

The Bout-de-Ville Times.

No. 7.

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The Bout-de-Ville Times.
Winter Number 1898-99.

January 14th 1899.

Editorial Notices.

A considerable period has elapsed since our last issue.

We will not weary our Readers by any detailed account of the events which have occurred since the Summer Number of The Bout-de-Ville Times, 1897.

The Clerical Editor must, however, record his gratitude to Almighty God, for the mercy which has preserved the Townend family in its fulness, so that Father, Mother & the nine Children are gathered together again, for the Christmas Holidays under the roof of the Chaplain's Quarters, R.M.C.

Various matters of historical interest to them, will unfold themselves, in the ensuing columns of this Issue.

The difficulties attending the setting-up of the type, in printing this stupendous Periodical, are so many & great, that we do not apologize for the accident which has already occurred in the Heading above. Such mishaps ought rather to endear this Number to an appreciative public, as a proof of the exceeding trouble & care taken by the Editor & his Staff, which cause the one erasure, blot, blemish, mistake or catastrophe to

be unique. This defaced Issue will, doubtless, in time, become as valuable as an "Error" in Philately, & every copy will be eagerly sought after.

We are happy in having secured the talent of our old friend & artist, Mr. William Townend for the illustrations which adorn these pages. As a Traveller over an extensive range of Earth's surface during the past year, he has been able to diversify his sketches to an unprecedented extent. Few — we may boldly say none — of our contemporaries can boast of an artist whose pencil has traced its graphic course over two quarters of the globe, — from the Berkshire to the Nova Scotian pine forests across the whale & porpoise haunted billows of the roaring Atlantic, — amidst the towering ice-burys, & along the rugged cliffs of Belleisle & Newfoundland.

N.B. As this celebrated delineator has had to be fed & housed at the Editor's expense during the progress of this Number, & the production of his sketches, it may be delicately hinted to the admiring public, that contributions of a silver nature, — not objected to — will come in handy to defray his keep. Offerings in kind, will be considered extremely kind, & appropriate, especially pancakes & trifles.

To one correspondent who has already forwarded a case of Yorkshire Pudding,

We return our thanks, & beg respectfully to announce that the gifted descendant of Rubens, Titian, & the other artists of Olden & Modern times, has expressed himself as being tired of this particular daintiness, & the Editor has, therefore, absorbed it, as he will, also, all other gifts similarly spurned, for his own use & benefit.

Notes and Queries.

It is painfully notorious that the attendance of the outside public—as well as of the R.M.C. Ladies, Officers & Cadets,—at the Saturday Sports,—Summer Cricket & Winter football, has greatly decreased of late years.

It will be seen, from the letters we publish in another column that various reasons are given for this much to be regretted change.

Perhaps the true solution lies, not in any one of these alleged causes, but in the whole of them together.

We notice that the Chaplain, R.M.C., has figured, of late weeks, in a waggonette, & behind a "Gee"! Camberley & Yorktown have had a new excitement added to their many wouled ones. Whether a special flavour of expectancy is mingled with their admiration, is a question it boots not to ask, or answer:—the expectation of some pleasing disaster to attend the Reverend Gentleman's driving; but, so far, no collision has taken place, no child or old lady been run over, no lamp-post been broken, no fragments of the family been scattered round.

It has been alleged,—but we doubt not that this is mere scandal,—that the Clerical Driver has assumed an air of additional importance, since he began again to handle the ribbons. The way in which he jerks his elbow, in response to any salute on the road, has been specially noticed.

In connection with the above, we have been asked by several correspondents, who the young gentleman is, who occasionally takes the reins, to the bewilderment of the various butchers & grocers of the neighbourhood, who are puzzled which side

of the road to take, so as to get out of the way of the dig-dag course taken by this youthful gentleman. The matter bewildering, & beyond the power of the talented Reporter of Topography to delineate.

Another & important query has reached from an anxious young lady—to judge by the handwriting,—What has become of the Chaplain's eldest son? She,—we again presume of the sex of the writer—has looked for him in vain & repeatedly at the balls & parties of the Season:—in fact, to quote from the well-known ballad, she seems to have

"Sought him in vain;
And to find him not."

Not merely in the "giddy rout," but at entertainments of a quieter nature, which might be supposed to better suit the tastes of a modest & retiring nature,—such as the Yorktown Theatricals & the recent Comic Burlesque of the Mimes Club. The tall, slender, willowy, yet commanding form of the heir to the Townend estates, has been conspicuous by its absence; nor have the hopes of our fair correspondent, inspired by the dancing practices, inaugurated by Mrs French, been crushed with success.

"He cometh not," she said.

Our pen waxes poetical. May this public appeal reach & move our sought-after young friend. We confidently await results!

