THE CRAB AS A CHAPERON.

What Little Hardclaw Said When He Saw a Boy.

"Dear mother," cried a little crab, "I'd like to see a man!
I've never yet set eyes on one. Oh, tell me when I can!"
"Why, come with me," his mother said, and took him nearer shore.
"What luck!" said she. "Here comes one now. Pray scan him o'er and o'er."
The crablet waved his high-stalked eyes and clasped his claws with joy.
"Behold," then spoke the mother wise, "the kind of man called 'Boy.'
Those boys are dreadful creatures, love. Be careful where you roam,
Look out! Avoid that pet! That's right. We'd better side home."
Away they sped; and, safe at home, the crablet straight began
To tell his mother what he thought of that strange creature man.
"How awkward it does seem," said he, "and yet I see it's true,
While we walk straight on eight small legs, he goes sideways on two!
His shell looks soft, and seems to be a kind of sickly pink;
Much uglier than our dull green and lovely brown, I think.
With his small claws how could he tear the weakest fish in two?
And if he tried to fight a crab—I don't see what he'd do!
His eyes are flat. How can he look behind him in the sea?
I can't see how he lives at all. What use can such things be?"
"Tis hard to tell," the mother said. "Your father used to say
That boys and nets were trials, love, and useful in this way:
When youthful crabs are lazy, and won't learn to swim with speed,
These creatures come to punish them, and on their bodies feed!
So walk as fast as you know how, and swim and dive with care,
That when the boys with nets shall scoop, they will not find you there.

St. Nicholas.

THE SISTERS

"Are they nice?—that is to say, are they the sort of people whom one would—a—care to be responsible for—you know what I mean? Are they ladies?" inquired Mrs. Aarons, who, by virtue of her own extraction, was bound to be select and exclusive in her choice of acquaintances.

"Most certainly," replied Paul, with imprudent warmth. "There can be no manner of doubt about that. Born ladies."

"Then you want me to take them up, so that you can have it here? Is that it?"

The little man was looking so ferocious, and his departure from her side appeared so imminent, that she changed her tone quickly after putting this question. "Never mind," she said, laying her jewelled fingers on his coat sleeve for a moment, "I will not be jealous—at least I will try not to be. I will go and call on them to-morrow, and as soon as they have called on me I will ask them to one of my Fridays. Will that do?"

"I don't wish you for a moment to do what would be at all unpleasant to yourself," he said, still in a hurt, blunt tone, but visibly softening.

"It won't be unpleasant to me," she said sentimentally, "if it will please you."

CHAPTER X.

THE FIRST INVITATION.

Mrs. Aarons kept her promise, and called upon the Kings on Saturday. Mrs. McIntyre saw her get down at the gate of No. 6, at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, watched the brougham which had brought her trundling slowly up and down the street for half-an-hour, and then saw her get into it and drive off; which facts, communicated to Paul Brion, gave him the greatest satisfaction.

He did not see his neighbors for several days after. He heard their piano, and their footsteps and voices on the veranda; but, whenever he essayed to go outside his own room for a breath of fresh air, they were sure to retire into theirs immediately, like mice into a hole when the cat has frightened them. At last he came across them in an alley of the Fitzroy Gardens, as he and they were converging upon Myrtle street from different points. They were all together as usual—the majestic Elizabeth in the middle, with her younger sisters on either side of her; and they were walking home from an organ recital in the Town Hall to their tea, and a cosy evening over a new book, having spent most of the morning at the Public Library, and had their mid-day dinner at Gunsler's. As he caught sight of them, he was struck by the change in their outward appearance that a few weeks of Melbourne experience had brought about, and pleased himself with thinking how much their distinguished aspect must have impressed that discerning woman of the world, who had so kindly condescended to take them up. They were dressed in their new gowns, and bonneted, booted and gloved in the neatest manner; a little air of the mode pervaded them now, while the primitive purity of their taste was still unadulterated. They had never looked more charming, more obviously "born ladies" than to-day, as he saw them after so long an interval.

The three black figures stood the shock of the unexpected meeting with admirable fortitude. They came on towards him with no faltering of that free and graceful gait that was so noticeable in a city full of starched and whale-boned women, and, as he lifted his hat, bowed gravely—Elizabeth only giving him a dignified smile, and wishing him a good evening as she went by. He let them pass him, as they seemed to wish to pass him; then he turned sharply and followed them. It was a chance he might not get again for months, perhaps, and he could not afford to let it slip.

"Miss King," he called, in his imperative brusque way; and at the sound of his voice Elizabeth looked back and waited for him to join her, while her younger sisters, at a sign from Patty, walked on at a brisk pace, leaving her in command of the situation. "Miss King," said Paul, earnestly, "I am so glad to have an opportunity of speaking to you—I have been wanting all the week to see you, that I might thank you for your kindness in asking me to tea."

"Oh," said Elizabeth, whose face was scarlet, "don't mention it, Mr. Brion. We thought of it merely as a—a little attention—a sort of acknowledgement—to your father; that it might please him, perhaps, for you to see that we had settled ourselves, as he could not do so himself."

