

## Poetry.

## THE OLD COTTAGE CLOCK.

Oh! the old, old clock, of the household stock  
Was the brightest thing and neatest;  
Its hands, though old, had a touch of gold,  
And its chime rang with the sweetest.  
Twas a monitor, too, though its words were few,  
Yet they lived, though nations altered;  
"Tick, tick," it said—"quick, quick, to bed—  
For ten I've given warning;  
Up, up, and go, or else you know,  
You'll never rise soon in the morning!"

A friendly voice was that old, old clock,  
As it stood in the corner smiling,  
And blessed the time with a merry chime,  
The wintry hours beguiling;  
But a cross old voice was that tiresome clock,  
As it called at daybreak boldly,  
When the dawn looked gray o'er the misty way,  
And the early air blew coldly;  
"Tick, tick," it said—"quick out of bed,  
For five I've given warning;  
You'll never have health, you'll never get wealth,  
Unless you're up soon in the morning."

Still hourly the sound goes round and round,  
With a tone that ceases never;  
While tears are shed for the bright days fled,  
And the old friends lost forever!  
Its heart beats on—though hearts are gone  
That warmer beat and younger;  
Its hands still move—though hands we love  
Are clasped on earth no longer!  
"Tick—tick," it said—"to the church-yard bed,  
The grave hath given warning—  
Up, up, and rise, and look to the skies,  
And prepare for a heavenly morning."

## Select Tale.

## THE MYSTERIOUS BOX.

BY CLARA AUGUSTA.

Mrs. Tabitha Prynose had the most fully developed "bump" of curiosity in the whole world.—It is a known fact among understanding people, that if a mysterious neighbour had lived on the farther extremity of the much-talked-of North-West Passage, Mrs. Prynose would, long ago, have monopolized Dr. Kane's well-deserved honor, and discovered the veritable passage itself; provided, the neighbour at the other end patronized news messages and believed in green tea and short-cakes. We don't wish to be understood that this was anything to the disadvantage of Mrs. Prynose, far from it; we mention it that the reader may know that we deal only in distinguished characters.

Once upon a time (a pleasant June morning, of course,) Mrs. Prynose and her amiable daughter, Sallie Prynose, were engaged in the praiseworthy employment of washing the family linen, (for Mrs. Prynose was thoroughly American, and did not believe in foreign importations, and so, as all of that belief should, she did her own work, and no thanks to the first gem of the say!) the horse-team, which passed by Prynose place every day on its way to the city, drew up at the front door of the aforesaid place, and Mrs. Prynose hearing the noise, hastily left her labour and ran to the window, where through a hole in the curtain ("kept there a-purpose for a peep-hole," as she confidently informed her daughter,) she saw a strange and soul-absorbing spectacle! The teamster climbed to the top of his load and brought down a small black box, eighteen inches in length by one in height and breadth, and very carefully deposited it on the front door step. Then, with the air of one familiar with such performances, John mounted his box and drove off again.

Mrs. Prynose could scarcely wait till he was out of sight—she was "dying," she said, "to examine that box!" Sallie took her red hands out of the suds, and after wiping them on a soft towel, (Sallie was afraid of freckles,) she joined her mother on the door-step.

"Gracious me! what a strange lookin' thing! Bad-locked as sure as I'm a livin' critter! Don't tech it Sallie, don't. There's no good about it in my opinion—like as not it's an eternal machine—such as we read about in the Olive Branch last week! Blowed up a man and his wife and barn, you know. Land of favour! What if it should happen to be one? Don't Sally! Don't tech it, I say! Nobody knows but you'd be in the clouds next minit! Come away from it, and be contented to look!"

But Sallie was endowed with no small share of the Prynose propensity, and not being allowed to feel of the box, and having used her sight as much as she deemed profitable, she knelt down at a small distance from the box, and sniffed with considerable emphasis.

"Don't smell of nothin' that I can see," she said, rising and facing Mrs. Prynose, "and I've

allers heard it said that gunpowder had a strong smell to it—so it's plain enuff that it ain't gunpowder!"

"Ah, Sallie, child, there's no trusting to appearances, they're deceitful things! Jeet as if a man that knowed enuff to make an eternal machine couldn't take the smell out of the gunpowder! You ain't lived in the world long enuff to know everything yet!" And Mrs. Prynose, in full realization of the awful responsibility resting upon her as the possessor of so much knowledge, heaved a deep sigh.

"Mother," said Sallie, rousing herself from a fit of abstraction, and her hands from the pockets of her capacious apron at the same time, "I've jest thought of what's in it—it's a present of something or rather that somebody's sent to us, jest to surprise us! Don't you remember the story in the Gazette about the poor minister that was a starvin' and freezin' to death, and somebody sent him a baby in a box?"

