

responsible government for His Excellency to confer appointments—as he was charged with doing—without any consultation with his Ministers. They argued that he had gone contrary to the very spirit and essence of that system of government so reluctantly conceded by the Imperial Parliament only a few years before. Sir Charles demurred to the views entertained and publicly expressed by his Ministers; and he did so with characteristic candour and fearlessness. Resignation followed, and the Governor-General remonstrated with the retiring Ministers on the ground that they had taken not only an extreme but unwarrantable course. They maintained their position, however, and as neither they nor Sir Charles would yield, great excitement was the consequence. The Rev. Dr. Ryerson came out as the champion of the Governor-General in a lengthy and ably written defence of His Excellency. Mr. Sullivan, a Legislative Councillor and one of the ablest men at the Canadian bar, took up the other side of the question in an equally lengthy series of letters over an anonymous signature, but which fell short of the argumentative ability displayed in Dr. Ryerson's one hundred and fifty pages of what he termed "calm reasoning." Mr. Sullivan, being one of the retiring Ministers, was an interested party, and Dr. Ryerson was accused of inconsistency for writing against the party with which he had been allied. He was charged, too, with aiming at personal advancement. He certainly ceased to be President of Victoria College, and was appointed Chief Superintendent of Education for Upper Canada, a position he held with credit and honour to himself and the Province up to within a few years of his death. Dr. Ryerson was a remarkable man, and in a great measure self-taught. He was without doubt the most influential man in Canada outside of Parliament and the Government, while his successful career as an educationalist endeared him to the people generally. He was the framer and founder of our present admirable system of education, which is justly the pride and boast of Ontario. His efforts in behalf of one of whom he said, "While God gives me a heart to feel, a head to think, and a pen to write, I will not passively see honourable integrity murdered by grasping faction, and spotless character and generous humanity hewn down by party combination," were successful, for Sir Charles, having dissolved Parliament, was sustained by the people in the course he took. Mr. Baldwin was forced to seek the support of a Lower Canadian constituency; Mr. Hincks, the Inspector-General, was beaten by a comparatively obscure opponent; and Mr. Harrison, another member of the Cabinet, was so ignominiously thrown aside by the electors of Hamilton that he disappeared from the scene in the night between the first and second days of the contest, Sir Allan McNab, who was afterwards chosen Speaker of the Assembly, being returned by a large majority.

OCTOGENARIAN.

(Concluded next week.)

## AN OPEN WINDOW.

"This window open to the night."—POE.

SOME people have a passion for an open window—that is, when the thermometer is amenable to temperate influences and stands at any reasonable height. These same people, let it be observed, have also a decided preference for certain seasons, days, and hours. Spring, Saturday, and sundown—or, rather, the space between sundown and the first night, the gloaming—are cabalistic words, perhaps, to most in-door workers; especially are they so to the student-teacher, who finds in each "respite and nepenthe" from work-a-day vexations, and comfort and inspiration for those hours of relaxation, or work in another form, which he may properly call his own.

But not only must the window be an open one, and the thermometer satisfactory, there must be other adjuncts present to complete the sense of perfect enjoyment. There must be at least one picture, and there must be books. As for animate society, in the true sense of the term, a human companion may sometimes be desirable, sometimes not. Of course, the window should be a study-window; the books—more of them anon—will, of necessity, be there; the picture—the glorious landscape, a country landscape, framed in by the window in question; and the companion, if any—well! female—age, undecided, to suit taste, poetical, pretty, and sweet. If of the opposite sex—age, anywhere from thirty to a hundred; not particular as to looks; literary, good-natured, something of an idealist and naturalist, and not too loquacious. If, with these accompaniments, and ordinary health, a paradise of two hours' duration cannot be reconstructed from the debris of "the Fall," then there is something wrong with the weather or the digestion.

Let us for the nonce imagine ourselves seated at such an open window, to see what sort of paradise may be constructed from the elements left by sin and fall.

Some flowerets of Eden ye still inherit,  
But the trail of the serpent is over them all.

Is this true at all times? Perhaps not. The following lines by the same hand are preferable:

You may break, you may shatter the vase, if you will,  
The scent of the roses will cling to it still.

Here is a chestnut tree, if you like! a vast pyramid of palmate leafage, every separate leaflet fingering the balmy air, and all along the branches, cresting the sprays, smaller pyramids—or, rather, cones—of snow-white blossoms, with petals like crumpled tissue-paper dipped in milk, splashed, just where the stamens spring from the base, with wine drippings, crimson and amber. The great bursting sprays

look in at the open casement, as though to meet us face to face, and give us good-night greeting. Standing under the gloom of the leafage in the early morning you hear the hum as of a populous city in the distance, the voices of the bees, great fellows with suits of velveteen, slashed with yellow braid and dusted with flower-pollen.

