

for selling skim milk diluted with water. A few days after he fined him for feeding his cows with salt so that he could lay the blame of dilution upon the cow. All the Solons of Athens would get the slip from such a man.

It is proposed to abolish the system of tollage on the entire Island, the revenue of the eleven toll houses to be made up—one half by the Government, one quarter by Montreal and the remainder by the municipality through which the road runs.

In reference to the dispute between the city and the Richelieu Navigation Company in connection with the contract for ferry steamers to St. Helen's Island, and which Company threatens to throw up for want of returns, the Council appointed a man to count the passengers for two weeks. The surprising result is that from 40,000 to 45,000 passengers crossed, which, at five cents apiece, supplies enough of "return" in two weeks to enable the steamers to run for four months!

The St. Lawrence Refinery has just performed another financial manoeuvre, by shutting down in the midst of the season for preserving. The explanations given by the employers are, it is needless to say, somewhat in conflict with those given by the employes. The men are grumbling that the new refinery is built in a neighbourhood where living is much more costly than it was in Griffintown before the fire. They were thrown idle in this way last winter for ten weeks. This refinery has scored the day of rest out of its calendar by working seven days per week. The *Ironmaster*, of Pittsburg, the new apostle of religious economics, has overlooked this attitude, at least, of the question.

The Montreal Café Company will soon open its first experiment, a five-storied building, of which it has taken a two-years' lease at \$1,500, and which is being fitted up with luxury in varnished white wood and bevelled glass panellings.

Sir Somers Vine, Assistant Secretary of the Imperial Institute, is going the round of the colonies, the champion of the institution in which he is interested—a building which is to cost £200,000 sterling, which is intended as a memorial of the Jubilee of our beloved Queen, and as a means of educating the British Empire about itself, a scheme to which Canada has already contributed \$100,000. Having visited Australia, New Zealand and all our own Western Provinces to invite their co-operation he proceeded to Quebec, the Maritime Provinces and the West Indies. He addressed a meeting of the Council of the Board of Trade, to whom he explained the aims, scope, and operations of the Institute, and who pledged him the heartiest response of the people of Canada. When Sir Somers succeeds in placing the Great Britons on the level of knowledge regarding the colonies which the Greater Britons have reached regarding the mother country, his Institute, with all its royal patronage, may serve a noble end. But when every British newspaper prefers to educate its readers about Canada through Philadelphia or Washington; when our own Mr. Grant Allen, as a successful competitor in one of the leading public educational institutions of England was refused the prize because he was not a British subject (!); and when an eminent educationalist in England (in *England*, not *Britain*) in an important correspondence with an institution of learning in Canada that I happen to know, sought to ingratiate himself by tendering his sympathy with Canada "in her long struggle against slavery," it may be supposed that Sir Somers could spend his time and energies to more advantage without undertaking the unpleasantness of an ocean or a channel voyage. In England (that is Britain this time) possession is ten tenths of patriotism, and as John Bull naturally enough likes to see all he possesses, he has grown to believe he possesses no more than he sees.

VILLE MARIE.

THE SONNET.—II.

SONNETS ON BOOKS.

MONTAIGNE, with that charming openness which makes each of his readers a confidential friend, confesses as follows with regard to his want of method in acquiring wisdom:—"There is nothing that I will cudgel my brains about; no, not knowledge, of what price soever. I seek in the reading of books only to please myself by an irreproachable diversion. . . . If one book do not please me I take another, and never meddle with any but at such times as I am weary of doing nothing." From this and other remarks concerning his habits of study it might be doubted, if we did not know him better, whether the complaisant old philosopher really entertained any personal love of books—such a real affection, for instance, once led Charles Lamb to reverently kiss an old folio copy of Chapman's "Homer," or constrained Leigh Hunt to write (after meekly expressing a hope that he himself might live on, a little while after death, in book form for the delight of his friends)—"If fortune turns her face once more in kindness upon me before I go I may chance, some quiet day, to lay my overbearing temples on a book and so have the death I most envy."

It is an ideal love, this bibliophilism, and becoming largely lost in an age of cheap literature, when the masterpieces of all ages vie in price and vile printing with the diseased brain-ramblings of men and women who write "with a low-necked pen." Cheap books are chiefly bought to be sold again to the Shylocks of second-hand bargains or to be lent until they are lost. Because they can always be replaced, they can never be prized—except perhaps by

some poor student who collects a small library, at the expense of one good book, in the dim hope of some day being able to replace them one by one with more fitting and respectable editions.