"It would have pleased me, beyond everything in the world, Miss King. Only—only—"

"Yes, I know. We forgot that it was not quite *de rigueur*—or, rather, we had not learned about those things. We have been so out of the world, you see. We were dreadfully ashamed of ourselves," she added candidly, with a little embarrassed laugh, "but you must set it down to our ignorance of the laws of propriety, and not suppose that we consciously disregarded them."

"The laws of propriety?" repeated Paul hotly, his own face red and fierce. "It is Schiller, I think, who says that it is the experience of corruption which originated them. I hate to hear you speak of impropriety, as if you could even conceive the idea of it!"

"Well, we are not in Arcadia now, and we must behave ourselves accordingly," said Elizabeth, who was beginning to feel glad in her gentle heart that she had been able to make this explanation. "I think we are getting corrupted with wonderful rapidity. We have even been called upon, quite as if we were people of fashion and consequence, by a lady who was dressed in the most magnificent manner, and who came in her carriage. Her name was Aarons—Mrs. Aarons. She said she had heard of our being here, and thought she would like to make our acquaintance."

"Did she?" responded Paul warmly, thinking how nice and delicate it was of Mrs. Aarons to respect his anxious wish that his name and interposition should not be mentioned, which was certainly more than he had expected of her. "And were you all at home when she called?"

"As it happened—yes. It was on Saturday afternoon, when we are generally rather busy."

"And have you returned her call yet?"

"No. We don't mean to return it," said Elizabeth composedly; "we did not like her enough to wish to make an acquaintance of her. It is no good to put ourselves out, and waste our own time and theirs, for people whom we are sure not to care about, and who would not care about us, is it?"

"But I think you would like her if you knew her, Miss King," pleaded Paul, much disturbed by this threatened downfall of his schemes. "I am sure—at least, I have always heard, and I can speak a little from personal knowledge—that she is a particularly nice woman; thoroughly kind and amiable, and, at the same time, having a good position in society, and a remarkably pleasant house, where you might meet interesting people whom you would like. Oh, don't condemn her at first sight in that way! First impressions are so seldom to be trusted. Go and call, at any rate—indeed, you know, you ought to do that, if only for form's sake."

"For politeness, do you mean? Would it be rude not to return her call?"

"It would be thought so, of course."

"Ah, I was not sure—I will call then. I don't mind calling in the least. If she has done us a kindness, it is right to acknowledge it in whatever is the proper way. It was my sisters—especially Patty—who took a dislike to her, and particularly wished not to see her again. Patty thought she asked too many questions, and that she came from some motive of curiosity to pry into our affairs. She was certainly a little impertinent, I thought. But then, perhaps, ladies in 'the world' don't look at these things as we have been accustomed to do," added Elizabeth humbly.

"I don't think they do," said Paul.

By this time they had reached the gate through which Patty and Eleanor had passed before them out of the gardens. As they silently emerged into the road, they saw the pair flitting along the pavement a considerable distance ahead of them, and when they turned the corner into Myrtle street both the slender black figures had disappeared. Paul wondered to see himself so irritated by this trifling and inevitable circumstance. He felt that it would have done him good to speak to Patty, if it were only to quarrel with her.

Elizabeth bade him good night when she reached the gate of No. 6, where the hall door stood open—putting her warm, strong hand with motherly benevolence into his.

"Good night, Miss King. I am so glad to have seen you," he responded, glaring fiercely at the balcony and the blank window overhead. "And—and you will return that call, won't you?"

"O yes—of course. We will walk there on Monday, as we come home from the library. We are able to find our way about in Melbourne very well now, with the help of the map you were so kind as to give us when we first came. I can't tell you how useful that has been."

So, with mutual friendship and goodwill, they parted—Elizabeth to join her sisters upstairs, where one was already setting the tea-kettle to boil on the gas stove, and the other spreading a snow-white cloth on the sitting-room table—Paul Brion to get half-an-hour's work and a hasty dinner before repairing to the reporters' gallery of "the House."

He did not see them again for a long time, and the first news he heard of them was from Mrs. Aarons, whom he chanced to meet when she was shopping one fine morning in Collins street.

"You see, I remembered my promise," she said, when matters of more personal moment had been disposed of; "I went to see those extraordinary protegees of yours."

"Extraordinary—how extraordinary?" he inquired stiffly.

"Well, I put it to you—are they not extraordinary?"

He was silent for a few seconds, and the points of his moustache went up a little. "Perhaps I so—now you mention it," he said. "Perhaps they are unlike the—the usual girl of the period with whom we are familiar. But I hope you were favorably impressed with your visit. Were you?"

"No, I wasn't. I will be frank with you—I wasn't. I never expected to find people living in that manner—and dressing in that manner. It is not what I am used to."

CHAPTER XI.

DISAPPOINTMENT.

How they should dress themselves for Mrs. Aarons' Friday was a question as full of interest for our girls as if they had been brought up in the lap of wealth and fashion.

