

news and politics. The *Montreal Star* is always on the popular side of every question. The Ottawa papers, like those of Washington, carry little weight and are miserable in every particular. The French Canadian newspapers are less enterprising and energetic in the gathering of news than the English, but their editorial columns are usually more striking in a literary way.

A LOVER OF THE QUEEN.

BY AIME GIRON.

General Gilbert de Motier, Marquis de La Fayette, possessed at Auvergne his old family chateau, Chavaniac—a huge, strongly-built, clumsy and characterless pile. Not far away rose rugged cliffs, covered by a tall growth of chestnuts and beeches. Beneath the green night of these forests swarmed the toilers of the wood. Dwelling in huts, working side by side in the open air, were the charcoal makers, the resin workers, the plank sawyers, the stave cutters, the makers of sabots.

Among them was a young sabot maker who neither sang nor worked with the rest. He was an orphan and a dreamer, reserved and taciturn. Apart from the others, he silently cut, shaped, pointed and polished his sabots. His name was Razon, signifying, in patois, Reason; but as he had such strange ways, lived alone and spoke little, the peasants gave him the nickname of Darazon, or "The Simpleton." And when, after awhile, it was discovered that beneath a rusty old musket on the wall of Darazon's hut there was pinned a tiny picture of Marie Antoinette, his companions laughed and whispered among themselves and called him Darazon, the lover of the Queen.

One day General de La Fayette arrived at Chavaniac from Paris. It was just at this time that the Court of France was amusing itself à la pastorale, at Trianon, and great lords and ladies masqueraded in the garb of shepherds and shepherdesses, millers and milkmaids, and thrust their aristocratic feet into wooden shoes—dainty ones, to be sure, but still genuine wooden sabots. And it was Marie Antoinette, herself, who wore the first pair.

All this the Marquis recounted to the groups of peasants in the forest, where he went, good Marquis that he was, for a friendly gossip with his people. Darazon listened breathlessly—wide-eyed and eager.

"The Queen wears sabots? Sabots did you say?"

"Yes!"

"And if—I should make her a pair, would you give them to her—would you, Monsieur le Marquis?"

"Why yes!" replied the General, smiling; "only remember to make them far too pretty even

for your sweetheart and quite pretty enough for your Queen!"

Darazon answered nothing. Only daybreak found him at his work, and when twilight fell he was still working, and nearly all the night he worked by a feeble light in his hut. In fifteen days he had made a little pair of sabots—prettier than the prettiest sabots de noces.

They were finished! Darazon took them carefully in his right hand. He went through the forest and along the steep road until he came to the great chateau. He knocked and asked to see Monsieur le Marquis.

"It is I," he said; "and here are the Queen's sabots."

"You have really made them, then!" said the General.

He took them from Darazon and looked at them curiously. They were delicately fashioned from the wood of the chestnut, waxed and exquisitely polished; they were slender, elegant and daintily pointed—because they were for a Queen and not for a peasant; they were covered with a delicate tracery of vines, and beautifully carved on the toe of each little shoe was a heart, wreathed by a garland twined through the letters T. T. L. V.

The Marquis smiled. He knew the significance of these four letters, which every lover of Auvergne has carved upon the sabots of his sweetheart.

The Marquis de La Fayette returned to Paris, and true to his promise, carried the sabots to the Queen at Trianon. He told their simple, little story. Trianon was pastoral mad and Marie Antoinette was enchanted. What! To have real sabots! Sabots such as peasants wear! And made by a real sabotier!

"This heart, Marquis," said the Queen, "wreathed in 'favors' like the hand of the Virgin, that I can understand; but these letters T. T. L. V.?"

"Your Majesty alone has the right to permit me, or rather to command me, to translate them."

"Translate, then, it is my desire!"

"Taimerai tonta la vida."

"But I cannot understand this strange language!"

"This strange language is the patois of Auvergne, your Majesty, and means 'I will love thee a lily life!'"

The Queen neither smiled nor spoke

"The truth is," continued the Marquis, "that this poor sabotier, who is a little simple, worships your Majesty in the shape of a small portrait."

"Poor fellow! Brave fellow!" murmured the Queen tenderly. "The sabots, Monsieur le Marquis, seem to me a trifle large, but they will the better hold the recompense!" and Marie Antoinette whispered something in the ear of the Princess de Lamballe, who smiled, took the sabots, and left the room, returning with the little wooden shoes filled with as much gold as they could hold.

"And now, Marquis," said the Queen, "will you have this gold sent, in a casket to your young sabotier, with my warmest thanks, and say also—no! say nothing more!"

And the contents of the little shoes were sent.

But Paris was on the eve of the Revolution, and the wooden shoes were forgotten. 1789, 1792, 1793 passed like peals of thunder, each more terrible than the last.

Darazon, in the heart of his forest, knew this—like the rest of the world. There was terrible anguish in his heart, but he said nothing. Finally came the news of the imprisonment of the Royal family in the Temple. After this Darazon grew still more silent and sombre. One day he disappeared from the forest. They searched his hut. On the table lay an empty, open casket. The old musket and the picture of Marie Antoinette were gone.

Darazon was on the road to Paris.

He reached the city on the 17th of October, 1793—in wild rage with the tormentors of the Queen.

At the Place de la Bastille he accosted a patriot wearing a scarlet cap and armed with a club.

"How can I reach the Temple?"

"What do you want there?"

"To deliver the Queen!"

"The Austrian? She is a head shorter since yesterday!" replied the man with a ferocious gesture

Darazon, pale as death, snatched his musket from his shoulder, but the patriot dealt him a crushing blow with the club and the peasant fell, like a stone.

The mob gathered instantly. The peasant's body was roughly searched. On his breast they found the portrait of Marie Antoinette, beneath it the suspicious letters T. T. L. V. Ah then! This man was a complot.

"Away with him!"

The poor body was seized and hurried to the Seine.

The river silently opened her arms to receive the poor sabot maker of Auvergne—the lover of the Queen—with the dear gold pieces hidden in his peasant's blouse and the sacred image next his heart.

As will be seen from an advertisement in this paper, Mr. A. E. Thouret still presides over the oyster counter at the St. Charles hotel, on Yonge Street. Brother Thouret's courtesy and attention have won him lots of friends, from which he continues to receive very liberal patronage. No better oysters are to be found in the city than at Thouret's counter.

"Topliftical" is a new assault upon the alphabet made by a Yankee paper. It means too utterly high-falutin'.

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