

VACATION VAGARIES.

RANDOM THOUGHTS OF A VISITOR ON PAPER.

Some Striking Things in Portland, Me.—The Home of the Longfellow and How It Looks Now—Facts and Fancies.

PORTLAND, Me., Oct. 30.—If I were superstitious I should be inclined to think that a very intimate relation is destined to exist between me and the steamer Cumberland. Four times in two years have I travelled between St. John and the United States, and on every occasion, without any effort or intention of mine, that boat has had the honor to convey me. What does it portend? Good fortune or bad? Am I to be drowned in her, or shall I, some day, pick up a pocketbook in the saloon?

"How soon are we forgot when we are gone!" Three years ago I was on speaking or bowing terms with half the men in Portland, but now I wander around all day and, outside the newspaper offices, find very few whom I know or who know me. The larger the city, the more frequent and radical such changes are. I knew Philadelphia pretty thoroughly once, but if I went there now I should find myself in a wilderness of strange faces; while, as for New York—well, even Chatham square would probably turn its back on me.

One man outside the profession recognized me on the instant. He ought. A good many of my dollars have gone over his counter. I refer to my old tobacconist.

He gave me an enlarged conception of the importance of the trade in the filthy weed, when a chance remark caused me to ask him how many brands of tobacco are sold in the eastern markets. "I handle between 60 and 70," he said. "Though you can see that my jobbing business has fallen off greatly. Blank & Blank, on Commercial street, have 110 brands in stock. I don't doubt that in this little city you could find 500. Many of them are substantially alike, of course, though there are slight differences in the flavoring." I gathered from him that it has not yet occurred to any anti-tobacconist to introduce a new brand flavored with prussic acid.

To keep the practical from infringing upon the poetical is more difficult than one might think. When I stood before the noble statue of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow that adorns the beautiful square which bears his name I saw no fault in it, no incongruity in its surroundings. My appreciative soul yearned for a photograph of the spot and I bought one. Then I discovered that, though the electric-light wire opposite the statue had failed to meet my eye, it had asserted itself to the camera. In the photograph, Portland's poet has a rope around his neck!

Sentiment yields to convenience, here as elsewhere. The house at the corner of Fore and Hancock streets, in which Longfellow was born, is divided now into cheap tenements, inhabited by cheaper people. Not so many years ago, there was an illicit rum-shop in the very room where the future author of "Evangeline" opened his eyes on the world. You see there is money in rum; there isn't any in sentiment—unless one can become a professional philanthropist and keep his tears on tap.

Nevertheless it occurred to me while I stood beside this statue and looked up at the serene but earnest face that it is the fault of the Portland people themselves if they have no more than a bowing acquaintance with the muses. Within a radius of a hundred miles from this spot, no less than 30 persons who have made their mark in literature have been born or have long resided. The Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth and Samuel, stand at the head of the list. Then come Nathaniel Parker Willis—most lovable of dandies!—and his sister, Sarah Payson Willis, whose "Fanny Fern" papers made herself and the New York Ledger famous. John Neal too was a Portlander. S. S. Prentiss, whom the South still worships, was born on the corner of Congress and Temple streets. Mr. Griffiths' admirable book, "The Poets of Maine," in which are represented more than 400 verse makers, of varied degrees of merit, would help me to a list a column long, if it were worth while to print it.

Why is it that the fashionable quarters of most cities grow towards the westward? Because the inhabitants wish to follow the "star of empire"? or is it because the sight of the rising sun might occasion the unpleasant reflection that it is the signal for common folk to take up their tin dinner-pails?

I never saw a quieter presidential campaign. The Great American Liar is taking a rest. The stump orator, full of patriotism, enthusiasm and tears, orateth not in this section. I am sure that Thanksgiving—which comes later in November—will be appropriately observed by a grateful people.

We saw the sun this morning—for the first time in fourteen weeks, I believe. Flags were displayed on the public buildings and even all the shipping, and a salute was fired by order of the mayor.

SAWYER.

THE WORLD OF BOOKS.

