

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

Gone Beyond the Veil—September 7, 1892.

A TRANQUIL beauty brooded o'er the day,
Fairer than summer at its midmost prime,
So softly bright the golden sunshine lay,
In deep content of happy harvest-time ;
And, sitting on the grey, pine-crested height,
In quiet, thoughtful mood, we talked of thee,
Thy rippling verse, thy clear prophetic sight,
Thy stainless purity.

And then came one who mournful tidings bore,—
For sorrow's steeds fly swiftly on their way,—
Who told us that on earth thou wert no more !
Then stole a shadow o'er the golden day ;
Nor sky nor shore nor river seemed so fair,
Now thou wert gone, who loved all Nature well ;
Even the grey squirrel blithely leaping there
Seemed the sad news to tell !

Oh, thou, who ever did'st, through Nature's face,
Look inwards to the over-brooding love,
Who, vainly straining human sight to trace
The life unseen, the thought all thoughts above,
Did'st meekly fold thy hands, and sweetly trust
The Love thine heart felt—though it could not see ;
Now thy pure soul is freed from earthly dust,
We scarce may mourn for thee !

Fain would we trace thy flight to realms unseen,
Fain would we catch one lingering note from far,—
In vain ! In vain ! We know what thou hast been,
And fair thy memory shines, as evening-star !
Fain would we feel thy spirit touch our own,
Anointing earth-bound eyes to vision plain ;
Yet, though the earth seems poorer—thou being gone—
We may not grieve thy gain !

And as the dying day, in crimson glow,
Lays on the placid stream its evening kiss,
It seems to fit thy closing life below,
Thine entrance into purer life than this ;
We feel thy spirit's presence with us still,
Now thou hast gained at length, thy longed-for rest,
And Love Divine, that waits our hearts to fill,
Breathes o'er us,—“*This is best !*”

Through “the great silence,” still thy voice we hear,
Lifting our hearts all earthly change above ;
Still, in life's stress and pain, we hold most dear
Thy tones divine of faith and hope and love.
And so we stand “beside the silent sea,”
O'er which thine echoes seem to linger long,
And humbly thank Infinite Love for thee,
Thy service and thy song !

FIDELIS.

LORD SHERBROOKE.

IT speaks largely for the intelligent interest taken in the affairs of England that Canadian newspapers published accurate and comparatively full notices of the life of a statesman who for more than ten years had entirely disappeared from the public stage. Every man is in a measure unique, as every leaf in a forest differs from another ; and yet surely never was a man so dissimilar as was Robert Lowe from all the prevalent types of the different careers which he successively (and successfully) followed.

His zenith was in the year 1866, and then he became (for a brief time, indeed) the arbiter of English destinies. No other speaker, probably, in ancient or modern times has exercised such a sway. A strong Conservative speech delivered from the Liberal benches (or *vice versa*) always creates a sensation, but very seldom has a Government been overthrown by speeches delivered from its own side of the House. And at no time within the memory of man was so splendid a galaxy of orators gathered in the House of Commons. Gladstone and Disraeli in their prime, Bright and Horsman, Bulwer-Lytton and Hardy, John Stuart Mill and Henry Fawcett ; of lawyers, Coleridge and his great rival of the Western Circuit, Sir John Carslake, not to mention Sir Roundell Palmer and Sir Hugh Cairns—only a speaker of the first order could command a hearing.

And Mr. Lowe did not seem to possess the qualifications. He was no newly-discovered genius ; everyone knew about him. He had already made his mark, but never a very lofty mark. At Oxford he had taken brilliant honours, and had become the most successful of private tutors. He had signalized himself in the debates of the Union Society, and had taken part in that famous discussion (immortalized in the “*Uniomachia*”) when the future Archbishop of Canterbury was fined a guinea for disobedience to the chairman's order. Then he had crossed the ocean, and had entered political life in Australia, an extraordinary step in those days. Only considerable private interest could have brought him so soon to the front in Sydney politics, but both as a lawyer and a member of the Local Legislature he made a considerable reputation. On his return to England he entered Parliament, first as member for Kidderminster, later for the family

