

we will go?" And it avails not to say, "My dear, this is the gateway into the land of Evangeline, into Acadie, home of the happy."

For, actually, most of the picturesque that is yet manifest, we find on the colored lithographic advertisements plastered on the walls by the managers of thoroughfares. These somewhat tawdry suggestions of the poetical, may be supposed to engage some brief attention, to an end more practical, or it may be economical. I think the poet may be by this time fledged, though not full-plumed, who shall do justice to the railway; but really to us, there is, exteriorly at least little of the romantic in an ordinary train-station. But the shell of creation does not, happily, contain all imaginative possibilities on its outside; there is a kernel full of meat to him who can get at it, given the penetrative spirit, and the cunning, subtle genius, never credited till it discloses and approves itself, then all the rest is easy; the marvels of science—themselves the concrete poetry of the time—are translated into that rare essence which is distilled in such secret laboratories as the genii hold the keys of; these genii being named among us, Shakespeare, Dante, Browning, and the like, for our greater convenience in classification. But poetry is in the soul, if anywhere. As for this station, it is muggy and close, and tobacco-smoke is all pervasive. We are glad to seek the platform, and God's great aerial ocean, like His aqueous, too vast to be altogether polluted. Whoso hath lungs, sound to the deepest cell, let him expand them, and be thankful. There are some alive to whom it is even pain to breathe.

On the train we find at least the poetry of motion. We sit at the open window, watching long and silently the shifting landscape as we glide along. Twenty years we, who sit side by side watchfully, have known since last we traversed these scenes together. There is a wistfulness in the gaze that looks beyond the things seen, following the pearls slipping from life's string into that oblivion whence only a transitory memory rescues them. The sheeny circles of this valley stream, we cross and re-cross, are not quite so bright as they were when we first went over these rattling bridges; but they lead, as of old, to a place where the heart has rest. There is many a bit of rural prettiness, a snug orchard plot, a rustic crossing over a sunny dimpling brook, a farmstead half buried in trees and shrubbery, a picturesque drive-way, or bit of sheltered road, with a team careering over it. A certain Arcadian quietude, a remoteness from the roaring passage-ways of the world, a Sabbathic leisureness and tranquillity distinguish this valley, marked more by the occasional emphasis of rushing trains. And with all variation in the immediate scenery, there is the abiding feature in the distance; it is the North Mountain range, forming in its direction the boundary of your view. We do not think these native features the loveliest our eyes ever looked upon, because they belong to our home-landscape; but we do discern an uniqueness most attractive, and a peculiarity of loveliness quite their own; nor do we wonder that stranger eyes come to look curiously, and afterward return to look delightedly.

"Where flows Annapolis along
Her apple-scented valley."

At Kentville the pause is long enough to enable the traveller to refresh himself. But the total amount of our refreshment is a deep draught of outside air, a walk down the

platform for the relief of restrained muscles, and a glance at familiar forms, that have not, at most, changed more than the gazer. It is a shady town lying on a little plateau or meadow, and well surrounded by hills. The county seat and a hostelry town, not only in this day of railways, but earlier, when the four or five horses drew the jostling coach, and the sound of Kilcup's whip was heard in the land—it has long disputed with Wolfville the right of eminence in this pleasant region of Kings. Here trains may pass, and trainmen and passengers may sup, and they who will do no other may wait and cultivate the sweet herb, patience; but I have noticed how thrifty a growth the acrid plant, its substitute, often attains.

And now we enter the country more distinctively Acadian, or the region of Grand-pre; and if we had before a feeling of neighborliness, all is now congenially familiar. We do not ride through with our "Evangeline," open on our knee, glancing from the text to the corresponding objective; but our memory-book is rustling in all its golden leaves, as with a breeze from Thessaly, and we get snatches of what the years have written there. Below us, as we glide along, is Port Williams; and beyond, the Cornwallis Valley; with the basin of Minas opening out before us, and Blomidon standing sentinel, as of old:

"This is that black rock bastion, based in surge,

Pregnant with agate and with amethyst,
Whose foot the tides of storied Minas scourge,
Whose austere top withdraws into its mist.
This is that austere Cape of fears and storm,
Whose towering front inviolable frowns
O'er vales Evangeline and love keep warm
Whose fame thy song, O tender singer,
crowns!