At last it seems as if one might really claim that a grand and distinctive motive is beginning to inspire our literature. This motive is such a one as has ever been the inspiration to noblest achievement—a national and patriotic motive. In greater or less degree, yet distinctly and appreciatively always, we find our poems, our stories, our histories, our pictures, our intellectual life generally, awakening to a loving concern for Canadian themes and scenes, thrilling to Canadian aspirations. The growth of this national enthusiasm is the safeguard of our future.

The brief romance which forms the subject of this notice is a work of deep significance. Its ideal, presented with force and persuasiveness, is that of a united Canada working on distinctive lines to the highest and purest national development. The work is impressive not only by virtue of this splendid motive, but by its fervent sincerity as well, its fresh enthusiasm, its faith, its impulse. Of a most unconventional form, slight in structure, and written in curiously diminutive chapters, scarcely longer than some men's paragraphs, the work nevertheless attains a high degree of literary excellence. The incommunicable charm of a native gift pervades it. In the opening chapters there is a certain stiffness of expression, which, however, wears off as the work proceeds. It strikes the critical reader as the effort of one not yet quite certain of his style. Such a defect is a natural and but temporary accompaniment of earnest literary purpose. The story purports to be written by a French Canadian. Its scene is laid chiefly in Montreal, and in an idyllic French-Canadian seigniorial village on the banks of the St. Lawrence. The studies of French-Canadian life are charming in their vividness, fidelity and delicacy. Whether it be in the city or the village, the life observed is always that of the two races in contact, and the author's ideal evidently is that each race should supply the deficiencies of the other—each find the other necessary to it in the effort toward its highest development. The Canadianism of the work embraces not only our race and its aspirations, but to our splendid landscapes as well. Over these—and who can wonder that it should be so—the author broods with passionate delight; and his descriptions live, for his heart is in them. In a word, with my eyes fully open to certain defects of crudeness and of what might almost be called utopianism, I regard the work as a veritable "Book of Gold" for all Young Canada; and Young Canada, we may declare with pride, is a term which now embraces most of Canada's older and wiser sons. One or two brief extracts will illustrate a portion of what I have said. The first is from the scene in the Institute of Dormilliere, on the eve of election, when the business before the meeting is the plan of campaign. Haviland is the Young Seigneur himself. "The Ontarian" is Chrysler, a Dominion M. P., who is the guest of the Young Seigneur, and who represents throughout the work the English-Canadian element:—

"I have heard," began De La Lande, "that Grandmoulin has commenced to raise the issue of French patriotism."

"You are right," said Zoticque. "Well, then, why can we not use a like word, that shall go to the heart of the people? Give us a national cry! Let the struggle rest on our fundamental emotions of race! Why can we not?" The face of the impetuous schoolmaster began to flame into eagerness and fire.

"Because," interrupted Haviland, firmly, "we are in this particular country. Would you have us enter upon a campaign of injustice and ill-will? Leave that to the glory of it to Grandmoulin and to Picault!" "But, my chief, the positions of the French and the English!—we who were first, are becoming last!"

"Come here, if you please, sir," Haviland said, turning to Chrysler, who rose and advanced to him surprised. Haviland took him, and passing over to De La Lande placed the hand of the Ontario gentleman in that of the high-spirited schoolmaster, who accepted it, puzzled. "There," cried Haviland, raising his voice to a pitch of solemnity, "say whatever you can in that position. That is the position of the Canadian races!"

A shout rose in the hall, and every man sprang to his feet. Cheer rose upon cheer, while De La Lande shook the hand in his with feeling; and the cheering, smiling and handshaking lasted nearly a minute."

The next is from a scene upon the river, where Haviland gives Chrysler a brief outline of his national ideals:—

"First of all," he said, "as to ourselves, there are certain things we must clearly take to mind before we begin:—

"That we cannot do good work without making ourselves a good people.

"That we cannot do the best work without being also a strong and intellectual people.

"And that we cannot attain to anything of value at haphazard; but must deliberately choose and train for it."

"Labors worthy of Hercules!" ejaculated the old gentleman.