borough of Calne, belonging to the Marquis of Lansdowne, and obtained subordinate office in one of Lord Palmerston's later administrations. He introduced and carried an Education Act, which embodied the famous principle of “payment by results,” a great step in advance for the time. But the alteration of a report, made without any dishonourable motive, but only in a too characteristically arbitrary manner, gave an opening to his foes. The late Prime Minister, then Lord Robert Cecil, was a keen free-lance on the Conservative side, a brilliant contributor to the *Saturday Review*, and never dreaming then of being one day a marquis and Prime Minister of England. He pounced upon the opportunity, and carried a resolution of censure in the House of Commons. Lord Palmerston stood by all his colleagues to the last, but he had to recognize that this political Jonah must leave the ship, and so Mr. Lowe's resignation was accepted. After Lord Palmerston's death in 1865, the short-lived Russell-Gladstone ministry was formed, and the famous Reform Bill introduced the next year. This, it will be remembered, was the mildest of all homœopathic remedies, almost a Conservative measure when compared to the sweeping “Household Suffrage Bill” which was eventually carried by the other side. But it served Mr. Lowe's purpose. Whether his original radical opinions had been altered by the missiles of the Kidderminster mob, or whether his academic Whiggism had always been antagonistic to an extension of the Franchise, would be hard to decide. Suffice it to say that he not only got together the third party known from Mr. Bright's epigram as the “Cave of Adullam,” but also delivered against the Reform Bill a series of masterly speeches, incisive in utterance, classical in literary style, and entirely in harmony with the prepossessions of the English country gentlemen who listened to him. The political philosophy was not new ; it was Edmund Burke's “Old Whiggism,” expressed in language of which Burke himself would not have been ashamed. In vain John Bright ridiculed the denizens of the cave, in vain Mr. Gladstone summed up the debate on the second reading by a speech which he himself never surpassed in eloquence. The division gave only a majority of five votes to the Government, and soon after entry into committee, the bill was defeated by an insidious amendment introduced by a denizen of the cave, Lord Dunkellin.

Mr. Lowe had triumphed. Men spoke of him as a possible Prime Minister. When Lord Derby was sent for, he offered a place in his cabinet to the redoubtable member for Calve. Why did he not accept ? Perhaps he had an intuition of the future policy of the Conservatives, and that a Reform Bill far more sweeping and radical was eventually to be introduced. Perhaps he revolted against the type of old, uncompromising Toryism which he should have met,—who knows ? So he remained in opposition, and when the famous resolutions on the Irish Church were brought forward in 1868, supported them in the speech which ended with the words : “Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground ?”

Office came to him when the Liberals came in in 1869, and no less an office than the Chancellorship of the Exchequer. His budget was a brilliant failure, the “match-tax” furnished material for the comic papers and burlesques, and Mr. Lowe found himself the best abused and most laughed-at man in England.

The writer remembers the performance of a burlesque in the year 1870, when Mr. Gladstone's historical collars Mr. Lowe's white eyebrows, and Mr. Ayerton's fascinating smile were portrayed to the life in a *pas de trois*. The Lord Chamberlain put in his veto, after all London had crowded to see the performance. Finally Mr. Gladstone took the Exchequer to himself, and Mr. Lowe went to the Home Office, a difficult position where every statesman becomes unpopular, and where probably it was thought that the new occupant would find a congenial atmosphere.

After the fall of the Liberal ministry in 1874, Mr. Lowe ceased to be a political force. Occasionally he spoke in the House of Commons, and always was listened to with attention, but it was felt that he, at least, merited Mr. Disraeli's famous illustration of the “extinct volcanos,” applied to his opponents in a speech at Manchester. And when once more the tables were turned in 1880, and the Midlothian campaign brought in Mr. Gladstone at the head of a large majority, only the least instructed of prophets expected to find Mr. Lowe's name included in the new Cabinet. He received a peerage, and after that only two events were recorded in his life, the publication of a volume of poems, chiefly translations and epigrams, dating from his university days, and a second marriage.

The writer of this notice remembers seeing him in the year 1886, on the occasion of a garden party given by Lady Dysart at the historic mansion of Ham House. It was the first time, in the memory of man, that the old house had been opened for any such hospitality, and all the notabilities of London were present.

