

Tradesmen work twelve and sometimes eighteen. This must be remedied. Congress hoped to live to see the day when six hours will be the working day, as six days constitute the working week.

It was proposed to put "Progress and Poverty" on the list of books to be used in schools, but not carried.

VILLE MARIE.

NATURA VICTRIX.

NIGHT was dark but full of wonder
At the forest's muffled thunder,
For through valleys came and went
Tempest forces never spent,
Like the voice which called asunder
Each chaotic element.

Music like an inspiration
Swayed the pines a shadowy nation,
Round the wood-lake deep and dread,
Round the river glacier-fed,
Where a ghostly undulation
Shakes its subterranean bed.

Stern and gaunt as if not caring,
Stood the giant mountains, bearing
Weight of ageless ice and snows
Cleft by nature's labour-throes,
Monster faces, stark and staring
Upward into God's repose.

Savage peaks and wildernesses,
Which a gloom-like vapour dresses
In the livery of Time;
Where your earth King reigns sublime
All your moods and deep distresses
Roll around him like a chime.

Heard we not the mighty chorus
Of the elements that bore us
Doubting, struggling, down the stream,
Unto waking of the dream,
In the darkness where before us
Time and death forgotten seem?

Splendour of the links of lightning,
Round the neck of storm-god tightening,
Till his anger and his shame
Burst upon the earth like flame,
In the darkening and the brightening
Of the clouds on which he came.

Mother nature, stern aggressor
Of thy child, the mind-possessor,
Welling thro' us like a flood
In the course of thought and blood,
Greater holden by the lesser,
As the flower parts in the bud,

Love I not thy fixed enduring,
Times and seasons life procuring
From abysmal heart of thine,
Where are hid as in a mine
Magnet energies alluring
Storm-tossed spirit to combine?

Would that spirit in the splendour
Of the thunder-blasts could render
Back the dismal dole of birth,
Fusing soul-clouds in the girth
Of thy rock-breasts, or the tender
Green of everlasting earth.

Haply when the scud was flying
And the lurid daylight dying
Thro' the rain-smoke on the sea,
Thoughtless, painless, one with thee,
I, in perfect bondage lying,
Should forever thus be free.

Mighty spirits who have striven
Up life's ladder-rounds to heaven,
Or ye freighted ones who fell
On the poppy slopes of hell,
When the soul was led or driven
Knew ye not who wrought the spell?

Understood not each his brother
From the features of our mother
Stamped on every human face?
Did not earth, man's dwelling place,
Draw ye to her as no other
With a stronger bond than grace?

Tempest hands the forests rending,
Placid stars the night attending,
Mountains, storm-clouds, land and sea,
Nature, make me one with thee,
From my soul its pinions rending
Chain me to thy liberty.

Hark, the foot of death is nearing,
And my spirit aches with fearing,
Hear me, mother, hear my cry,
Merge me in the harmony
Of the voice which stars are hearing
Wander-stricken in the sky.

Mother, will no sorrow move thee?
Does the silence heartless prove thee?
Thou who from the rocks and rain
Madest man, take back again
Soul thy fingers wrought to love thee
Thro' the furnace of its pain.

Giant boulders roll beside me,
Tangled ferns bow down and hide me,
Hide me from the face of death,
Till the demon vanisheth—
Vain! a whisper comes to chide me
Borne upon the forest's breath.

Soft and sweet as organ playing,
Came a voice my fears allaying
From the mountains and the sea;
"Would'st thou, soul, be one with me,
In thy might the slayer slaying,
Wrestle not with what must be."

With the voice my heart was stronger,
And my days were dark no longer,
Girt about the land and sea,
One with all the days that be
In the older and the younger
Nature that was one with me.

Then I burst my bonds asunder,
And my voice rose in the thunder
With a full and powerful breath,
Strong for what great nature saith,
And I bid the stars in wonder
See me slay the slayer—Death.

Drummondville.

FREDERICK G. SCOTT.

LONDON LETTER.

NOTES BY THE WAY: IN THE HEART OF THE COUNTRY.

