

## THE SEEKING OF THE WATERFALL.

They left their home of summer ease  
Beneath the lowland, sheltering trees.  
To seek, by ways unknown to all,  
The promise of the waterfall.

Some vague, faint rumor to the vale  
Had crept—perchance a hunter's tale—  
Of its wild mirth of waters lost  
On the dark woods through which it tossed.

Somewhere it laughed and sang; somewhere  
Whirled in mad dance its misty hair;  
But who had raised its veil, or seen  
The rainbow skirts of that Undine?

They sought it where the mountain brook  
Its swift way to the valley took;  
Along the rugged slope they clomb,  
Their guide a thread of sound and foam.

Height after height they slowly won;  
The fiery javelins of the sun  
Smote the bare ledge; the tangled shade  
With rock and vine their steps delayed.

But, through leaf-openings, now and then  
They saw the cheerful homes of men,  
And the great mountains with their wall  
Of misty purple girding all.

The leaves through which the glad winds blew  
Shared the wild dance the waters knew;  
And where the shadows deepest fell  
The wood-thrush sang his silver bell.

Fringing the stream, at every turn  
Swung low the waving fronds of fern;  
From stony cleft and mossy sod  
Pale asters sprang, and golden-rod.

And still the water sang the sweet,  
Glad song that stirred its gliding feet,  
And found in rock and root the keys  
Of its beguiling melodies.

Beyond, above, its signals drew  
Of tossing foam the birch-trees through;  
Now seen, now lost, but bailing still  
The weary seekers' slackening will.

Each called to each: "Lo here! Lo there!"  
Its white scarf flutters in the air!  
Thy climbed anew: the vision died,  
To beckon higher overhead.

So tolled they up the mountain slope  
With faint and ever fainter hope;  
With faint and fainter voice the brook  
Still bade them listen, pause, and look.

Meanwhile below the day was done;  
Above the tall peaks saw the sun  
Sink, beam-horn, to its misty set  
Behind the hills of violet.

Here ends our quest: the seekers cried,  
The brook and rumor both have fled!  
The phantom of a waterfall  
Has led us at its beck and call.

But one, with years grown wiser, said:  
So, always led, not misled;  
We follow where before us runs  
The vision of the shining ones.

Not where they seem their signals fly,  
Their voices while we listen die;  
We cannot keep, however fleet,  
The quick time of their mingled feet.

From youth to age unceasing stray  
These kindly mockers in our way;  
Yet lead they not, the baffling elves,  
To something better than themselves!

Here, though unreach'd the goal we sought,  
Its own reward our toil has brought:  
The streaming water's sounding rush,  
The long note of the hermit thrush.

The turquoise lake, the glimpe of pond,  
And river track, and vast, beyond  
Broad meadows belted round with pines,  
The grand uplift of mountain lines!

What matter though we seek with pain  
The garden of the gods in vain,  
Ifured thereby we climb to greet  
Some wayside blossom Eden sweet?

To seek is better than to gain,  
The fond hope dies as we attain;  
Life's fairest things are those which seem,  
The best is that of which we dream.

Then let us trust our waterfall  
Still dashes down its rocky wall,  
With rainbow crescent curved across  
Its sunlit spray from moss to moss.

And we, forgetful of our pain,  
In thought shall seek it oft again;  
Shall see this aster-blossomed sod,  
This sunshine of the golden rod.

And haply gain, through parting boughs,  
Grand glimpse of great mountain brows  
Cloud-enclosed, and the sharp, steep sheen  
Of lakes deep set in valleys green.

So failure wins; the consequence  
Of loss becomes its recompense;  
And evermore the end shall tell  
The unreach'd ideal guided well.

Our sweet illusions only die  
Fulfilling love's sure prophecy;  
And every wish for better things  
An undreamed beauty nearer brings.

For fate is servitor of love;  
Desire and hope and longing prove  
The secret of immortal youth,  
And Nature cheats us into truth.

O Und allurers, wisely sent,  
Beguiling with benign intent,  
Still move on, through divine unrest,  
To seek the loveliest and the best!

Enlong the flitting glimpse of good  
Shall rest in full beatitude;  
And more than all to earth denied  
Shall greet us on the other side!

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER.

[This is the last poem of Mr. Whittier, published in the January *Atlantic*.

ED. C. I. NEWS.]

