

every class must have its share of space and of attention. These contrasts are sometimes singularly striking; but we never knew one more so than occurred to the present writer on the Monday after the last Christmas day, which fell upon a Sunday. In the morning he went to Dr. Fletcher's chapel, Finsbury Circus, where that venerable divine was addressing some 4000 Sabbath school children and teachers. When they lifted up their infant voices in the praise of God, it was indeed a sight and a sound that can never be forgotten. It was a glorious spectacle for the well-wisher of his species, to behold these thousands of youthful minds receiving religious impressions, which would serve to form not merely their own characters, but to influence materially the generation which is to follow us. In the evening he was sent to an equally spacious edifice, an equally crowded and enthusiastic audience; but, alas! of how opposite a character! It was one of the great Shoreditch theatres, where one of those ridiculous and unmeaning exhibitions known as "pantomimes" had been got up at immense expense, for the amusement of the particular section of society which frequent such places. On these occasions every reporter must go somewhere, so that the notices of all the theatres may appear simultaneously. In the morning there were songs of praise, and all was calm and dignified, chaste and scriptural: in the evening the comic song, the indecent ballet, shouts and laughter, beer and gin in the galleries, and in the pit husky voices calling out, "oranges, ginger beer, bill of the play, house bill to-night, sir?" The minister and teachers in the morning, the lessee and actors in the evening, morality and immorality, the hopeful and the dangerous classes, the future christians and the future criminals!

Such is society, and the reporter sees all sides of it; of each, to be efficient, he must have a good general knowledge; and when he goes where his sympathies do not take him, he must observe a judicious silence, or turn the conversation to a neutral topic. One evening we have "dined in black and white" with a party of noblemen and gentlemen at one of the great taverns, and the next night have been sent to report the complaints of a body of poor half-starved Spitalfields weavers, assembled in a dilapidated skittle alley in their own neighbourhood, with a gaunt and hungry look, with little work and poor pay, capable of subsisting—the whole body of them—for a month or more upon the money spent for the single meal of the same number of fellow creatures the evening before!

These are contrasts that give a man of feeling many a heart-ache. But the subject is too painful to be pursued. The result of all this is, that an intelligent and observant reporter is often a man of vast and varied general information. No class of men have a greater variety of topics brought under their notice.

As to reporters themselves, they are as diverse as the duties they are called on to perform, not merely in abilities and in manners, but in dress, habits, social position, and appearance. Some are men with university honours; others are innocent

both of the ancient and the modern languages, and possess only a limited familiarity with the best productions in their native tongue. Some are *au fait* at two or three subjects, and not to be relied on in any except in such matters; while there are others who come straight from the opera, and write a review of a volume of sermons, or a three-volume novel, or perchance translate from the "Moniteur" the latest news of the French capital. These are the "general utility" men, as they are sometimes facetiously called by those whose genius is not quite so versatile. Most men, however, have their speciality. One does reviewing, another the musical, a third the theatrical, a fourth the opera, a fifth scientific notices, a sixth general business meetings, a seventh ecclesiastical and university intelligence, an eighth benevolent and charitable institutions. The higher ranks of the profession are devoted to parliamentary reporting, and to special works in various parts. But we must stop here. Of "the Reporter in the British Senate" we have often spoken in these pages; special reporters and newspaper correspondents we must leave for separate papers.

ADVENTURE AMONG THE HUDSON'S BAY FUR-HUNTERS.

OUR brigade of four boats lay moored on the banks of the great Saskatchewan; which river, taking its rise amid the rugged steepes of the Rocky Mountains, flows through the great prairies and woodlands of the interior of Rupert's Land, and discharges into Lake Winnipeg.

The men were ashore at breakfast. On a low gravelly point that jutted out into the stream, smoked three large fires, over which stood three rudely-constructed tripods, from which depended three enormous tin kettles. Robbiboo was the delectable substance contained in these kettles. Pemmican is a compound of dried buffalo meat, melted fat, and hair—the latter being an accidental ingredient. Mix pemmican with flour and water, boil and stir till it thickens, and the result will be "robbiboo."

