

OUR POT-POURRI JAR.

WHY THAT NAME WAS GIVEN THE DELICIOUS PERFUME.

The Rose Garden of the Carmelite Nuns and Their Precious Recipes—How the Writer's Pot-Pourri Jar was Secured—A Little of Everything.

Far up among the French Pyrenees, in a world of almost supernatural beauty and eternal loneliness, is a convent of cloistered nuns, belonging to one of the most rigid orders of the Roman Church: the Order of the Carmelites. Always excepting the monks of La Trappe, who live in a perpetual silence, and who, as their name implies admits no women into their order, there is no religious body in the world amongst whom the discipline is so severe, and the whole life so thoroughly given up to self abnegation, and the utter repression of all natural impulses as this one. Fasting, prayer, and penance, discipline, and labor, make up the daily lives of these devotees who have chosen one of the most thorny of all paths to heaven. Summer and winter, through scorching heat, and bitter cold, the Carmelite friars go barefooted and bareheaded. Summer and winter, the nuns work in their fields, and kneel on their chilly stone floors, in the cold grey dawn, and yet find peace, and even what is to them happiness! Perhaps—who knows?—their dwelling place so near the clouds, may bring them nearer heaven in thought; may lift their hearts as far above the world and its ceaseless turmoil, as their habitation is above the level plain of our everyday earth.

Inside the high stone wall which surrounds the convent is a perfect fairyland of beauty. Flowers of every hue grow in a profusion that seems almost wild; herbs and "simples" of every known variety flourish as the green bay tree, and each one has its use. No smallest shrub or plant but has its own separate reason for existing. Its patent of nobility, as it were, for each possesses some especial virtue of its own, known to the good sisters, if to no one else. And wonderful are the medicaments to be found in the nuns' dispensary, so wonderful, indeed, that it seems as if they possessed a specific for every ill that flesh is heir to.

But it is the rose garden that has ever been the pride of the convent. "The rose garden of the Carmelite nuns" has become, in one way, almost as famous as the Vale of Cashmere, where one walks upon a carpet of rose leaves spread nearly ankle deep, not that the rose leaves of the Carmelite convent are allowed to go to waste as they are in Cashmere, by no means. They are transformed into precious essences, into confections made by rare old recipes written on parchment, into rose water, into rose pillows, to soothe the aching heads of fever patients. They are laid away in bags to be used for poultices. A rose leaf poultice being infallible in some maladies. Indeed, to describe even a few of the uses to which the many put them would take up far more space than I have at my disposal today, particularly as I began with the intention of devoting that space to the one product of the convent which has rendered it most famous. The celebrated pot pourri of the Carmelite nuns, the recipe for which, though it has been copied a few times, has never within the history of the convent been out of the strong room, so highly is it prized. I have a copy now lurking somewhere in the lowest depths of that olla podrida, a journalist's desk, from which receiving vault I have not the courage to disinter it, but I still possess a small jar of the pot pourri made according to its rules, and so I can vouch for its perfection.

It is composed of all things rare and costly and sweet. Rose leaves plucked fresh and dried with their perfume in them, half open buds and full blown roses preserved with salt, and spice perfumed with oil of bergamot, and of ambergris with orris root, with musk, with cedar, with benzoin—not benzene, please—with cloves and cinnamon, and even myrrh. And all this combination of odors revolves itself into one perfume so perfect that I know of nothing else like it. Take off the cover of your rose jar as you sit in the summer sunlight, and as the imprisoned perfume escapes you might almost fancy yourself in the spice groves of Ceylon, so sweet, so subtle, so penetrating is the odor. Age makes no difference except to improve it, ten, twenty, thirty years may go by, and still, like old wine, the pot pourri only grows stronger.

Sit alone in the twilight a little longer, "The scented dusk" as some poet calls it, and as the spicy sweetness steals over your senses, old memories arise and surround you like ghosts.

Those roses! why they came out of the corner of the old garden at home, no other roses ever smelt like them before, and I greatly doubt if any ever will again. Perhaps you were very young when you gathered and dried them, I was I know when I made that treasured jar full of mine. A very small and uninteresting boy indeed, who was addicted to wearing out the knees of his knickerbockers and mislaying his pocket handkerchief, and whose ears I remember with bitter humiliation were seldom quite clean except on Sunday morning; at least so his mother said.

