

The moonlight fainteth
Sick and white;
The east grows red
With a lurid light;
Only one star
In the changing sky,
Fades slowly back
As the dawn creeps nigh.
The casement slowly
Grows light and square;
And the dying eyes
That are watching there,
Count each small pane
That the day looks through,
And the one star fading
Against the blue.

Then she wearily, wearily,
Lifts her head—

"When the tide goes out,
They will find me dead:
They will smooth my hair,
And braid the strands,
And clasp together
The meek white hands;
They will fold the shroud
On my frozen breast,
And dream they have left me
To sleep and rest.
But deep in my bosom
A secret lies,
That I read forever,
With sleepless eyes.

"Alive or dead,
It is burning there—
If for revel or shroud
They braid my hair!
The grave is dark,
And its bed is deep—
But can Love forget,
And can madness sleep?
Though the grave-worm lie
On my dead heart's chill,
The curse and its sign
Shall awake there still!"

The sun rose up
Like a sphere of fire,
Up through the fair sky
Mounting higher;
Rattled the tide
Down the pebbly shore,
But the dead lay silent
Forever more.
The wild tide rushed
To the distant sea,
And a soul went with it,
Silently!

Back from her forehead
So cold and white,
They braided her tresses
Like cloudy night.
Deep in her bosom
So pure and cold,
They found a chain,
And a ring of gold.
They let it lie,
And they folded there
Her hands across it
As if in prayer.

MINETTE.

VICTOR HUGO.

Victor Hugo is in the full strength of that second youth which M. Flourens is so anxious to invent. Sea air, and long pedestrian excursions, absence from our theatres and the French Academy, keep him in a vigor of body and mind of which the "Songs of the Streets and Woods" were the expansion, and "The Toilers of the Sea," the grateful expression. He will yet write many another work. It seems as if the period of its fecundity were at its very beginning.

Years ago he wrote "Autumn Leaves," by an anticipated melancholy which preceded his summer. Here are harvest and fruits long before winter-time.

An intrepid walker, an excellent host or guest, an indefatigable talker, fond of good, hearty, sonorous laughter and the stories which beget it. Victor Hugo has in his gesture, mien, in the expression of his whole person, that strength which is far above solemn attitudes, which avouches abundant life. He is a man loving, hating, working, in all the serene ardor of virility.

We must tell the lazy who await inspiration, —Our masters rouse it, and do not wait for it to rouse them. Lamartine is up and at work at five o'clock, A. M. Victor Hugo rises at the same hour.

Victor Hugo's chamber is almost a garret. It is in the top of his house. The bed—which is a sort of sofa covered with velvet and old tapestry—serves for seat as well. This small chamber is a portion of the belvedere of the Lookout whence vessels are signalled, and where the flag is hoisted, according to the island's custom. Victor Hugo is there as if it were his post.

The moment he rises he goes into his study, which looks more like a photographer's studio than anything else. The first objects in it which strike attention are a small stove of old earthenware, a few seats, scattered books, the infinite horizon of ocean, and the chimneys of the village. In the passage leading to the staircase there are a small sofa and a table; here he takes refuge when the sun beats too ardently on his glazed study.

The parting or returning laborers discover from the sea, if their going or coming be before dawn, a lamp in this study, high above the village houses,—the lamp of another laborer. Did they suspect some months since that the master of Hauteville House was observing, studying them, and following them with his imagination as he told their joys and depicted their sorrows?

Victor Hugo works standing. As he has found no old-fashioned piece of furniture which can be turned into a convenient writing-desk, and has a wise horror of modern desks, he writes on stools placed on stools on which old folios are piled and covered with a cloth. It is on the Bible and on the Nuremberg Chronicle that the poet leans his elbows and spreads his paper.

His paper is blue, thin, folio size. Blotting a great deal, correcting his phrases time and again, to satisfy an artist's scruples, which are never quite contented, Victor Hugo uses none but ganso-quill pens. It almost seems he takes pleasure in making those broad scores which cover words and lines, and which are often like hills,—like landscape-vistas in the text.

It would not be hard to find sometimes formless outlines, attempts at drawing in the midst of the writing. The vision of the idea is often double for the poet-painter.

The dripping sheets, wounded by that Gallic writing which is so characteristic, dry spread out at length. When the day's labor is ended, Victor Hugo collects the sheets, locks them up, and commonly keeps the secret of his inspiration. He never reads to his most intimate friends, nor to his family, until the work no longer fears criticism. He is an essentially dramatic poet, and when he reads, it is to raise emotion. These very rare readings are always a

festival to the listener. Victor Hugo reads very well; he reads rather solemnly, but with a charming, expressive voice.