Around these kettles stood, and sat, and reclined, and smoked, about thirty of the wildest and heartiest fellows that ever trod the wilderness. Most of them were French Canadians; many were half-breeds; some were Orkneymen, and one or two were the copper-coloured natives of the soil. But Canadians, Scotch, and savages alike, were servants of the Hudson's Bay Fur Company; they were all burned to the same degree of brownness by the summer sun; they all laughed and talked, and ate robbiboo more or less—generally more; and they were all clad in the picturesque habiliments of the north-west *voyageur*. A loose-fitting capote, with a hood hanging down the back; a broad scarlet or parti-coloured worsted sash round the waist; a pair of cloth leggings, sometimes blue, sometimes scarlet, occasionally ornamented with bright silk or bead-work, and gartered at the knees; a pair of chamois-leather-like mocassins made of deer skin; a round bonnet, or a red nightcap, or a nondescript

hat, or nothing; such is the outward man of the *voyageur*.

"Ho! ho!" shouted the gruff voice of the guide, as the men, having emptied the kettles, were hastily filling and lighting their pipes—"embark, my lads, embark."

In five minutes the boats were afloat, and the crews were about to shove off, when the cry was raised, "Mr. Berry! hold on; where's Mr. Berry?"

Poor Berry! he was always late, always missing, always in the wrong place at the right time and in the right place at the wrong time. His companions—of whom there were two in charge of the boats along with himself—called him an "old wife," but qualified the title with the remark that he was a "good soul," nevertheless. And so he was—a beardless youth of twenty-two summers, with a strong tendency to scientific pursuits, but woefully incompetent to use his muscles aright. He was for ever falling into the water, constantly cutting his fingers with his knife, and frequently breaking the trigger of his fowling-piece in his attempts to discharge it at half-cock. Yet he was incomparably superior to his more "knowing" comrades in all the higher qualities of manhood. At the moment his name was called, he sprang from the bushes, laden with botanical specimens, and, crying "Stop! stop! I'm coming," he rushed down to the boat of which he had the special charge, and leaped in. Five minutes more, and the brigade was sweeping down the Saskatchewan, while the men bent lustily to their oars, and filled the shrubbery on the river's bank and the wide prairies beyond with the ringing tones of one of their characteristic and beautiful canoe-songs.

The sun was flooding the horizon with gold, as it sank to rest. The chorus of the boatmen had ceased, and the only sound that broke the stillness of the quiet evening was the slow and regular stroke of the heavy oars, which the men plied unceasingly. On turning one of the bends of the river, which disclosed a somewhat extended vista ahead, several black objects were observed near the water's edge.

"Hist!" exclaimed the foremost guide, "they are buffaloes."

"A terre, à terre!" cried the men, in a hoarse whisper.

A powerful sweep of the steering oar sent the boat into a little bay, where it was quickly joined by the others.

"Now, then, let the crack shots be off into the bush," cried the gentleman in charge of the brigade. "Away with you, Gaspard, Antoine, Jacques. Mind you don't waste powder and shot on old bulls. Hallo! Mr. Berry, not so fast; let the hunters to the front."

"Ah! Misser Berry him berry bad shot," remarked a middle-aged Indian, regarding the youth somewhat contemptuously. Berry armed for the chase with frantic haste, dashing about and tumbling over everything in search of his powder-horn and shot-pouch, which were always mislaid, and moving the muzzle of his gun hither and thither in such a way as to place the lives of his men in constant and deadly peril. He started at last,

with the speed of a hunted deer, and made a bold sweep into the woods in order to head the buffaloes. Here he squatted down behind a bush, to await their coming.