I was also very much given to slopping around in the swamps and marshes in search of "Indian pitcher" plants with another boy, who was bigger than I in many

ways even then, and who is a very, very much bigger man now than I can ever be. The historic Westcock marshes, since made famous by that other boy's gifted pen, were the scene of many of those amphibious excursions, for the other boy—to whom I never caught up—was Canada's future poet Laureate. Well, our paths have lain apart these many years. Fame did not pursue me with a wreath of laurel. She let me severely alone. And sometimes when we meet now—not Fate, but the poet and I—and I feel once more the boyish warmth of his hand-clasp, it does not seem so very long ago since we sat on a comparatively dry "hummock" at the edge of the marsh, with our boots full of bog water and our hearts of triumph, dividing our spoils of frog spawn and swapping pollywogs.

Why the very jar of pot pourri I spoke of is made of rose leaves gathered in the rose garden of old "Westcock House," overlooking the Cumberland marshes, and the poet himself helped me to dry them, so, if space permitted, I could not better begin my jar of literary pot pourri than with one of the latest poems from his pen, a poem which is full of the spirit of his boyhood, and which seems a picture from memory of the old rectory where his childhood was spent, with its garden and grove, and the "apples in flower." Where the sound of the frogs making "merry the pools of May," floated up from the marshes by Cumberland Basin, and the night hawk winged his bounding way.

—GEOFFREY CUTBERT STRANGE.

AN OPINION FROM THE COUNTRY.

The Appearance of the Hospital in a Correspondent's Eyes.

IN THE COUNTRY, JUNE 10.—Few of the numerous visitors to the city of Saint John have failed to notice among the many buildings of interest to be seen there the General Public Hospital. Prominently situated on a hill, it commands a fine view of the city, and is near enough to be within easy walking distance and yet, is completely separated from the busy turmoil of everyday life. I cannot say that I am very pleasantly impressed with the rather gloomy appearance of its exterior, but entering I experienced an agreeable surprise, for no gloom was to be found in those well ventilated halls and bright, sunny rooms. Not to mention the intelligent and cheerful face of the young matron who kindly offered to conduct me through the building.

The wards are long with remarkably high ceilings, and were evidently furnished with all conveniences necessary for the comfort of the patients. Special attention seems to be given to cleanliness, and it must be no light work to keep those large wards in their usually fresh and perfectly clean condition. As we passed through the corridor I caught a glimpse of the nurses dining room, where a pleasant faced woman was engaged in setting the table for dinner, while a young nurse was bending over the table tastefully arranging some flowers. Her pretty uniform attracted my attention at once, for, being a woman, I can appreciate anything pretty when I see it. She wore a blue and white dress, which was almost hidden under a large white apron; snowy white cuffs and collar, and a tiny white cap, which was extremely becoming. All the nurses in training are obliged to wear the uniform, and have also to conform to the rules of the hospital, being under the superintendence of the matron and the resident doctor.

The nurse of today is not the nurse of tradition, for many of them are accomplished and educated women, and ladies in every sense of the term; and the work they have chosen is truly a woman's profession, that requires wonderful patience, untiring energy and determination.

All infectious cases are banished to the "Epidemic," a smaller hospital in connection with the General one, and any of the nurses are always willing when called upon to nurse any patient there, and they endure their exile with wonderful fortitude.

A new wing has lately been added to the hospital consisting of a number of bright rooms, a ward, and a long room where the operations are performed. I could not help thinking that a few pictures on the bare white walls would make a great improvement, and secretly wished that some of the St. John housekeepers would send some pretty bright pictures to this public institution. I am sure their donations would be acceptable and receive due appreciation too.

The grounds surrounding the hospital where looking their best. I could not resist stopping at one of the windows in the ward to admire them. As we stood there some happy convalescents came within sight, they had been strolling about for some time; and the convenient benches placed here and there about the grounds were gladly appropriated.

I enquired of the matron if there were many hopeless cases. She looked sad for a minute, as she answered, "Yes, there are a number of patients here who will never go out alive." It did seem sad; but should we not be glad that so many of the poor in this great commercial city are so well cared for, and that they are so often snatched back from the jaws of death. Yes! the City of Saint John has done a good work in providing this "haven of rest" for the poor, "The General Public Hospital." ISABEL.

NOT TO BE DISMISSED,

AFTER A FLIPPANT AND BRIEF PLATFORM DISCUSSION.

Pastor Felix Likens the Pillars of the Temple of Christianity to the Stars in the Heavens—Tested by Chance and Time—The Task of Proof not Light.

I looked up tonight into the Heavens, and saw God's ancient stars in the same places, wherein the eyes of past generations had beheld them. Tier above tier they rose, in shining ranks, and marshalled in everlasting order, with the calmness and stability of the hills from which I was gazing. "What," I fancied, "if this mystic order were dissolved, this glorious brotherhood were dispersed; what if some giant hand were lifted to pluck them down, and they came reeling across the field of space in a madman's dance to sure destruction!" At the instant a meteor shot out as if from amongst them, and sheathed its hasty sword in its scabbard of blue air; so, for a moment, my fancy fell dizzy at the strange conception of such chaos begun. But no, there they abide, and will continue, when this brain that reels on the brink of space, and trembles at their mightiness has gone back to its parent dust.