EASTERN WAR.—Gortschakoff has notified Russia's assent to the European Conference being held at Vienna, immediately after the armistice is signed.—The Greek Government is sending an army corps into Thessaly. Epirus and Macedonia—ostensibly to maintain order.—The advancing Russians have occupied Burgas, Chorn, Demotika, and Gaux-Kopri.—Austria is intent on neutralizing the Danube.—Affairs in Crete are still warlike.—Refugees are seeking the seaboard from all parts of European Turkey.

## THE GREAT CONCERT OF THE MONTREAL SNOW-SHOE CLUB.

On Friday, the 25th inst., a grand concert was given by the Montreal Snow-Shoe Club, popularly known as the "Tuque Bleue." The programme was a most complete and representative one, and was carried through in a masterly manner. It is now four years since the Tuque Bleue held a concert; last year it was attempted, but fell through. This year the Concert Committee were fortunate in securing the services of Mr. R. R. Stevenson, one of our most thorough musical men, and the consequence was that the attendance of members at the practices, on which depended the success of the concert, increased from fifteen, the first night, to one hundred and eight at the last practice.

The movements of the club were illustrated by a series of tableaux. The first scene opened, head of Union avenue, where the Club assemble every Wednesday evening at 8 o'clock for their weekly tramp, and the solo and chorus, "Tuque Bleue," was here sung by Mr. D. Campbell and the Club. The second scene represented the Club on its way towards the Pines at top of the Mountain. The "Snow-Shoe Call" was sang here, and the effect was certainly striking, as the clear-toned solo rang out on, as it were, the night air, followed by the chorus sung in unison without accompaniment. The curtain closed as the Club fied away out of sight, and in a few minutes the audience were introduced to the Club-room, at back of the Mountain, where the principal part of the musical programme was performed.

The trio, "Ye Shepherds Tell Me," opened the Club-room scene, and was sung by Messrs. Campbell, Young and Sorge, who took Mr. Cameron's place at short notice, he being unwell. Mr. Malby and Mr. Young sang "Nancy Lee and the Poacher's Dog," after which the Club sang the part song, "March of the Men of Harlech," which elicited unbounded applause, it being given with the musical rhythm, so often neglected by large bodies of voices. This was followed by piano solo variations on "Home, Sweet Home," by Mr. Septimus Fraser. The first part was concluded by a most comical exhibition, "The Governor-General's Body Guards," which kept the audience in roars of laughter and fairly brought the house down. Mr. Malby then took Mr. Cameron's place and sang the Drinking Song from "Martha." This was followed by the piece of the evening, the "Soldiers' Chorus," from "Faust," which chorus was sung in a manner which reflected the highest credit on the Club as a musical corps, and the gentleman who trained them. We noticed particularly that the "points" were well taken up, and the latter part of the chorus which has often troubled societies of trained musicians. Mr. Sorge sang "The Stirrup-Cup," Mr. Reichling gave a violin solo, and Mr. Donald Campbell, who is an immense favourite, sang by request, "Come into the Garden, Maid," and was rapturously *encored*. He responded with "Good-bye, Sweetheart, Good-bye." The part song, unaccompanied, "Sweet and Low," was sung by Messrs. Campbell, Young, Stevenson and Sorge, and was most delicately rendered. This concluded the Club-room scene, and the next tableau represented the Club on the return down the sparkling sides of Mount Royal in Indian file, with a snow-storm just commencing. Messrs. Lamplough and Malby here sang the "Snow-Shoe Tramp," the Club joining in the chorus. The last scene showed the Club arrived again at head of Union avenue, and, after the singing of "God Save the Queen" by the Club and the immense audience, the curtain dropped on one of the finest entertainments, both musical and spectacular, it has ever been our lot to witness.

## WAGNER'S YOUTHFUL DAYS.

HIS PECULIARITIES AS A BOY—EARLY STRUGGLES AND FINAL SUCCESS.

It was Saturday night last. The curtain had just fallen upon the last act of "Lohengrin," and with the swan song still floating through his memory, a representative of the *Evening Post* wandered listlessly away from the Opera House and turned into a well-known place on Fifth street, where artists, actors and singers are wont to congregate in the late hours of the evening. He had not ceased observing a remarkable-looking man, when a friend, one of the principal members of the Pappenheim Company, came up and introduced him. Gladly availing himself of the privilege, he sat down and opened the conversation.

"You have been to the opera to-night," he said.

"Yes, and enjoyed it very much. 'Lohengrin' I greatly admire—"

"Ah, you have heard enough to-night to whet your appetite enough to make you thirsty to drink in its beauty, no more?"

"You mean, then, that it was not a perfect rendering of the work?"