His autograph manuscripts never leave Hauteville House. They are copied by affectionate pens, and collected with respect. Everything is matter of importance to a writer who is a painter, and who dreads the disappearance of a word, the mutilation of a phrase, the change of a dash, a comma, a colon, or a period, as the removal of a portion of the light indispensable to the harmony of the picture. When the work has thus been copied, reread, and collated, it is sent to Lacroix & Co., who place it in the printer's hands.

Messrs. Vacquezie and Meurice correct the proof-sheets, and superintend the printing at Paris. We may say Victor Hugo's works are the most irreproachable in appearance and arrangement of all works which now appear, thanks to the care which Claye, the printer, the publisher, and the author's friends take in bringing out the work,—thanks to the importance they attach to every particular which can increase the effect of works which really are dramas.

The question has often been asked, does Victor Hugo work easily? It is evident he does not possess that extraordinary faculty of extemporization which enables Lamartine to write so much without even blotting a word. Lamartine's steel pen runs rapidly, scarcely grazing the glazed paper which it covers with delicate marks. It looks as it flies like a sylph waltzing on the snow. Victor Hugo makes pen and paper creak under him. He reflects on each word. He weighs every expression. He leans on periods as travellers sit on milestones, to consider the ended phrase and the blank space where the following phrase is going to begin. Some memoranda of words, some names jotted on the margin, like notes, would make one suppose that he records his impressions as if he were afraid he would not easily find them in his memory.

The absolute isolation which is necessary to his labor, his rigorous solitude while working, would lead one to believe he required all his faculties. It is true they may likewise indicate a prodigious reverence for intellectual things in a writer who refuses to allow anything to profane the Muse's visits.

The reader may now imagine how "The Toilers of the Sea" was written. The east was still pale; the poet copied the horizon, and over his manuscript looked at the ocean which, so to speak, came to his feet; his paper was its beach.

I believe I shall have completed the essential traits of Victor Hugo while writing, after I have said that he is the most honest and the most skillful merchant of his works. There is never any lawsuit, dispute, or even disappointment, on his or on his publishers' part.

Thoroughly acquainted with everything touching the cost of books, he knows, too, the result of the sales. He reckons the probable profits of his publisher, and he equitably proportions his profits to those of the publisher. All persons who have entered into contracts with Victor Hugo say they have never been called upon to refuse exaggerated demands, nor to hope for profit which their modesty as tradesmen might blush to reap.

When once pecuniary questions are settled on a reasonable footing, Victor Hugo does not yield to any temptation. As he refused the other day—not \$100,000 as was stated, but—\$20,000 offered by several newspapers to publish "The Toilers of the Sea" in *feuilletons*, so he knows how to resist every temptation which would make the sentiment of art yield to the love of speculation.

This reserve, when the voice of money is at the same time the seductive voice of flattery and of praise deserves to be mentioned. It was rare

at every epoch. It may be deemed impossible now-a-days.

Is it not consoling to think that the most skillful and the best paid writer of our generation is likewise the proudest of them all?

NOT FORGOTTEN.

I left her:—loth was I to go—
She was my promised wife—
The pledge, long sought, had made its mark
In joy upon my life.
'Twas like the Bow of Promise placed
By God's hand, high above,
To me a sign of storms all passed—
A covenant of love!

A weight of sadness crushed us
When the hour of parting came;
A dark and drear foreboding fell—
A dread without a name.
It seemed a living Presence
Threat'ning stood between us two,
And we felt its blighting shadow,
As we said our last adieu.

What was it trembled at our hearts—
That caused our cheeks to pale?
A shudder, such as thrill those souls
Who hear the Banshee's wail!
Still, firm in faith of our great love,
We saw the Shadow fade.
I kissed the roses back again
Ere the last words were said.

I know we counted hour by hour,
And kept the tally true;
Had I but known—I would have held
The moments as they flew,
And spun them into long, long years,
Each year an Age, if then
I but might clasp my living love,
Close to my heart again.

I lingered in my distant home
Three weary years or more;
The laggard post, with leaden feet,
Sweet welcome greetings bore.
But then there came a lapse—no word,
No token from her hand—
And then, between my love and me,
I felt the shadow stand!

It was a gaunt and formless shape,
I viewed it with hushed breath,
I felt its cold hand on my heart,
And each pulse-throb said—Death.
There was no pause, no stop, no rest,
No wait for time nor tide—
I felt my loved one could not die
Without me by her side.

I dared not stay that gentle soul
On its blest, heavenly way;
I cared not for the blasted life
That must be mine alway.
I knew that halting 'tween the two,
God's grace and human love,
The soul of my soul fluttered,
Ere it took its flight above.