A short time sufficed to bring the stealthy hunters within range. Three shots were fired, and two animals fell to the ground; while a third staggered with difficulty after its companions, as they bounded through the woods towards the prairies, headed by the patriarchal bull of the herd. This majestic animal had a magnificently shaggy mane and a pair of wild glittering eyes, that would have struck terror into the stoutest heart; but Berry was short-sighted; moreover, he had concealed himself behind a shrub, through which, as he afterwards remarked, he "could see nicely." No doubt of it; but the bush was such a scraggy and ill-conditioned shrub, that the buffalo-bull could see through it just as nicely, and charged, with a hideous bellow, at the unfortunate youth as it came up the hill. Berry prepared to receive him. For once he remembered to cock his piece; for once his aim was true, and he hit the huge animal on the forehead at a distance of ten yards; but he might as well have fired against the side of a house; the thick skull, covered with its dense matting of coarse hair, was thoroughly ball-proof. The bull still came on. Just at this moment another shot was fired, and the animal hurled forward in a complete somersault; the bush was crushed to atoms, and Berry was knocked head-over-heels to the ground, where he lay extended at full length beside his slaughtered foe.

"Ah! pauvre enfant," cried Antoine, running up and lifting Berry's head from the ground. "Is you hurt yer' moch? Dat bull him break de ribs I'fraid."

Antoine's fears were groundless. In half an hour the youth was as well as ever, though somewhat shaken by the fall. The choice morsels of the dead buffaloes were cut off by the men with an adroit celerity that was quite marvellous, and in a very short time the boats were again rapidly descending the stream.

The bivouac that night resounded with more vigorous mirth than usual. The camp fires blazed with unwonted power and brilliancy. The cook's office—no sinecure at any time—became a post of absolute slavery; for there was a glorious feast held beneath the spreading trees of the forest, and the bill of fare was "buffalo-steaks and marrow-bones." But if the feast was noisy, the hours that succeeded it were steeped in profound silence. Each man, having smoked his pipe, selected for his couch the softest spot of ground he could find, and, wrapping himself in his blanket, laid him down to rest. The deep breathing of untroubled slumber was the only sound that floated from the land and mingled with the rippling of the river; and not a hand or foot was moved until, at day-break, the loud halloo of the guide aroused the sleepers to their daily toil.

A week or two passed, and we had left the lands of the buffalo far behind us, and were sailing over the broad bosom of Lake Winnipeg. It was calm and polished as a sheet of glass when we entered it, but



NIGHT DIVOUAC ON THE BANKS OF THE SASKATCHEWAN RIVER.

it did not remain long thus. A breeze arose, the sails were hoisted, and away we went out into the wide ocean of fresh water. Lake Winipeg is a veritable ocean. Its waves rival those of the salt sea in magnitude, and they break upon a shore composed in many places of sand and pebbles. If we sail straight out upon it, the shore behind us sinks in the horizon, but no opposite shore rises to view, and the unbroken circle of sky and water is presented to our gaze, as it appears on the great ocean itself.

The wind rose almost to a gale as we careered over the billows, and the men had to keep up incessant baling. It was almost too much for us; but no one murmured, for, had the wind been ahead, we might have been obliged to put ashore and remain there inactive for many days. As it was, we made a rapid run across the lake and entered the river, or rather the system of lakes and rivers, which convey its waters to the ocean. Hudson's Bay was our goal. To this point we were conveying our furs for shipment to England.

Many days passed, and we were still pushing onwards towards the sea-coast; but not so rapidly now. The character of the navigation had changed very considerably, and our progress was much slower. Now we were sweeping over a small lake, anon dashing down the course of a turbulent stream, and at other times dragging boats and cargoes over the land.

One afternoon we came to a part of the river which presented a very terrible appearance. As far as the eye could reach, the entire stream was a boiling turmoil of rocks and rapids, down which a boat could have gone with as much safety as it could have leaped over the falls of Niagara. Our advance was most effectually stopped, as far as appearance went. But nothing checks the onward progress of a north-west *voyageur* except the want of food. The boats ran successively into a small bay, the men leaped out, the bales of furs were tossed upon the banks of the river, and the boats hauled up. Then every man produced a long leathern strap, with which he fastened a bale weighing upwards of 90 lbs. to his back; above this he placed a bale of similar weight, and trotted off into the woods as lightly as if he had only been laden with two pillows. The second bale is placed above the first by a sleight-of-hand movement which is difficult to acquire. Poor Berry well-nigh broke his back several times in attempting this feat, and eventually gave it up in despair.

