"Old House"

Or, Dulcie's Confession

CHAPTER VII.—(Continued).

Doctor Crewe was a hatchet-faced little man. He greeted the lawyer curtly.

"What's the meaning of this tale Martha Craddock has been pouring into my ear?" he demanded. "She says the Will I drew up for poor Carwardine can't be found! I told her you must all be blind, for I put it in the top right hand drawer of his desk, locked it, took the key back to Carwardine, and he saw me replace the key on the bunch to which it belonged."

"There is no Will in any of the drawers of the desk," replied Mr. Norton. "Come and see for yourself. But first tell me who benefited by this Will?"

"A lot of charities—I forget their names," was the reply. "Martha Craddock was left a few thousand pounds, five I think, and the two girls fifty pounds a year each. I may tell you, Mr. Norton, that I did my best to persuade Mr. Carwardine to leave his money to his daughters, but he seemed to have taken a violent dislike to them, and threatened that if I would not write what he asked, he would leave them completely penniless. I thought they wouldn't thank me if I refused, and I did what he asked."

"Who were the witnesses?" inquired Norton.

"Myself and James the gardener," was the reply.

The lawyer was silent for a few minutes.

"I suppose Carwardine was sound in mind when he signed the Will?" he asked.

"Perfectly," was the reply.

Mr. Norton led the way in silence to the study, but Doctor Crewe was no luckier in his search than the others had been.

"With my own hands I placed it in the drawer in a long envelope," he said, glaring angrily around him.

"Some one has taken it!" cried Martha.

"It looks uncommonly like it," said the doctor.

"But who could have taken it?" asked Dulcie. "Only Doctor Crewe and Martha knew where it was placed, and it seems scarcely possible for any one to take the key of the drawer from my father's bedroom without his knowledge."

Dulcie's remarks seemed very much to the point, and Martha regarded her viciously.

"When it is found, you will not be so hoity-toity, my lady," she snarled.

"You forget yourself, Martha," said Dulcie with dignity. "You are an old servant and privileged, but you are getting too presumptuous. You had better go out of the room."

"I shall do nothing of the sort!" retorted the woman rudely.

Dulcie turned to Mr. Norton.

"Please get rid of this woman for us," she said. "Pay her what is owing, and a month's wages in advance. My sister and I have endured her insolence for many years because she was an old servant, but we will not do so any longer. Our minds are quite made up on this point, and if she has not left the house by twelve o'clock to-morrow I shall ask you to send to Stalstead for a policeman to remove her."

Dulcie was perfectly cool, and her voice was determined.

"Do you wish to dismiss the woman?" Mr. Norton asked Primrose.

"Yes, please," was the firm reply. "She has been no friend to my sister or myself. I shall be very much obliged if you will arrange for her to leave the house at the earliest possible moment."

"You will be sorry for this before many days are over," said Martha, laughing unpleasantly. "I will have the law on you for doing away with that Will. I know your goings on for the last three months, meeting men on the sly, and kissing them in the woods, and——"

She did not finish her sentence, for the lawyer stopped her.

He spoke a few words of warning to the angry woman, who flung out of the room with this parting shot: "Wait till the Will turns up!"

But the Will did not "turn up," although a systematic search was made throughout the house, both by Mr. Norton and his clerks, who thoroughly enjoyed the task, as it brought them into frequent contact with Dulcie, who looked prettier than ever in her elegant mourning.

At the end of a fortnight the search was abandoned as hopeless, for it was evident that the document Doctor Crewe had drawn up was not within the walls of Blue Posts. Martha Craddock remained in the village while the search continued, and then took service with Doctor Crewe, who happened to be in need of a cook. To him she asserted her firm belief that either Primrose or Dulcie Carwardine had learned of the Will and destroyed it.

"I am sure I do not know what has become of it," said the doctor. "You should have taken better care of it—you had plenty of opportunities for removing it to a safer place than the study."

"How was I to know it would be stolen?" asked Martha angrily. "If you had given me a hint I would have kept the Will in my own possession, and we should both have been richer by several thousand pounds."

"I do not know what you mean," was the doctor's reply.

"If you have forgotten what your share was to be for doing what old Carwardine wanted and keeping it quiet, I have not," muttered Martha.

"Your memory is playing you a trick," said the doctor.