Could they afford themselves new frocks?—say, black grenadines that would do for the summer afterwards. This suggestion was inquired into at several shops and of several dressmakers, and then relinquished, but not without a struggle. "We are just recovering ourselves," said Elizabeth, with her note-book before her and her pencil in her hand; "and if we go on as we are doing now we shall be able to save enough to take us to Europe next year without meddling with our house-money. But if we break our rules—well, it will throw us back. And it will be a bad precedent, Patty."

"Then we won't break them," said Patty valiantly. "We will go in our black frocks. Perhaps," she added, with some hesitation, "we can find something amongst our mother's things to trim us up a little."

"She would like to see us making ourselves look pretty with her things," said Eleanor.

"Yes, Nelly. That is what I think. Come along and let us look at that bundle of lace that we put in the bottom drawer of the bureau. Elizabeth, does lace so fine as that go with woolen frocks, do you think? We must not have any incongruities if we can help it."

Elizabeth thought that plain white ruffles would, perhaps, be best, as there was so much danger of incongruities if they trusted to their untrained invention. Whereupon Patty pointed out that they would have to buy ruffles, while the lace would cost nothing, which consideration, added to their secret wish for a little special decoration, now that the occasion for it had arisen—the love of adornment being, though refined and chastened, an ingredient of their nature as of every other woman's—carried the day in favor of "mother's things."

"And I think," said Patty, with dignity, when at last Friday came and they had spread the selected finery on their little beds, "I think that ladies ought to know how to dress themselves better than shopgirls can tell them. When they want to make themselves smart, they should think, first, what they can afford and what will be suitable to their position and the occasion, and then they should think what would look pretty in a picture. And they should put on that."

Late in the evening, Paul Brion, who had not intended to go to this particular Friday, lest his presence should betray to the sisters what he was so anxious to conceal from them, found that he could not resist the temptation to see with his own eyes how they were getting on; and when he had entered the room, which was unusually crowded, and had prowled about for a few minutes amongst the unpleasantly tall men who obstructed his view in all directions, he was surprised and enraged to see the three girls sitting side by side in a corner, looking neglected and lonely, and to see insolent women in long-tailed satin gowns sweeping past them as if they had not been there. One glance was enough to satisfy him that there had been no fear of their not looking "nice." Patty's bright and flushed but (just now) severe little face, rising so proudly from the soft lace about her throat and bosom, seemed to him to stand out clear in a surrounding mist, apart and distinct from all the faces in the room—or in the world, for that matter. Elizabeth's dignified serenity in an uncomfortable position was the perfection of good breeding, and made a telling contrast to the effusive manners of those about her; and fair Eleanor, sitting so modestly at Elizabeth's side, with her hands, in a pair of white silk mittens, folded in her lap, was as charming to look at as heart of man could desire. Other men seemed to be of his opinion, for he saw several hovering around them and looking at them with undisguised interest; but the ladies, who, he thought, ought to have felt privileged to take them up, appeared to regard them coldly, or to turn their backs upon them altogether, literally as well as metaphorically. It was plain that Mrs. Aarons had introduced them to nobody, probably wishing (as was indeed the case—people of her class being morbidly sensitive to the disgrace of unfashionable connections) not to own to them more than she could help.

He withdrew from their neighborhood before they saw him, and went to seek his hostess, swelling with remonstrant wrath. He found her on a sofa at the other end of the room, talking volubly (she was always voluble, but now she was breathless in her volubility) to a lady who had never before honored her Fridays, and who, by doing so to-night, had gratified an ambition that had long been paramount amongst the many ambitions which, enclosed in a narrow circle as they were, served to make the interest and occupation of Mrs. Aaron's life. She looked up at Paul as he approached her, and gave him a quick nod and smile, as if to say, "I see you, but you must be perfectly aware that I am unable to attend to you just now." Paul understood her, and, not having the honor of Mrs. Duff-Scott's acquaintance himself, fell back a little behind the sofa and waited for his opportunity. As he waited, he could not help overhearing the conversation of the two ladies, and deriving a little cynical amusement therefrom.

"And, as soon as I heard of it, I begged my husband to go and see if it was really a genuine example of Derby-Chelsea; and, you see, it was," said Mrs. Aarons, with subdued enthusiasm, almost with tears of emotion.

"It was, indeed," assented Mrs. Duff-Scott, earnestly. "There was the true mark—the capital D, with the anchor in the middle of it. It is extremely rare, and I had no hope of ever possessing a specimen."

"I knew you would like to have it. I said to Ben, 'Do go and match it up at once for Mrs. Duff-Scott's collection.' And he was so pleased to find he was in time. We were so afraid some one might have been before us. But the fact is, people are so ignorant that they have no idea of the value of things of that sort—fortunately."

"I don't call it fortunate at all," the other lady retorted, a little brusquely. "I don't like to see people ignorant—I am quite ready to share and share." Then she added, with a smile, "I am sure I can never be sufficiently obliged to Mr. Aarons for taking so much trouble on my account. I must get him into a corner presently, and find out how much I am in his debt—though, of course, no money can represent the true worth of such a treasure, and I shall always feel that I have robbed him."

