

## TWO SONNETS OF PETRARCH.

## I. "VAGO ANGELLETO."

SWEET Bird, that ever as thou passest by  
Dost lift thy plaintive voice, early and late,  
Knowing that night and winter for thee wait,  
While summer and the day behind thee lie:  
If thou couldst in my pain thine own desery,  
Couldst know how like to thine my sad estate,  
Thou wouldst not shun this heart so desolate,  
But share thy griefs with mine in sympathy.  
And yet I know not how they can compare,  
For she thou lov'st is still perchance in life,  
While Death and Heaven have robbed me of my bliss.  
But gloomy hours and seasons such as this,  
Memories of days with sweet and bitter rife,  
Move me my heart's disquiet to lay bare.

## II. "DOLCI DUREZZE."

Gentle rebukes and soft remonstrances,  
Full of pure love and pitying tenderness;  
A sweet severity that could repress  
My passionate will to due observances;  
A low soft voice, in whose clear tones unite  
All courtesy with spotless purity,  
Fount of delight, white flower of chastity,  
Winning my soul from wrong to love the right:  
Eyes of divinest beauty, such as fill  
The soul of man with happiness, yet strong  
To curb the strivings of my restless will  
And heal my spirit vexed with bitter strife  
In this perfection of thy lovely life  
I find my peace, through conflict stern and long.

LOIS SAUNDERS.

## OTTAWA LETTER.

THE Bill to subsidize the Winnipeg and Hudson Bay Railway to the extent of \$80,000 a year for twenty years was smartly opposed in the Lower House, but, like the Prince Edward Island tunnel, this scheme has the solid vote of a whole parliamentary delegation to back it, and the seats of that delegation depend on the effectiveness of their advocacy. So the Bill naturally passed, and is now getting a severe criticism in the Senate. It is suggested that the Senate might well repeat its famous action in the Esquimalt and Nanaimo and Harvey and Moncton Railway Bills, but the Upper House seems so justified as to its *raison d'être* from the fact of having the Premier in it, that there is not much likelihood of its taking such a course. Incidentally the debate in the Commons raised the question of members speaking and voting upon measures in which they have a pecuniary interest. Mr. Casey's support of the measure was in itself provoking to his party, but Mr. McMullen's reference to Mr. Casey's being a shareholder in the railway disclosed an unlooked-for acerbity, and Mr. Lister proved but a Job's comforter in defending Mr. Casey against the imputations on his disinterestedness by saying the stock was worthless.

The one subject of political talk is the McGreevy-Langevin investigation. Comment on a case *sub judice* is unbecoming, unfair too when only a part of one side of the story has been heard. But people will give their impressions all the same, and, without prejudging anybody, some of these may be repeated. Mr. Owen Eugene Murphy's experience in the particular line he has chosen has probably accustomed him to face awkward situations coolly and to keep a shot in the locker. Much of the effect of his cross-examination in laying a basis of contradictions and evaded questions whereon to found an argument of his untrustworthiness was demolished by Mr. Perley's admission of taking the jewellery from him. Public opinion jumped at once to the illogical conclusion that the whole of his story must be quite as circumstantial as this part of it. However the result of his testimony is to show that whether all he says be true or false, Sir Hector Langevin and Mr. McGreevy have for years been knowingly dealing with a man who on his own showing is a defaulter. Then the Perley incident reminds people of the \$17,000 testimonial presented to Sir Hector by the contractors, and also of a certain set of opals given to a lady much more exalted than Mrs. Perley, but in quite as delicate a position towards the donors. Another point commented upon is the tendency to change front shown in the alleged proposal by Sir John Thompson to alter the instructions of the Government's counsel so that their functions would be those of prosecution, so to speak, rather than of defence. The story goes that this move was made to suggest to Sir Hector the desirability of retiring from the Ministry, but that he calmly dissented thereto, declaring he would rather not go all by himself, that investigation might as well be carried farther, and some more of his colleagues row in the same boat with him. All this, if it took place, did so in the oath-bound secrecy of the Privy Council. So the story may go for what it is worth; following, however, on Sir John Thompson's answer in the House to a question about the lawyers, that they were retained to aid the investigation, and on the previous statement that they represented the Department of Public Works, not Sir Hector individually, it may serve as an indication of people's thoughts.

