

THE FLANEUR.

The origin of the line

"Thought lost to sight, to memory dear,"

was referred to in a late number of the *Nova*. The whole piece where it occurs appeared in 1701 in the *Greenwich Magazine for Sailors*—

Sweetheart, good-bye! the fluttering sail
Is spread to waft me far from thee;
And soon before the favouring gale
My ship shall bound the sea.
Perchance, all desolate and forlorn,
These eyes shall miss thee many a year;
But unforgotten every charm—
Though lost to sight, to memory dear.

Sweetheart, good-bye! one last embrace!
O cruel fate, two souls to sever!
Yet in this heart's most sacred place
Thou, thou alone, shalt dwell forever.
And still shall recollections trace
In Fancy's mirror, ever near,
Each smile, each tear, that from that face
Though lost to sight, to memory dear.

The origin of the phrase, "Mind your P's and Q's" is not generally known. In alehouses where chalk scores were formerly marked upon the wall, it was customary to put these initial letters at the head of every man's account, to show the number of pints and quarts for which he owed; and when one was indulging too freely in drink, a friend would touch him on the shoulder, and point to the score on the wall, saying, "John, mind your P's and Q's." That is, notice the pints and quarts now charged against you, and cease drinking.

A bright lad was sent out the other day to get something to light his mamma's fire. He sallied out to a neighbouring news stand on St. Antoine Street.

"Have you the 'Star'?"
"All sold."
"Got the 'Witness'?"
"Don't keep it."
"Then give me a bundle of kindling wood."

The very latest.
Who is the father-in-law of Prince Alfred?
The Czar, of course.
No such thing, sir. Popular mistake.
Who the deuce is it, then?
Jacques Offenbach.
How do you make that out?
He is the author of *The Grand Duchess*!

Two years before the French-Prussian war, the famous prophet of palmistry, Desbarrolles, was introduced to Napoleon III. at the Tuileries.

"What do you read in my hand?" asked the Emperor.
The chiromancer hesitated.
"Speak without fear. Say all."
"Well, sire, I read in your hand that your majesty should henceforward devote himself exclusively to agriculture."
It was a sybilline answer.
Later, in explaining these words, Desbarrolles said:
"The Emperor did not understand me, and yet it was clear. Devote yourself to agriculture meant 'Do not wage war and take care of your health.'"

Who will say that our servant girls are not improving? And how soon even country girls learn the tricks of the trade. A young married couple had hired a lass from St. Andrews. The other day the lady saw on her purveyor's pass book an entry of one dollar and a-half for a turkey. She called the girl.

"How is this, Madge? On that day I remember perfectly that you gave us roast pigeon."
"Tis true, mam. I noticed that you never checked your entries, and I wanted to give you a lesson!"

The appearance of "Ninety-Three" has quite naturally turned public attention to Victor Hugo. The first question one puts is—does the work rise to the standard of the author's reputation? It certainly does. It swarms with his peculiar defects of manner, but it is likewise tessellated with beauties of genius.

Victor Hugo writes rapidly, and busies himself with several works at the same time—novels or romances. When he is tired he takes rest by composing verses. "Ninety-Three" was written in six months. The master-piece, "Notre Dame de Paris," was composed in two months. A popular and cheap edition of the former is about to appear.

A few details of Hugo's writing habits may be interesting. Winter and summer, he rises at six. As soon as he is dressed, he swallows a fresh egg and a cup of black coffee. He then works till eleven, when he breakfasts. At noon, he goes out for a stroll, on foot or in the omnibus, choosing the old quarters of Paris and the oddest streets. At four he returns, and works till dinner, after which he receives his friends. He invariably retires at midnight. Hugo writes standing. There is not a chair in his study. Visitors are obliged to take seats on piles of books. He is fond of a few friends at table. Every morning he gives his housekeeper twenty dollars for the expenses of the day.

One of the most delicious examples of an evasive answer is credited to that charming wit, the late Theophile Gautier. Being asked whether he liked amateur piano playing, he answered:

"I prefer it to the guillotine!"

In his latest work, Merimée refers in terms of admiration to this maxim of Swift: "A lie is too good a thing to be wasted!"

There is one word of our Canadian language which strikes visitors as singular and incongruous. Whereas Englishmen speak of their public drivers or Jehus as cabmen, and Americans, as hackmen, we call them carters. Montreal and Quebec are faultiest in this respect, deriving the word from the equally evasive French word *charretier*.

ALMAVIVA.

EXPERIENCES OF "A COMMERCIAL TRAVELLER."

BY "ONE OF THEM."

ORANSEVILLE, March 21st.

Arrived at Bracebridge, the aspiring "capital" of the Muskoka district, I found it necessary, it being my first visit, to look about me before making a raid on any of the merchants. The excitement consequent upon the election had hardly begun to subside, and as no one would talk or think about anything else, I had abundance of time to make my observations. Loud was the boasting of the holders of "the winning hand," and both loud and bitter were the accusations of bribery made by those who had lost. And so it is with every election. The victors always win by fair means, the vanquished are always defeated by foul ones.