"Perfect, my boy," and his eyes gleamed as the old man turned them on his questioner. "Never use that word in connection with art. There, there is nothing perfect."

"You have probably seen this work produced something like it should be?"

"O, yes, yes; to-night I have no fault to find, only as I say, with the many things wanting, it was only suggestive to me."

"You have probably seen it played often in Europe?"

"Seen it played, yes." (This was spoken

very quietly—almost to himself.) "I often sat by Richard Wagner when he was writing the score."

Here was a chance that does not often come of talking to a man who had been the friend of the great German composer. So, drawing his chair up closer, the writer eagerly questioned the old man.

"Yes," said he, "Wagner is a great genius that the people are just beginning to comprehend. Like all great thinkers and workers, he, so to speak, projected himself into the future, and the masses of musical people are just creeping in sight of the colossal figure that stands beyond. Outside of Germany, and only the most devoted of his followers there, have a true knowledge of Wagner, except beyond the text of his operas. He is known only from one side. Here you know him less. You can't translate him; it is like trying to translate the works of the English Carlyle into French. Like him he coins words and puts new thoughts into vigorous shape."

"I wish you would tell me something about him personally. I mean about his early life. We know and read a great deal about his life at Rairouth for the past few years."

"We went to school together at Leipzig about 1822 or '23. I was a few years older than him, and took a sort of fancy to the lad, not that he showed any remarkable ability; on the contrary, he was a very ordinary and self-willed boy. He was then living with his mother and stepfather, Ludwig Geyer, an actor and a very clever man. His own father was dead."

"Did he show any evidence of musical talent then?"

"Some. It is a curious thing about Wagner that when young he would project ideas that he could not carry out. He tried to learn the piano, which at that time was becoming the popular instrument, but he couldn't. He couldn't make the runs, and if you will notice in all of his music to-day there are no runs; he got such a detestation of them through his inability to master them that he could not write any. He was an industrious scholar, too. He learned English so that he might read Shakespeare, and when he had mastered and studied the great poet, he had a plan, which we used to laugh at, of writing a great tragic opera in which *Leir* and *Hamlet* should be combined."

"The combination of two such plays would be somewhat difficult, and certainly novel, if it could be accomplished."

"It was one of Wagner's visionary schemes that never came to anything, but the study of Shakespeare proved of great advantage to the boy."

"In what way?"

"You do not know, perhaps, that his first opera was founded on one of Shakespeare's tragedies. Yes, the 'Love Veto' is on the story of 'Measure for Measure,' and it contains some beautiful music, although it is now almost forgotten."

"Where was his first work produced?"

"In Königsberg, I think. He went there from Leipzig, where I saw him acting as director of the theatre. It was there he married his first wife. About this time he was thinking of writing 'Tannhauser,' and wrote to Scribe, in Paris, asking him to write the libretto for him. Scribe never answered the letter, thought it not worth taking any notice of. What tools men sometimes are! Scribe might perhaps have immortalized himself; now he is only known as a scribbler of librettos."

"Did Wagner remain long in Königsberg?"

"No; he went to London, and I lost sight of him for some time. Wagner and his wife started for London in a sailing vessel. I have often heard him describe the journey afterwards. They were about a month getting there. It was in passing through the Norwegian isles that he heard from the sailors the legend of the Flying Dutchman, and went to work to compose the opera. So, although that month was a very tedious time to Wagner, it has been a benefit to art, for had he not gone out on that voyage we might never have had 'Der Fliegende Holländer.'"

"Up to this time he had only written one opera?"

"He had several unfinished works, but nothing complete except the 'Love Veto.' I will tell you a very amusing thing about its first performance in Leipzig."

"At that time Wagner was in very needy circumstances, and he determined to give a grand performance of the opera to 'raise the wind,' as you call it. He obtained the use of the theatre, and the night was announced for the performance. When it was time for the curtain to rise, Wagner looked through the peep-hole in the curtain to see what sort of an audience there was, and discovered three persons in the house; his landlady, where he boarded, and her husband were in what we call the parquette, and in the dress-circle, a Polish Jew, in full evening costume, had his part of the house all to himself. His annoyance at the sparseness of the audience was interrupted by a little incident on the stage. The prima donna's husband, who was filling some subordinate position in the cast, was jealous of the tenor, who was a handsome young fellow, and paid considerable attention to his wife. Observing the same time as Wagner the condition of the auditorium, he thought it would be a good opportunity to punish Mr. Tenor without incurring the exchequer to any great extent, so he at once sailed in. Claudio's pretty face was very soon mashed out of shape and colour. Isabella tried to intercede to save her admirer. In rushing between them she got a

blow accidentally, and at once went off into hysterics. The end of the matter was that the manager stepped to the front of the stage and informed the audience there that, owing to circumstances over which he had no control, &c., the production of the opera would be postponed until a further occasion. So ended Wagner's first attempt to produce an opera in Leipzig."