The Perley incident, followed by his suspension and the resignation of Mr. Burgess, consequent upon the disclosure in the Public Accounts Committee of irregular practices as to payment for extra work done by clerks in

the Department of the Interior, caused not only a sensation but a feeling of great uneasiness as to the condition of things in the public service generally. In both cases there has been much sympathy for the individual man. Nobody—in Ottawa, at all events—thinks that either of these gentlemen, who are well known and respected, was guilty of corrupt practice. Mr. Perley, to be sure, might fairly have pleaded his Minister's example, and does not seem to have known for some time either the value of Murphy's gift, which was actually received by Mrs. Perley in her husband's absence, or the imputation which it conveyed. Mr. Burgess either allowed to continue, or was ignorant of, a practice which was almost sanctioned by custom in many other departments than that of which he was till so lately the deputy head. His reluctance to allow a relative's name to appear as receiving payment for services is easily understood by those who know the intense jealousy and narrow-mindedness that pervades the ranks of the Civil Service and the mischief wrought by malicious gossip; all the same, it was a bad mistake. Mr. Perley and Mr. Burgess alike have had to suffer the inevitable penalty of serious indiscretion in such high position.

The Committee is getting deeper and deeper into the facts of the case. On Friday last Mr. Valin, ex-M.P., and Chairman of the Quebec Harbour Commission, told what he knew about it with that cynical frankness that characterizes the professional politician in Quebec, when he does talk to the public as he is accustomed to do among his own set. That money is needed for elections everybody knows; Mr. Valin evidently considered the knowledge axiomatic. The point was that he said the money for his election in 1887 came from or rather through Messrs. Murphy and Thomas McGreevy. When he wanted more, McGreevy told him Sir Adolphe Caron could not be satisfied in his demands for electioneering purposes in Quebec County, and Sir Hector Langevin was costing a good deal in Three Rivers, besides which there were others to be supplied. He told how McGreevy managed the substitution of an unaccepted cheque for the deposit receipt which was lodged as Larkin and Connolly's security for the Quebec Graving Dock Contract, and followed this by explaining that the influence which McGreevy possessed with himself and the Harbour Commission generally was due to his being Sir Hector's confidential man, a phrase which was rendered in the translation from Mr. Valin's French into "confidence man." Sir Hector had, so Mr. Valin says, told him to follow McGreevy's advice when in doubt, which as Sir Hector seems also to have qualified McGreevy as a "good fellow" sounds like the famous whist maxim. Mr. McGreevy in turn recommended the contractors to Mr. Valin's kind offices as being also "good fellows." So doubtless at that period of the game Mr. Valin counted the strength in trumps in his own and his partner's hands. To say that these revelations caused a sensation is putting things mildly. The feeling now is that a crisis is near at hand, and the explanations and evidence in rebuttal are eagerly looked for. The Committee then adjourned till Tuesday, the longish delay being compensated for by a promise that Mr. Robert McGreevy would then be produced, after whose examination the proceedings on the side of the accusers would be hurried to a conclusion. Mr. Thomas McGreevy is ill, but is expected to appear some time this week, and there are some hopes that by the end of next week the Committee may proceed to their report and give Parliament some chance of being prorogued by the end of August.

The Public Accounts Committee meanwhile goes on accumulating materials for the making and investigating of charges against the Civil Service generally and the political heads of Departments in particular. The irregularities in the Department of the Interior have been followed by the suspension, and probably will be followed by the dismissal, of a number of officials of various grades. The Opposition are so strenuous in their denunciation of the state of affairs which Mr. Perley's confession, taken in conjunction with this Interior business, is supposed to reveal in the service generally, that Government supporters are not likely to try and stem the tide of accusation, or to take time to devise means whereby the causes of the evil will be permanently removed, while the really guilty are punished. In the present excitement wherever a head, however innocent in reality it may be, stands out among the crowd, it is likely to be hit hard. It must not be forgotten, in judging of the supposed prevalence of corruption and malpractice, that the charge is made primarily for political ends, and, like all charges so made, is both consciously and unconsciously, perhaps it might also be said unconscientiously, magnified and exaggerated. There are many abuses, however, and there are some scandals, but, to judge from the tone of the Civil Service generally in regard to these, it would rather prefer investigation, if this could only be on the merits pure and simple. But abuses and scandals are not confined to the Service, and unfortunately "political exigencies" will see that these go unpunished while sacrificing other offenders.

The galleries are empty and stuffy, the floor is deserted by all save a few members of his own side to listen to the tariff orator of the moment and to "keep a house." The private Bills weakly interest semi-torpid committees. Ottawa "society" has gone out of town; ministerial dinners are mercifully rare; there is nothing in the way of dramatic or musical entertainment. Still a summer season has its compensations. The evening breeze is always cool on Parliament Hill, and the grounds grow yearly

more beautiful. The trees on the slope of the bluff along which the shady "Lover's Walk" runs, and the flower beds bordering the paths across the lawns, give the lovely buildings a setting far more becoming than the hard whiteness of winter, or the colourlessness of that anomalous period which goes in Canada by the name of spring. The walk along the edge of the cliff brings some fresh charm always. Either it is the sunset behind the wooded hills on the Quebec side of the river, a new effect of light on the Chaudière Falls, the trees of the Canal Ravine and Major's Hill Park, or some hitherto unnoticed "bit" where towers and gothic windows are grouped in a framing of foliage.