It has been taught by certain old religions that the souls of the departed linger round those they loved and left on earth to guide and protect them during their lives. In this age of religious disenchantment such a simple theory of sweet consolation and strengthening grace is lost to belief; but to some, who find more truth and friendship in books than in humanity, the living thoughts of dead men assume the functions of those older spirits. For many reasons it is preferable to commune with the dead than converse with many living authors. Personally they may not have been one whit better while they lived; but vanity, intolerance, arrogance, and all the baser parts of their mental nature were buried with their bodies and find no place in the souls of their books. For books are stoical philosophers and neither blush at our praise nor pale at our anger; therefore the task of resurrecting the mortal faults, follies and frailties of those who have left us their better and immortal parts for our use and delight seems ghoulish and it is one of the ominous signs of a vitiated age when biographers become inhuman. The beauty of a flower is not enhanced by the dissection of its dead leaves.

It would be surprising if the sonnet had not been employed to embody some thoughts on books, yet it is noteworthy that there exist only few of this class.

One of the earliest sonnets in the language was addressed by Henry, Earl of Surrey, one of the transplanters of that Italian flower of verse, to the other, Sir Thomas Wyatt, the elder, who paraphrased the Seven Penitential Psalms in verse. It is to be remarked that the form of sonnet employed was not Petrarchan, but that now known as Shakespearian, consisting of three differently rhymed quatrains closed by a couplet.

PRaise OF CERTAIN PSALMS OF DAVID, TRANSLATED BY SIR T. W., THE ELDER.

The great Macedon that out of Persia chased
Darius, of whose huge power all Asia rung,
In the rich ark Dan Homer's rimes he placed,
Who feigned geste of heathen princes sung.
What holy grave, what worthy sepulture,
To Wyatt's Psalms should Christians then purchase?
Where he doth paint the lively faith and pure,
The steadfast hope, the sweet return to grace
Of just David, by perfect penitence;
Where rulers may see in a mirror clear
The bitter fruit of false concupiscence
How Jewry bought Uria's death full dear,
In princes' hearts God's scourge imprinted deep,
Ought them awake out of their sinful sleep.

Although ostensibly written in praise of his friend Wyatt's verse, the real object was deeper. The allusion to the marriage-mania of King Henry VIII. is too pointed to be mistaken; but fearless Surrey had a still more bitter and rebuking sonnet "of Sardanapalus' dishonourable life and miserable death," which is said to have raised the royal ire to the height of the scaffold, so far as the writer was concerned. We reserve this for our consideration of some political sonnets.

The accent of "purchase" and the good old word "geste" (deeds) are the only peculiarities to modern ears.

One of the most criticized sonnets, so far as its authorship and internal style is concerned, is attributed to the reputed friend and probable Italian tutor of Shakespeare, Giovanni Florio, who is also supposed on rather slender grounds to have been burlesqued as Holophernes. Florio was the author of several interesting books, and is quite a curious figure on the Elizabethan page of literature as well as a chronic crux to Shakespearian students. The pedantic quaintness of the titles to his books are amusing, as "Queen Anna's New World of Words" for a new edition of his Italian dictionary; "First Fruits, which yield Familiar Speech, Witty sentences, and Golden Sayings;" "Second Fruits, to be gathered of Twelve Trees, of divers but delightful Tastes to the Tongues of Italian and English men;" but the book we are chiefly interested in at present is the "Essays written in French by Michael, Lord of Montaigne, etc. Done into English by John Florio." Prefixed to the second folio edition, published in 1613, was a sonnet of anonymous authorship. It has been attributed to Shakespeare, Daniel, Matthew Gwinne, and other contemporary writers; but some allow to "Resolute" John Florio himself, in the absence of definite facts to the contrary, the credit of its composition. The sonnet is as follows:

CONCERNING THE HONOUR OF BOOKS.

Since honour from the honourer proceeds,
How well do they deserve, that memorize
And leave in books for all posterities
The names of worthies and their virtuous deeds;
When all their glory else, like water-weeds
Without their element, presently dies
And all their greatness quite forgotten lies,
And when and how they flourish'd no man heeds!
How poor remembrances are statues, tombs,
And other monuments that men erect
To princes, which remain in closed rooms
Where but a few behold them, in respect
Of books, that to the universal eye
Show how they lived; the other where they lie.

There are several passages in this sonnet that remind us of Shakespeare's thoughts on the subject of fame and the world's memory; such as that bitterly sarcastic remark of Hamlet, "Die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year."

In the speech of Gloucester, in the opening of the second part of King Henry VI., the phrase is used, "Blotting your names from books of memory." But the sestet in the Florio sonnet bears a remarkable likeness to the famous 55th sonnet of Shakespeare, which, as it deals

directly with the preserving power of books, as opposed to more pretentious remembrances, finds its fitting place here. It has been entitled "A Living Monument" and "The Poet's Praise Immortal."