On dit that a certain Royal Potentate, hailing from far-distant Eastern shores, & temporarily residing in our neighbourhood, paid marked & continued attention to the Chaplain's eldest daughter at a large party given to the children of the neighbourhood & their parents, at Primrose Lodge, on December 30th.

So conspicuous was this notice that, as representatives of the press, we feel justified in congratulating the young lady upon it, & in recording our sincere belief that the favour bestowed upon her by His Royal Highness, was no mere empty compliment, but a well-deserved recognition of her merit both in face & manners.

We also present our compliments to the same young lady on her endurance, & may we use the boyish term—pluck, in a long-continued malady of a distressing nature. May she speedily regain the use of her foot! May her courage be renewed! May her invalid-chair & crutches soon be exchanged for bicycle & skipping-rope.

B.B. One of our Staff, who, apparently

much interested in the young lady — but who, it has to be confessed, is seldom without some such interest in a feminine direction, — has just informed us that "skipping rope" is too juvenile an amusement altogether for the damsel in question.

We apologise, but beg to state that, as skipping involves violent exercise with both feet, we used the term to express our wish that the young lady may shortly be able, if she comes for such a pastime, to skip & jump & bound & gambol & frisk about like a young filly or lamb or kid or kangaroo.

The youthful member of the Bout-de-Ville Times' Office, also begs us to notice with favourable comment, the remarkable progress the same young lady has made in learning to play the mandolin.

[There has ensued a long & violent discussion in the Office, on the right method of spelling this word. Some of our Staff insist that it should have a final "e". Others — principally the Editor himself, are confident that it ends with the "n". Unfortunately, the Office Dictionary has had so many leaves torn out, for making life-light, that there is little ^{left} except words beginning with V & Z left; & alas! our subscribers are not sufficiently numerous to warrant a new Edition. The Editor rightly considers that his opinion ought to outweigh those of all his colleagues, — else where the use of being an Editor at all? — but this idea is obstinately opposed by every other soul in the Office; & they have all gone forth to consult the local music-seller. Meantime, & not in the least caring what they, or all the music sellers between here & Bagdad, choose to say, the Editor proceeds with these notes & queries & "Mandolin" it is, & "Mandolin" shall be.]

We can only express our hope that the fair musician —

[they will be wanting an "e" at the end of this word, next, as the musician in this case, is a female!]

that the fair musician will favour us with an invitation to attend at the Chaplain's Quarters, & hear her discourse sweet melodies on her instrument. We are not, of course, even remotely hinting at any refreshment, on the occasion, if granted to us; though a cup of tea, with four lumps of sugar, & a spoonful or two of the celebrated College Cream, would, doubtless, very considerably assist our appreciation of mandolin music. But this is a digression. We cordially congratulate our talented & fair young friend on her unprecedented success. May she, some day, delight a crowded audience, from the stage of the R.M.C. Theatre, or the Yorktown Drill-Hall!

[Later. — Our Staff have returned. They dare to bring back an impertinent message from the music-seller; yet doubtless, not intended for us to hear. It is to the effect that any fool, outside Broadmoor Asylum, ought to know how to spell "Mandolin"; & we are, further, informed that this particular music-selling fool spells it with an "e".

Later still. — We have kicked our Staff.

Later again. — We are still kicking him. Alas, our pen has betrayed us. Our Staff consists of one, — & he is a boy!

He confesses now, between his howls, that he has only heard the young lady playing upon her mandolin, through the open door, when delivering the Bout-de-Ville Times of an evening at the Chaplain's Quarters.

Still later. — We have dismissed the Staff. In fact, he has dismissed himself, & gone to tell his mother about the kicking. We are writing

"Gone to Klondyke —

not expected back for several years" on a large card to be nailed outside our Office door.

Henceforth, we manage the printing & publication of our Journal entirely alone & unassisted! And hope still to survive! Every portion of this gigantic undertaking will now be under our own personal supervision! A guarantee of carefulness & success!]

Considerable interest was excited in the Royal Military College, & the neighbouring Villages, by the news that a considerable contingent of the Townend family was going —

[Bother take that Staff of ours: — "our's" by the way, no longer! — Ought it to be "were going." That Boy has taken his English Grammar with him. "Contingent" means a lot of people. But then — hum — ha — we will say that it is a printer's error, if any one objects to "was" going to North America. As that Continent [let us see! It ought to be "part of a Continent" oughtn't it? Again, to that Boy! His Geography has gone with him! But let the word stand!]

As that Continent is considerably further than London, or even Brighton, beyond which latter place no ordinary being in this neighbourhood ever goes, — the rumour caused increasing wonder as it gradually assumed consistency & strength.