"Oh, pray, pray don't talk of payment," the hostess implored, with a gesture of her heavily-ringed hands. "You will hurt him dreadfully if you think of such a thing. He feels himself richly paid, I assure you, by having a chance to do you a little service. And such a mere trifle as it is!"

"No, indeed, it is not a trifle, Mrs. Aarons—very far from it. The thing is much too valuable for me to—to—" Mrs. Duff-Scott hesitated, and her face was rather red—"to deprive you of it in that way. I don't feel that I can take it as a present—a bit of real Derby-Chelsea that you might never find a specimen of again—really I don't."

"Oh, please"—and Mrs. Aaron's voice was at once reproachful and persuasive—"please! I know you don't wish to hurt us."

A little more discussion ensued, which Paul watched with an amused smile; and Mrs. Duff-Scott gave in.

"Well, if you insist—but you are really too good. It makes me quite uncomfortable to take such a treasure from you. However, perhaps, some day I may be able to contribute to your collection."

"Ah, my dear Herr Wullnerr," she said, in a very distinct voice, "I was listening, and I thought I could not be mistaken in your touch. Heller's "Wanderstunden," wasn't it?" And they plunged head first into musical talk such as musical people (who never care in the least how much unmusical people may be bored by it) love to indulge in whenever an occasion offers, while Mrs. Aarons stood by, smiling vaguely, and not understanding a word of it. Paul Brion listened to them for a few minutes, and a bright idea came into his head.

CHAPTER XII.

TRIUMPH.

Mrs. Duff-Scott lifted up a sheet of crabbed manuscript as yellowed by time as Patty's Brussels lace, and said: "This is not quite the thing for a mixed audience, is it?"

"Ah, no! you are right; it is the study of Haydn that a friend of mine asked of me yesterday, and that I proposed to read to him to-night," said Herr Wullner, in that precise English and with that delicate pronunciation with which the cultivated foreigner so often puts us to shame. "It is, you perceive, an arrangement for one violin and a piano only—done by a very distinguished person for a lady who was for a short time my pupil, when I was a young man. You have heard it with the four-stringed instruments at your house; that was bad—bad! Ach! that second violin squeaked like the squeaking of a pig, and it was always in the wrong place. But in good hands it is sublime. This"—and he sighed as he added more sheets to the one she held and was steadily perusing—"this is but a crippled thing, perhaps; the piano, which should have none of it, has it all—and no one can properly translate that piano part—not one in ten thousand. But it is well done. Yes, it is very well done. And I have long been wanting my friend to try it with me."

"And what about the young lady for whom it was written?—which part did she take?"

"The piano—the piano. But then she had a wonderful execution and sympathy—it was truly wonderful for a lady, and she so young. Women play much better now, as a rule, but I never hear one who is an amateur play as she did. And so quick—so quick! It was an inspiration with her. Yes, this was written on purpose for that lady—I have had it ever since—it has never been published. The manuscript is in her own hand. She wrote out much of her music in her own hand. It was many, many years ago, and I was a young man then. We were fellow-pupils before I became her master, and she was my pupil only for a few weeks. It was a farce—a farce. She did not play the violin, but in everything else she was better than I. Ah, she was a great genius, that young lady. She was a great loss to the world of art."

"Did she die, Herr Wullner?"

"She eloped," he said softly, "she ran away with a scapegrace. And the ship she sailed in was lost at sea."

"Dear me! How very sad. Well, you must make your friend try it over, and, if you manage it all right, bring him with you to my house on Monday evening and let me hear it."

"That shall give me great pleasure," said the old man, bowing low.

"You have your violin with you, I suppose?" she asked.

"It is in the hall, under my cloak. I do not bring it into this room," he replied.

"Why not?" she persisted. "Go and fetch it, Herr Wullner, and let Mrs. Aarons hear you play it"—suddenly bethinking herself of her hostess—and smiling upon that lady—"if she has never had that treat before."

Mrs. Aarons was eager to hear the violin, and Herr Wullner went himself, though reluctantly, to fetch his treasure from the old case that he had hidden away below. When he had tuned up his strings a little, and had tucked the instrument lovingly under his chin, he looked at Mrs. Duff-Scott and said softly, "What?"

"Oh," cried Mrs. Aarons, striking in, "play that—you know—what you were talking of just now—what Mrs. Duff Scott wanted so much to hear. I want to hear it too."

"Impossible — impossible," he said quickly, almost with a shudder. It has a piano part, and there is no one here to take that."

Then Paul Brion broken in, conscious that he was running heavy risks of all sorts, but resolved to seize his chance.

"I think there is someone who could play it," he said to Mrs. Aarons, speaking with elaborate distinctness. "The Misses King—one of them, at anyrate—"

"Nonsense," interrupted Mrs. Aarons, sharply, but under her breath. "Not at all likely." She was annoyed by the suggestion, and wished to treat it as if unheard (it was unreasonable, on the face of it, of course); but Mrs. Duff-Scott caught at it in her direct way. "Who are they? Which are the Misses King?" she asked of Paul, putting up her eye-glass to see what manner of man had taken upon himself to interfere.

