

OTTAWA.

I.

THREE are the cliffs, and three the winding rivers,
High on the cliffs' crest riseth the crowned town,
Three are the cliffs, and one the Fall with its thunder,
Shaking the bridge, while the river rolleth under,
Flicking the wild white foam from its lips so brown.

II.

A city set on a hill may not be hidden,
Her sunlit towers from afar transcend the green;
Three are her hills, as an Old World town's were seven,
And from all three her spires ascend to heaven,
Like nests in the cliff her homes in the rock are seen.

III.

Fair is the view when the morning mists are melting,
Bridge and river and tree awake in the dark;
Fairer yet when the rosy clouds of vesper
Fire all the Gothic glass, and fair when Hesper
Shoots at the blue his tiny silvery mark.

IV.

But fairest of all when the winter sun is glowing,
And the bluest sky in the world is overhead,
Or when at night all the jewelled lights are shining,
And the twisted ribbons of fire are gaily twining
Around her pines to the sound of her children's tread.

V.

Outaouai! Whatever else betide her,
Beauty is hers for a birthright sure and sweet,
And old Romance, could he see her rocks and ridges,
Could he stand but once on her spray-swept stormy bridges,
Would grow young again as he cast himself at her feet.

SERANUS.

NOTES BY THE WAY—CALAIS.

THE gray sea moans in autumnal fashion against the pier at this queer little town; the rain drips in those straight lines which portend a wet day; the wind "keens" round the corner of the unpicturesque streets, so like a series of French Tottenham Court Roads. It is the fashion to leave here the moment one arrives, yet there is much that is interesting, and that one would be sorry to miss. For Dessein's still exists precisely as it is described by Sterne, great gates, courtyard, and all, precisely as Thackeray wrote of it in his well-known *Roundabout Papers*, when there was a talk of pulling down the fine old place—then called Quillacq's—altogether. Now they have returned to the original name, and many a score of the admirers of the *Sentimental Journey* have looked, as I am looking now, at the stuccoed walls and heavy sashed windows of the famous Queen Anne hostelry. Scarlet geraniums, blue lobelia, green mignonette, fill stone vases that decorate the quadrangle, but the flowers are running to seed, and moreover are by no means improved by this steady rain. As I gaze I expect to see Yorick's grim visage nod at me from the open doorway, and to hear the starling's pitiful little voice break the silence. 'Tis as if an enchanter had stopped all life there these hundred years; nothing sounds but the wind, nothing stirs but the leaves under their ice shower-bath.

I AM thinking of a certain terrible lonely death bed in Bond Street, of which we know only through a servant sent to summon the great author to a presumed forgotten feast. "Mr. Sterne is ill," said the landlady, "go up and see him!" The man stood in the doorway of the desolate room, arrested on the threshold by the presence of even a greater power than his embroidered coated master then jesting with Garrick and Hume, the absent guest's empty chair between them. And death awaits, looking at his victim, who stares back at him with lack-lustre eyes; and then as the figure stirs, Sterne, shielding himself from the blow with his trembling arm, exclaims: "Now, it's coming,"—and, in an instant of time, the messenger, in his scarlet and gold livery, is the only living person in the room. There is an overgrown churchyard in the Bayswater Road in London, where, following a worn track, one comes to a stone which in grandiloquent language records the fact that here lies Laurence Sterne. But another story is told, in which resurrectionists and the dissecting room form prominent features. What an ending for the wit and satirist, the man whom all the town conspired to honour for so many years of his ill-spent life—the chosen companion of those great folk, whose names glitter at us from the pages of history! No niche in a dim cathedral, or even a slab in a quiet country church. The resurrectionists' lantern, the dissectors' knife, are fit followers of such a death-bed as this.

"BEAU BRUMMELL's house was taken down only the other day," I was told by a pleasant-mannered verger who showed me over the beautiful church, with its fine seventeenth century reredos and its altarpiece after Vandyck. If I had come last year I could have seen the grave of a com-patriot of mine, a certain Lady Hamilton, but now, with many others, it is levelled for the new ramparts. He could tell me of no diversions, except—yes, I might take the train to St. Pierre, across the sandy wastes, and I must visit the gateway once drawn by Hogarth, and some pretty, quaint stuff should be bought as momentoes, called the Pas de Calais pottery.

Do you remember Charles Collins' opinion of this town (which he christened Malaise) expressed in his *Cruise upon Wheels*? He married Dickens' youngest daughter Kate, and the *Cruise* took place on their honeymoon, and I think it is one of the best books of travel ever written.