O velvet bee, you're a dusty fellow,  
You've powdered your legs with gold!

Yes, with the gold issued from the mint of Nature, bearing the seal and impress of Heaven's High Regent in its face.

The great branches, in the morning-tide, sway and balance in the southerly breeze with a sound as of many rustling voices—or, rather, of one universal voice—low-pitched and tender, and telling of all beautiful things, uttering in very deed

A pleasant noise till noon,

the "worship without words" of the dead poet. It tells of expansive plains and broad rivers, of reedy wastes and wave-lapped shores, of wood vistas vocal with the song of the mocking-bird, and shrub-dotted areas swept by the magic pageant of the Southern spring, haunted by bright-winged butterflies, the children of the sun. Anon, it lulls, fainting utterly out, to rise again presently in shriller cadence as it sings now of the plateau and the peak, of mountain slopes and crested heights towering to blue skies, from whose fissured sides is brought the echo of the gray pine woods and the maple lands, musical as is the shade, beneath which we stand, with the jubilant voices of Nature.

Hard by the chestnut with its broad, umbrageous leafage, springs a rowan, the graceful mountain ash, whose clustered red beads in the autumn-time look like little islets of coral in a sea of gray atmosphere. At present it is in blossom, or rather, semi-blossom, with greenish-white tufts of half-opened flowerets topping the beautiful feathery sprays, that seen against the clear sky look like ferns in lace work against a backing of pearl. The bees as yet do not seem to affect these tufts of opening bloom, but keep clustered round the chestnut panicles, clinging there like so many aerial John Gilmors to their swaying steeds, and gleaning and humming to their hearts' content.

A lady-bird flies in and settles on the window sill. It has come from the lilac clump just to the right of the garden path, separated from the rowan by a white wicket which fronts the road and the prospect beyond. It is a beautiful little creature, this fairy insect with its orange mailed surcoat, on which are placed Argus-like, the black eyes of the family crest, the patent of Herald's College. For, we must recollect, the lady-bird comes from a very ancient family; indeed there is a rumour to the effect that its direct ancestor was a fellow voyager with Noah in the Ark. It is, nevertheless, a very harmless and unpretentious little creature. You may let it rest on your hand and examine its armorial bearings for yourself, ere the tiny orange hemisphere parts, and from beneath the plates stretch two gauzy liliputian sails, very epitomes of pinions, and away she goes, back to the great purple tassels that are swinging soft fragrance from their petalled censers all through the long spring twilight.

There is but one thing wanting to complete the picture at our open window, so far as floral externals go. We miss the long strings of the yellow laburnum, the "golden rain" of the German poets. But a laburnum with lilacs on the one side, and a horse-chestnut and rowan on the other, all in bloom together, would be too much of Paradise for any one poor mortal to enjoy at any one time. So we comfort ourselves, and are thankful for what we have, nor waste time in repining for what we have not.

Hark! there is a louder whir among the chestnut blooms. Surely a monster bee indeed must stand sponsor for that stentorian outburst of quasi-buzzing melody. But it is not a bee at all. Here is the author of the disturbance, a humming-bird! and it rests, actually rests beneath our very eyes, not six feet away on a tender branch that scarcely quivers to the touch of the fairy visitant.

Thou happy, happy humming bird!

And surely no living creature is happier. It sits there for minutes, and we watch it breathlessly; it is a marvel of beauty and airy grace, a winged gem; its body a glossy metallic green; its head black as polished jet; its breast, white, and just where the under base of the beak joins the throat-feathers, and across the throat is drawn as with a brush a broad splash of vivid scarlet. There it sits, its keen, black, bead-like eyes peering this way and that, while its long and delicate bill, capillary-like, almost in its attenuated dimensions, moves rhythmically to the sidelong motions of the tiny head. At length it tires and the music of motion recommences, literally and figuratively. The rapid palpitations of the wings make the little creature look more like a magnified insect than bird. Were it not for the graceful lines of the body and the tiny crumpled-up feet below, we should mistake it for such. Ah, ladies! such feet for slippers! To which the glass ones of Cinderella were as nothing. There it hovers and probes now one bloom now another, its black eyes twinkling, its wings a gauzy maze of motion, and its little green body like an emerald iris suspended between, in a flexible and ever-ranging curve, that no earthly artist can imitate, that puts Hogarth's line of beauty itself in the shade. Something startles it, and like an iridescent flash it is gone, and with it something too of light and life has vanished. The world is darker than before. We begin to feel, that really, we have here a just cause for complaint, and are about to formulate our grievance in the guise of a semi-articulate murmur of querulousness, when a sudden gush of fragrance comes from the lilac clump, and a great yellow bee swings

himself like a gymnast from a blossom trapeze in our very faces, and lo! we are soothed and happy again—and behold, everything is very good!