"My dear lady," sighed Herr Wullner, dropping his bow dejectedly, "it is out of the question, absolutely. It is not normal music at its best, and I have it only in manuscript. It is impossible that any lady can attempt it."

"She will not attempt it if she cannot do it, Herr Wullner," said Paul. "But you might ask her."

Mrs. Duff-Scott had followed the direction of his eyes, and her attention was violently arrested by the figures of the three girls sitting together, who were so remarkably unlike the majority of Mrs. Aaron's guests. She took note of all their superficial peculiarities in a moment, and the conviction that the lace and the pearls were real flashed across her like an inspiration. "Is it the young lady with the bright eyes?" she inquired. "What a charming face! Yes, Herr Wullner, we will ask her. Introduce me to her, Mrs. Aarons, will you?"

She rose as she spoke and sailed towards Patty, Mrs. Aarons following; and Paul Brion held his breath while he waited to see how his reckless enterprise would turn out. In a few minutes Patty came towards the piano, with her head up and her face flushed, looking a little defiant, but as self-possessed as the great lady who convoyed her across the room. The events of the evening had roused her spirit and strung up her nerves like Herr Wullner's fiddle-strings, and she, too, was in a daring and audacious mood.

"This is it," said the old musician, looking at her critically as he gave a sheet of manuscript into her hand. It was a wonderful chance, of course, but Patty had seen the facsimile of that manuscript many times before, and had played from it. It is true she had never played with the violin accompaniment—had never so much as seen a violin until she came to Melbourne; but her mother had contrived to make her understand how the more delicate and sensitive instrument ought to be deferred to in the execution of the piano part, and what the whole should sound like, by singing the missing air in her flexible trilling voice; and just now she was in that peculiar mood of exaltation that she felt inspired to dare anything and assured that she should succeed. "You will not be able to read it?" Herr Wullner suggested persuasively, drawing hope from her momentary silence.

"Oh, yes, she said, looking up bravely. "I think so. You will stop me, please, if I do not play it right." And she seated herself at the piano with a quiet air of knowing what she was doing that confounded the two ladies who were watching her and deeply interested Mrs. Duff-Scott. Paul Brion's heart was beating high with anticipated triumph. Herr Wullner's heart, on the contrary, sank with a cold despair.

"Well, we will have a few bars," he sighed. "And pray, my dear young lady, don't bang the piano—I mean don't play over me. And try to keep time. But you will never do it—with the best intentions, my dear, you will never be able to read it from such a manuscript as that."

Patty looked up at him with a sort of radiant calmness, and said gently, "Go on. You see you have an opening movement to yourself."

Bewildered, the old man dropped his bow upon the strings, and set forth on his hopeless task. And at exactly the right moment the piano glided in, so lightly, so tenderly, and yet with such admirable precision and delicate clearness, that it justified, for once, its trespass upon ground that belonged to more aerial instruments. It was just what Paul Brion had counted on—though Paul Brion had not the least idea what a wild chance had brought about the fulfilment of his expectations. Patty was able to display her chief accomplishment to the very best advantage, and the sisters were thereby promoted to honour. The cold shade of neglect and obscurity was to chill them no more from this happy moment.

The guests were laughing and talking and flirting, as they were wont to do under cover of the music which generally prevailed at these Friday receptions, when an angry "Hush!" from the violinist, repeated by Mrs. Duff-Scott, made a little circle of silence round the performers. And in this silence Patty carried through her responsible undertaking with perfect accuracy and the finest taste—save for a shadowy mistake or two, which, glancing over them as if they were mere phantoms of mistakes, and recovering herself instantly, only served to show more clearly the finished quality of her execution, and the thoroughness of her musical experience. She was conscious herself of being in her very best form.

"Ah!" said Herr Wullner, drawing a long breath as he uttered the exclamation, and softly laying down his violin, "I was mistaken. My dear young lady, allow me to beg your pardon, and to thank you." And he bowed before Patty until his nose nearly touched his knees.

Mrs. Duff-Scott, who was a woman of impulses, as most nice women are, was enthusiastic. Not only had she listened to Patty's performance with all her intelligent ears, but she had at the same time investigated and appraised the various details of her personal appearance, and been particularly interested in that bit of lace about her neck.

"My dear," she said, putting out her hand as the girl rose from the music-stool, "come here and sit by me and tell me where you learned to play like that."

Patty went over to her readily, won by the kind voice and motherly gesture. And, in a very few minutes, Paul had the pleasure of seeing the great lady sitting on a sofa with all three sisters around her, talking to them, and they to her, as if they had known one another for years.

Leaving them thus safe and cared for, he bade good-night to his hostess, and went home to his work, in a mood of high contentment.

CHAPTER XIII.

PATTY IN UNDRESS.

