

ST. JOHN, N. B., SATURDAY, MARCH 12, 1892.

GRAND OPENING OF THE FINEST STOCK OF FANCY DRESS MATERIAL

Ever Imported by MANCHESTER, ROBERTSON & ALLISON.

It gives us pleasure to draw attention to the attractive display of dress fabrics now on exhibition in our dress room, embracing all the latest weaves produced this season. Our dress room is the finest in the Lower Provinces, splendidly lighted, and the goods perfectly arranged so as to display to the best advantage our large and well assorted stock of COLORED WOOL DRESS MATERIAL consisting of Alligator Suitings, Wool Crinkles, Crepon, Pleated Serge, Fancy Bedford Cords, Fine Boucle Stripes, Fancy Cheviots, Camel's Hair, Checked Tweeds, Fancy Homespuns illuminated effects, Boucle Borders, Tinsel Borders, Vandyke Patterns with Borders.

The above mentioned are some of the leading styles, our assortment comprises all the most attractive designs from foreign manufacturers, placing us in a position to suit the taste of the most fastidious.

—The most Fashionable Shades in Plain Colors.—

All of the new COTTON FABRICS for Summer, 1892 are now shown on our counters. Fancy printed Lawns, Fancy Sateens, Lamas, Drillettes, Senegals, French Cambrics, Percales, Trafford Cloths, Spotted Pique.

ALL NEW AND FRESH STOCK.

MANCHESTER, ROBERTSON & ALLISON.

SOME FAMOUS PARROTS.

BIRDS THAT HAVE SHOWN MOST WONDERFUL ABILITIES.

Dr. George Stewart Tells the Readers of "Progress" Many Interesting Facts—The Gay Plumaged Bird's Past, Present and Probable Future.

Half a century ago, there were more parrots in the world than there are now, and the ornithologists say that a hundred years hence, most of the finer-plumaged ones will cease to appear in their haunts. Very little is known of the habits of parrots in their wild state, though the study of them, one would think, ought to prove interesting enough. Most varieties abound in the tropical and sub-tropical climates, though it is an error to suppose that specimens of the tribe are found in those regions only. The Carolina parakeet used to range in the vicinity of Lakes Erie and Ontario, and along the banks of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, but authorities say, that they no longer inhabit those localities, but are to be seen in the Gulf States instead, though in greatly diminished numbers. The best speaking parrots come from the Amazon district, but all the tropical countries supply specimens of very beautiful plumage. The prettiest are the bright green ones, which belong to South America, though they are not in such demand as the natives of West Africa, which are ash-grey in color, docile in disposition and noted for their talkativeness and power of mischief.

Parrots were considered a great dainty in ancient Rome. The emperors often served them, delicately cooked, and garnished with green leaves and mosses, before their guests on state occasions. One ruler, famous in history, banqueted his lions on a huge dish of the birds. Prof. Newton says that no representation of any parrot appears in Egyptian art, nor does any reference to a bird of the kind occur in the Bible, and from these facts, it is concluded that neither painters nor writers had any knowledge of the astounding "Polly," so familiar to our people of today.

The closest imitator of the human voice is the well-known grey parrot with a red tail. Sea captains often bring quantities of them, for they travel well on board ship, and seem to stand the hardships of the voyage without difficulty.