ROUND the windows grape leaves twist and turn. The children, leaning out, look like Bacchantes or young Bacchus crowned with vine-wreaths. Small bunches of green unripe fruit knock against the panes when the wind is in the east, and pink-brown branches and delicate fine shoots thrust through onto the inner side as the lattice is opened. On the lawn that slopes to the moat rose trees stand, shivering, flowerless, in the chill September breeze, and on the ruffled waters a boat dips and rocks, straining at the rope that ties it to the steps. From the woods fringing the gardens comes the peaceful cawing of the rooks, and the air is sweet with the fragrance of clematis, last of summer's odours, and cheerful with a multitude of never-ceasing sounds.

Silencing for a moment a robin's shrill song from the holly bush, some one cries on the terrace the latest news of the Docks, news which if it scares the birds has yet no power to stop the tennis balls, for London has lost its influence over most of us, and is a land with which for the next few weeks we care to have nothing to do. In the heart of the country, who wants to hear of anything of so little importance as a great strike? We have matters to attend to of greater interest, so G. is bidden to shut up, and not bother; and the counting goes on over the nets with redoubled fervour; and the dog-cart rattles off with the shooters, and others start for their walks without staying a moment to hear that which in town would have caused them intense excitement. G. sits quiet in his wicker-chair, absorbed in his *Times* and *Post*, true-bred Cockney as he is; and I, as the London smoke has somehow with the London papers blown across the lawn, and the smell of a cigarette has put to flight the faint clematis odour, and voices from the tennis-court drown those from the woods, I open a book (laying aside Alphonse Karr and his flower pieces), which fits in better with cigarettes and London accents, for the name of it is "The Confessions of a Young Man," and its author is Mr. George Moore.

I have never had much of an acquaintance with Mr. Moore's stories, which occupy, I take it, the same position in England as do those of the remarkable Mr. Saltus in America. To most readers bred to expect good manners if nothing else, Mr. Moore's fiction is generally intolerable. You remember Rogers' explanation of his bitter speeches, that his voice was so weak unless he said something disagreeable no one heard him. I think Mr. Moore argues that unless he writes what should not be written no one would read his books. With little artistic feeling he will paint you, and for the most part untruthfully, the depraved, sordid, vicious, so that the portraits are worse than the originals. He paints unclearly, and his touch fouls afresh their foul rags. So little a man of the world he mars the reputation of a volume full of excellencies, over which, be sure, he has spent weeks of care and thought for the sake of slipping in some schoolboy grossness, some hideous vulgarity, which can please no one, and can only hurt all. Lacking experiment, self-control, training, with immense belief in his own powers, and an unbounded admiration of the grimy models he follows, this author of ours has a curious future. One can not hope, though critics continue to sneer, and Mudie still refuses to circulate these novels, that Mr. Moore will cease altogether to write, for odious as he is occasionally, the most uncertain of companions, a chatterbox always, rough and coarse often, there is a something that attracts and interests whenever he chooses to remember he should be a gentleman. And in these "Confessions," hardly marred by his worse faults, only marked by his abnormal conceit, you find George Moore at his best.