When Paul Brion bade Mrs. Aarons good-night, he perceived that she was a little cold to him, and rather wondered at himself that he did not feel inclined either to resent or to grieve over that unprecedented circumstance.

(To be Continued.)

The Harriers.

The members of the well-known Ranelagh Harriers' Club of London, Eng., know what is best when one writes like the following. Mr. W. F. Jefferies, member of the Club, says: "I find St. Jacobs Oil the best remedy I have ever used for sprains, stiffness and bruises. It quickly removes pains and swellings, and if rubbed into the muscles, it will be found of great benefit to all athletes. I may also add that several friends of mine have found the Oil a cure for rheumatism and neuralgia."

Maggie Murphy's Home.

Chicago *Times*: "This 'Maggie Murphy's Home' is getting to be a bigger nuisance than even was 'Annie Rooney' and her Joe," wrathfully ejaculated a man with a high hat as a small boy passed the door howling at the top of his voice,

"'Tis my delight
On a Sunday night—"

"I'll bet a man can hear that blankety-dashed air twenty times in a trip from here to Fortieth street," the irate man went on. "From Lake View to Jackson Park, from the lake to the West Side tracks one's ears are constantly and forever assailed by a more or less mutilated rendition of that blanked lot of dashed nonsense about Maggie Murphy and her home. I'm not down on the Irish, but I wish the man who wrote 'McGinty' was at the bottom of the sea himself, and that the fiend who slopped over to a waltz tempo about Annie Rooney had to marry Annie and live with her in some sequestered nook very far from where I have to go, and that whoever evolved those lines and that aria relating to Miss Murphy's place of abode could be condemned to two years in solitary confinement with an automatic hand-organ that played nothing but his devilish song."

An Inherited Taxing Power.

Word comes from West Superior, Wisconsin, that Charles D. Skillings, a newspaper man there, has unexpectedly inherited an estate valued at $5,000,000. Nearly one hundred years ago, an ancestor of his leased a tract of land in Maine to somebody else's ancestor, for a term of ninety-nine years. The term having now expired, Mr. Skillings takes possession as an heir of the former owner. Meantime, the city of Portland has grown up and spread over the tract, and what was a wild and almost valueless section of the earth's surface, has become, on that account, an extremely desirable location—one for the privilege of using which thousands of people are willing to pay handsomely. Mr. Skillings has done nothing to make this land valuable. Nor did his ancestor, nor any of the line through which he derives title. In no sense can he claim pay for any service. His claim rests soly on the power his title gives him of levying taxes on some of the inhabitants of Portland. These taxes they must pay or move. And when they pay them, the taxes, instead of being used for the benefit of Portland, will be used for the benefit of a lucky newspaper man out West.—*N. Y. Standard.*

Why She Gets Up.

New York *Press*: "I suppose you have an easy time of it now that you've got a servant girl. What time do you get up in the morning?" "At 7 o'clock." "And at what time does your girl get up?" "At a quarter past 7." "Gracious! Why do you get up before she does?" "To call her."

A Case in Point.

New York *Herald*: Bond—My dear fellow, I don't believe in this treating business. How much better it would be to invite a friend in to have a necktie or some article of wearing apparel.

Gallon—All right, my boy; let's step in here and have a nightcap.

It Had Come to a Hard Pass.

Brooklyn *Life*: "Dear me," said the Summer girl.

"What's the matter?" inquired her mother.

"Oh, nothing—only I haven't heard any one call me dear in so long that I thought I would call myself dear."

Starting Early in Life.

Judge: "Where is Johnny Tivington?" inquired the Sunday school teacher, looking up from the Bible he was reading.

"He went out between the Acts," replied Sammy Brown.

Women may not be deep thinkers, but they are generally clothes observers.

To form an idea of the experiments that take abroad in the way of testing new devices in warfare, the station at Leige, Belgium, consumes nearly 4,000,000 cartridges and 40 tons of powder a year in testing firearms.

The zinc-tannin process of preparing wood to resist decay is proving a great success. It hardens the wood and makes it much more useful, especially when used for railroad ties.

Savannah *News*: Robert Beck, of Doboneges, wanted to get married, but his finances were so low that he could not parade the necessary $1.50. His brother-in-law, who is 35 years old, went out on the public square, mounted a dry goods box, made such a strong appeal that the crowd chipped in the necessary money, and Robert and Nancy Jane Higgins were married on Saturday.

THE ABERDEEN VISIT.

The Countess Enchanted With the Beauty of Hamilton

AND WITH THE KINDNESS OF ITS CITIZENS.

Life at Highfield Described—The Mountain—The Search for Bugs—The Youthful Interviewer.

(Through Canada with a Kodak": By Lady Aberdeen in "Onward and Upward".)