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme;
But you shall shine more bright in these contents
Than unswept stone, besmear'd with sluttish time.
When wasteful war shall statues overturn,
And broils root out the work of masonry,
Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn
The living record of your memory.
'Gainst death and all oblivious enmity
Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room,
Even in the eyes of all posterity
That wear this world out to the ending doom.
So till the judgment that yourself arise,
You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.

As a curious example of how much thought and beauty can be destroyed by translation, we append a French rendering of this sonnet by Alfred Coppin:

Non, les tombeaux des rois faits de marbre et d'airain
Ne vivront pas autant que ma puissante muse.
Et votre nom chanté par mon vers souverain
Défiera le granit épais que le temps use.
Quand la guerre partout déchainant ses fureurs
Détruira les palais, ces temples de l'histoire,
Ni le feu, ni le fer d'infâmes massacreurs
Ne pourront entamer, ô Seigneur, votre gloire.
En dépit de l'oubli, cet ami de la mort,
L'avenir vous attend et vous réserve un sort;
Votre nom si fameux deviendra la patrie
Des générations à venir; c'est ainsi
Que pour l'éternité vous pourrez vivre ici
Sous le regard épris de la race future.

The construction of the Florio sonnet is similar to the earlier ones by Sir Thomas Wyatt, who very probably wrote the first of this verse in England, and consists of a two-rhymed octave, a quatrain, and a closing couplet. This form is not liked by certain critics, and the closing couplet is offensive to such refined ears as Mr. Hall Caine and Mr. William Sharp wear when sounding sonnets; but it was employed by Spenser, Shakespeare, Watson, Chapman, and in fact most of the early sonneteers, nor does it seem inappropriate or jarring, except perhaps in very few instances. Instead of annoying one like the hanging of a door at the close of a piece of fine music, as Mr. Sharp suggests, the rhymed close seems rather like the rolling away of the last final touch of chords harmonious; and when a critic of Mr. Hall Caine's signal ability "refers to the closure in question as being as offensive to his ear as the couplets at the ends of scenes and acts in some Shakespearian plays," one can only smile at the trick of words that would foist an unfair comparison on the unsuspecting reader. If Mr. Hall Caine's judgment is led by the ear in this way, he must not imagine himself capable of drawing all his readers after him by the same easy process, however Orphean his critical word-music may be.

The end couplet seems a positive necessity in certain sonnets, and after a study of several hundred of the best known, the charge against the couplet ending appears unfounded. We would set up against the critics such examples as Blanco White's "Night and Death," Keat's "Last Sonnet," Arnold's "Shakespeare," etc.

But to return to the Florio sonnet, in spite of Professor Minto's able analysis and argument, the supposition that this was penned by Shakespeare is rather far-fetched, chiefly on structural grounds, because it is written in the earlier form—the octave having only two rhymes—whereas Shakespeare invariably used differently rhymed quatrains. It agrees more with the style of Daniel in its Petrarchan build, and Daniel was a friend and fellow-office-holder of Florio; but it is only fair, in the absence of definite information to the contrary, to give Florio himself credit for the authorship. It may not be uninteresting to recall Sir William Cornwallis's description of John Florio and his translation: "It is translated into a style admitting as few idle words as our language will endure. It is well fitted in this new garment, and Montaigne speaks now good English. It is done by a fellow less beholden to nature for his fortune than wit, yet lesser for his face than his fortune. The truth is, he looks more like a good fellow than a wise man; and yet he is wise beyond either his fortune or education."

The only book in which Shakespeare's autograph occurs is a copy of Florio's "Montaigne," and was purchased by the British Museum authorities for £120. In the same place is another copy of the same book with the autograph of Ben Jonson.

In another work by Florio, called "Second Fruits," etc., is a sonnet addressed to the author by his friend, Phaeton, which has also been the subject of much dispute as to its authorship. The same objection holds against the Shakespearian theory, viz., that it is written in the Petrarchan octave instead of the separate quatrain style; but it has been urged in both instances that the author adopted the Italian type as a compliment to his Italian friend. The conceit of the sonnet is an excellent play of thought and fancy on the names of the author and his book. It is here given in its original form:

PHAETON TO HIS FRIEND FLORIO.

Sweete friend whose name agrees with thy increase,
How fit a rivall art thou of the Spring?
For when each branche hath left his flourishing,
And green-lockt Sommer's shadie pleasures cease,
She makes the Winter's stormes repose in peace,
And spends her franchise on each living thing:
The dazies sprout, the little birds doo sing,
Hearbes, gummies, and plants do vaunt of their release.
So when that all our English witts lay dead
(Except the Laurell that is evergreene),
Thou with thy Frutes our barrennes o're-spread,
And set thy flowrie pleasure to be seene.
Sutch frutes, sutch flowerets of moralitie,
Were nere before brought out of Italy.