As the swallows come and go across the waters of the moat, skimming past the moor hen's nest among the reeds, past the gray-green willows and stalwart elms, I read of the boy's up-bringing in Ireland, and of his early love for literature of the style of "Lady Audley's Secret," that murderess whom one used to think a creation as unreal as the fairies before we knew better, and call to mind how the other day I came by accident on Ingatstone Hall, the original of Audley Court. It is so exactly the house sketched by Miss Braddon that even if every other landmark were not accurate one could be certain there was no mistake. As it stood according to the story so it stands to-day. They tell you Miss Braddon lodged in a corner of this beautiful old place, let by its owner, Lord Petre, to anyone who would rent a few rooms, and wrote the novel here. They show you the lime avenues and famous well, and the path across the fields which Lady Audley and Phoebe Marks took that dark night when the Castle Inn at Mount Stanning (the real name is Mount Nessing), was burnt to the ground. If you care to go into the history of the picturesque house you can hear of the nuns and their successors, and of Count Zinzendorf and his band of Moravian Brothers, who for some years made this their country home. On the contrary, if the story spun by Miss Braddon from the suggestive materials about her interests you more, you will forget nuns and country squires and quiet German Reformers, and in their place will see moving about the quaint low rooms, in and out of the sunny quadrangle, Sir Michael with his snowy beard, my Lady in her gleaming silks, frowning, handsome Alicia, and the shrewd young barrister from Fig Tree Court. It is years since I read the novel, and I am afraid I have forgotten the name of the barrister—wasn't it Robert Audley?—but I remember, as of course so you do you, everything in the history of Mrs. Dawson's governess and George Talboys, remember it better perhaps than the uneventful career, written in the American language, and read only yesterday, of that store clerk and the typewriter his fiancée. I wonder do tourists piously visit certain streets in Boston, or in New York, or in those extraordinary little country towns, for the sake of the heroes and heroines of the modern trans-atlantic novel? Pilgrims still stroll under the archway of Ingatstone Hall to stare about them, still lean by the gate to look at the lime avenue towards the well, though "Lady Audley's Secret" has been told for nearly thirty years.

Mr. Moore's small, intelligent eyes impatiently frown at you from the frontispiece (who asked for his portrait?) and follow you as you turn the leaves. "I am extraordinarily clever [so Mr. Moore says in effect] and it is a privilege to hear me speak. I will tell you of my school-hours, wasted: of my youth in Paris, wasted; of the long purposeless days spent in the Strand lodgings where my principal studies were the Savoy chorus girl and the maid-of-all-work. I have so much to say about myself, and I can make the smallest detail of interest. Only you must accept my judgment as final, for I know I am right, always: and as a last word remember that Byron, Shelley and George Moore were the three great men of the nineteenth century, whose work ungrateful England received with cries of indignation." Byron, Shelley and George Moore, that is how he puts it. Will you care to listen to one who classes himself in such a fashion? But it's a mad world, my brother, and this particular form of lunacy is dangerous to no one but Mr. Moore.

If the approval of one of Miss Thackeray's delicate little stories is an astonishment to a reader who remembers that he who commends is the author of "The Mummer's Wife," the disapproval expressed of George Meredith is even a greater surprise. This Young Man who confesses is full of contradictions. I think that is one of his attractions. He is arrogant and would have you believe he has just cause: it is merely the self-assertion of self-distrust. Missing the English boy's wholesome education of public school and university he has missed what he must always regret. But a taste cannot be wholly vitiated that appreciates the sweet gracefulness of Miss Thackeray's Elizabeth, and there may come a time when even the Frenchmen's books, which at present Mr. Moore loves so well, will grow wearisome. Then he will find peace, if not happiness, in the literature of the Villa, in the despised pages of Messrs. Hardy, Besant, Blackmore, Murray.

So the "Confessions" slip from my knee onto the grass and lie with the red Virginian creeper leaves flying over their pages; at my back I hear the children chattering over "Big Claus and Little Claus," laughing with the freshest delight when the horse's skin squeaks under the table, though they know the song by heart. Yonder I can see the hollow where stood the old house, built by the founders of the Dunmow Fitch. There are the broken ranks of long-disused avenues up which ghostly carriages roll of a moonlight night. There are marks of ancient terrace walks, the hedge that once divided my lady's rose garden. The Past is continually asserting itself. Just the other day the well was discovered into which the men and maids let down their buckets when Henry the Eighth was on the throne. Brilliant flower beds, round and curved, are in the same position, and embroidered with much the same flowers as they have been these three hundred years. High overhead a cawing rook, black against the grey sky, flaps his fringed wings. The knights and dames heard a cry exactly like that sound as they sauntered under the elms so short a time ago. And the Present asserts itself too, joyous and alert—a Present, playing tennis and cricket on fields where bowls once rolled and the archer's arrow sung through the air; tandem driving over the old coach roads; scorning all