Bracebridge, in its winter dress, is not the most inviting place in the world to live in; whichever way you enter it, you have to go down hill, and part of it is built on the brow of the hill to the north and west, and part at its base, so that to travel all over it you have to do considerable climbing. Being only of some five or six years growth, the dwellings and stores are very much scattered, while most of them have a mushroom appearance, as if they had gone up in a night. The principal hotel is made up of two or three single dwellings "rolled into one," necessitating that uncomfortable arrangement which compels you, in going from its sitting-room to the bar-room, to pass through the dining-room and half-a-dozen other rooms. As the prosperity of the place becomes more marked, the old buildings will doubtless have to make room for a better class. Such of the land in and near Bracebridge as was uncovered by the snow, which in this region veils everything, looked to me rather sterile and unproductive. "The virgin rock" crops through the soil everywhere. Still, farmers whom I conversed with, and who ought to have been disinterested, told me that there is plenty of good land within a few miles of the village. Undoubtedly the rocky character of the country is a great drawback to its settling up fast; there are, though, as an intelligent farmer at dinner-table aptly remarked, no Gillespie nor Little Hodges there. Every farm-drudge who emigrates there from the "old country" becomes, if he wishes, a property owner, and in the course of a few years proprietor of a productive and profitable farm that would, in many instances, bear comparison, in both its yield and its profit, with the landed estates of the master whose hind he was in times past. For my part, I can say I heard no murmurs of discontent from any of the farmers who thronged the village that day; not often have I seen a healthier, happier lot of faces than clustered round the dinner tables. Many of them, too, were recent arrivals, and as such, privileged to look melancholy with the recollections of home and kindred, and despondent with the uncertainties of their future life in the wilds and fastnesses of Canada. Whether the spirit of their neighbours infected them or not I cannot say, but certainly they looked fully as cheerful. There is no question that from a sanitary point of view few parts of Canada can compare with the Muskoka District: the atmosphere is wonderfully clear, and although I was there in the coldest month of the winter, the frost seemed to have a peculiarly bracing effect, different from the dead, marrow-freezing cold prevalent in the winter months of a more temperate latitude.

I was speaking of the up-hill work entailed by opening, or endeavouring to open, accounts in new places, and this brings me to a consideration of the various types of customers encountered by the traveller. A rather rare specimen, but a very provoking specimen, is the merchant who greets you, friend or stranger, with an affable grin; his face literally beams with smiles, but his smiles are unfortunately far more plentiful than his orders. The novice, when he goes into the merry gentleman's store, and has shaken hands with him, feels the thermometer of his spirits go up to summer heat, and, pleasing visions of a good fat order flit through his brain. He neglects his other customers, believing that this is the prize, and hangs around this combination of suavity and deceit like a bee about a sugar barrel. When dinner-time comes, although he has not yet "had him in," the beguiled traveller is in no wise discouraged; he talks bombastically to his fellow travellers about "the large bill he is going to sell Mr. Smooth-tongue," and superciliously informs them that "it only requires a gentlemanly address to get into the good graces of these hard cases," to all which they give a doubtful assent, and when he has gone to see after Mr. Smooth-tongue, chuckle over his coming discomfiture. Tea-time comes and still he hasn't "had him in," but hope and Mr. Smooth-tongue still tell their flattering tale, and he now says that "he rather prefers getting the old chap in at night, as then he won't be worried with the shop." But alas! "the old chap," though suave and pleasant as ever, won't come to time. All the importunities of the despairing "Commercial" have about as much effect on him as water has on a duck's back, and probably from the same cause, the oil that exudes from both. Next morning, as he leaves town, a sadder and a wiser man, he bitterly realises that "hope deferred" and Mr. Smooth-tongue "make the heart sick."

Who has not met the "Bluff Customer," who never agrees with your first remark, and who, if you greet him with "How do you do, Mr. Bluff?" will gruffly inform you that "he does as he pleases." This man considers himself privileged to make unpleasant remarks, under a cloak of pretended love of truth and frankness; he is too often an Englishman, and usually an ignorant one, and being so, adopts what is said to be a national characteristic, and the one his native boorishness enables him to simulate best, that of a churlish bluffness. I am acquainted with one of these Bluff merchants in Orillia. When some retiring, delicate little man calls on him for the first time, Mr. Bluff shouts at him from the other end of the store, so as to give all inside and some outside the benefit of his harangue, and informs him with a volley of expletives worthy of Billingsgate that "he don't want his d—d goods"; that "he has more of these (here comes a string of choice adjectives) peddlers calling on him than he has customers." Now some travellers more sensitive than wise are terribly galled at being called a "peddler," and if the little man is so disposed, he will probably turn on his heel and walk out in high dudgeon. But it is more likely he will be stupefied by this style

of address, when this gentlemanly merchant will launch into a tirade of abuse against wholesale men, travellers, and all and everything connected with that class of men upon whom he is entirely dependent upon for his supplies of merchandise to carry on his business. There is no use in handling such men with kid gloves; you must, if you know how, give them as good as they send. They will respect you for it. But customers are as numerous in their characters and idiosyncracies as travellers, and deserve what they shall receive—a paper to themselves.

WAYFARER.

DRAMATIC GOSSIP.