"Worthy of God," the young one replied. The difference of age between himself and the Ontarian seemed to disappear, and he proceeded confidently:—

"The foundation must be the Ideal

Physical Man. We must never stop short of working until—now, do not doubt me, sir,—every Canadian is the strongest and most beautiful man that can be thought. No matter how utterly chimerical this seems to the parlor skeptic who insists on our securing only the common-places, it cannot be so to the true thinker who knows the promises of science and reflects that a nation can turn its face to endeavors which are impossible for a person. Physical culture must be placed on a more reasonable basis, and made a requisite of all education. * * * * We must have a nation of stern, strong men—a careless people can never rise; no deep impression, no fixed resolve, will ever originate from easy-going natures.

"Next, the most crying requirement is True Education. The source of all our political errors and sufferings is an ignorant electorate, who do not know how to measure either the men or the doctrines that come before them. * * * * A man is being truly educated when his training is exactly levelled at what he ought to be—first of all a high type of man in general, and next, a good performer of his calling. Let him have a scheme of facts that will give him an idea of the ALL; then show him his part in it. * * * * Seek for him, in fine, not learning so much as wisdom, the essence of learning.

"But especially, left every Canadian be educated to see The National Work, and how to do it.

"It is an Ideal Character, however, a character perfectly harmonized with his destinies as a soul and his condition as a citizen, that is the most important armor in the panoply of the Canadian. * * * * After the equipment of the ideal Canadians, Chamilly proceeded to describe their work. Among themselves a few great ideas were to be striven for: 'We must be One People'; 'Canada must be perfectly independent'; 'there must be No Proletariat.' 'The principle of government was to be Government by the Best Intelligence.'

"Again, we must stamp our action with the Spirit of Organization. The nation must work all together, as a whole. The public plan must be clearly disseminated, and especially the aim 'To do preeminently well our portion of the improvement of the world.' Consecrated by our ideal also we must seek to draw together and foster a national distinctiveness. Canada must mean to us the Sacred Country, and our young men learn to weigh truly the value of such living against foreign advantages. For there is no surety of any excellence equal to a national atmosphere of it. They have always been artists in Italy; they have always been sternly free in Scotland; for a word of glory the French rush into the smoke of battle; and the Englishman is a success in courage and practicality; the German has not given his existence in vain to thoroughness; nor the American to business; let us make to ourselves proper customs and peculiarities, like the good old New Year's call, the winter carnival, the snow-shoe costume and a secular procession of St. Jean Baptiste. Tradition, too! Why should we forget the virtues of our fathers,—or perhaps still better, their faults? Let the man who was a hero—Daulac, Brock, the twelve who sortied at Lacolle Mill; or their deathless three hundred of Chateauguay,—never be forgotten. Have them in our books, our school books, our buildings. Make a fund for Tablets, so that our people may read everywhere:—'Here died McGee, who loved this nation.' 'Papineau spoke here.' 'In this house dwelt Heavysege.' So might all Canada be a Quebec of memories. * * * * "Think," cried he finally, "of a country that lives, as I am suggesting, on the deepest and highest principle of the seen and the unseen—what has been the aspiration of the lonely great of other nations, the clear purpose of all in this; what have been the virtues of a few in the past, determined here to be those of the whole; and every citizen ennobled by the consciousness that he is equally possessed of the common glory!"

CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS.

"The Young Seigneur, or Nation Making," by Wilfrid Chateauguay. Montreal: Wm. Drysdale & Co.

A Crack County is another of Mrs. Edward Kennard's novels, republished by the National Publishing company of Toronto. Mrs. Kennard's productions lack variety. To read one is to read all of them. Foxes, hounds and horses, "stiff double oxers," a beautiful heroine, who is fearless, graceful and an enthusiastic horsewoman, and a man are the materials of all her novels.

A Crack County, by Mrs. Edward Kennard. Toronto: National Publishing Co. St. John: J. & A. McMillan; paper, 30 cents.

Bonner Gets There.

The latest news from New York is that Bonner has made contracts with Robert Louis Stevenson and Frances Hodgson Burnett to write serials exclusively for the Ledger. Mrs. Burnett will get about \$15,000 for the story. The sum to be paid Stevenson is not stated. If he can write anything to equal Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde or Treasure Island, he should be paid as much as Mrs. Burnett. If he writes some of the drivel which he has put into print since he became famous, he would be dear at any price.

