

Sweetheart Travellers.*

this: 'You dilettantes are to be blamed, for there are two defects very common among you; either you have no thoughts of your own, and borrow from others; or if you have original thoughts you do not know how to make use of them.' Is not that heavenly, and does not this great criticism which Mozart intended for music apply equally to all the other arts? I have," he continued after a pause, "seen Mozart, as a child, seven years old, when he gave a concert on his journey through Frankfurt. I was then fourteen years old, and I still remember the little man with his curly hair, and his sword by his side."

When Eckermann once expressed the hope that the music for Faust would be worthy of the work, Goethe said: "The music should be in the style of Don Juan. Mozart should have composed Faust. Meyerbeer would, perhaps, have been capable of it, for Faust needs a composer who, like Meyerbeer, has lived long in Italy, so that he might unite his German nature with Italian art and sentiment. But Meyerbeer would not undertake it, he is too much engrossed with the Italian theatre." This comparison is noteworthy between Mozart and Meyerbeer, whose fame, which was still in its infancy, had been divined by Goethe without his ever having had opportunity to become acquainted with the composer's works.

Once when speaking of Rossini's Moses, and some praised the music while condemning the text and stage effect, Goethe broke forth in the following fashion: "I cannot conceive, my dear children, how you can separate subject and music and enjoy each independently. You say the subject was worthless, but you ignored it and enjoyed the excellent music. I really admire the organization of your nature, how your ears can be in a condition to listen to delightful sound whilst the most powerful organ of sense, the eye, is tortured by the most absurd objects. And that your Moses is really too absurd you cannot deny. As soon as the curtain goes up, the people stand and pray. This is very much out of place. I should have liked to make a totally different Moses, and have the piece begin in a totally different manner. I would first have shown how the children of Israel were suffering under their cruelly enforced labour and the tyranny of the Egyptians, that the service which Moses renders his people, when he freed them from so shameful a bondage, might have its full effect. This much is certain that I cannot thoroughly enjoy an opera unless the subject and setting are as perfect as the music, so that they all go side by side. If you ask what opera I really admire, I should mention the Wassertraeger of Cherubini. In this the text and stage effect are so perfect that it might be given without music, as a mere play, and it would be thoroughly enjoyed. Either composers do not understand the importance of a good groundwork, or there is an extraordinary lack of professional poets to keep step with them and furnish them with a really satisfactory text. If the letterpress of the Freischutz were not so admirable, the music would have had enough to do to obtain the splendid success which has attended the opera, and hence a few honours should be spared for Herr Kind. Weber should never have written the Euryanthe, he ought to have seen that the subject was bad, and that nothing could be made of it." Although Goethe's judgment was correct with reference to these two last operas, it must not be overlooked that he was not free from a certain prejudice against Weber, and did not estimate him at his full worth. And further, the old adage is true in this case, that it is easier to blame than to mend, for it is well known that the great poet, in spite of many attempts, never succeeded in writing a good text for an opera.

In conclusion, one more interesting comparison may be mentioned, namely, that of Napoleon with Hummel* when the talk had turned on the ease with which talent creates. "Napoleon," said Goethe, "handled the world as Hummel did his piano: both seem wonderful to us and we understand the one as little as the other. Napoleon was specially great in that he was always the same and always in his element. He was equal to any moment and any emergency: before a battle, during a battle, after a victory, or after a defeat, just as it is with Hummel, whether he is playing an adagio, or an allegro, bass or treble. This is the faculty which is found wherever a real talent exists, in the arts of peace as of war, at the piano or behind the cannon."

Kingston.

LOIS SAUNDERS.

* A famous Kapellmeister in Weimar.

IN "Sweetheart Travellers," the characters are those of a father and his little daughter of four years. They take long rides together on a wheel, and an occasional jaunt on foot through the woods. The following is a selection from one experience of these jolly comrades:

"Can I take off my shoes and paddle?" pleaded the Sweetheart wistfully.

