

jest and they passed rapidly through all the quarters. The rival poets could not appear outside of their lodgings without becoming the centres of enormous crowds who made them recite their sonnets, which they yelled in chorus line after line. Copies of the poems were printed by the thousands, and everyone possessed them or knew them by heart. All this tumult continued for several months. One night at the Hôtel de Rambouillet Pierre Corneille appeared; he was very seldom seen there though always welcome. The Marquise received him kindly and soon in the course of conversation asked his position on the Job-Uranie dispute.

"Ah! Madame! it is to settle that question I have come to-night." The Marquise was delighted. She ordered silence in the *salon*, and told everyone that Monsieur Pierre Corneille wished to settle the dispute about the two sonnets. Great excitement ensued. Pierre Corneille was well known; but his position in the great dispute was not, and here he had come, after all these weeks of riot and wrangling, to settle the matter. Corneille bowed to the Marquise and produced a small piece of paper.

"Behold this paper, mes amis. That contains the solution of the difficulty. Whilst you and all the town have been fighting and quarrelling over *Voiture* and *Benserade*, I have been carefully studying their sonnets, and at last have embodied my conclusions, which are final, in these verses. Seeing how well sonnets are received to-day, I, too, have written in the form of a sonnet, and I hope no one will write against me in another."

Much applause greeted this opening speech, and there was a general idea that Corneille meant to be satirical. The future master of tragedy read the following:—

SUR LES SONNETS D'URANIE ET DE JOB.

Deux sonnets partagent la ville,
Deux sonnets partagent la cour,
Et semblent vouloir à leur tour
R'allumer la guerre civile.

Le plus sot et le plus habile
En mettent leur avis au jour,
Et ce qu'on a pour eux d'amour
A plus d'un échauffe la bile.

Chacun en parle hautement
Suivant son petit jugement,
Et s'il y faut mesler le nostre,

L'un est sans doute mieux résolu,
Mieux conduit, et mieux achevé,
Mais je voudrais avoir fait l'autre.

In its turn this sonnet became popular, and hundreds of sonnets, epigrams, satires and other verses were written by all who could make a rhyme on the subject, whilst pamphlets and tirades in prose were as numerous. One of the cleverest squibs that appeared was by Sarrasin, who wrote a gloss on the Sonnet de Job. It consisted of fourteen verses, of four lines each, the last line in each being a line of Benserade's sonnet. It was addressed to *l'abbé Esprit, de l'Oratoire*. The poem is too long for reproduction here; but the first, sixth and last verses read as follows:—

- (1) Monsieur Esprit, de l'Oratoire,
Vous agissez en homme saint,
De couronner avecque gloire
Job de mille tourmens atteint.
- (6) Diriez-vous, voyant Job malade,
Et Benserade en son beau teint,
Ces vers sont faits pour Benserade,
Il s'est luy-mesme icy dépeint.
- (14) J'ayme les vers des Uranis,
Dit-il, mais je me donne aux Diables,
Si pour les vers des Jobelins
J'en connois de plus misérables.

At the Court itself the Job and Uranie debate engaged the attention of the royal family, noblemen and ministers, and, on one occasion, La Roche du Maine, a maid of honour to the Queen, was asked which sonnet she favoured. It is possible La Roche had never read or heard either, or it may be that she was a wit of great discernment, for, after being pressed hard for an answer, she surprised and convulsed everyone by declaring herself in favour of the *Tobie* sonnet. The word *Tobie* was just the thing to tickle the French mind. It meant nothing and described nothing; but thousands who cared nothing for the Job or the Uranie sonnet declared thereafter that they were champions of the imaginary *Tobie* sonnet.

The quarrel died a natural death after a long and protracted course of fever. The words remained as popular cries and reproaches long after the sonnets were remembered.

It is not the writer's intention to revive this ancient and singular dispute; but it will probably be admitted by all impartial readers that the "Sonnet d'Uranie" is a more thoughtful and finished production than the "Sonnet de Job"; though in admitting this it by no means follows that it is necessary to endorse a recent critic's opinion, "that it is difficult to think of any living writer who could surpass, or of any writer living during the last two centuries, who could have surpassed the mixture of gallantry and sincerity in the Uranie sonnet."

It is sincerely to be hoped that no living writer will attempt the feat. SAREPTA.

CARELESS women are spendthrifts of their tongues; careless men of their purses.—*Vauvenargues*.

