

A TRIOLET.

SHE listened unto all I said,
And, sweetly smiling, answered, "Yes."
She blushed a lovely rosy red,
And listened unto all I said;
With earnest pleas her ears were fed,
And giving me her lips to press,
She listened unto all I said,
And, sweetly smiling, whispered, "Yes."

Brandon, Man.

A. MELBOURNE THOMPSON.

THE RAMBLER.

WHAT do we actually understand by the term suburban? When I say that I took a walk through a suburban district the other evening I do not mean that I threaded the luxurious upper precincts of St. George St., or Madison Avenue, Kensington Crescent or N. Sherbourne St., but that I found myself in a far humbler and more obscure neighbourhood characterized by staring red brick, children at play in the streets, and general dismalness; never mind where the locality was; whether pink or green on the gorgeous new map issued by the *Mail*, or the Directory Co.—I forget which—whether east or west, north or south. As I observed the listless women at the windows, worn out after all-day application to sewing, shop-tending, housework or washing dishes, the tired men ready only for bed or at best the perusal of the *Telegram*, and the stuffy though respectable character of the houses, an unaccountable depression overcame me. Yet not altogether unaccountable perhaps, since Mr. Kipling has recorded sentiments of a similar nature in his letters from Vermont. The terrible flatness, dulness, mediocrity of the locality struck me very forcibly and I may even say, sadly. The dwellers in that suburb have absolutely no pleasures. They have no time for self-improvement. It would be cruellest irony to talk to them of books. Try twelve hours' steady labour in a house yourself and see if, when dark falls, you are ready for books and culture. Many of these women, dressmakers and dressmakers' apprentices, general servants, laundresses, shop girls, tailoresses, rise at six and work till half-past five, break off for a cup of tea and work again till bed-time. Many of the men, while apparently enjoying shorter hours, put so much more bodily strength into their work that at eight o'clock they are exhausted too. A labourer in the fields is better off—far; he has at least the breath of heaven, the waving wheat, the glint of a kingfisher's wing, the music of the blackcap. These people live at the extreme end of this large town. There is nothing for them to go out and see, except other streets as uninteresting and other workers as unenlightened. Even the Island does not greatly attract, for it is three or four miles distant and one is tired getting there and getting back. See them out on the lake, huddled together on one of the large steamers, and they do not look particularly happy. Like many other deflections, this deflection is partly racial. The Anglo-Saxon element does not permit them to be happy. Happiness is wanting, sadly, strangely wanting in this prosperous and spacious new land. Why, even a People's Palace would be something, and yet—to how many optimistic minds would this hint carry treasonous and heretical opinions of a most forbidding description. Yet hear one of these poor people speak. I recently asked an Old Country person how she liked it out here. "You make more money, I suppose?" Yes; she admitted she could make more money. "And what do you do with it?" That appeared to be the difficulty. There was, she said, so much more to be done with it. "In Ireland, I had my Sunday suit and the rest of the week I went in print, but here I have to go in the fashions." One keeps the countenance, listens, looks grave. "And you will stay now you are here, I suppose." She supposed so. But she referred pointedly to the disappointments she and her party felt when arriving here. "They talked in Ireland of the money as almost lying in the streets. I never saw it. I know we have to work here as well as there. It's cruel, the talk—of the gold we should find here, and it's thinking we are we'll get it without lifting a hand. Then there's little to see beyond the city streets."

Given, as the *Spectator* says, a nation that does not drink wine, that is sober and cautious and conscientious and unimaginative, and you have the natural result of village life in Vermont, and it may be added town or suburban life in Canada. We can neither emulate the Sicilian nor the Franco-Canadian. We do not understand fêtes and pageants. If we get rich, we manage to amuse ourselves tolerably well, and only tolerably well; but if we remain poor, we have not the wit to become our own jig-makers, and cakes and ale have to be forever abandoned.

In fact, it seems to me that an older country, such as England, is the best place for the poor man. So long as his position in society is only low enough, he may manage to extract a certain amount of pleasure out of his surroundings. I could not seek to exalt the music-hall at the expense of the Baireuth Festival, but the former came to stay a number of years ago and nightly claims its open-mouthed grinning victims. Then go higher in the scale. Here is a young man of education, college taught if you like, who, though he forever remain obscure and unsuccessful in the walks of journalism or art, can yet enjoy his shilling seats at the best theatres in the world, can for

other shillings ramble among art treasures and books, can take trips into the country fraught with intense pleasure and instruction and interest. Better for such a one his European or English struggle, accompanied at least by glimpses of a life distant, varied, and better than his own, than the clerkship in the colonies under which his faculties dwindle and he becomes a mere toiler at a desk. But I am fully aware of the heresy I utter.