Lydia Thompson acted as ticket-taker at a recent charity entertainment at Washington.

A new operetta by Johann Strauss, entitled *Doctor Fledermaus*, is in preparation at Vienna.

"The Wife is too Beautiful" is the curious title of a piece to be produced shortly at the Paris Gymnase.

Zale Thalberg, a sixteen-year-old daughter of the famous pianist, sings so well as to have been engaged for six years by Mr. Gye, the London impresario.

Neilson was playing at Booth's last week, and the Strakosch Italian Opera troupe, including Nilsson, Campanini and Miss Cary, at the Academy of Music, New York.

Melle Helene Petit was so ill on the first night of "La Jeunesse de Louis XIV." at the Paris Odeon that she fainted after each scene. But she struggled through to the end.

"Queen Mab," a new play by W. G. Godfrey, brother of Dan Godfrey, the musician, has been produced at the Haymarket, London, and is well spoken of. The dialogue seems to be its best point.

Mlle. Croizette, an actress who plays in Feuillet's new play the "Sphinx," is creating an immense *furor* in Paris by what a critic terms her "offensively truthful physical presentation of a death by poison."

A Japanese operetta called the "Belle Sainara" was recently given with great success at a private entertainment in Paris and the London journals express the opinion that it would take immensely as a first piece in that city.

Salvini began his farewell performances in the States at New Haven, on the 27th ult. After a tour embracing Hartford, Washington, Providence, Richmond, Baltimore, and Philadelphia, he will appear in New York on the 1st of June.

Mr. Gye, the manager of the Royal Italian Opera, Covent Garden, has just been appointed by the Emperor of Russia director of the Imperial Theatres at St. Petersburg and Moscow upon exceptional conditions. Mr. Gye is to have the title of director, instead of that of manager, and will himself select the *artistes*, contrary to the usual custom.

Mlle. Levasseur, a leading tragic actress in Paris, was once playing a most touching part in which the heroine commits suicide by taking poison. At the most pathetic passage, while she was bidding adieu to life and making everybody in the theatre sob, she suddenly changed her tone, and shrieked, "Damnation! what has been put in this bowl?" Imagine the effect of this homely prose delivered in so energetic a manner in the midst of stately poetry! The actor Beauvallet, who loved a practical joke, had smeared the beaker with assafoetida.

Leona Dare and her husband get \$150 a week in New York and \$200 outside of it; the Jackley Family, \$350; Lulu \$1000; Ala, \$150; the Wilsons, \$150, and the Matthews Family, \$190. At least, the last named were engaged in England three years ago by Mr. Butler for \$190 a week, and after they made their appearance in N. Y. he let them out to other managers at \$500, making by the transaction over \$200 a week himself. The Berger Family of bell-ringers get about \$800 a week, and other specialists receive all the way from \$100 to \$500 weekly.

The late Alexandre Dumas is now asserted to have left three unpublished dramatic works, in addition to the drama of *La Jeunesse de Louis XIV*, produced this week at the Odeon. One is a *Revue* and *Juliet*, in verse, quite complete, and which was to have been produced in the Odeon in 1869, but was shelved on account of a difficulty in finding a suitable Juliet. The two others consist of a part of a drama, *The Death of Portier*, a piece written at the actor Dumaine's request, and three scenes of *Joseph Balsano*. Dumas is said to have felt dissatisfied with all three of these works.

Mons. Offenbach has a son, Auguste Offenbach, who is as bright a little fellow as ever lived. He was quite ill last September, and became so weak his family thought it desirable that he should spend the winter at Cannes. A few days before the first performance of "Orphée aux Enfers," (the first performance of its revival,) Mons. Offenbach sent to his son this telegram: "To Mons. Auguste Offenbach, Splendide Hotel, Cannes: My dear Auguste—I have introduced your little Turkish March into 'Orphée aux Enfers.' You give me permission, don't you?" The child replied: "To Mons. Jacques Offenbach, 11 Rue Lafayette, Paris: Dear father—I consent to become one of your collaborators, and to give you my little Turkish March, but upon these conditions, namely: that I may be present at the three last rehearsals, and at the first performance, and that I may personally go to the Dramatic Composers' Agent's office and receive my share of the copyright."

The following story is told by M. Legouve of a solecism committed by Scribe, the dramatic author: "The second empire had just been inaugurated when Scribe met a former schoolfellow of his, an important personage, whom the writer calls M. de Verteuil. 'Well,' said he to Scribe, 'what are you about? Any new comedy on the stocks?' 'Yes,' replied the dramatist, 'I have got a charming subject. A peer of France under Louis Philippe who becomes a Senator under Napoleon III. Imagine the comic situations afforded by this character in his attempts to reconcile his past with his present allegiance. It will be glorious!' Here the friends were parted by the crowd. Scribe returned home in a thoughtful mood 'I'm afraid,' thought he, 'that my subject is not as good as I supposed. De Verteuil is a clever fellow. I fully unfolded the plot to him. But he did not laugh, hang it, he did not laugh. That's a bad sign.' While thus musing Scribe opened the evening paper and read the following: M. de Verteuil, peer of France, is appointed Senator."