Parrots can be taught to say almost anything. They are quick to pick up words and phrases, and some of them have been known to sing as much as a whole verse of a song. The writer once knew a kind old grey parrot, which could speak both French and English. This bird often sang a French song with true Parisian accent. Once, when its owner left home, with his family, to spend the hot summer months at a country retreat, on the south shore of the St. Lawrence, where the population was entirely French, he met with a most amusing experience. He had, before leaving town, taught his bird to say, "Comment vous portez vous, Madame Potrin?" Madame Potrin was the name of the landlady of the Pension where the family had taken rooms for the holiday visit. By the time that Polly and the master were ready to embark on the little steamer which had been chartered to carry them to their journey's end, the parrot could say the words of greeting exceedingly well. The villagers had never seen a parrot in all their lives, and when the great iron cage was placed on the centre table in the best room of the modest house, and the cloth covering taken off, all the inmates pressed forward to have a good look at the curiosity. Madame Potrin, as mistress of the domicile, and jealous of her privileges, was the first to advance, crane her neck, and peer into the barred fortress. Polly with head perked to one side, and a saucy expression in the eye, called out in purest French, "Comment vous portez vous Madame Potrin?" The old dame drew back as if she had received a stunning blow, and when Polly repeated the words in shriller tones, she cried out with amazement, and to the amusement of her city guests, "My, my, but she knows my name." The astonishment of all present, not in the secret, may be imagined. But, Polly was up to no end of tricks. Its intelligence was remarkable, and it parrots could really reason, this specimen gave proof of the fact every day of its life. When its owner would make a movement to leave the room, Polly would cry out to him, "Good-bye, old fellow," and its imitations of the sound caused by the pop of a cork from a champagne bottle, the shriek of a locomotive, and the whistle of boys in the street, were strikingly realistic.

Parrots often live to a great old age,

some individuals being known to arrive at their hundredth birthday. One of the most noted parrots that the writer ever heard of, died only a few years ago, at the age of 27 years. It belonged to a high official in the Canadian civil service, and came from the coast of Guinea. Its plumage was grey, the head was tinged with white, and the tail-feathers were a gorgeous crimson. This parrot was a favorite with everybody, despite the fact that it had contracted the bad habit of biting at people, whenever it could get the chance. Its master used to try to correct it of this fault, and, when doing so, he would pretend to be very angry, saying in a loud voice, "how dare you, sir?" Polly the Great, the name of this clever bird, sometimes puzzled visitors, by calling out to them, in tones of indignation, "how dare you, sir?" This bird could cheer, and laugh, and cry, and each imitation was perfect in its way. Once it gravely congratulated a statesman on the honors which his queen had conferred upon him, and when this new knight stood up, and with becoming dignity thanked Polly for its good wishes, the shocking bird replied with a genuine wink, "I believe you, my boy."

Parrots, of course, are not always as ready with a reply. The accidental hit, however, created much merriment at the time.

Polly the Great, among other accomplishments, propounded conundrums, spoke Latin, German, French and English, and though his singing was harsh and unmusical, his whistling was clear and true. In the summer time he lived in his master's library, and became quite literary, giving freely his opinions on books and reading. Certain works he never tired of recommending to readers, saying, for weeks at a time, at stated intervals, "Well, sir, have you read the Life of Lord Sidmouth? Pray read it." He early developed remarkable facility in picking up the association between words and action. On hearing a door opened he would immediately say, "Come in," or "Good bye," as the humor took him.

A story is told of another famous bird named Markoe, whose home was in St. Louis. He belonged, says the newspaper account, to a lady who had bought him from a sailor with whom he had been a great pet. Sharing the tastes of his master, Markoe liked wine, and even stronger liquors. His new mistress tried to break him of the habit, by keeping stimulants of all sorts away from him. When Markoe was under the influence, his conduct proved so amusing that visitors to the house, often begged that a glass of wine or cordial be given to him, so that they might hear him talk. Frequently, when the lady's back was turned, the servants gave the bird beer, and the entertainment he afforded was very funny. The lady's nephew once gave him some champagne on the sly, and his mistress coming in, and finding him intoxicated, said to him, "You're drunk, sir, go away. I don't want to see you till you're over it." The parrot slunk away, and hid. Soon afterwards, a gentleman coming to call on the lady was ushered into the room where the hilarious parrot had sought shelter. In a few moments, the visitor heard, in a displeased tone of voice, these words, "You're drunk, sir. Go away. I don't want to see you till you're over it." The gentleman caught up his hat and fled from the room, but not before the owner of the parrot entered, so he made a hasty bow in passing out, and left the house very hurriedly. The lady had heard the bird's words, and fearful lest her friend had heard them, and thought them hers, was overwhelmed with chagrin. She found Markoe under the folds of a portiere. At once she drew near her writing desk, and began an apologetic note to her late guest, explaining the situation, though she was afraid he would never believe the story. Before her letter was written a servant entered bearing in her hand a note from the gentleman to whom she was writing, in which he confessed with humility, that he had, perhaps, taken too much wine with his dinner, but had hoped in calling on her, that she would not have detected it. He regretted she had noticed it, and begged to offer his humblest apologies, and a prayer for forgiveness.