CANADIAN SILVER DISCOUNTED.

Tit for Tat is to be the Motto of Our Neighbors—A Maritime Club. (SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE.)

BOSTON, Oct. 31, 1888.—Did I say that retaliation wasn't going to be enforced? Well, I was wrong; it is already being put into operation in this city. Within the past few weeks Canadian silver currency, which has always been in common circulation here, has been the object of a general onslaught; for what particular reason I do not know. It has never been taken on the horse-cars or the United States post office, but in all other connections it has always passed for its face value as readily as the American coin. There has not even been any discount on it, contrary to the fate of United States dimes and quarters in Canada. Now, however, it is in disgrace, and a sort of general movement against it has commenced. Whether this is due to the fact that the Canadian courts have refused to allow absconding bank cashiers to bring stolen American coin into the Dominion, or whether it is because the coin bears the handsome but obnoxious physiognomy of Queen Victoria, I am unable to say. Anyway, it is certain that it has fallen into disrepute.

Some of the progressive Provincialists of the Hub are moving in the direction of forming a Maritime Provincial Club, for social and beneficial purposes, and the chances are that their efforts will meet with success. It is very desirable that we should have such an institution here, where so many Provincialists are earning their daily bread and butter and baked beans. Leaving aside the question of their own benefit from such a club, it would be a very desirable thing to be able to entertain casual visitors from the provinces. Suppose Sir Leonard Tilley, Sir Adams Archibald or some other distinguished provincialists, should happen in town on a visit, we should be at loss what to do with them to show our appreciation if we did not have such a club. They would be left to roam around through a cold unfeeling world, at the mercy of heartless confidence men and death dealing Boston herdies.

Verily, we must have a Provincialist club. THOMAS F. ANDERSON.

NEW CONFECTIONERY FANCIES.

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"Have you candied rose leaves, you know?" asked a young man about town of the pretty girl in a fashionable candy store in the presence of a Free Press reporter. "Yes, sir; how much would you like?" "One pound, aw—in a nice box you know." "Oh, certainly, sir. We put them up in French bon-bon boxes. Here it is; \$4, please."

"What? \$4 for one pound of candy. Impossible!" The young man was frightened into speaking good English. The pretty girl smiled.

"The candy is only \$3 a pound. The bon-bon box is \$1—that makes \$4."

"I—I don't think I'll take it. You can give me a pound box of mixed candies at the regular price, if you don't mind."

"Certainly, sir," and the obliging clerk changed the order and the young man escaped solvent.

"There are plenty of young men who do buy them," said the girl. "Some take sweet violets, some like candied rose leaves and others prefer pinks done in sugar."

"What is the object of eating candied flowers?"

"To perfume the breath. All young society ladies carry perfumed sweets with them to the theater and to parties, everywhere they go, indeed. Some of these are tiny lozenges put up in fancy vials like these."

They looked like homeopathic medicines—small sugar pills in all colors. There were violet bijous of a lovely lavender color; musk bijous, pink and pretty, and a lot of other sweets for the breath.

"And the price?"

"Oh, those are cheap enough; only 10 cents a bottle. Then there are mixed flavors for the bonbonnières, the little round boxes fastened to the corsage. Even the gentleman are beginning to use them instead of cloves and coffee to sweeten the breath."

"No Girls—No Fun."

Some time ago the general passenger agents of the country had a joint meeting in Florida. They always hold these joint meetings as far away from home as possible, else they could never have the satisfaction of using their varied annuals. On this occasion the officials from this section of the country were speeding Southward on their special train, with wives and families, when they learned that their Eastern brethren had made up a "stag" party and were on their way, their lapels adorned with ribbons bearing the initials "N. G."—meaning "No girls." When the Chicago party heard this they telegraphed ahead to one of their associates in a certain Southern city en route, and he met them at the depot with a boxful of ribbon badges marked "N. G. N. F."—which, interpreted, meant, "No girls, no fun." When they proudly marched up to the Florida hotel with their wives on their arms, the New Yorkers, who were without companions of the fair sex, appeared quite chopfallen, and acknowledged that "the boys" from the Northwest had the best of them. At the next joint meeting the Eastern men brought their families.—Chicago Herald.