I knew she ought not. But, after all, it was a fine day, and I wanted very much to do it myself. So we stripped in company, and with many shriekings and much splashing we spent a long hour, which lengthened imperceptibly into two, grappling as of old for loch pearls and "guddling for bairnies." Our success was not what could be called phenomenal, but at least we got most delightfully wet. And after all that is the main thing. Never once did we think of what would be said to us when we got home.

All in a moment a happy thought leaped up in my mind, like a trout in the pool below.

"DON'T LET'S TELL AT ALL!"

In a moment Sweetheart and I had become companions in infamy. Our several knickerbockers were wet. Our caps had fallen into the water and were sopping. I cannot even remember the names of half the things belonging to Sweetheart which were wringing wet. But what matter? Was there ever such a day, so bright a sun, so green a grass, such clear, cool waters?

"I almost feel the heat bringing out the freckles," said Sweetheart, whose greatest aim in life is to be freckled like the girl she saw in the hay-field the other day. She has worn her cap pushed very much on the back of her head ever since—"on purpose," as she says.

How near the flowers are! Sweetheart and I seem somewhere about the same age—possibly Sweetheart may even have a trifle the advantage of me.

But just then we heard the sound of a horse's feet. We looked guiltily at one another. Were we to be caught in the very act? Hastily we pushed the tricycle into an empty stone-breaker's stance cut deep into the edge of the wood. And then we—well, we walked with dignity and calmness into the shelter of the forest.

No, certainly not. What an idea! We did not run and hide. That would have been a hasty and improper description of our movements, though I admit that our retreat looked a good deal like it. But mere unbalanced judgments from circumstantial evidence ought never to be expressed publicly. They are apt to be dangerous as well as misleading.

It was a pony-carriage which came trundling round the corner. In it sat the Lady of the Workbasket.

As soon as she saw the tricycle she pulled up.

We could see her looking everywhere about for us. We could even hear what she was saying:

"They must have gone up in the wood for blackberries. They are trying to surprise me by bringing home a lot. How like them, and how kind!"

Sweetheart and I blushed for very shame. But the case was too bad to be bettered by making a discovery and confession now. Presently the Lady of the Workbasket tied a little knot of ribbon to the handlebar to let us know that she had been there, and drove on her way.

Sweetheart and I looked long at one another. We sat thus indeed, hardly speaking, till most of our apparel was dry enough to put on. Then we said, "We must find these blackberries now."

And after a long search we did a capful, and a pocketful, and a handkerchief-ful.

When at last we got home, they said, "What has kept you so long?"

Then we smiled at one another and said nothing. We meant to keep on doing just that.

But when she came home, and before she saw our treasure-trove the Lady of the Workbasket said kindly, "You stopped to gather blackberries in the Duchrae Bank for to-morrow's pudding. But I won't tell you how I know!"

Then Sweetheart and I had the grace to blush again and yet again. But all the same we never told what we had really been doing. And even now we beg that it be considered a dead secret."

We predict for "Sweetheart Travellers" a large measure of popularity on this side the Atlantic. It will have a large sale during the coming holiday season.

BRIEFER NOTICES.

Denounced, A Romance. By John Bloundelle-Burton. Toronto: The Copp, Clark Co., Ltd.—The publishers have done well to bring out a Canadian edition of this stirring, and sometimes thrilling, Jacobite story of intrigue, revenge and love. There is very little about the "Forty-five" in it and the only glimpse we get of Bonnie Prince Charlie is towards the end when, having outstayed his welcome, he is arrested by order of the French King and conveyed to the frontier. The author established his claim to a high rank as a popular novelist by "In the Days of Adversity," and this work fully sustains the reputation he then acquired.

* "Sweetheart Travellers." By S. R. Crockett, author of "The Stickit Minister," "The Raiders," etc. New York: The Frederick A. Stokes Co.