The doctor. Polly's conversation was not over-refined, and when the old dame had concluded her narrative, the bird exclaimed, with emphasis, amid roars of laughter from the bystanders, "You lying old—". The doctor was equal to the situation, however, for, stepping forward, with his hand on his heart, he said in his most solemn manner: "It is no lie, you wicked bird! It is all true as de gospel."

It is recorded by Humboldt that in South America he met with a venerable bird which remained the sole possessor of a literally dead language, the whole tribe of Indians, Aures, by name, who alone had spoken it, having become extinct. This, says Newton, in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, in connection with the "speaking" of parrots, is a most curious circumstance.

Parrots are commonly great pets in the household, and soon make friends. Some of them, however, will not speak if they notice strangers about. The sight of a new face seems to render them shy and diffident. Parrots are not difficult to look after, their wants being few. Their food consists of canary and hemp seed, bread dipped in milk and water, cake, crackers, and sometimes meat, though it is not well to give them too much of the latter. Solid food often disagrees with them, and when overfed by a generous diet, their feathers fall.

GEORGE STEWART.

FELIX IN A STRANGE COUNTRY.

What a Memramcook Frenchman Saw in the Republic.

Probably some of PROGRESS readers have wandered at some time up through the pretty valley of the Memramcook, and should they have lingered within its classic shades, they may have become acquainted with many of its hospitable and kindly people, who predominate in the valley, and who are always ready to talk, eat or drive with you as a rule on terms of the utmost good friendship. Here, near the headwaters of the turbulent Memramcook river, whose muddy tide ebbs and flows twice every 24 hours with due and unceasing regularity, on the brow of a hill which commands a splendid view of the valley and Dorchester Island in the distance is the village of Bon Homme Gould, more familiarly known as BOONUM GOULD, and within its precincts has been raised many a sturdy son of toil, who has added to its fame and glory by the achievements won by his daily labor in foreign lands. Here for a time capital was spent in the search for treasures, copper mines, etc., and many of the old residents can recall the time when the late Mr. Wright of Moncton, familiarly known as "Sandy Wright," spent many a dollar in developing what was known to him and a select few as "a gran project," but which never projected very far on the road to final development and completion. Prominent among the *habitants* who reside here is the well known and interesting talker Monsieur Thodoe Felix La Blanc, or as he is more generally called *Thodoe Felix*. Thodoe has been for some time past the centre of attraction for the boys at the station both large and small, as with his old black clay well filled, he relates to his admiring hearers accounts of his travels in the land of Uncle Samuel, which he not long since visited, to see his son who resides in Newburyport, Mass. As it would take up too much time to give a detailed account of the scenes he so graphically describes, I submit only a few clothed in Mr. LeBlanc's own vernacular.

"Well when I get dere I never see so many people—dam it's thick like de fly on de woods in de summer time. Day go for pull my carpet bag off me han' and ax me come to dis house, and go dat house. I tell em—you let go my carpet bag pretty soon, I go my own way. Bimeby I find my boy den I git along all right."

"Well I find dis nice place and de people she was very nice and kind. I find lot me French friend, and 'quaintance here and we have one night gran reception and have very good time too, mind ye."

"Dey was often say de Yankee people not very religious—I find dat mistake, here where we got one church dere twenty for our one—and mighty fine church too—no mistake. Den my boy and his wife we go take ride on de street cars. Day go by laxtricity, but *sacre jais* I not understand dat no hoss, noting to pull it, but go like de devil. I tink dis ting not right. Somebody gone to get kill bimeby and de devil to pay."