"It may suit you to say so now," retorted Martha, "but I fancy you would have been singing another tune if the Will had not disappeared."

"I do not want to hear anything more about the Will. I am weary of the whole affair, and if you cannot hold your tongue about it you won't stay in my house!"

Martha Craddock, sullen and disappointed, entered reluctantly on her duties. The hopes she had cherished were shattered with her cunning plans, but one crumb of comfort remained to her when she heard that the Misses Carwardine were leaving Blue Posts and going to live in London.

"Thank goodness I shall never see their faces again!" she said. "Idle, good-for-nothing creatures! No good will come to either of them!"

She scoured her pans viciously, wishing she could serve Dulcie and Primrose as she treated the kitchen utensils.

CHAPTER VIII.

When it was evident that no Will except the one Mr. Norton possessed was forthcoming, steps were taken to put it into effect. The sisters found they had money in plenty—several thousand pounds a year.

Primrose asked Mr. Norton to take charge of their affairs, and when Dulcie said she did not want to remain at Blue Posts, they decided to sell the furniture and take a furnished flat in London for the winter.

The furnished flat was Dulcie's suggestion. She wrote to Philippa Heriott, telling her of the change in their fortunes, and asking for assistance in the selection of a flat. Philippa told the news to her brother at breakfast.

"What on earth do they want to come to London for?" he asked, with an indifferent air.

Dulcie thinks that Blue Posts is a depressing old house, and certainly I do not see why they should bury themselves there now—especially as they appear to be left extremely well off. I shall offer to find a flat for them."

Heriott grunted.

"I suppose Belturbet will be coming to town, too?" he said.

"Dulcie does not mention him," was the reply.

Heriott shrugged his shoulders, and changed the subject.

A few weeks later Dulcie and Primrose were installed in a flat not very far from the Heriotts, and for the first time in her life Dulcie experienced the bliss of spending money freely. She went from shop to shop, buying whatever took her fancy, and before many days were over she had acquired an extensive and elaborate wardrobe.

She revelled in the thought that there was no one to say her nay, for although Primrose chided her gently for being extravagant, yet she agreed that, after all, there was no reason why they should not now purchase the things that had been denied them for so many years.

"I am going to make up for lost time," announced Dulcie. "Come along, Prim, let us go shopping. We will take a taxi, and call for Philippa. She has been awfully decent to us, and I am going to ask her to accept the fur coat she admired so much the last time we were at Kay's."

Dulcie was certainly not selfish with her newly-acquired wealth, and the novelty of having money to spend contented her for a while, occupying the whole of her time; but at length it began to pall, and she longed for some other form of excitement.

She cultivated Philippa's acquaintance, but in spite of her efforts saw very little of Jim. If she and Primrose went to tea with Philippa, Heriott did not appear; he was either out or in his workshop. If they asked Philippa and her brother to dinner the latter always had a business engagement. Dulcie did not appear to notice it, but Jim's defection wounded her in a very vulnerable part—her vanity.

When she had bought more clothes than she could possibly wear during the next few years, she began once more to experience the sensations she had suffered when Jim told her that he would have nothing more to do with her. Three times a week Belturbet wrote her dutiful letters, to which she replied in the same strain. At the end of that period, however, instead of sending the usual politely affectionate reply, she wrote that she feared she did not care sufficiently for him to marry him, that she had been mistaken in her feelings, and hoped he would forgive her, and several pages in a similar strain.

She would have felt anything but flattered had she realized the immensity of Arthur Belturbet's relief on reading her letter. At first he feared he might have misunderstood it, but when he found he was actually free once more, he got up from the breakfast-table and paced quickly about the room, his heart full of joy and thankfulness.

It seemed incredible that after making such a fool of himself he was going to be let off so lightly. His first impulse was to fly to London, seek Primrose, and ask her to be his wife; but on reflection he saw that to do this immediately on being rejected by her sister would not place him in a very favorable light.

Besides, what reason had he for imagining that Primrose would listen to him? How could he expect her to believe that he was honestly in love with her when a few months ago he had proposed to marry her sister? He thought it over for a long time, and the joy he had felt on receiving his dismissal from Dulcie sobered into doubt.