FRITH writes from the Manchester Exhibition: "I can't tell you what a delight these pictures are to me. I remember nearly every one of them being exhibited in the Academy, it's like meeting old friends again. Fildes' 'Village Wedding,' bought by Brookes, the man who invented magenta dye, is the attraction. There's nearly a roomful of Landseers; a good selection of Millais'; beautiful Walkers and Frederick Taylers; only two Du Mauriers, both water colours; none of his exquisite pen and inks; only one Leech; and no specimen at all of old Stone, though there are plenty of his school. Lawrence's portraits look well; people are interested in Phillips' 'Marriage of the Princess Royal'; his Spanish pictures glow on the walls. I have seven here: the 'Merry-making,' 'Hogarth Before the Magistrates,' and 'Boswell's Lodgings' look best. For the rest, the exhibition is like all the South Kensington ones, with the addition of the tobogganing and switch-back, and I think the food is better than the stuff provided in London for us. . . . Anstey tells me he means 'Starmouth' in *Punch* for Yarmouth; how good it is; was there ever anything better than the Professor incident, and the Blazers' behavior thereat?"

I PICKED up in an old bookstand the other day the first edition of Mrs. Gaskell's *Life of Charlotte Brontë*, when I was much struck with the violence with which Mrs. Postlethwaite—poor Brunwell's evil genius—was attacked. No wonder Mrs. Gaskell had to apologise, and the edition was suppressed. I remember going to Haworth last year, and finding a narrow commonplace village street, and whitewashed inn, a vicarage set in the midst of the dead folk; beyond, moors stretching far into another county; above, a sky the colour of the gray houses; around, the chill atmosphere of autumn and hills. There was no sound outside the cottage doors, except the clink of clogs chiming on the stones, as children tramped briskly and men and women climbed wearily up the steep hill. I was shown to the new church by the deaf sexton, and mourned with him over the demolition of the old building, and was taken to peer into the vicarage garden where they buried "Keeper," and where so much of *Wuthering Heights* was written, and we groaned again at the new wing to the old house. Finding I was interested in the Brontë family, the sexton, who turned out to be Tabby's great-great nephew, took us into two or three of the cottages to see some relics of the girls and their brother, the last of whom died thirty-two years ago. An old woman, shrewd-faced, kindly-eyed, stopped in her household duties to show me an execrable picture on the wall, a wicker doll's cradle, and a small workbox. "That is a portrait of my husband," she told me. "He was Mr. Brontë's clerk for many a year. Mr. Branwell painted it in '36; it was never finished. No, it wasn't a present; we paid for it, frame and all. Their servant Martha was my niece; she gave my daughter Miss Charlotte's workbox, and I remember Miss Charlotte wearing a bonnet trimmed with this black and white ribbon; these are her cloak-clasps. We got into the way of calling her Mrs. Nicholls for a bit, but after she died it was Miss Charlotte again with all of us." In another cottage, where the family were dining, they left their stew to take me upstairs, so that I might see the bed on which Charlotte died, Emily's travelling trunk, with the name of the Brussels maker still inside, a carpet from Mr. Brontë's room, his prayer-book, and a letter in his crabbed writing. Down in the kitchen there stands Emily's desk, left exactly as it was when in her possession, with its pens, pencils, and hoard of coloured pebbles; Ann's workbox lined with blue, and full of the odds and ends that litter a girl's life, such as lengths of old-fashioned gauze ribbon, bows, and worked collars; and I saw the little garden-stool once belonging to Emily. "Miss Ann was the prettiest," they said, "Miss Emily was the tallest. A brother of Mr. Brontë's once came to see him, a regular Irishman, with gray stockings and knee-breeches; they had not many relations, except some far-away Cornish cousins of their mother's, and some Irish ones of their father's. We always liked Mr. Branwell; he was a very short gentleman with red hair; the young ladies were auburn." These women spoke to us with the greatest sympathy of the Brontës, knowing or caring little enough for their authorship, telling only of their faithful discharge of every sort of duty. From there I went across the moors to a house at Keighley (pronounced *Keethley*) and there within a stone's throw of the shop where they used to buy their manuscript paper—the old bookseller is still alive—I found many of Charlotte's drawings, bad enough in all conscience, and a portrait by her of Flossy the spaniel; a cameo brooch left by her to be repaired at the jeweller's, not long before her death, and never claimed, two fine Cashmere shawls, once worn by Mrs. Brontë, the last gown Charlotte wore, and a presentation copy of *Jane Eyre*. All these things were given from time to time to the faithful Martha, who bequeathed them to various members of her family. Mr. Nicholls has married again, and lives in Ireland. Till within the last few years he came back every summer, and used to visit Scarborough from here, to see that poor Anne's grave was in proper order.

WHAT miserable wretches have set foot in this town, flying from debt; the air is full of ghosts. One can fancy Brummell's feelings as he faced the pier and strained his eyes towards England—towards London, rather, for London is England to a true Londoner. "There is no world without Verona's walls," sighed poor Romeo, when he was banished but twenty miles. Like the starling, how many a captive has cried here, "I can't get out;" only a streak of sea between them and their homes in Clarges Street, or Clapham, yet what an impassable gulf!

WALTER POWELL.
Calais, Oct.