"Lor! well what if they did? Didn't do him much good I reckon! Gracious! I hope this ain't a baby, for to tell the truth, I can't bear a baby—keeps folks to home so. But law! I guess I needn't worry, there's no present there—that box is either full of gunpowder, or else there's snakes in it! Ugh! it makes me crawl over to think of it! I'll bate any thing that it's some of old Pettigell Boody's works—he hates me because I said the Widder Sanburn gave him 'the mitten,' ('twas nothin' but the truth, and he knowed it; that's what made him cut so close!) and he's been and sent me this box of snakes out of spite? Thought I'd be fool enough to open it, eh? I guess he'll find he's mistaken before he gets through. I won't open it—not I! but I do wish I knowed what was in it."

"I mean to find out how heavy 'tis, anyhow," said Miss Sallie decisively, "the teamster teched it and I mean to. I'll get father's long 'pincers' and hist it up, see if I don't;" and agreeably to her determination, Sallie proceeded to test the specific gravity of the mysterious object before her.

"La! taint very heavy—there can't be much in it—but snakes is light critters, all tail so, 'taint as if they had a great orkard body, you know.—I should not wonder if there was snakes in it—not a mite!"

"I've an orful great mind to bust it open and see what's in it," said Mrs. Prynose, walking cautiously round and round the object of her curiosity, "but on the whole, I dessent. But it ain't a-gwine to set here—that's sartain. Like as not it's got the small-pox shut up in it,—I'll warrent it has, for I dreamed last night of white horses with black trimmings, and that's a sure sign of sickness. Seems to me, now I think of it, that I heard the small-pox was over to the city; but, law! I'm so frustrated that I can't remember whether it was this year or last that I heard it. Somebody's been and sent it to us now, and if I don't make 'em smart for it, then my name ain't Tabitha Prynose! I'll give 'em a home in the stone jug for a spell—I'll have 'em fined and quartered for it! Good for nothin' degraded set of scape-graces! I wish I had hold of 'em, and that teamster, too—you needn't squizzle up your nose, Sallie, it's no use; Jim Larport shall suffer for this if he is your sweetheart! Sallie, I'm a-gwine to berry this box in the airth, they say that's all the way you can git the infection out of anything, and you jest go and dig a hole down in the lower tater patch for it and I'll bring it down with the pincers.—We won't say a word about it to anybody, for if it gits out that we've had the small-pox sent us in a box, we can't go visitin' down to Mrs. Lovejoy's to-morrow afternoon, and I want to go orful bad because I shall be likely to hear if Jane Varney is goin' off to work in the Falls' factory."

Sallie Prynose was an obedient girl, so she did as her mother commanded, and in less time than one would be likely to suppose, the box was consigned to the keeping of the "tater patch," and the impromptu sextons returned to finish their washing, talk over the occurrence, and smoke the house thoroughly (the door-stone in particular, with such fumigators as old rags, cots, worn shoes, and broken "whalebones.")

Just as the family were sitting down to their noon-day meal, Mr. Benjamin Cushing, Mrs. Prynose's brother, made his appearance; and after the affectionate salutory greetings were over, and Mr. Cushing was comfortably seated at the table with a big pitcher of cider before him, he said:

"Well, Tabitha, I 'pose you mistrusted I was a-comin', when you seed I sent my baggage on afore me."

"Baggage on afore! What do you mean, Ben? I hain't seen no baggage."

"My box—didn't Larport leave it this mornin'?" asked Uncle Ben, looking savage, and dipping speciously at the cider.

"Lor! why that was Ben's box, the eternal machine!" said Mrs. P.

"The present of a baby!" said Miss Sallie, giggling.

"The box of snakes."

"The small-pox, and it's buried!" exclaimed Sallie, determined to tell the principal part of the news herself.

"Eternal machine! babies and snakes—boxes buried! what do you mean? Do talk reasonable!" said Uncle Ben, getting nettled.

After a good deal of circumlocution the matter was satisfactorily explained. Sallie exhumed the box, and Uncle Ben applied a key and opened it! Wonders of Pompeii and Herculaneum! hide your diminished heads! The box contained a quart bottle filled with brandy!

"I wanted to bring it to you," said Uncle Ben, addressing Mrs. Prynose, "for I knowed you was fond of it; but I thought I'd send it by the team, for I didn't want to hear it said that I, a deacon of the church, went about with a bottle of spirits in my pocket!"

## Miscellaneous.

## EXTRACTS FROM REPORT OF CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS IN CANADA.

1. SEPARATE SCHOOLS.—While the general success of the school system during the year has been an increase over that of preceding years, the people of Upper Canada have evinced an unprecedented unanimity and determination to maintain it in all its integrity. It secures to all what all have a right to claim—equal and impartial protection. It provides equally for all classes of the community.—No example of proselytism under its operations has ever occurred; and no charge of partiality in its administration has ever been substantiated. No less than 396 Roman Catholic teachers are employed in teaching the public schools, and a corresponding or larger proportion of the superannuated teachers to whom pensions have been granted, are Roman Catholics.

2. A system of public instruction being founded upon the principle, that it is the duty of the State to provide for the school instruction of all its citizens, it follows, that none should be excepted from its advantages or obligations. If all do not need it or do not desire to avail themselves of it, they are not the less obliged to support it, the same as all are required to contribute to provide court houses and the payment of the salaries of Judges, although many may never enter a court house nor seek the opinion of a Judge.