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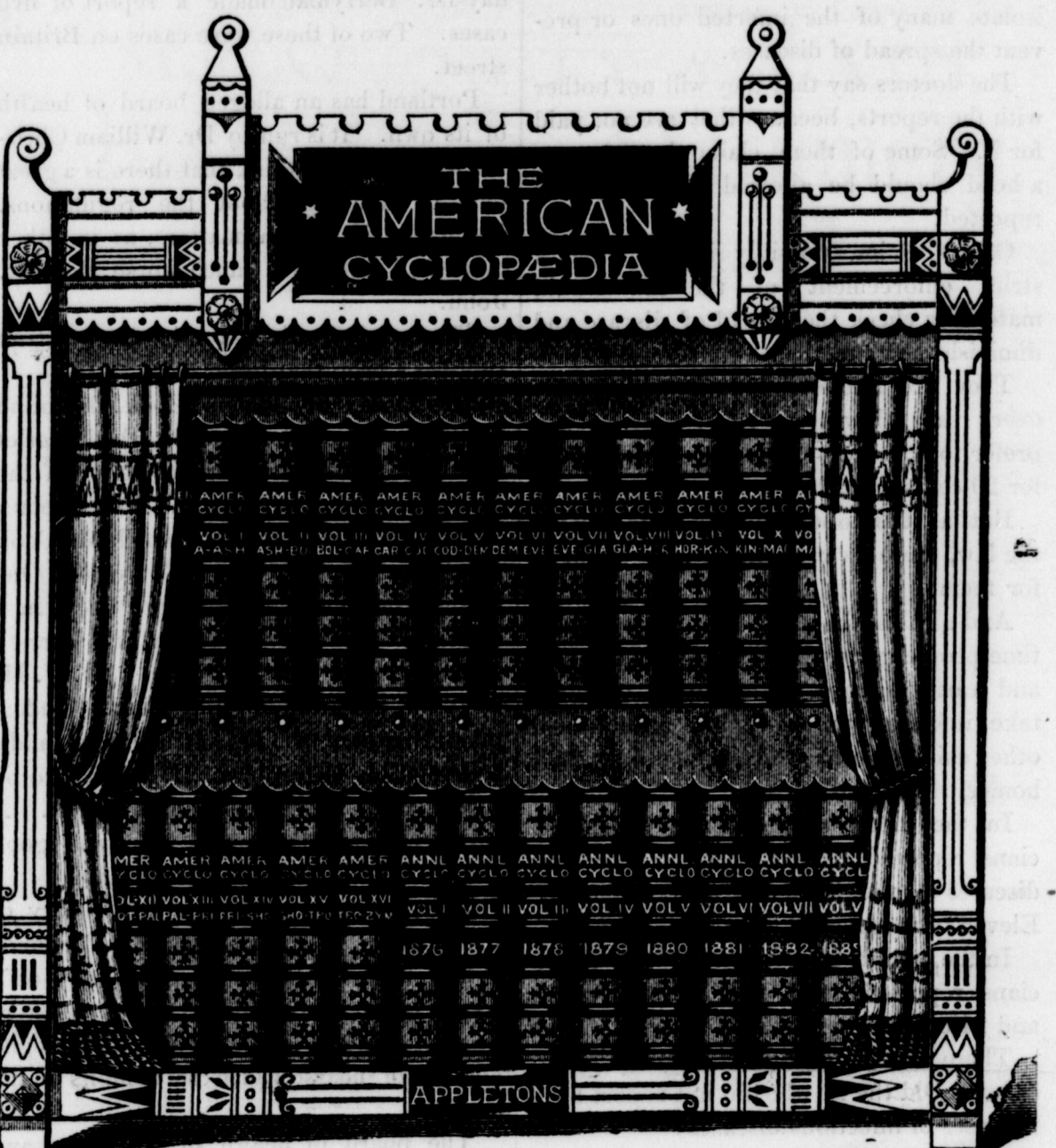
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