I am sure that any of you who have travelled will agree that one of its chief pleasures is coming home again. And we felt almost like getting home when we walked into the cool, comfortable, dining-room, where breakfast had been prepared for us by those of our household who had preceded us to "Highfield," the house which was to be our home whilst in Canada. Here is a picture of Highfield. I will not give you one of Hamilton, for it is a place which photographs do not do full justice to. The town lies on a gently-rising slope round the head of a beautiful bay, and nestles under a steep ridge, which stretches miles and miles away to the heights of Niagara. Here it shelteringly protects the town, which fondly acknowledges its sway, and which demands from all strangers and newcomers a due tribute of loyal admiration for "the mountain." As an illustration of this admiration, the day after we arrived a boy, af about thirteen, came up Lord Aberdeen as he was walking in the grounds and said, "Is Lord Haddo at home?" "Well, no, he is not, but I am his father. What do you want with him?"

"Well, I wanted to interview him, and ask what His Lordship thought of our city, and I wanted to put the interview in my father's newspaper."

Lord Aberdeen was rather startled in spite of having become somewhat familiarized to the custom of "interviewing" which prevails universally the other side of the water, by means of which public men make known their views. He had scarcely, however, expected his 11-year-old son to be called upon to give his opinions as yet, and he tried to explain to the youthful journalist that in the Old Country boys were not expected to air their views so soon. But our young friend was not easily baffled. He still persisted in asking "If Lord Haddo had made arrangements to inspect the public buildings of the city, and especially if he had visited 'the mountain,' and what he thought of that." Lord Aberdeen informed him that his boy was at that moment enjoying a clamber up the steep, and did his best to satisfy his enterprising enquirer by expressing his own appreciation of the heights under whose shade they were standing.

Well, climb up this mountain (almost on the side of which stands Highfield), in the cool of an early September evening, and see the town spreading itself out east and west below you—wide and well-kept streets, trim lawns as green as those in England, houses nestling amongst trees, handsome buildings, church spires and factory chimneys competing for pre-eminence. And beyond the city, and its manufactories, and its wharves, lies the bay, all gleaming with the bright colors of the setting sun, amid which little yachts and pleasure boats are making their way home. Our thoughts linger fondly over the restful days spent in this peaceful retreat, and I fancy that both we and our children associate Highfield to a great extent with sunshine and butterflies. Perhaps we had a little more of the former than we cared for just at first—for days with the thermometer over 90 degrees in the shade do not as a rule commend themselves to Scottish-bred folk. But after all we had not much to grumble at, for the heat was not accompanied by our much-dreaded foes, the blood-thirsty mosquitoes. True, this race of pests, who are supposed to avoid Hamilton as a rule, had sent out this year an advance guard to survey the place, and even we, though late in the season, heard ominous trumpetings as we laid our heads on the pillows, but it seems that as yet they were but vegetarian specimens of the race who had arrived, for none of our party suffered at their hands. Nor did they suffer at ours. We did not capture a single specimen. And this is a great deal to say for such an insect-hunting family as we must confess ourselves to be.

As we sat in the pretty secluded grounds which surround Highfield that first day, we became conscious that we were by no means alone, and our children, who had joined us, were soon in full pursuit of the wonderful creatures, which looked like butterflies on the wing, but turned into grasshoppers when they alighted, of the "Camberwell Beauties," and the "Admirals," and the many other bright-colored visitors of our garden. But we did not do much that first day—we had not the necessary implements, and we had to sally forth in search of the wherewithal to make butterfly nets, and killing-boxes, and specimen boxes, and I know not what. And here let me introduce the four young butterfly-hunters of Highfield. Of course, if you ever hear that their mother—your staid editor—joined them in their wild pursuit of Her Majesty, the glorious red-winged, swift-flying "Queen of Spain," or if you hear of her anointing telegraph poles and trees with honey and molasses, and flitting about with others of the staff of "Onward and Upward" at dead of night, with lanterns, capturing unwary, but magnificent moths, who had imbibed the sweet draughts too freely, you will surely not believe such tales!

Suffice it to say that a really beautiful collection of moths and butterflies resulted from our stay at Highfield, a collection doomed to an untimely end, for during their transit home, they got so battered that it was only left to the two editors to mingle their tears together over their ashes. We must not ask you to linger with us in our lamentations over our broken treasures. We live in hope of replacing them some day, and meanwhile we have other memories of Hamilton which we wish to share with you.

A hundred years ago Hamilton had barely begun to exist. But the few who were then ploughing up the land on which the city now stands, were of the stamp which makes nations to rejoice over her children. You will remember that after the war which resulted in the independence of the United States, a number of American people who had remained true to the British flag throughout the war, resolved to give up their lands and their homes and migrate to Canada, rather than dwell in a land which had revolted from the Crown to which they were so loyal. And again right joyfully held out her arms to these noble-hearted refugees. Ontario was then unpeopled, and so 200 acres of land in this rich Province were granted free to every one of these United Empire Loyalists, as they were called. U. E. Loyalists they are called now for short, and those who can trace their parentage to these families count it a proud descent, and glory in it.