"What a dolt I was from the very first!" he told himself. "If I had not overheard her say that day in the woods that she intended to marry me I should have loved her from the beginning, instead of pretending to myself that I did not. But I wonder what made her say it when she did not mean it? I know now that she is the very last girl in the world to run after a man—yet she did say it, for I heard her. Anyhow, I do not care what she said. One day, perhaps when we are married, I will ask her the reason, and I expect we shall both laugh at the very simple explanation she will give!"

He wrote a nice letter to Dulcie, acquiescing in the wisdom of her decision, adding that he had feared they were not in sympathy with each other, and that he hoped, although she had decided that they were only to be friends in the future, that they would be warm friends. He mentioned that he was going abroad for the winter, but would be returning to England in the spring.

Dulcie received the letter at breakfast time, and yawned as she read it.

"Thank goodness, that's all over," she said.

"What is all over?" asked Primrose, who had recognized the writing on the envelope.

"My engagement to Arthur Belturbet," was the cool reply. "I have broken it off. I really did not care a scrap for him, so what else could I do?"

Primrose regarded her sister with amazement. She had not had the faintest inkling of Dulcie's desire to end her engagement.

"But—but——" she said, hesitating, "I thought you wanted above everything else to marry him?"

"When I hadn't a penny. But things are different now—besides, a woman can always change her mind if she likes. You can read what the immaculate Arthur says. You will see then that I have not broken his heart."

"I do not want to read the letter," said Primrose.

"Then I shall read it to you," retorted Dulcie.

She did so, reading Arthur Belturbet's carefully selected phrases with apparent enjoyment of their correctness.

"You can plainly see, my dear Prim, that no tender sentiments are broken," she said when she had finished. "In fact, we have both come out of the affair sound in mind and heart!"

Primrose nodded.

"All the same, Dulcie," she said quietly, "he must have loved you when he asked you to marry him, and because he seems to accept your dismissal philosophically, it does not follow that he does not feel it."

Dulcie looked slyly at her sister.

"If Primrose knew as much as I did about what happened when he asked me to marry him," she thought, "she would not be so sure about it. Anyhow, I got what I wanted at the time, and no one is a penny the worse now as far as I can see."

"If he is upset he will soon get over it," she said aloud, "and it will do him good to find out he can't marry the first girl he is engaged to."

Primrose saw that whatever Belturbet's wounds might be, Dulcie had come out of the engagement unscathed. She did not allow herself to dwell on what might have happened if it had not occurred to Dulcie that the master of Old House would be a good match for her. He had fallen a victim to Dulcie, and Primrose had therefore endeavored to banish all thought of him, except as Dulcie's lover. She had devoted all her energies to her father during his illness, and during those terrible days of watching and waiting had thrust all thought of self away from her.

The question of the missing Will had for a time forced everything else into the background, and Primrose had little leisure for introspection. Dulcie had not been in the least worried, declaring that it was fortunate for them the Will had disappeared. Primrose felt sure that there was a mystery, but no one seemed able to solve it, so the matter dropped.

As the winter passed away, the roses in Primrose's pale cheeks began once more to bloom, the shadows faded from beneath her gray eyes, and she seemed every day to grow more like the gay, light-hearted Primrose of a year ago. Dulcie, on the other hand, became restless and uncertain in her moods, for although Heriott knew that she was now free, he maintained the attitude he had taken up when the sisters first came to London. He did not meet them more often than politeness compelled, and when he did so, he talked far more to Primrose than Dulcie, in spite of the latter's attempts to engage him in argument or discussion.

Philippa's reception of the news that Belturbet was once more a free agent had been characteristic.

"I never could understand what made him propose to Dulcie Carwardine," she remarked to her brother. "Of course, the reason she accepted him was obvious, and her jilting him now proves that she never cared a scrap about him. I wonder if he will ask us down to Old House next summer?"

Jim made no reply.

"If he does, I shall not go," he thought. Because he loved Dulcie, and she was now a wealthy young woman, Heriott was nearly as rude to her as a gentleman could permit himself to be on the few occasions when they met. "She wants to flirt with me again till somebody else comes along," he reflected grimly, "and then treat me as she has treated Belturbet. No, I am not to be fooled again!" He set himself impossible tasks to achieve in his workshop, and grew irritable and quick-tempered.

His feelings were patent to Philippa, who regarded Dulcie far more favorably now that young lady did not wish to annex Belturbet, and she thought it a pity that her brother was growing boorish. Dulcie's money would be extremely useful to him, because it was her belief that he would never make a penny out of his inventions.