[We do not like the conclusion of this last sentence; but how can we compose calmly, while that fiend of a boy — our late staff, — is smoking a cigarette — one of our own choice cigarettes we verily believe, — just outside our office window, & pointing us out, with the outstretched finger of derision, to a circle of friends, about his own age & size, who are jeering & cheering alternately, to the manifest amusement of the passers-by, amongst whom we see several of our most valuable subscribers!

Happy thought! Pull down the blind!

Blind pulled down! — Result: — funereal darkness! Blinds & an English January don't agree well.

Another happy thought: — Light the gas!

How to resume.

We are happy to be in a condition to state that the Reverend gentleman, & four of his sons, — including our talented artist, — journeyed safely, & we understand, very comfortably, across the Atlantic & back. The interesting details of this memorable trip will form the subject of an article in our subsequent pages. In fact, we are momentarily in expectation of a descriptive narrative of the tour from the pen of the Explorer himself, who —

[A terrific knock at our office door. It must be that brute of a boy! He seizes the ruler, & so noisily to open, and strike! Brute force is the only way with brutes! He throws the door back on its hinges & rush out! —

It is not the boy, — at least the boy has vanished — a run-away knock! We might have guessed it! This is becoming ridiculous. Never before have we realized the literal accuracy of that term — a "Printer's Devil."

He can't go on composing! The Chaplain may go to Hong-Kong, let alone Canada, for all we care just now. He must go forth, & quiet down. Perhaps a view of the College front, & the Lake — populous with them! Wild-fowl — may soothe & calm.

By thunder-turtles another knock! — We will have the scoundrel this time! — Ruler — rush — catch unfastened — bolt into passageway — smash! — All in the twinkling of an eye! — And oh my sainted grandfather! — it's the wrong boy! And we'll nearly fractured his skull! And it means abject apologies & half-a-crown! And he has a letter for us, & it comes from the Reverend Traveller on Canadian shores — a bulky affair, too: — the promised description, doubtless, of the Summer tour: — copy sufficient for a dozen columns! No need to tax one's own brains, or worry over that fiend of a boy! — We'll just cast an eye

over his Reverence's manuscript, & set it up at once.
 Eh — What's this? — What in the name of —
 Here, where's a pipe, cigar, cigarette — something to puff at, & save oneself from swearing! — Listen to this!

"Dear Editor,

R.M.C.

Jan. 5th 1898

Very sorry; but children going to Fancy Ball at White Hart, Blackwater, & home all in an uproar. — Gamblers, male & female, of all ages & colours, countries & ages, present &, apparently, to come, all over the Alps. Heads being powdered in my study: — an Irishman receiving luncheon in the Dining Room; — a clown in chattering in my Dressing Room; — my wife is getting herself up as the Queen of Sheba, in our Bedroom. Flourishes & fichus, skirts & shagles, turbans & comforters, "upstairs & downstairs & in the lady's chamber!" I simply can't let you have the MS, because I simply can't get to it, or at it, or along with it.

Yours, in wild haste & confusion,

le. &c.

P.S. I should be disappointed, & hard up for copy. Send, instead, my sermon on the necessity for women to be silent in Church" — you can publish it in place of Canadian Trip. I wish I could preach my women-folk into silence at home. They & the chicks are making noise enough to wake the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus!"

It is just one hour since we received the above, & we are calm once more. We have smoked, & we have washed forth. The silence & seclusion of the College grounds — the glassy & dull expanse of the Lake, the vacant loneliness of the one human being whom we have met, the dulcet chimes of the Yorktown Bells, trying with little success to play the Sicilian Mariners' Hymn — all these have entered into our soul, & hushed its murmurings. Once more we are at peace with the world, yes even with that beast of a boy — our late staff. He might approach, & we would not slay him.

But the Sermon is in the waste-paper basket, & these holes & queries shall remain unfinished, & we are looking out for a berth, as Sexton, or Tax Collector, or Dentist, or some other light & amusing occupation, which has nothing to do with Editorship & slavery.

Doggerel

Supposed to be the utterance of an ex-Cadet, R.M.C., on revisiting the College after many years' absence.

When we, old boys, were Cadets together!

And, dear me, it seems but yesterday!

When all was bright and Summer weather,

And life itself but one Summer day!

Of course we growled, at odd seasons —

As every fellow does —

And thought we had best of reasons,

And any amount of woes; —

But when one comes to the Fifties

And looks back to Twenty or so,

One would take all those troubles as gifts,

And welcome them all in a row.

"Reveille," for early parading,

When we drilled with yearnings for bed,

Or flew in a posture degrading

O'er the very White-eyed Kaffir's head.

* Is it not writ in the poems of Burns?

O wad some power the giftie gie us
 To see ourselves as others see us!

† The White-eyed Kaffir — a horse-famed & dreaded the Riding School. Lay a stress on "very," please.