

ANACREONTIC.

(From the French of Théophile Gautier.)

THOUGH I love thee, O my Poet,
Leash thy love, lest mine should fly,
Like the modest dove, unquiet,
Up into a blushing sky.

See, the bird that hears a whisper,
Sails away in swift surprise;
Such a winged thing is Passion—
Follow it, away it flies!

Standing rather like the marble
Mercury mute beneath the tree;
Soon descending, calm and fearless,
Thine own birdling shalt thou see.

And around thy brows shall flutter
White and palpitating wings;
Snowy whirlwind that in passing
Airs of freshness with it brings!

And the timid dove so tender
On thy shoulder will alight;
And its rosy beak will render
Kiss for kiss to thy delight!

Ottawa.

SERANUS.

SAUNTERINGS.

OCTOBER with his legions, all in russet and gold, has besieged us for a fortnight, and at last we have capitulated. In our gardens, on our terraces, up and down our dusty streets, we may watch his gaily uniformed forces incontinently routing the green doublet troops of June and July, whose gentle domination we have known so long. To our deaf, human ears the battle is soundless, save for the angry rustle of the wind-swept attack, the occasional report of a falling ash-berry, or the explosion of chestnut-bombs upon the sidewalk. Yet the birds must have heard the noise of battle, for they have nearly all gone; and Psyche must have informed the butterflies, for they too have disappeared and left not a wing behind. Bloodless, too, we are inclined to believe the encounter; yet, behold the sanguinary aspect of the Virginia creeper and the more bellicose of the maples! Clearly the victory is as hard now as it will be short-lived, for shall we not presently surrender to November with his unruly lieutenants, and find ourselves, as his disreputable flying squadrons whirl through our streets, verily under mob rule!

Perhaps, after all, we are not unfortunate in our dulness to the multitudinous tiny vibrations which accompany Nature's performance of her perfect work. As it is, we miss, perhaps, much nameless music written in inconceivable scores; we lose Nature's undertones and minor melodies, which must be surpassing sweet. But could we catch her never-ending speech, her divine silences would not be. And yet so necessary and so dear to that which is best in us do we find these mute moods of hers, that we would not exchange them for any unguessed good, even admission to her most exclusive and classical *musicales*.

Such silences brood often in October. The sunlight falls lazily through the haze that possesses the land; there is no stir among the crisping leaves; the great bursting horse-chestnuts hang motionless in the quiet air. There is everywhere a sense of accomplishment and mellow fruition and pause. Nature, well content with the results of her summer labour, is taking a siesta in the sun before the serious necessity arises that she should creep under white blankets for a longer season of repose. Down in the orchard there is great sleepiness from over-exertion; the very yellowing grass tufts have wilted down into somnolency in the warm, still sunlight. Even the stray robin who has delayed his departure southward on account of the mountain-ash berries is entirely subdued by the hush that prevails; and his flitting shadow beneath the rowan-tree is not more noiseless than he. It is the time of times when no Canadian should have any distracting occupation which should prevent him from lying at full length among the dropped spoils of some gnarled Spitzbergen, and staring up through its sun-gilt brown leaves at the fathomless blue of the deep above him, and the

Fleets of clouds that drift before
The charmed winds of upper seas.

All else is vanity and vexation of spirit, and dwindles insignificantly away beside the supreme joy and necessity of drawing in the golden fullness of this autumn weather, of losing life's uncertain perspective in this gracious haze, of rounding off destiny's ragged edges with October dreams. Presently it will all be blown away again, this dreamy spell that keeps us loitering among the yellowing vines; and our autumn weather will have a

touch of champagne in it. The leaves will fall faster, and the air will grow more deliciously pungent, and the very last cricket will seek a hearth-stone audience for his cracked baritone. And a great many good people will discover in themselves symptoms of sympathy with the dying year, and will go about retailing them with emotional references to Keats and the decaying vegetation. Not everybody. There are some other people to whom the scarlet sumach, and the tasselled golden-rod, and the purple juniper-berries, and all the sovereign largesse of glorious dishevelled October communicate a sudden subtle thrill of triumph, a splendid sense of strength that shall endure, an intoxicating assurance that we are not, after all, precisely like the grass of the field, which to-day is and to-morrow is cast into the oven.

Is it not a little odd that, with all our social ideals and attainments, to say nothing of our pretensions, we should manifest so slight an interest, of other than a political nature, in the capital of our Dominion? For, whatever our literary shortcomings, socially Canada has no small cause to think well of herself. Her people are well educated, well read, and, on the whole, well mannered. Her aristocracy of birth is so slender, and her aristocracy of wealth so small, that, while the influence of both is, of course, unmistakeably felt, neither of these invidiously operating castes obtains here to any very damaging extent. While we are largely governed by the social traditions that obtain in England, we are so far from the autocratic code of insular dictation, and so near the somewhat lax and liberal system that prevails among our cousins of the Republic, that repressive austerities are somewhat softened among us with the result of a decided gain in individuality. Canadians, as a rule, talk well, and—*laus Deo*!—not through their noses, except in Toronto, where this distinctively democratic characteristic appears to be rapidly gaining ground. Culture they have, if riches they have not; and the social atmosphere of Eastern Canada, where the inhabitants have had a little more time to grow than we in Ontario, and where already some optimistic sky-searchers see a brightening of our literary horizon, is said by competent critics to be as charming as any, anywhere! One would fancy that a consciousness of our accomplishments in this direction would provoke a very general interest in social matters throughout the country, and that it would naturally centre in Ottawa.

We are told by the managing editor that this interest does not exist, and upon this presumption the managing editor declines to gratify it. He employs a whole corps of correspondents, the ablest, the most alert, the most indefatigable within his reach, to watch and report the political situation. He devotes page after page of his journal to leading Parliamentary speeches, and full accounts of interminable sittings. The country knows its representatives only as a superior kind of talking-machines, with the faculty of interrupting one another at intervals with laughter, loud and prolonged applause, and similar manifestations, with which we are all typographically familiar. And here our information ends. Their political entity is all our intensely party press will concern itself with. Socially, intellectually, personally, we know no more of the men to whom we entrust the destinies of our Dominion, than if their social, intellectual, and personal characteristics were *nil*. We are tolerably familiar, thanks to our comic journals, with the nose of the present Premier. But for the unwearying efforts of these caricaturing instructors, we might still be in a harrowing state of doubt as to whether he had one!

To be sure, social correspondence from Ottawa would entail the lady correspondent, and with a terrified eye upon the fate of Washington legislators at the hands of this person, our representatives at Ottawa may well pray to remain in kind oblivion and the hands of the men. Where there are no lady correspondents there can be no victims to the lady correspondent's rhetoric. The honourable member is spared the exquisite agony of seeing himself photographed in the *Mail* or *Globe* as a dear little chubby, rosy-cheeked, silver-haired gentleman, with necktie always askew, a chronic expression of benevolence, and an almost invariable gravy spot where no gravy spot should be. Or to find himself possessed of a forehead of alabaster, slightly corrugated with the cares of state, beetling bushy eyebrows, and steely-blue eyes that flash iridescent scorn at his hapless opponent, writhing under the torrent of invective that proceeds from behind an iron-gray moustache of heroic proportions. He is not accused of tossing back his raven locks with one white hand, as poor General Logan has been on several occasions, and rising to the imposing height of his splendid stature to confront the foe. He is not compelled to deprecate the admiration of this fair journalist of alarming resources of imagination. His is not the time-honoured supplication, "Deliver me from my friends!"

Nevertheless, we, the public, feel defrauded in this matter. Not that