So I pressed on, ever onward,
Never dust clung to my feet,
Till I walked with lying calmness
Up the well-remembered street.
I passed the door, unconscious,
I stood beside her bed—
I knelt adown and took her hand—
Alas! my love was dead!

I bent to kiss her pallid brow
Which gave no sign—not one,
With sorrow beating at my heart,
Which grief had turned to stone.
Then broke the pent-up agony—
As some fierce dammed-up stream—
And burst the fetters from my mind
Which had been all a-dream.

The bitter sobs broke from my lips,
The hot tears coursed adown—
O God! there culminated all
Of woe the earth has known.
It mattered not that I had felt
The woe that was to come,
That moment flashed the truth to me,
And brought the sorrow home.

Home to my breaking heart, while I
Rained tears upon her cheek
And uttered wild and frantic prayers—
If she would only speak—
If from this death trance she would give
A token or a sign;
One look, one sigh, one pressure faint
Of her cold hand in mine!

And then there passed across her face
A transient flush of life,
In which Soul combatting with Death,
Rose victor in the strife.
The closed eyelids slowly oped,
But with a gaze distraught,
As though the soul sublimed from clay,
Its heaven with longing sought.

And then a change—O fading cheek!
Life's flush for ever gone!
One glance of love she beamed on me,
One glance—one—only one!
But in that glance the single love
Of all her stainless life
Was centered—then the calm of death
Usurped Earth's passion strife.

Sublimely beautiful, my love,
Thy face comes back to me,
With God's own holy halo round
Its frail mortality.
With God's grand impress on thy brow
That look comes back again,
And thanks from my long widowed heart
Rise up in fervent strain.

Rise upward, in a psalm glad
That in that last fond look
Thy love revealed itself to me
As in a written book.
Whose words, in golden letters stamped,
This blessed solace gave—
That love unsullied in its truth,
Can triumph o'er the grave.

HENRY C. WATSON.

BELLINI.

BY ARTHUR POUJEN.

Translated from the French by MARGARET CECILIA CLEVELAND.

I.

"It is prejudice to believe that genius ought to die early. I believe that the space between thirty and thirty-five years has been assigned as the age most fatal to genius. How many times I have joked and teased poor Bellini on this subject, in predicting that in his quality of genius, he ought to die soon, as he had attained the critical age! Strange! notwithstanding our tone of gaiety, this prophecy caused him an involuntary disquiet: he called me his *jettatore*, and never failed to make the sign of the cross. He had such a strong desire to live! The word death excited in him a delirium of aversion; he did not wish to hear death spoken of; he was as afraid of it as a child who fears to sleep in the dark. He was a good and amiable child, a little self-sufficient at times, but one only had to threaten him with his approaching death to make his voice modest and supplicating, and see him make with raised fingers the sign of disenchantment from the *jettatore*. Poor Bellini!

"You were then personally acquainted with him? Was he handsome?"

"He was not ugly. We men can do little more than to answer affirmatively such a question upon one of our sex. A figure lithe and swaying, movements graceful and almost coquettish; always dressed faultlessly; regular features, florid complexion, blonde hair, almost golden, worn in light curls, a noble forehead, high, very high, straight nose, pale blue eyes, a well proportioned mouth, and round chin. His features showed something vague and without character, although they sometimes changed into an expression of bitter-sweet sadness. This sadness replaced *esprit* in Bellini's face; but it was a sadness without depth, the light of which vacillated without poetry in the eyes, and trembled upon the lips without passion. The young maestro seemed to wish to display in all his person this soft and effeminate grief. His hair was curled with a sentimentality so dreamy, his garments fitted with a languor so supple around his slender figure; he carried his Spanish cane with an air so idyllic that he always reminded me of those shepherds that we have seen mincing in Pastorals, with ribboned crook and breeches of rose colored taffeta. His gait was so feminine, so elegiac, so ethereal! His entire person had an air of sentimental foppishness. He had much success with the women, but I doubt if he ever inspired any great passion. For me, his appearance had something pleasantly annoying, the reason of which I could account for in his bad French. Although Bellini had lived in France several years; he spoke the French language as badly as they speak it in England. I ought not to qualify this language by bad: bad is here too good. It is necessary to say: frightful enough to make one's hair stand on end! When in the same *salon* with Bellini, his proximity always inspired a certain anxiety, intermingled with a feeling of awe which repulsed and attracted at the same time. His involuntary puns were often of an amusing nature, and brought to mind the chateau of his compatriot, the Prince of Pallagonie, which Goethe in his "Travels in Italy," represents as a museum of strange extravagances and monstrosities. And