CONQUER your foe by force, you increase his enmity; conquer by love, and you will reap no after sorrow.—*Buddha*.

THE KINGSTON SATURDAY NIGHT CLUB.

THIS club consists of a limited number of persons who have associated for the purpose of discussing political, social and economic questions on their merits, and without reference to party interests. Recently a discussion took place on, "Reciprocity with the United States from the Canadian Side," of which the following is an abstract:—

A. The word "Reciprocity" appeals sympathetically to Canadians who are no longer young. The effect of the Treaty of 1854-66 on Canada was felt so immediately and beneficially that, ever since its repeal, a renewal of it in some shape has been one of the objective points of Canadian foreign policy. The avowed object of even the N.P. was to bring about reciprocity of trade through reciprocity of tariffs. The N.P., however, was a fatal mistake. It has contracted trade at home, driven away large numbers of our youth to look for employment abroad, shut us out from our natural markets on the continent of which we are a part, and made living in Canada almost as dear as in the United States. What is the remedy? The old Reciprocity Treaty would be best; but, as there is no chance of that, Unrestricted Reciprocity is proposed. *Prima facie* there is everything to recommend that, but the following objections have to be considered. (a) It implies an infringement of the vested rights of the manufacturers whom we have called into being. But, seeing that change would be made gradually and would have the promise of permanence, all healthy manufactures could adjust themselves to the new conditions. (b) It would lead to Annexation. But, that is the direction in which our present system of protection is leading. (c) Loss of revenue. If that forced us to fall back on direct taxation, it would be a good thing. (d) Discrimination against Britain. But, Britain discriminates against us when it suits her, and we are doing so against her by means of the N.P. Our taxes are so adjusted as to shut out her manufactured goods, and it matters nothing to the British manufacturer whether that is done in the interest of his Canadian or his American rival. (e) It would mean on our part a transition from a high to a higher protective policy. But, this would be neutralized to a great extent by the extension of the free area for trade. This continent would be the largest free-trading area in the world.

These objections, then, do not amount to much. The real objection shows itself when we go into details. It would involve the framing of the Canadian tariff at Washington, and when we had surrendered our commercial liberty, we would be in a less favourable position than now to arrange for political union, should we even desire that. Men have tried to make out that Unrestricted Reciprocity and Commercial Union are two things, but to me they are indistinguishable.

Two alternative remedies have been suggested. First, cultivate the British market. But this can never be anything more than our second best. It is open to the whole world, and is therefore the cheapest in the world, and those who live nearest to it can always undersell those who live three or four thousand miles away. Secondly, that Britain should give her Colonies a preference in her markets. There is only one chance that Britain will ever venture on so desperate an experiment. Should the new reciprocity policy of the United States succeed as well as its promoters expect, and extend to other countries besides those to the south of the Republic, so as to cut Britain off from markets that she now has, she may feel compelled to cultivate trade within the Empire by giving special preference. Meanwhile, Canada is "between the devil and the deep sea."

B. I do not agree with the positions that have been assumed. How can the United States be our natural market when it is our great competitor in neutral markets? It has been assumed that the price we get for our products is the price of the same articles in the United States, minus the duty and transportation charges; but that is not so, as a matter of fact. If the duty were abolished to-morrow, the Canadian producer would not find the price of his products increased by the amount of the duty now charged. The McKinley Bill hits us in barley and hay, but so far as these are concerned it is a blessing in disguise. The farmer who sells his hay is racking his land, and it is a good thing that he should be forced to change his methods. Independently of the Bill, and prior to it, other causes were bringing about depreciation of the price of barley, and our farmers after a while will accommodate themselves to the new conditions. They have done so to a remarkable extent already. At any rate, crying for Reciprocity is crying for the moon. The question has passed with our neighbours from the economic into the political stage, and wisdom and self-respect should make us recognize that. Let us act on their principles in dealing with them, and on Free Trade principles in dealing with Britain. Britain is not only a natural market, but also the country from which we get the best emigrants and where cheapest money is to be had. We could make this a cheap country to live in by placing the duties on English goods at the lowest possible figures and making the most at home of our natural products. We would thus successfully compete in foreign markets, with the United States, even in countries where they have reciprocal treaties. This would, of course, mean the extinction of some minnow industries that have been artificially propagated by the N.P. If the counters of our retail dealers were covered with English goods, these goods would be bought not only by ourselves, but by American summer

travellers. This involves discrimination against the United States; but that is the principle, in substance if not in form, on which they act towards us, and therefore they could not complain.