Yonder, across these reeling fields of foam
Came the sad threat of the avenging ships.
What profit now to know if just the doom,
Though harsh? The streaming eyes, the praying lips,

The shadow of inextinguishable pain,
The poet's deathless music—these remain!"

It is haunted ground, where men have lived and suffered; it is doubly hallowed where and when the poet has sung. We point out to our companion the dyked marshes, stretching away toward the basin; and all the broad expanse of the Grand-pre, covered in spring with the richest green, in autumn with waving crops, and later with multitudes of cattle.

We have reached the village—whereat we look out recognitively—which is misnamed Wolfville. This delightful locality, if it has any right, pre-eminent by situation and association, it is that of being called Acadia. But call it by what name you will, it loses no whit of its loveliness; and it deserves more attention than the tourist can give it in three minutes from the window of a railway train. Its marts and homes, suggestive of thrift and comfort, if not of elegance, and, o'er looking all its halls and dome of learning, are withdrawn into a depth of shade. Its picturesqueness and sylvanness of attire are well set forth in the following lines, by an appreciative citizen, Mr. J. F. Herbin:

"Lolling on a hill-side, dark with wood,
And orchards ripe and red she lovely lies;
Her spreading robes, her dress of many dyes,
Trail in the waters of the mur'ring flood.
About, the mountains ages old have stood
And watched her grow. From the dawn-rays
that rise,
To evening melting into farther skies,
The sun o'erarches her beatitude.

Here Beauty, Peace and Knowledge, closely tied,

Assert a happy sway 'mid sylvan scene.
The fresh salt breezes mingle with the smell
Of clover fields, the ripened hay beside;
And Nature, musing happy and serene,
Hath here for willing-man her sweetest spell."

We have little need to describe this much celebrated place with precision; to tell how cosily the village lies at the foot of the slope and along its side; how the hills which rise behind separate it from the valley of the Gaspereau; how prominent a landmark Acadia College is as you enter the village from the west; how the railway runs by the place, rather than through it, and skirts the edge of the Grand-pre; how the apples at the season when we write are peeping from the orchards, lying in "mellow fruitfulness" between the tourist luxuriating in his car, and the little thorpe he looks upon, which the poet's graceful fancies have adorned. To-day a purple haze is upon the landscape and the stretch of shining sea, and the islands and headland beyond. The day has been not altogether refulgent; but the evening sky is mellow, and its cheerful lights add a consecrating lustre to the scene.

As we shall not have occasion to visit this village during our present sojourn in Acadia, we may be pardoned for tarrying a trifle longer (that is, fancifully) than the railway time-table warrants. This, too, is "home, sweet home." The boy who walked these streets and rambled on these hills, and handled types hereabout in the office of a country newspaper, will not, I trust, look with ungentle eyes on the scene of his joys and sorrows of twenty-five years past. The *Acadian* newspaper—still extant, under the management of old friends of the writer—was then in its flourishing, vigorous youth, and the present writer was the somewhat innocent and unsophisticated devil of the establishment whence it was issued. The house is discernible on the hill from our present seat as we pass by; but re-vamped by architect and painter, like a *parvenu* elevated by fortune, it knows its old familiars no more. How often, on a summer evening, has the boy, released from the drudgery and confinement of the day, found the choicest delight in a book and a ramble along yonder road that winds between the hills! How often has he threaded yonder academic shades to the classic portal to meet with some student sympathizer, or to bear away some choice borrowed tome out of the library.

These walks, to our mind, are peopled with other forms than the eye discerns. As we stand at the outer door of the old office, at sunset, who is he who comes sauntering by with such a luxurious, jaunty, leisurely air? This is W—m. N—b—e, my elocutionary beau-ideal. He pauses to discuss poetry, and cites some favorite passage with such a bell-like tone, and perfect grace of manner, that we look after him, as he passes, and would fain summon him back to do it over again. He has taught us to dote on Poe; and we think he outrivals Booth when he recites the Raven. Being in this village he is of course of good Baptist stock; and that he is a proper shoot of a thrifty clerical vine his present fruitage declares. And who comes, with that prompt, decisive step; that tough and stalky well-compacted trunk; that well-squared philosophic head, darkly set on broad shoulders? It is our particular friend Ch—sl—y, the phrenological student. If we have any bumps, raised by the assertive brain, he can detect them unerringly.