"Noder time I go see fine big houses, we go all over it, and I fin it very good. Den de man take me to little room, and I walk in. All fix up wid carpet, nice sofa, looking glass on de wall. Everything very nice, de man ask me sit down on de sofa. Small boy dere he pull little rope and de whole

ONLY ONE ROAD TO

HEALTH
and
STRENGTH.

dam room go up. I not understand dat. It puzzle me like de devil.

"Den we go on one dem dime show, such a lot dam nonsense I never see, some tings not too bad. De woman and de snake puzzle me. Den we see de gal dance on stage. I fraid she lose its petticoat she jump so high, and so hard. Must be pritty warm place dere dey have so little close on it. I don't tink dey live long on Memramcook dat way on de winter time. Dey very fond kick dere leg about and twis itself into all kind shape. I soon get out dis place. I say no place for decent man from Boonum Gould."

"Den I go out for ride on big steam-boat, and such a crowd people. We go down to place called Nantaskit and watch de people go on de water and jump kick and fly round, like frog on Tom Caloon's mill-pond. We get some steam clam and some lager beer, after wait 'bout an hour after give de order. I tell de waiter, you cum down to Geo. Wallace, Dorchester corner, or Pescal at Memramcook, we wait on you dam sight quicker dan dis. He only grin at me and tell me wipe off my chin. Den dey all laff at me."

"Den I make up my mind come home. De states very nice place but de people dey all fly too fast, look to me as if dey have no time to live. Time for every ting else. It makes me head turn, so much noise, so much hurry, so I tell my boy I pack me carpet bag, and go back on de Boonum Gold and Memramcook where I get little rest. So I leave it and come home. Some time I tell you some more tings what I see when I am in de states."

And then Thodoe lights his old black clay and saunters off about his business. The boys discuss what they have heard, and wind up with a little flick at "draw" or some other interesting subject, for the time being, and the tide in the turbulent Memramcook surges in and out, and out and in, as it has done for years in the past, and will do for years in the future, and quietly more reigns supreme at Memramcook.

ANTOINE.

Hunkum Hill.

I used to gaze on Hunkum Hill,
And think it very high,
And one of nature's mighty props
That help hold up the sky.
One day I tottled up its side
And stood upon its top.
And then I learned the sky must rest
Upon some other prop.

And there I saw it just beyond,
Another hill n' a higher,
Its summit mingled with the sky.
All tused with sunset fire,
"That hill's a button on the earth,"
Said I to little John:
"The great sky spreads its buttonhole
And then it latches on."

One day I climbed the other hill,
And found with heavy heart
The button and the buttonhole
Were very far apart.
But there against the crimson west
Another hill was seen,
A mighty spangled cushion where
The big sky loved to lean.

And so I've kept on climbing hills
From busy day to day;
But from the topmost peaks I find
The sky is far away.
In s'ne of many tumblers, still
This sermon I would preach:
Lile's greatest fun is grasping for
The things we cannot reach.

—S. W. Foss.

METHODS OF FRENCH WRITERS.

Amusing Stories of Noted Men in the Throes of Literary Creation.

We have recently been treated to some amusing information concerning the way in which the great French authors do, or have done, their work. Victor Hugo, for instance, always wrote standing at a high desk, especially constructed for him, throwing off sheet after sheet as fast as he filled it, till he would be quite snowed up in leaves of foolscap. He often rose in the middle of the night to note down an idea or a verse. He got up for the day usually at 6 o'clock, and would devote from six to eight hours per diem to his work. He made but few corrections, his poems being thought out complete in his brain before he put pen to paper. It is a well known fact that he indulged in the arduous task of composition while traversing the streets of Paris on the top of an omnibus. When working out some great conception he would spend hours in this way.