So, in some moods, I vaguely fancy to myself the pillars of this temple of Christianity shaken—the Star of Bethlehem plucked out of the eastern sky; and I ask if it is reserved for this last, or some coming century, to discover and demonstrate that the grand mysteries in which the former nineteen have believed are vain superstition and myth? But this quickly passes; and as firm and abiding the things in which our souls have trusted, are seen remaining, as when the fathers fell asleep.

If men have any truth to show us that runs counter to christianity, properly understood, we await it. But let it be considered that this is a large matter, and not to be flippantly dismissed at the close of some shallow hour in which its merits have been canvassed upon the platform. It may be a convenient occasion for the exhibition of wit, or for a certain species of logic or eloquence; but we may doubt if it is one for candid and comprehensive dealing with a set of questions which have tasked the powers of gravest, strongest, most sincere and reverent spirits, of all ages—much less for their final settlement, and that adversely to the consensus of all time.

That which some would treat as if it were chance before the wind, has had time and chance to get itself tested. It is not a matter of today or yesterday, merely; though it will be a very vital thing, doubtless, of tomorrow, and of many to-morrows. If gentlemen are disposed to make way with it, let them consider the difficulties attendant on such a task; let them remember the subtlety of the power with which they deal, the unaccountable force and aggressiveness of it; and reckon it is one thing to confute a preacher, or claim a dialectician's noisy victory; and quite another to make this matter positive, that "dust and ashes" is all that is, and that one called Immanuel was not "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world."

This thing has been here a long time, nor is it by wise men to be classified with notions that pertain only to the ignorant and superstitious. To use words that seem to me weighty with truth, and the conviction of it—"It is the faith of the enlightened nations, incorporated in them at the beginning of their existence, helping to create them, presiding over their growth. It has moulded to a great extent their political and social institutions, their sentiments and usages, and leavened their literature and laws. It has entered into their very blood and marrow. To dislodge Christianity as a supernatural religion, were it possible, from the convictions and life of the European nations and their off-shoots, would be a revolution the magnitude and terrible effect of which, as I believe, it is impossible to conceive. The old Greco-Roman religion fell, but it fell by the explosive power of a new and better faith. Had it been swept away by mere unbelief, with nothing but atheism, or the indistinct and fluctuating creed of natural religion, to stand in the room of it, who can doubt but that there would have been a ruin without a recovery? But the principal thing which I wish to say under this head is that the burden of disproving Christianity and demonstrating that it rests on a false foundation properly belongs to the assailing party; and, further to intimate that the task is not a light one."

When, therefore, we are advised that some gentleman (who bears, at least, the name of one sweet singer, beloved in all the christian world), will publicly call in question the system which Christ founded, and Milton and Newton received; the faith, in which multitudes of humble ones have happily lived, and triumphantly died; and when he summons all its advocates within his hearing to come inside his Goliath lists in its instant defence; why, then, the experienced and sensible among mankind,—together with some who have more doubts and fears,—will contrive, after all to sit with tolerable comfort in their chairs, or to lie without any marked uneasiness in their beds. This little exercise of restless talents—this intellectual cock-fight is soon over, with the glory of it; and it matters little if he be answered or not, the universal heart goes on quietly beating, and the common people hear gladly of the old verities of their inward life, for which no substitute can be found. PASTOR FELIX.

* Of Dr. George Park Fisher, LL.D., of Yale College.

THIS COMPANY'S GROWTH

SPLENDID STATEMENT SUBMITTED AT THE ANNUAL MEETING

Of the Company—The Directors Comment on the Business of the Year and say That it was More than Ordinarily Successful—The Local Manager is Mr. Sipprell.

The Twentieth Annual Meeting of The Ontario Mutual Life Assurance Company was held in the Town Hall, Waterloo, on Thursday, 22nd May, 1890. The attendance was both influential and representative.

The Directors submitted their 20th Annual Statement showing that the business for the past year had been more than ordinarily successful.

During the year 2,382 applications were received for assurance, amounting to \$3,006,050, out of which 2,085 applications for \$2,621,800 were accepted and policies issued thereon, and \$9 for \$124,500 were declined as not being up to our standard of selection. The remaining 208 applications for \$259,750 were not yet completed at the close of the year.

The Premium and interest income amounts to \$450,612.25, being over \$1,400 for each working day of the year, and showing an increase of \$55,200 over the previous year.

