers believe half they preach themselves, they are so loath to believe other folks. The parson one day jist up and axed me all about it.

" 'Steve,' says he, 'they tell me you have seen the old Judge; is that true?'

" 'Oh, parson!' says I, 'now you are only a goin'

for to banter me; let me alone, now, that's a good soul, for that ain't a subject to banter on; and I might say something I would be sorry for, perhaps.'

" 'I am not a going to tease you, Stephen,' he said: 'I really want to hear it as it happened, if it ever did happen. They say you had a hard struggle with him; is that true?'

" 'True as gospel,' says I.

" 'Were you quite sober that night, Steve,' said he. 'You know, folks sometimes see double on St. Patrick's Day.'

" 'See!' says I, 'parson; I not only see him, but felt him, too. Look here, where he left the marks of his teeth on me!' and I stripped and showed him the scars. 'Do you believe now?' says I.

" 'I never heard that ghosts had teeth before, Steve,' said he, most provokin' cool—'no, never.'

" 'Did you ever see one?' says I; 'so come, now, answer me that.'

" 'No, says he; 'I never saw one, and never expect to.'

" 'How the plague can you tell, then,' says I, 'whether they have teeth or not? But I have seen one, do ye mind: and I can swear they have teeth—plaguy sharp ones, too—breath as hot as a tea-kettle, and claws as long and as strong a bear.'

" 'Stephen,' said he, 'my son, I didn't think you were so easily frightened.'

" 'Frightened!' says I; and I began to get cross

with his banter, as if I would go for to tell a lie, or be such a fool as not to know what I was a talking about — ‘frightened, is it?’ said I; ‘it’s more than ever you could do to skeer me, though you have been preachin’ against the devil and all his imps ever since I was born. But do you go to Beler’s Lake on St. Patrick’s night, and if the Judge is to home, and a talking and a stirring under water, do you ondervalue him as I did, and say you ain’t afraid of him, dead or alive, and if he don’t frighten you into believing what you hear, and believing what you see, and into knowing the difference between a bite and a kiss, then you are a braver man than I take you to be, that’s all.’

“ ‘I’ll go with you the next 17th day of March,’ said he.

“ ‘Thank you,’ said I; ‘I’d rather be excused.’

“ ‘Well, I’ll go with or without you, just as you please, on the 17th of next March, if you will first go to Nick Wyland’s, and see that Colonel Brown’s crazy boy (the one that roasted his brother) is well chained up. It’s my opinion that that mischievous maniac broke loose, or slipped out that night, and attacked you; and the only wonder is that, with his superhuman strength, he didn’t kill you. You had a great escape. But as for a ghost, Steve...’

“ ‘Parson,’ says I, ‘do you believe the Bible?’

“ ‘Yes,’ says he, ‘I do.’

“ ‘Well, then,’ says I, ‘believe in Judge Beler’s ghost. I have seen him, and heard him, and felt him,

and have the marks to prove it. You are Parson Rogers, ain't you?"

" ' Yes.' "

" ' Well, so you are ; but how do I know it ? Because I've seen you, heard you, and felt you. Well, that's the way I know the ghost. I tell you, I have heard, seen, and felt Judge Beler's ghost.' "

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