X.

## A VISIT AT POINTE-A-PLATON.

THE Artist and I arose at six, and wandered about the streets of Three Rivers, that antediluvian little city of antique white French convents and churches, and odd jumbles of back-yard architecture. We bought our supplies of bread and vegetables in the market, to put with our Bolognas and ham and chicken in the sail-boat. We embarked and spread canvas past the mouth of the St. Maurice and made the hours run happily down the river past each gradually-sighted church-spire, until the banks grew higher and sheerer and the sun went down. A great cloud stretching like a vanguard across the sky was advancing quickly, under which was a white mist; we must now make for the shore. We were still a quarter of a mile from land when the white mist suddenly flashed bright and covered the whole landscape behind us, and in ten seconds, with a rattle like a volley of arms, a squall came down upon us; waves surged into the boat and everything beyond a few yards was one blind, rattling whiteness of furious rain and hail. Fortunately our mast and sail were at once blown down, and the squall lasted only a minute, or we should have drifted to shore in another fashion. That cold drenching decided our night's stopping-place. We got to a hamlet near by, and slept overnight at a cobler's. It was, as we opined from the map, the hamlet named Ste. Emmelie, which is at one end of the Seigniorie of Lotbinière, while Pointe-à-Platon, with the Manorhouse, is at the other, and as its inhabitants depend on Mr. Joly's mills my enquiry for him brought the friendliest responses.

The next morning we sailed past lofty bare cliffs of purple clay, surmounted by a thick fringe of arboreal foliage—cliffs having, from the utter absence for miles of any dwellings, a peculiar lonely picturesqueness. Out of this silent shore the Pointe-à-Platon stood—a torrent of forest bursting the cliff-wall, and foaming down in surges of thick green leafage. At the foot of the Point was a wharf, to which we made our boat fast, and, leaving our satchels with a woman at the cottage hard by, we started for the Manoir, which could be just described in a delightful position, hidden in verdure half-way up. Mr. Joly came forward, out of a family group, and met us under the trees surrounding the lawn. With delightful cordiality, he waived any formality of introduction, declaring that we had already been sufficiently announced by a letter from our common friend, and we must immediately have dinner and spend the day with him. "Daughter," said he, "what room can we give these gentlemen?" "The Pink Room, papa." The Pink Room it was, therefore—one of the most charming of chambers. Everything in it wore, of course, some phase of pink colour, from the pretty wainscot panels, in delicate shades, to the bed coverlets of pink covered with white lace. The chamber, in fact, consisted of two, a small, curtained off from a large one, with outlooks from both into green shades and river-view. By drawing aside the wardrobe which stood in it, our host afterwards showed that it had a secret entrance into another room—a museum, containing cases of admirably stuffed birds and animals, the fauna of the surrounding region, the work of his own ingenuity and of the industry of his boys. Mr. Joly is famous for his gentle manners. A graceful, white-haired kind-eyed man, he is with small doubt the most perfectly bred man in Canada, and one of the noblest hearted. These qualities were both his strength and his weakness as Premier of the Province, and they gained him the title of "the Knight of Lotbinière," which so exactly fits him. He inherits the Seigniorie of Lotbinière from his mother, a Mademoiselle de Lotbinière, of the family under whose lordship these lands have been since 1672. His father was a Huguenot merchant, who seems to have been a business-like, God-fearing man. It was the latter who built the present pretty Manoir. It was put up in sections, first at Ste. Emmelie, and only afterwards removed to the lovely Point. It is a graceful châteaueau structure, embowered in vines, and ample in size; it is, however, not an elaborately expensive building. "The house itself is nothing," exclaimed our friend and host; "it is the view over the river from this height which is our pride." And the view up the broad river and across to the Deschambault shore was grandly picturesque. There, from their leafy eyrie, the Lotbinière household see all that passes up and down the stream, and enjoy an ever varying feast of sky and water, cliffs, shores and shipping. In front is a spacious lawn bounded by a hedge on the brink of the hill, and having a raised summer-house as a lookout. On the right hand of the lawn you enter the gardens, interspersed with fruit trees and containing a fish-pond, conservatories and vines, together