In an hour the packs were carried over the "portage," and deposited beside the still water at the foot of the rapids. Then the men returned for the boats. One was taken in hand at a time. The united crews seized the heavy craft with their strong hands, and shoved against it with their lusty shoulders; a merry song was struck up, and thus the boat was dragged through the forest for nearly a mile. The others quickly followed, and before evening all was carried over and we were again rowing down stream.

Not long after this, we came to a rapid, in the midst of which was a slight water-fall. The water was deep here, and the rocks not numerous, and it

was the custom to run the boats down the rapids and over the fall, in order to save the labour of a portage. Three of the boats ran down in grand style and reached the foot in safety. Berry and I were in the last boat. The steersman stood up in the stern with his hands resting on the long heavy sweep, while his gaze was directed anxiously towards the boiling flood into which we were just entering. The bowman, an immensely powerful man, stood up in front with a long strong pole grasped in both hands, ready to fend off from the sunken rocks. The men sat in their places with their oars ready for action.

"Now, boys, look out," cried the guide, as we plunged into the first billow of the rapids. The boat flew like an arrow straight towards a rock which was crested with white as the water burst against its ragged front. To all appearance our doom was sealed. The bowman regarded it with a complacent smile, and stood quite motionless, merely casting a glance backward. The steersman acknowledged the glance with a nod; one long stroke of the great oar; the boat turned sharply aside and swept past in safety. There was no danger in such a big blustering rock as that!

"Prenez garde," cried the bowman in a warning tone, pointing to a spot where lay a sunken rock. The steersman's quick hand turned the boat aside, but the bowman had to lend his aid, and the strong pole bent like a willow as he forced the boat's head away from the hidden danger. And now the fall appeared. It was not high, perhaps four feet, but there was a mighty gush of water there, and it was a bold leap for a heavy boat.

"Prenez garde, mes garçons, hurrah! lads, give way! well done." The boat plunged almost bows under, but she rose again like a duck on the foaming water. The worst of it was past now; but there was still a ticklish bit below—a bend in the river, where the sunken rocks were numerous, and the surface of the water so white with foam that it was difficult to detect the channel. The bowman's duty now became more arduous. With knitted brows and compressed lips he stood, every nerve and muscle strung for instant action. The steersman watched his movements with intense earnestness, in order to second them promptly. Ever and anon the stout pole was plunged into the flood, first on one side, then on the other; the two guides acted as if they had been one man, and the obedient craft sprang from surge to surge in safety. Suddenly the bowman uttered a loud shout, as the pole jammed between two rocks and was wrenched from his grasp.

"Another! another! vite! vite!"

One of the crew thrust a fresh pole into his hand. Plunging it into the water, he exerted his giant strength with such violence as nearly to upset the boat, but it was too late. The planks crashed like an egg-shell as the boat dashed upon a rock, and the water began to rush in, while the stern was swept round and the blade of the steering oar was smashed to atoms. Almost before we had time to think, we were swept down stern foremost, and floated safely into an eddy at the foot of the rapids. A few strokes of the oars brought us to the land; but short although the interval was between our

striking the rock and running ashore, it was sufficient to half fill the boat with water.

The danger was barely past, and the intense feeling of it was still strong upon my mind, yet these light-hearted *voyageurs* were jesting and laughing loudly as they tossed the packs of furs out of the water-logged boat, so little did they realize the imminence of the peril from which they had been delivered—the shortness of the step that had separated them from the immediate presence of God.

The remainder of that day was spent in drying the furs that had been wetted, and in repairing the damaged boat. Afterwards we continued our voyage, which, without farther accident, terminated at length on the shores of Hudson's Bay.

VICISSITUDES OF FAMILIES.

SIR BERNARD BURKE, Ulster King of Arms, author of the "Peerage and Baronetage of the United Kingdom," and of other kindred works, has given, under the above title, a volume of very saddening reading to the world.* It is not so much the decline and fall, as the degradation and misery of great families, preceding their utter extinction, of which his book affords many melancholy instances. But, as it is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting, so these brief records of wealth reduced to want, of princely power sinking to menial drudgery, of all the most envied distinctions and enjoyments of life ending in destitution and woe, leave certainly as mellowing and moralizing an impression on the mind as the brilliant reverse of the picture would by itself leave one of a very opposite tendency. All Mr. Burke's examples of family vicissitudes are not, however, of so tragic a description; yet, the few to be found in his opening preparatory chapter well express the character of those most interesting ones which follow; and what can be more impressively suggestive of solemn thoughts than the final fall of the descendants of the Plantagenets, and also of those of the "time-honoured Lancaster," which usher in a long train of similar downfalls of regal and noble houses narrated in the sequel of his work. The following is the passage.