But the picture, the landscape has been forgotten, and we have said nothing as yet of a pert and familiar sparrow, clamorous, like all his tribe, that chirrups and flirts his tail at us, in a style that would put the Mikado to shame, and in a most exasperating fashion, every time we appear at the window. Nor have we noticed the robins, nor a great "steel-blue" dragon-fly, a knight-errant, possibly, in search of adventure, that wheels in resplendent mail before the wicket.

The burnished dragon-fly is thine attendant,  
And tilts against the field,  
And down the listed sunbeam rides resplendent  
With steel-blue mail and shield.

Nor have we spoken of the white butterflies that flicker like falling apple blossoms through the tender shade. It is really sometimes difficult to distinguish the butterfly from the snow-drift of the orchard at this time of the year. We must honour these with but scant notice and pass on to the picture.

As yet we have spoken but of the foreground, the foliage at hand, whose blossoms are in our faces and breath in our nostrils. The middle distance of the picture seems to be mostly bloom, a tangled wilderness of pink and white, with here and there great lilac splashes and now and then a tag of scarlet bravery, while underneath the cloistered shadows has been dropped the golden tribute of spring, largess to the herald of all-triumphant June. But this is in the morning, when the dandelion galaxy, looking up from the green earth to the blue sky, pays mute homage before the imperial Eye of Day itself. In the evening, when the purple shadows lie along the hills, and the last streaks of crimson faint from the western horizon, and the cool gray wings of the twilight droop over the scene, these fold their many-petalled radiances to slumber under the falling dew till morning.

But out beyond the blossom is seen the distance, the country; for the town lies behind us on the other side. The country, now blue in the haze of distance, with purpling contrasts not yet without suggestions of the green raiment of the noontide. Spectral-like, the tall trees raise their outline toward the ashen sky, where, even now, a star looks down, as the hour becomes later, and the bee-hum is going out from the trees, and the winged anthems of another insect host and a concert of many fragrances takes the place of the day-choruses around the chestnut spires and the lilac tassels.

The night closes and nature sleeps, nursing its wearied children in its pulseless bosom. But the window is yet open, for the weather is mild, and seated in the dusk, we can still linger and muse, untroubled by the entrance, promiscuous and unconventional, of beetle or fly, to abrade one's facial prominences, or outrage the sensibilities of the poetic mind.

And now for the books! The complement to the picture. That which makes our conception of the open window complete. True, they are of little use to us at present, eve-dreaming at a casement over a line of lilac-bordered palings; but, nevertheless, they are with us, ministers of the hour. We feel their presence though we see them not; for they are there behind in the shadow of the chamber, ranged in their trim rows, unseen—suggestive thought—unseen, yet there. The surviving mementoes of dead genius, the immortal relics of mortality, draped in the gloom of night, yet existent, as, we like to think, are the soul beings of the originators, though their bodies have long mouldered in the gloomy vaults of dissolution.

But the book, though an indispensable adjunct, must be suited to the scene and hour. There is an eternal fitness of association as of other things, too often neglected. Mention not Macaulay. What is that brilliant "book in breeches" to us? His ruffled shirt bosom was never bleached in the plebeian dew-drippings of dandelions, and has no place beside the humming-bird's motley. Nor do we desire Milton. We have no wish to dream of a fallen world, with the semblance of such a very real Eden before and around us. Not even Shakespeare do we want, for to-night is sacred and we would be rid of universal humanity. We can endorse his songs, and suggestions of forest vistas, and banks "whereon the wild thyme blows," and moon-lit gardens, but we wish to have no intercourse just now with bearded Moors, nor bloodthirsty Jews, nor defiant Romans, no, nor with Christians either. We may possibly make exceptions, under protest, to the one companion, if she be an angel, or he—asleep or dumb. We want no philosophers with their *cogito, ergo sum*, or other transcendently novel speculations, nor historians, with their musty fables and political clap-traps, nor Dantean geniuses of the red-pepper type, with inspirations reeking of hell and woe, nor every-day twaddlers of every-day commonplaces, of rant and gossip and cant and gullibility. No, the scene, the hour and the window are sacred to the names of a chosen few, and there in the dark back-ground are they, silent suns, now sunk behind the horizon of sentient being, but at a wish to blaze forth in all the glory of noontide splendour and perennial freshness. There is old Isiaak Walton with his dream rivers under the quiet banks, the wave lapping at his feet round the rushes and the lilies, line upon the stream and volume in pocket.

There is White of Selborne, boon companion of nature, haunter of the quiet lanes and familiar of the hedgerows. There is Wood, whose pages are a constant nature-feast. There are Darwin and Lubbock, who philosophise and prattle in the same breath of all things lofty and low,