It was a most interesting sight to behold the celebrities of the day, politicians, artists, actors, society beauties. But, when a voice was heard saying : “Look, there goes Sherbrooke,” a vivid curiosity caused the group to turn their heads. Entirely blind, Robert Lowe was guided by his young wife. The marked features recalled Tenniel's frequent caricatures of the past, and, indeed, no face lent itself so easily to satiric delineation. The figure was still erect and vigorous, but somehow one seemed to be looking on a character of a past age. The political excitement of that moment (July, 1886) was the fall of Mr. Gladstone's

third ministry on the rejection of his Home Rule measure. The “match-tax” and the Reform Bill agitation seemed as distant as Waterloo and the French Revolution. Concerning his personal qualities there were differing verdicts, but it must have been a very philosophical equanimity which caused him to quote with great amusement the following prophetic epitaph upon himself, written apparently during the crisis of 1886-7, and even to turn it into Latin :—

AN EPITAPH.

Here lie the bones of Robert Lowe,
A shifty friend, a bitter foe ;
All Oxford (when he dwelt thereat)
Knew him an Ardent Democrat ;
With others of the selfsame kidney
He chose to emigrate to Sydney,
And there our Robert still we knew
A Radical of deepest hue.

Returning home to British ground
A seat in Parliament he found,
Where, with an ardour unabated,
'Gainst “musty parchments” he dilated ;
Attacked with zeal the Tory minions,
And still retained his old opinions.

A Kidderminster mob (how blind)
Both broke his head and changed his mind ;
No more he loved the unwashed masses
(Then first discovered to be asses) ;
But, laying Democratic plans down,
Took service with the House of Lansdowne.

Yet still a Liberal he stayed,
And for high office powers displayed ;
In Palmerston's Administration,
Did much for England's education,
And would have done still more, no doubt,
But bitter Cecil drove him out.

When Russell Minister became
High mid the rest stood Robert's claim,
But non-reforming zeal which stirred him
Quite from the Cabinet deterred him,
And (since such post he could not earn)
He vowed the coach to overturn :
Intent on his old friends' undoing,
He constantly was mischief brewing ;
Ran here and there by day and night
Assisting the Adullamite :
By specious truths and artful stories,
Decoyed young Whigs to vote with Tories ;
Against extended suffrage spoke
Alike with argument and joke ;
Then, victor in the final tussle,
Brought Derby in and ousted Russell.

Heaven rest his soul ! but where 'tis fled
Can't be imagined, must less said,
Should he the realms above us share,
No more will Peace and Love be there,
But, if he's gone to lower level,
Let all commiserate the devil !

Of the Latin version only a fragment has been quoted. It is as follows :—

Robertus Humilis hic jacet,
Qui nobis (mortuus) valde placet.
Amicus minimè fidelis,
Amarus hostis et crudelis.

Quenam conditio sit futura
Ambigitur, sed spero dura.
Si Cælum scandet ista pestis
Vale Concordia Cœlestis !
Si apud inferos jacet
Diabolum ejus penitebit
Et nos Diaboli miserebit.

He who could relish such powerful humour at his own expense must have had a very philosophical mind. His place in history will be doubtful, perhaps only a brief paragraph, and the student of the twentieth century will puzzle over the caricatures and allusions of contemporary newspapers. But literature claims the “Reform Speeches” as her own, and they will live to be recited and turned into Greek prose. And besides these barren distinctions, the motto which the victim of his greatest efforts, Earl Russell, prefixed to his own biographical recollections may be given with even more appropriateness to the subject of this sketch :—

What has been has been, and I have had my hour.

St. John, N. B.

J. DE SOYRES.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TRADE RELATIONS WITH THE STATES.

To the Editor of THE WEEK :

SIR,—THE WEEK of 23rd ulto. contained some criticisms and comments upon the pamphlet recently published by me on “The Commerce between the United States and Canada,” and on an article contributed by me in THE WEEK of 16th ulto., in reply to that of Mr. Wiman taken from the *Contemporary Review*. With your permission, I would like to reply to some of your remarks and criticisms.

You say : “Mr. Lawder's method of collecting his statistics seems to be *faux*, though no doubt his figures would be challenged by American authorities” ; and again : “Unlike him, we do not believe that our American neighbours are so wanting in either information or penetration upon the subject as to be in any special danger of being misled by the utterances, however partisan or pessimistic, of any Canadian journal.”

The circumstance that the pamphlet referred to was compiled by request for and addressed to a prominent American Board of Trade, especially interested in liberal trade relations between the United States and Canada, is sufficient evidence that in their opinion, information was necessary, in addition to and in controversion of much