"Wagner had some difficulties then in his outset?"

"No man ever had more, and none ever had greater determination to overcome them. When I saw him last in his luxuriant home at Baireuth, I could scarcely imagine that he was the same as the determined young man that I had seen battling with fortune forty years ago. When he was about twenty, before his marriage, he determined that he would see Beethoven, who was then living in Vienna. He started off through Bohemia and walked all the way. On the road he met a party of strolling musicians, and played a violin in their company to obtain money for food and shelter. But he saw Beethoven, and the grand old man treated him very kindly, although he was then too deaf to talk to him and the conversation on Wagner's part had to be carried on in writing."

"After this his rise was rapid, was it not?"

"Yes; shortly after his return from England I lost sight of him for some time, but he rapidly gained in reputation until he went to Munich, when in 1868 his 'Meistersinger' was produced to a house with every part crowded, Wagner sitting beside the king in the royal box. Before this you know that 'Tannhauser' was played three nights in Paris after immense preparation, and was a dead failure. The Parisians could not or would not understand the work. They said Wagner's talent was better than his tendencies. Wagner then said, in his terse way, 'Paris may hear of 'Tannhauser' again.'"

"Don't you think that the anti-melodic style of Wagner's works has been the great preventive of their becoming popular?"

"No; it is more prejudice than any reasonable antagonism. Musicians have rarely been poets. They found poetry a sort of scaffolding on which to construct their musical forms. In Wagner both are parts of and necessary to each other. Many of the operas of the Italian school were constructed to introduce a number of special airs for certain singers; dramatic construction and unity were secondary. There is plenty of melody in Wagner, but melody is only one form of music. The first works that are known—the 'Flying Dutchman' and 'Tannhauser'—were composed before his art theories were written. In the first the action is simple. There are no useless details, but the colouring takes the place of action. There is no false pathos, no straining after effects, no sensations worked up to gain applause. His effort is the work of true art trying to express itself intelligently, freed from the trammels of conventional and arbitrary laws."

"You don't think, then, that he has yet fully developed his theories?"

"No, nor ever will. Others will follow him who will build upon the foundation he has laid. You can see it now even in Verdi's 'Aida,' the most thoroughly Italian composer of them all. Saint Saens, Brahms, Raff and others all show the power of his theories, and their works are perhaps unconsciously permeated by his influence."

"You saw Wagner only a few years since?"

"At Baireuth, during the performance of the 'Trilogy,' in his new theatre. It was a grand affair; everything was successful, and his life-dream was realized. After its close I saw him in his home with his wife, Cosima, and his children, and talked with great pleasure over our boyhood days and early struggles. His wife, Liszt's daughter, is a charming woman, retaining much of her personal beauty. She is also a fine musician."

"We hear that Wagner has become very fastidious in his surroundings, and is quite a top in his dress?"

"Yes; that is so. All strong men have their little foibles, and that is his; it is a habit that he has acquired. There is but little similarity now between the luxuriant Wagner seated in his handsomely-appointed study and the sturdy youth dressed in plain garments who started out from Leipzig forty-five years ago to walk to Vienna to look upon the face of Beethoven. His residence is a very beautiful place, on the borders of the royal park where his faithful friend and patron, Ludwig, King of Bavaria, resides. He does not work much now. Well, he has earned, if anybody has, the right to enjoy his *otium cum dignitate*."

## ROUND THE WORLD.

OBITUARY.—Dr. Doran, author of "Monarchs Retired from Business," and various other publications, is dead.

OBITUARY.—Geo. Cruikshank, the well-known draughtsman and caricaturist, aged 86.—The Rev. Canon Hobden, of Hamilton.

## PERSONAL.

MR. BLAKE has been re-elected for Halifax.

MR. ANGLIN has inside track for Speaker-ship.

LORD DUFFERIN enjoying himself in the United States.

It is stated that Hon. Mr. Burpee's resignation is in the hands of the Premier.

DR. TUPPER arrived at Toronto from Halifax after electoral campaign and was enthusiastically received at the U. E. Club.