The elder Dumas used to begin work by taking off his coat. He would then roll his shirt sleeves up to the elbows and would seat himself at his writing table, covering with dizzy velocity sheet after sheet of blue office paper with the delicate calligraphy, legible as copperplate and fine as that of a fashionable lady, which had proved his first bread-winner in his early days. His son also uses blue-glazed paper of the largest size, and always writes with a quill pen, several dozens of which are prepared and placed in neat bundles on the desk in his library. He likes, he says, to hear the quill pen "scream" on the paper. His comedies are executed in the silence and seclusion of the country. Alphonse Daudet spends whole days at his desk, trying, in the ardor of composition, to distract his thoughts from the tortures inflicted upon him by the chronic rheumatism that has afflicted him for long years past. He is so very near sighted that he writes with his head bent down close to the paper, almost touching it with his nose.

Emile Zola's habits are extremely regular. He takes a walk every morning, usually leaving his house, whether at Medan or at Paris, about 9 o'clock. He lunches at midday, and writes from 1 o'clock till 6, receiving no visitors and transacting no business in the afternoon. He has a particular liking for large and massive pieces of furniture, so his writing table and his library chairs are of colossal proportions, as is also his inkstand, which is in bronze and represents a lion.

De Musset always wrote at night, in a room brilliantly lighted up with lamps and candles. Sardou receives callers before luncheon, and is invisible from 1 o'clock to dinner time, being absorbed in writing. He writes a very minute hand, corrects, changes, and alters his work continually, and is far from being satisfied with what he has done, even when it finally leaves his hand. He is an incomparable stage director for his own plays, and often makes sketches of the scenery and of the attitudes of the personages that he considers necessary for certain important situations.

George Sand always wrote at night, and

when the fever of composition was upon her she was wont to work all night. There is a story told of her finishing a novel at 1 o'clock in the morning, and immediately taking up a fresh quire of paper and writing the first chapter of a new one before she retired to rest. Like Victor Hugo, Francois Coppee has need of motion when composing his poetry, and works out his ideas while taking long walks through the streets of Paris. Guy de Maupassant planned out his novels and stories while on his yacht, and once returned to land, he put his nature ideas upon paper with great rapidity. Henri Rochefort is an excitable writer. He begins his work always in a very correct costume. Then, as he proceeds, he will first tear off his coat, next his waistcoat, and then his collar and cravat. It is fortunate if he does not ruin his shirt front by pulling it open, regardless of buttonholes and studs. —Philadelphia Telegraph.

The Wise Man and His Umbrella.

"The wise man always carries an umbrella," is a well known old saw," said an umbrella manufacturer, "and it is not such a bad one, either; but the wise man who carries an umbrella is still lacking in wisdom if he doesn't place it, when it is wet, handle downward to dry. Show me an umbrella that has holes worn in the silk about the ring at the top, while the body of the material is still intact throughout, and I will show you an owner of an umbrella who doesn't deserve to own one, not if it is a good one; and show me an umbrella that has holes in it along the ribs before natural use of it should make them come there, and I will show you an owner who carries his umbrella more for sake of appearance than for utility."

"A wet umbrella placed handle down drips the moisture from it at the edges of the frame, and the material with which it is covered dries evenly, and leaves no spot still soaked with water. If it is stood handle upward the water runs down to one spot at the top, where the strong cloth lining about the ring holds a good deal of it, and in a comparatively short time rots the material, and it breaks easily."

"The man who carries his umbrella swathed in its case when it is not called into use by rain, to give it and him a more stylish appearance on parade, will soon find it wearing out from top to bottom. This is because of the constant friction between the case and the silk, and no matter of how good quality it may be the holes will appear in it long before they should, and the dealer who sold the umbrella will of course be blamed for selling inferior or damaged goods. There are many people so ignorant of the proper treatment of an umbrella that they will actually roll it up when wet, and leave it to rot and mould until the next time they want it for use."

"Of course, if it wasn't for such thoughtful folks we wouldn't sell so many umbrellas, but we would escape a great deal of grumbling and growling from customers about the quality of what we sell. If you want your umbrella and especially a good silk one, to last twice as long as it otherwise would, always leave it loose, whether in use or not, and dry it open, handle down."