At a late meeting of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, their spokesman brought arguments against Unrestricted Reciprocity that are unanswerable; but he had not a word against English competition. Healthy Canadian manufactures need not fear that, as it would be mitigated by a revenue tariff.

C. We do not assume that if the duty were taken off the Canadian farmer would get the whole of the benefit; but he would get the greater part of it. If you take two pools of water, a larger and a smaller, the larger the higher of the two, and cut a channel between them, both would be influenced; but the smaller pool would rise more than the other would fall.

D. Our policy should be free trade all round, limited only by a revenue tariff. Unrestricted Reciprocity with the United States would only tie us down to her false economic position. We fancy that we prosper when we merely sell, but our aim should be to sell, only that we may the more freely buy. Depend upon it, the process of exchange will take care of itself. The present condition of business in the United States, notwithstanding its enormous crop of last year and the exceptional demand for it in Europe, shows this. England, on the contrary, finds no difficulty in making exchanges with the United States and Russia, the countries that raise the highest walls against her. Instead of putting duties on imports, we should rather put export duties on any raw material that we can work up advantageously in Canada. England, about the end of the 14th century, put export duties on wool, timber, tin and other materials, and the result is admitted by every writer to have been a marked industrial development. The repeal of our export duty on logs was therefore a great mistake. We have within the country all the elements for successful manufacture of wood, and yet we are recklessly sending away this raw material which it will soon be impossible to replace. An export duty should also be placed on all minerals that can be as favourably smelted in this country as in the United States.

E. As the hour for adjournment has come, I am willing to read a paper when we meet again to show that the policy outlined by B should be adopted by us, as it would lead to preferential trade within the Empire. G.

FLORENTINE VIGNETTES.

"FLORENCE lies out on her mountain side," under winter skies now—skies that are often as dull and grey as those of the north. When the white mist rises from the Arno, and the cypresses of San Miniato and of Monte Oliveto show blue and indistinct, and the heights of Fiesole are scarcely seen. Then comes the first breath of the tramontana, and with it the mists disappear and the skies become of an opaline clearness and hardness, and every dusky olive tree and white villa on the neighbouring hills is clearly and crisply defined, and the dark, bare slopes of Monte Morello deepen into crimson and purplish tints, and the distant Carrara mountains glow with the splendour of their first snow-fall. There the Lung Arno lies, a long white curve in the sunshine, where people loiter to watch the floating ice in the sleepy green water; or, if there has been much rain up in the mountains, the tawny current, and to note how near it comes to the height of former floods, which are carefully marked on the walls. One may loiter in the sunshine of the Lung Arno, but one hurries briskly enough through the dark side streets, where the tramontana whistles so icily. How frozen everyone does look on these tramontana days in Florence. The peasants go along wrapped in the folds of their great cloaks; the horses are well covered with the red rugs, which make such a vivid note of colour in the streets; the old women huddle over their scaldinos.

Only the fashionables are not deterred from taking their daily "trottata," that drive which is expressly stipulated for in many an Italian bride's contract.

The "grandes dames" are all in closed carriages, wrapped in those white or grey furs, for which the Italians have such a weakness. But if it be a Sunday or festa, no matter how keenly the wind blows, there are plenty of people afoot as well—stout mammas, with plump, dark-eyed daughters, generally dressed alike. Blue cloaked officers and slim young dandies, smoking the thinnest of long cigars and eyeing the damsels appreciatively; family groups, going at that slow pace peculiar to their pursuit of pleasure, and which is so maddening when you are trying to make your way along the crowded pavement. All these stroll homewards along the Lung Arno from the Cascine, when the sky is growing golden for sunset over behind Monte Oliveto.

It is at sunset that these bright, clear winter days deepen into greatest beauty. On Christmas Eve we climbed the steep curves that wind up the slopes of San Miniato, and, just as the red flush was creeping over the mountains, reached the terrace before the church, and stood looking down on the domes and spires of the city, and on the hills that enclose it. A blue vapour hung over the town, through which the great dome of the cathedral rose majestic, and the turretted tower of the Palazzo Vecchio soared—those two outlines that always rise before one's mind's eye with the word "Florence."