I have been so expectant of the slashing diatribes (I think "slashing diatribes" is, if not original, correct,) of my correspondent "Shining Light" that so far I have refrained from saying my customary words about School Closings. It is nice to be famous and delightful to be read, but still, one's duty to the country perforce makes one careful. I am not, however, going to say that I have also refrained from attending those peculiar forms of entertainment. Who would be so callous, so brutal, as to decline the "Bohemian Girl" arranged for two pianos and the "Tannhauser March" for four! Who could resist Anglicized renderings of Rossini arias and Verdi scenas given by a young person in pink cashmere and the most innocent of expressions? Who but must own the power and pathos of a Macaulay Lay, recited from memory (her teacher anxiously following in a book, behind the best drawing-room screen, two dollars and Japanese, at Eaton's, and conveniently disposed on the platform) by a young miss of tender years and small voice? Then the delightful crush, and the sitting on the stairs, and the smell of the coffee and the genial clergyman's well-worn speech, and the feminine clapping of hands, and all the mystery and charm of a late evening invasion of a "Ladies' School!" There is nothing else quite like it, and the worst of it is, it becomes an acquired taste, till lots of people, like the misguided creatures who swarm to weddings, scramble in like manner for invitations to that hilarious function, the School Closing. There is always a wag on these occasions; sometimes it is the clergyman and sometimes the French or German Professor. And I have long regarded the speeches, made by said clergyman or professor upon presentation of the prizes, gems in their way. The speaker is always so ready. The child is Dora Bright and the prize is "Maury"; for pre-eminence in geography of course. "I have here, Miss Dora, such a—such a—delightful book. I trust, I hope, nay, I am convinced that you will peruse it with the greatest eagerness and pleasure during the holidays. When you go to—ah—Mimico or to—ah—Oakville, or to the—Island, you will carry this—ah—charming work with you and appreciate all the more for having read it the wonders of the lakeshore, of the beach, of the—ah—country. Allow me, etc., etc." Needless to say how the face falls as furtively the pages are scanned, even though the child does not know that Maury is no longer an authority. Then, the literature and Latin prizes which fall to the same young person, giving an occasion indeed. "Language and Literature—essentially the young ladies' subjects. I am glad to see that the same fortunate and talented pupil takes both, hoping only that her companions will forgive her and extend the hand of reconciliation. This pupil's name is familiar, I see; Mary Jones, daughter, I presume, of my old friend, Judge Jones, whom I see in the audience. Miss Mary, I have very great pleasure in congratulating a worthy daughter of an eminent father, and presenting, etc., etc." Consternation of the Faculty, giggling among the pupils, wrath in the bosom of Mr. Justice Jones and his daughter Guinevere, who is the stupidest girl in the class of which Mary, the daughter of Baker Jones, is such an ornament.

Speaking of the uninteresting and somewhat tame nature of many transatlantic phases, I would draw attention to a little sketch in the *June Dom. Ill. Monthly*. When I say that I do not consider the story distinguished by literary skill I wish to say nothing invidious; the author may or may not be capable of better things. I refer only to the subject matter. Here is what, if we wish to be veracious and Canadian, we must depict. "McLarty's Kicking B." is true, as Mr. Reid's "Mortgage" picture is true. Whether we like them or not, there they are and there they must remain, as approximate truths of Canadian life and scenery. But Mr. Reid chooses and places his colours too carefully. Artistic license, I suppose, permits him to mingle old gold, dull blue and olive green. In a Canadian farmhouse it would more likely be rose-pink, scarlet, apple-green and white patch-work quilts; an oilcloth table-cover and a mat of home construction, like one I once saw representing the Lion and Unicorn *et al.*, in primary colours upon a ground of old trouserings, gray, black and brown.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SCULPTURE.