Heriott was not only growing boorish, but the few words he threw to Dulcie often annoyed her exceedingly. One afternoon, when the sisters were having tea with Philippa, Jim came in. His brown eyes looked tired, and his former cheerful expression was replaced with one that showed he was weary of the work on which he had been engaged for many hours. His glance was critical as it rested on Dulcie's highly becoming hat and dress. She looked like a dainty piece of porcelain and altogether adorable, but Jim's remark that he thought she and her sister were too young to live alone, and that they ought to get a chaperone or duenna, caused a decidedly dangerous light to appear in her eyes.

"Prim and I don't intend to have a chaperone," she said. "We mean to do exactly what we like, go where we please and stay there as long as it suits us."

"A very nice programme," he replied. "But I do not despair of making Miss Primrose listen to reason."

He turned to Primrose, while Dulcie chatted to Philippa and laughed to hide her vexation.

She was furiously angry to find that Jim's words bore fruit in due season, for Primrose, in spite of all Dulcie could do to the contrary, engaged a middle-aged lady to live with them, for the elder girl realized that she and Dulcie were placing themselves in a position which Mrs. Grundy might assert was not suited to their age, and she was determined to do nothing they might afterwards regret.

So Mrs. Templemore, a good-tempered, pleasant-faced widow of about fifty, entered their household, and as she was wise and knew on which side her bread was buttered—realizing that the post of chaperone to two young and wealthy girls was not to be found every day—she made herself so amiable to her charges, that before long Dulcie allowed "that she wasn't a bad old thing."

Winter passed away, and when the leaves were once more on the trees, Arthur Belturbet returned to Old House, and a few days later called at Philippa's flat.

Philippa was looking extremely handsome in a velvet gown which showed the curves of her beautiful figure to the best advantage, and her chestnut hair was artistically arranged, yet she might as well have been attired in sackcloth for all the impression her appearance made on Belturbet.

They talked of his travels abroad, and Belturbet inquired after Heriott, who, Philippa explained, had gone into the city to see about one of his inventions.

"I want to give a little party to celebrate my return," said Belturbet after a pause. "As nobody will celebrate it for me, I must do it myself. Will you and Jim dine with me in the West-End to-day week, and then go to a theatre? I am asking a few other people, including the Misses Cawardine."

"We shall be delighted," replied Philippa. "Have you asked Primrose and Dulcie yet?"

"Not yet, but I hope to do so in person to-morrow."

"They are having a very good time. Their chaperone, Mrs. Templemore, knows some very nice people to whom she has introduced them, and they go about a good deal."

"Indeed!" murmured Belturbet, wishing he had not stayed away so long. "Well, you and Jim won't fail me next Wednesday, will you?"

After a little more formal conversation he took his leave.

(To be continued.)

The Undaunted Spirit of the Belgians

A WOUNDED Belgian artilleryman after having his wounds dressed, ready for another battle.

A PRETTY GREASY MENU.

Men of Shackleton Expedition Will Subsist Very Largely on Lard.

While marching across the ice fields the men engaged in the Shackleton expedition to the South Pole, will have three meals a day—breakfast, luncheon and dinner at night. The menu for breakfast and dinner will be the same, each man being given three ounces of lard, two ounces of sugar, one of dried milk, wheat protein and oats. The luncheon will consist of nut food mixed with oil and dried milk and oats.

"You may feel rather sick when you hear of it," Sir Ernest said during a recent interview, "it's rather a greasy compound. Indeed, when we tried it in Norway we thought it a very unpleasant sort of ration, but I can assure you that, scientifically considered, it is the finest that has ever been devised. I hope that this time hunger will play a very small part in our troubles."

All the provisions have been packed in sausage skins.

WHY JAPS ARE FIGHTING

REASONS WHY THEY ARE AT WAR WITH GERMANY.

Germans Have Been Competing Seriously With Japanese Manufacturers.

The Japanese ultimatum to Germany was sprung rather suddenly. Like so many sudden, comet-like things, it has a long, historic tail. None might put his finger upon the birth date of German ambition in the Extreme East. As early as 1870, however, the Chamber of Commerce at Hamburg made a pointed remark to the Kaiser upon the convenience of having on the China coast a base, a port. It said that the establishment of a line of German ships might make a trail on the Oriental seas like a prophecy. But the time when Japan earned an intimate introduction to Germany came a little later, writes Adachi Kinnosuke in the New York World.