The assets amount to \$1,488,167, showing an increase of \$174,314 over the previous year. The surplus, after making full provision for the necessary reserve and all other liabilities, is \$95,155, which will enable the Company to continue its liberal distribution among the Policy-holders.

The amount of assurance in force on the 31st of December, 1889, is 13,127,400 under 10,299 Policies, which is an increase of \$1,085,486, in the amount assured, and 901 in the number of Policies in force at the close of the previous year.

Printed copies of the Financial Statement and Auditors' Report for 1889, having been distributed, the president, I. E. Bowman, M. P., moved the adoption of the reports. He pointed out the substantial progress made during the past year in every department of the business, notwithstanding the stringency in money which prevailed, and that the results achieved compared favorably with those of any other company doing business in Canada. The new work for the first four months of the current year showed that The Ontario still maintained its popularity; but what the management aimed at was rather the quality than the quantity of new business written. The agency staff was never more efficient than at the present time, and the prospects for 1890 were, therefore, very encouraging. He referred to the Company's investments which would be found to be first class in every respect, but he held that owing to the shrinkage in values, more especially of improved farm property, more than ordinary care was necessary in loaning out the funds of the Company.

Mr. Robt. Melvin, second Vice-President, seconded the adoption of the Reports. He agreed with Mr. Bowman that "bigness was not so much to be desired as quality, but he was pleased to be in a position to state that the business this company had done and was now doing embraced both these conditions."

Messrs. Henry F. J. Jackson and J. M. Scully having been re-appointed by vote of the members present auditors for the current year, balloting for four directors was proceeded with, resulting in the re-election of I. E. Bowman, M. P., Waterloo; Alfred Hoskin, Q. C., Toronto; and E. P. Clement, Barrister, Berlin, and the election of the Hon. Wilfred Laurier, Arthabaskaville, P. Q., in the place of James Trow, M. P., resigned.

The customary vote of thanks to the Board, the Officers and the Agents having been tendered, the meeting was brought to a close. The Directors met subsequently and re-elected I. E. Bowman, President, C. M. Taylor, 1st Vice and Robert Melvin 2nd Vice-President of the Company for the ensuing year.

The Maritime province management of the Ontario Mutual is in the hands of Mr. E. M. Sipprell, and the growth and condition of its business is a matter of congratulation to the Company and himself.

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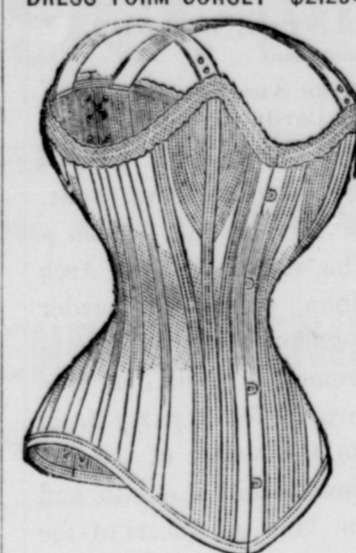
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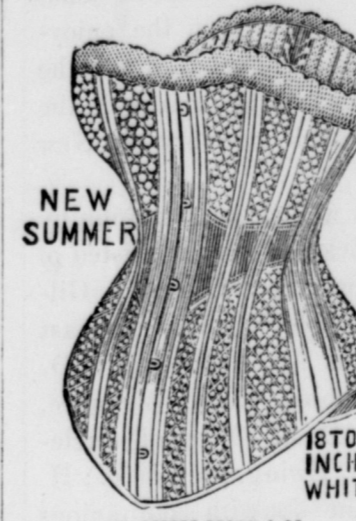
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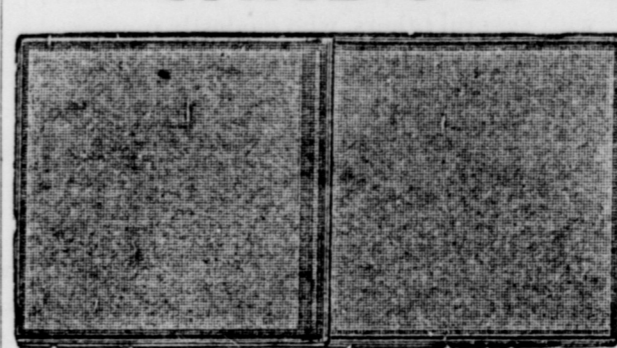
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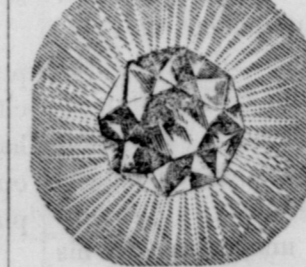
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