To the Editor of THE WEEK:

SIR,—Please accept thanks for the publication in your last issue of my letter in reply to one of your correspondents. Immediately following this letter, in "Art Notes," I noticed an apology or amende. This is open to criticism, but it could not possibly interest the public to pursue the question, and the explanation is taken as it seems to be meant. Apart from this, there was one passage in my letter which, referring as it did, in a general sense, to the

nobility of sculpture and the ends and aims of the art, I should be glad to have corrected. My manuscript, probably, was to blame, for the substitution of the word *three* for *true*, which affected the sense of the passage. The sentence should have read thus: "The *true* functions of sculpture limit it to the treatment of lofty, dignified and elevating subjects, which it aims forever, humanly speaking, to perpetuate." With this as a text, it may not be inopportune to offer some reflections and observations upon sculpture. I am well aware that of late years there have been many conspicuous and amazing departures from the rule embodied in the above words, by those who consider themselves, and are considered by their admirers, prominent artist-sculptors; but I think that it must be admitted by all who have observed with intelligent interest, or studied with reverence, the acknowledged masterpieces of antique or more modern sculpture, that this is a rule and a principle of the art. Sculpture must be, in its aims, lofty, dignified and elevating, and, furthermore, it must be true. True, not necessarily in the sense of the closest realism in the portrayal of a subject, for the desired result may be weakened in this very way, but true in all profound and underlying essentials, and these essentials of truth, it is not paradoxical to say, are heightened and made manifest by a proper idealization. The power of idealization and discrimination in its use, constitutes art.

There have been in the Toronto press of late, some curious references to sculpture, and notably among them are the views of a writer, given about a week ago, in one of the daily papers. This writer, who may be a professional artist, says, in his article upon the O.S.A. exhibition: "For some reason or other the interest which Canadians take in sculpture is slight, and to the world at large sculpture is supposed to be the least attractive of arts: although the fact that the exhibits by sculptors in this year's salons exceed those of the painters, leaves the matter open to question." With no desire for "odious" comparisons, and certainly with no intention of depreciating painting—for a life long love and respect for this art prevents that—one may be allowed to take strong exceptions to the first two propositions which the writer quoted has advanced. Painting and the graphic arts, engravings, etchings, drawings, may be, 1st, grand, elevating, ennobling; 2nd, they may be at once beautiful and instructive, decorative and pleasing; 3rd, they may be humorous and diverting, while skilfully executed. All of these qualities undoubtedly have their uses and their charms. True sculpture, however, can only be the first, and it seems to be as much of an injustice to Toronto to say that sculpture is not cared for, as to say that there is no appreciation here for an oratorio. In music, opera may, indeed, be more popular, and comic opera may draw the largest crowds. But, is there no difference of value in the appreciation?

Every celebration of the Battle of Ridgeway attests the value of sculpture, even though the soldiers' monument in the Park may lay no claim to being a masterpiece. When, even here in Toronto, artists are every day using, and pupils studying from, plaster casts of statuary, how can it be said that the interest in sculpture is only slight? That it is utterly erroneous to say that "to the world at large sculpture is the least attractive of arts," is shown by the indisputable fact that throngs of visitors from all over the world are continuously viewing the masterpieces of sculpture in the museums, galleries and public places in Europe, while in the New World the greatest solicitude is shown for such acquisitions, and the collections in a number of places on this continent are becoming every day more important. The question as to the correctness of these propositions seems to have arisen in the writer's own mind, because he would seem to speak "by the book," of "the fact that the exhibits by the sculptors in this year's salons exceed those of the painters." It is to be presumed that he refers especially to the Paris salon, and he may have scanned its catalogue. The statement is startling, but simply incredible. Even with the time-honoured restrictions upon the art of sculpture removed, its traditions ignored and its canons subverted, there could not be found subjects for such an avalanche of works, and if the subjects were found there would not be time for them to be executed. I have not seen the Royal Academy catalogue, but it is safe to say that there has not been displayed *one piece of sculpture* to fifty paintings. If the writer referred to has looked into the matter at all, there must have been a most remarkable (numerically) display of sculpture at the Paris salon. If one-third in number only to the paintings, it would be prodigious. The information is startling, for the result would be simply and inevitably a debasement and degradation of sculpture. Its deliberate dethronement, in France at least, from the lofty position achieved by the ancients, upheld by the great Italian masters, and transmitted to modern times by lesser but illustrious men. It would indeed be like another revolution if, through this French school and the national characteristics of audacity and irreverence, a grand and dignified art should be degraded to the commonplace and worse. It would verily be like desecrating a sanctuary.

The influence of Paris upon art is well known. Whether on the whole it is for the good or evil of painting, let the painters determine. As to sculpture it is not possible to conceive such an efflorescence as has been above suggested, but it is very reasonable indeed to suppose that the general tendency of the French schools of sculpture is to the grievous deterioration from high ideals. No people of modern times, perhaps no people of any time, have produced as many sculptors as the French. They are alert,