On April 17, 1895, Li Hung Chang signed the Shimonoseki Treaty. China ceded to Japan among other Chinese territory a strip of land on the continent—South Manchuria. When Mr. Ito Mikiji (not the late Prince Ito) went to Chefoo to have the treaty ratified he found his Chinese friends ready, willing, and waiting for him on the picture-like water of the Chefoo Bay, the German, the Russian, and the French ships—all cleared for action.

The three great Christian powers did not wish to do very much to Japan's plenipotentiary. All that they wished to do was to offer Japan, with all Christian grace and considerateness, a bit of advice. It will not be good for the peace of the Far East, they say, for her to take South Manchuria.

Japan gave up South Manchuria; she had to. A little later Germany took Kiaochow, on the Chinese mainland, in the Province of Shantung—evidently for the good of the peace of the Far East; and evidently for the same reason Russia also took South Manchuria, and France hers in the south of China. China was very unhappy to show her appreciation of the Christian services rendered by the three powers just in that particular manner, but then she had to do it.

An Enlightened Example.

And now Japan finds Germany on the plains of Belgium, not quite as friendly with her former allies as on that historic day at Chefoo. And Japan is reminded all of a sudden of the Germans in Kiaochow, of the peace of the Far East, the dearest of all the old tunes in the diplomatic repertoire, of the dictum that a good turn merits a good turn and of the virtuous and compelling yearning of—of giving an advice.

Which she has done. She has given an advice in the name of the peace of the Far East. In this she is following, like any other well-behaved kindergarten pupil, the enlightened example of Germany herself.

What!—some may say—Japan frightened out of her wits by Germany when the Fatherland is literally facing national death with practically all the rest of Europe at her throat? Does Japan think it a heroic war to hurl her "17 battleships, 13 armored cruisers, 15 protected cruisers, and 70 torpedo boats and destroyers" against the three old-maidish German cruisers now in the waters of the East?

Not at all.

The German ghost that turns Japan into a little boy seeing things in the dark is not the German sword. We were afraid, once upon a time, of the militant Russia based in Siberia; never of German warships, whether three or ten times three. We are not and never have been, at least for some years past, afraid either of the bird-of-paradise adjectives in the Kaiser's rhetorical exercises or of the Krupp guns.

Fear Commercial Supremacy.

What we are afraid of—let us make this point clear and emphatic—is this: The German commercial supremacy in the Far East.

We have seen and we see to-day—as do the British, the French, the Russian, and the Chinese—the army of young Germans land at the treaty ports of the East; we see them with wide and ever-widening eyes and with our wits half-cocked with dismay how they solve existence on ten, twenty dollars, Mexican; see them conquer the crooks and kinks in the dialects countless and vernaculars innumerable of the East as though they had done nothing in all their born days but catch eels with their naked hands; watch them master the business methods of the heathen natives, and their tastes and their needs.

Now this is a vastly different picture from the one we had been accustomed to. We used to see the British, the American, the French, and the Russian Traders at their country clubs in foreign concessions and at teas and tiffins, cultivating the airs of merchant princes in their white ducks and flannels and trying to revise a certain passage in the first Book of Genesis so that it might read: "And God said, Let us make white man in our image after our likeness and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea . . . and over the cattle and the heathen dogs and over all the other creeping things that creepeth upon the earth."

German's Commercial Conquest.

Of course, one could find a few Germans in this fool's-paradise atmosphere now and then, but a very few. The picture of the German merchants at their studious toil almost day and night in the examination of local conditions and trade methods of the East, in that patient and everlasting analytical way of theirs quite different from the bomb-burst, not to say bombastic, hustle of the American, is extremely impressive, especially so in contrast to the other foreign traders.

We knew how to answer a power who came ransacking us; we were much embarrassed what to do with the army which came sacking us commercially.

And there was nothing modest about the commercial conquest of Germany in the Far East since the early seventies. For the three years following 1873 the annual average of the number and tonnage of German ships which entered into and cleared from the Oriental ports beyond India were only 48 and 25,000 tons.