One of the earliest of these refugees was Robert Land, and he selected the head of the lake, more because of the game to be found there, and the scenery, than because of the fertility of the soil. His first acre was ploughed with a hoe, sown with a bushel of wheat, and harrowed with a leafy bough. He was his own miller, too, for some years, until a French-Canadian arrived and set up a mill some seven miles away. Then other farmers came, and in 1813 Geo. Hamilton laid out his farm in village lots, and gave the future town its name. Lying, as it does, so near the frontier, it did not escape anxious times during the war of 1812 and the following years, and in 1832 it narrowly escaped destruction at the hands of a terrible visitation of the cholera, and the same year by a raging fire. These trials did but prove the mettle of the inhabitants of the young town, and perhaps furnish the reason why its streets are now so broad, and so cared for, its buildings so solid, its sanitary arrangements so thoroughly looked into, its provisions against destruction by fire so complete. A popular writer described Hamilton in 1858 as "the ambitious and stirring little city," and the name stuck; only "little" she is no longer, being the third city in the Dominion, having a population of over 50,000, and her enviers have missed out the "stirring," so if you seek for news of Hamilton in the general newspapers you must look for it under the heading "The Ambitious City." But she is not, and need not, be ashamed of this nickname, for she has shown herself ambitious to some purpose. I could take up a large part of these Canadian gossips by describing to you the public buildings and their uses, the magnificent school buildings and the good work that goes on in them, the institutions—social, literary, philanthropic, and religious—the many manufactories which cause Hamilton to be regarded as the Birmingham of Canada, the acres of vineyards around the fruit gardens and orchards, which give this part of the country the name of "the Garden of Canada," the churches of all denominations whose services we attended, and above all the people of Hamilton. But, having regard to the length and purport of these sketches, I will not launch into so large a subject. Suffice it to say that the kindness and good fellowship extended to us by the inhabitants of Hamilton, of all classes, did what only true hearty courtesy and kindness can do, viz., we felt ourselves to be no mere tourists and strangers, but fellow-citizens of "no mean city." And, in proof of this assertion, I have, by my side here, in the office of "Onward and Upward," two beautifully-bound books, concerning the birds and plants of Canada, and which were presented to me by the Free Library Committee, as being the first citizen to apply for a book, on the occasion of Lord Aberdeen's opening of the new building. (I must confide to you, however, that your president's character had to be inquired into before I was admitted as a reader. I had to produce a certificate of honesty, and so forth, signed by two citizens of Hamilton. You will be glad to know that I found two Senators willing to vouch for me!)

There is no doubt that if you want really to know something of a country, its customs, and its people, it is a great advantage if you can settle down in some typical place for a few weeks, instead of merely travelling through and seeing the sights of each town. In the latter way you may see more perhaps of the buildings, institutions, etc., for, if you have but a day or two, you map out your time, and spend it in driving from one place to another, and you thus get through a great deal; but if you make yourself at home anywhere for a bit, you will not do the tourist so much, but if you mix at all with the people, you almost unconsciously get to understand them and their ways of thinking and the whys and wherefores of their customs and institutions. This was our experience, living our every-day life, interchanging visits, reading the daily papers of all sections of politics, mingling with clergy, statesmen, merchants, agriculturists, etc., and hearing various opinions from all sorts and conditions of men. And the sum total of what we learnt made us feel that the more the old country learnt to know her grown-up child over the sea, the more she would be proud of her in all ways, and the more earnestly did it make us wish and pray that the future of Canada may be worthy of the past, and the present God-fearing, industrious, simple, education-loving stock may only be reinforced by those worthy to combine with them in building up a grand nation and country.

As I have said before, none need fear to go out to Canada who are ready to work. Our lads and lasses who went out with us with the intention of settling (and of whom I give you a group sitting outside "Highfield") have nearly all found happy homes. One, indeed, has come back because of her father's death, but I feel much tempted to give you extracts from some of the letters of others. They have not suffered at all from the cold of the winter, but seem to have enjoyed the merry winter customs, and seeing all the skating and the sleighing going on round about them. For one thing the heartiness of Canadians towards new-comers counts for a great deal; they do all they can to make everyone feel welcome, and one with them—there is a freeness, a sense of equality, a consciousness that everyone will be taken just for what he or she is worth, and nothing more or less, which cannot altogether be attained in the old world, and which must always be refreshing to anyone of independent spirit. "Prove yourself to be a man, a woman, and we shall respect you, and you shall have an equal chance with any of us, and what is more, we will do our best to put you into the running with us from the first." Human nature is undoubtedly the same everywhere, and Canadians would not wish to claim for themselves immunity from all faults, but they may fairly claim that anyone wishing to live a free, independent, self-respecting, law-abiding and God-fearing life has as few impediments under the government, the public life and customs, the bright climate and the sangtine temperament of Canada and her folk as they will find in any land under the sun.

Lord Aberdeen was accused of distributing what was termed "taffy to the Dominion" (is this word derived from "toffee," I wonder? Anyway it means something sweet), in some of his speeches in Canada. Perhaps I shall be accused of following in his footsteps. Well, we can only speak of that we do know, and that we have seen, and I can honestly say that I am not conscious of having flattered. Next month I invite you to accompany us to some of Canada's autumn fairs, and to see some of her products.