"What race in Europe surpassed in royal position, personal achievement, and romantic adventure, our own *Plantagenets*—equally wise as valiant, and no less renowned in the cabinet than in the field? But let us look back only so far as the year 1637, and we shall find the great-great-grandson of Margaret Plantagenet, herself the daughter and heiress of George, Duke of Clarence, following the cobbler's craft at Newport, a little town in Shropshire! Nor is this the only branch from the tree of royalty that has dwarfed and withered. If we were to closely investigate the fortunes of the many inheritors of the royal arms, it would soon be shown that, in sober truth,

*The aspiring blood of Lancaster
Had sunk into the ground;

ay, and deeply too. The princely stream flows through very humble veins. Among the lineal descendants of Edmund of Woodstock, Earl of

Kent, sixth son of Edward I, King of England, entitled to quarter the royal arms, occur a butcher and a toll-gatherer; the first a Mr. Joseph Smart, of Hales Owen; the latter a Mr. George Wilnot, keeper of the turnpike-gate at Cooper's Bank, near Dudley. Then, again, among the descendants of Thomas Plantagenet, Duke of Gloucester, fifth son of Edward III, we discover Mr. Stephen James Penny, the late sexton at St. George's, Hanover Square—a strange descent, from sword and sceptre to the spade and the pickaxe!"

Our next anecdote is more melancholy still. After mentioning that an Urquhart of Cromarty was necessitated, by his extravagance, to sell his estate, and sunk step by step to the lowest depth of misery, coming at last as a wandering beggar to his own door, or rather to that door which had once been his own, Mr. Burke goes on:—

"A somewhat similar story is told of a Scottish peer. Fraser of Kirkhill relates that he saw John, Earl of Traquair, the cousin and courtier of King James VI, 'begging in the streets of Edinburgh, in the year 1661. He was' (these are Fraser's own words) 'in an antique garb, and wore a broad old hat, short cloak, and panner's breeches, and I contributed, in my quarters in the Canongate, towards his relief. We gave him a noble. He was standing with his hat off. The Master of Lovatt, Culbroekie, Glenmoriston, and myself, were there, and he received the piece of money from my hand as humbly and thankfully as the poorest supplicant.'"

We pass over the chapters on the Percys and Nevilles, and come to the one entitled "The Rise and Fall of Oliver Cromwell." Mr. Burke shows that, long before the time of the Protector, the Cromwell family possessed estates equal to those of the wealthiest peers of the present day. The Protector himself inherited considerable property, and from private sources left behind him enough to maintain his family perpetually in easy circumstances; yet, says Mr. Burke, in concluding his sketch of the rapid declension of the posterity of this great man:—

"How pointedly does this story of the downfall of Oliver Cromwell's family tell of the instability of all human greatness! Within the scope of a single century, and after the lapse of a few generations, we find the descendants of one, who in power equalled the mightiest princes of the earth, reduced to the depths of poverty, and almost begging their daily bread. To sum up: Thomas Cromwell, the Lord Protector's great grandson, was a grocer on Snow Hill, and his son, Oliver Cromwell, the last male heir of the family, an attorney of London. But it was in the female line that the fall was most striking. Several of the Lord Protector's granddaughter's children sank to the lowest class of society. One, after seeing her husband die in the workhouse of a little Suffolk town, died herself a pauper, leaving two daughters; the elder, the wife of a shoemaker, and the younger, of a butcher's son, who had been her fellow-servant. Another of Oliver Cromwell's great grand-daughters had two children, who earned their scanty bread by the humblest industry—the son as a small working jeweller, and the daughter as the mistress of a little school at Mildenhall."

* London, Longman & Co.