3. In such a system, where there are diversities of religious opinion, the method is to have combined secular instruction, and separate religious instruction,—the State providing the former, and leaving the latter to the respective parents and religious persuasions of the pupils. In most cases, especially in America, the religious instruction (when given at all) is given at home, in Sunday schools, and in Churches. In other cases, religious instruction is also given in the school houses or elsewhere by the clergy or catechist of each persuasion at appointed times, such as will not interfere with the ordinary exercises of the school. This last is the national system in Ireland, and it is, for the most part, the system in Upper Canada, and will probably be so altogether. In such a system there is no interference with the religious convictions of any pupils in the schools, and therefore no reasonable pretext for separate schools. If public schools are founded at public expense and for the public good, no citizens can be separated from them without injury—injury in some degree to the public schools on the ground of support—but much greater injury to the parties separated, as being deprived of the advantages of the public schools and compelled to support other schools at greater expense and generally less efficient, and with the additional disadvantage of being severed and alienated from other classes of the community with whom their interests, position and future prospects are largely associated. It is only, therefore, for very grave causes that the State can be justified in allowing any portion of the population to be isolated from a system of public instruction. But where this is claimed with the avowed view to the interests of a religious persuasion, the answer is, "the State has nothing to do with the peculiar interests of sects, but has everything to do with the school education of its youth." The State equally tolerates and protects the former, but it largely provides for the latter. As, therefore, a system of public schools is based upon public interests, the members of no sect or religious persuasion can claim on constitutional or public grounds, that any of such schools should be made sectarian, or that public funds should be expended for the support of sectarian schools at all—much less that such schools should

be placed upon the same footing as public schools. The sole object of public schools is secular education; the leading object of sectarian schools is sectarian interests—with which the state does not interfere where there is "no semblance of union between Church and State." If, therefore, the State does so far depart from the principle of a national system of instruction, as to permit any members of a religious persuasion to separate themselves from it and to even give them public aid for a sectarian school, it is a favor granted them on the ground of indulgence, but upon no ground of constitutional right; since no sect has a constitutional claim to more than equal and impartial protection in the enjoyment of access to the public institutions of the country. It was on the ground of toleration or indulgence that separate schools were first sanctioned by law both in Upper and Lower Canada; but with this difference, however, that in Canada East, where the union of Church and State exists, the schools of the majority are for the most part denominational schools, while those of the minority are non-denominational—the reverse of what exists in Upper Canada.

5. But if the parties for whom separate schools are allowed, and aided out of the Legislative School Grant, according to the average attendance of pupils (which is the principle of distributing the school grants among the common schools in all the townships of Upper Canada) shall renew agitation upon the subject, and assail and seek to subvert the public school system, as they have done and endeavor to force legislation upon that subject against the voice and rights of the people of Upper Canada, by votes from Lower Canada, and the highest terrors of ecclesiastical authority, then I submit that the true and only alternative will be to abolish the separate school law altogether, and substitute the provisions of the national system in Ireland in relation to united secular and separate religious instruction, and extend it to Lower as well as Upper Canada. To the principles of that system in relation to national schools no party can object. It has been in successful operation in Ireland for more than twenty years, and has recently been re-affirmed after the fullest discussion, by the unanimous vote of the British House of Commons.

8. As it is the duty of the state to provide for the education of all the youth of the country, it ought not to permit the legal exclusion of any portion of them from the fullest advantages of that provision without their having the benefit of teachers equally well qualified to teach as the teachers of the public schools, and schools and instruction equally efficient. But while teachers of the public schools have to be examined and licensed by a county board according to a programme prepared by the council of public instruction, the teachers of separate schools are subject to no such test of their qualifications, but are licensed by each set of trustees that employ them; and from the inferior qualifications of some of the teachers employed in them, and which must be the case more and more from their inadequate remuneration, and from their exemption from the examinations required of other teachers, it is to be feared that many children set off and assigned to the separate schools suffer serious disadvantages in comparison with other children residing in the same neighborhoods; apart from the disadvantage of their isolation, the salutary influence of the emulation and energy which arises from pursuing the same studies in connection with the youth of other classes in the community, and with whom they are to act and associate in future life. I think that adequate protection and security are not provided for in the school education of the youth separated from the public schools without any choice or responsibility of the their own: and it may yet be the duty of the legislature to look carefully into this subject. In the mean time, I believe there are some parate schools in which full justice is done to the secular branches of the education of the pupils

One-seventh of the time (besides mornings and evenings) of children is, by Divine authority and appointment, at the disposal of pastors, parents, and children, for the religious instruction of the latter, and other sacred purposes; and if the religious part of their education is neglected, the guilt lies with the parent and the pastor, and not with the teacher employed for the secular part of their education. Combined literary and separate religious education, is the true and only principle on which free, equal, and universal education can be provided for a people of various forms of religious faith. The state, or body politic, provides the former; pastors and parents individually impart the latter. The former is the peculiar work of the day school; the latter is the peculiar work of the church and the home fire-side. The former is imparted during one-third out of five or six days out