The total of the German shipping in all Asian ports for the year 1901 was 166 ships of 581,000 tons aggregate.

In thirty years Germany increased her Far Eastern trade from practically nothing to one billion marks in value. Take the case of Kiaochau alone. Up to 1897 there was no such thing as German trade there. In 1903, the year when Germany completed her railway to the distance of 300 kilometers there, she enjoyed the trade of seven million dollars, silver. And it did not stop. Even in the lean year of 1910, with all its financial and business disturbances over rubber speculations in Shanghai and Hongkong, Kiaochau enjoyed the trade of nearly sixty-five million dollars, gold, the importation of the non-Chinese wares alone amounting to $25,800,000.

Japan's Land of Promise.

And the following fact did not improve the matter at all—especially for the Japanese:

To Japan the continental Chinese markets have been and are the one land of promise, commercially speaking. And of the needs of China, Japan is not in a position as yet to supply to any great extent the things which call for a heavy capital investment, such as railway construction, mining operations, etc.

The British, the Belgians, the French, the Russians cover this field as well as the Americans; they are backed with adequate capital. We haven't the money. Let us pause here to emphasize this point: This is the reason why the British and the French are much more dangerous competitors of the American enterprises in China than the Japanese. This is the reason why the pet tinhorn tune of the California politicians over the Japanese competition in the Asian market has more fuss than fact back of it.

All is different with the German activity. The Germans go into small manufactures and things; they fight us right where we make our bread and right where we hope to make a little butter.

Mr. Miyao, Chief of the First Department of the Japanese Colonization Bureau, made his trip of investigation through the tradal centres of China in the days following the birth of the New China. "The revolution in China," said he on his return, "having been brought to a termination, Japanese merchants may be thinking that our trade with China will gradually increase in its volume. But when conditions in China are personally inspected and the activity of the German merchants is observed one cannot help but think that they will take away trade from the hands of our business men unless we make up our mind to better ourselves.'

But it may not be unwise for Japan to recall at this hour an ancient law—the law which has never been amended since the days of Cain—that he who killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword, and that even as Germany, who killed the Japanese ambition in Southern Manchuria in 1895 with an advice, is about to be killed at Kiaochau with an advice, even so Japan, who is about to triumph over the German supremacy in tradal East in this year of strife 1914, must of necessity be prepared to reap the whirlwind right where to-day she is sowing the seed in the pregnant German memory.

DEFENCE OF THE REALM ACT.

Englishmen Are Restricted Somewhat During War Time.

The proud boast "an Englishman's home is his castle" does not operate during the present war. Here are some of the things the naval and military authorities may do under the Defence of the Realm Act, passed by Parliament:

Take possession of any land, buildings, gas, electricity, water works, or sources of supply, horses, automobiles, or any other means of transport.

Cause any buildings, statues, or any property to be moved or destroyed, and order the inhabitants to leave any given area if necessary for naval and military purposes.

Close saloons entirely or during specified hours.

Enter by force, if need be, any house or ship which is susnected of being used to the prejudice of the State.

Arrest, or order the arrest, without warning, of any suspected person.

Here are some of the things a free-born Briton may not do:—

Loiter near a railway bridge.

Give or sell liquor to a soldier or sailor on duty.

Spread reports by word of mouth or writing, near a defended area, likely to create alarm among the troops or civilian population.

Light fires or display lights of any description on hill tops or other high ground or buildings without permission.

Tamper with or loiter near telegraph or telephone lines.

Civilians ignoring a military demand to "halt" may be shot down without a second challenge.

Court martial shall deal with offences against the military laws, and the tribunal shall have power to inflict sentences of imprisonment for life, in case of infringements.

The cost of experience depends entirely upon how much you can sell it for.

Which Way do You Buy Sugar?

Do you say decisively:

"A 5-lb. Package of REDPATH Sugar", or "A 20-lb. Bag of REDPATH", and
—get a definite quantity
—of well-known quality, "Canada's best"
—clean and uncontaminated
—in the Original Package?

Or do you say, thoughtlessly:

"A quarter's worth of Sugar", or
"A dollar's worth of Sugar", and get
—an unknown quantity
—of unknown quality
—scooped out of an open barrel
—into a paper bag?

Redpath

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Extra Granulated SUGAR

CANADA SUGAR REFINING CO., LIMITED, - MONTREAL.