

Poetry.

THE BANNER.

The Banner of the brave old land
Is floating in its ancient glory;
A host of heroes round it stand,
With battle all begrimed, and gory.
Ho, Banner of the noble story!
The trumpet calls each hero band,
So fiercely fair, so darkly grand,
To bear the banner of the land
Onward in glory!

Ho, onward still as heretofore,
Forever freedom's chosen symbol,
Still shedding light o'er every shore,
And making still the tyrant tremble!
Still of freedom be thy story—
Of triumph and of high command—
Of mercy, holding still the hand,
That bears the banner of the land
Onward in glory!

Onward in glory, and in truth,
God's blessing with thee ever going,
By land and sea, by north and south,
Thine old renown forever growing.
Oh! be thou still, in peace or war, ay
Foremost with the patriot band,
That bear with death-devoted hand,
The banner of the brave old land
Onward in glory!

Select Tale.

EUPHROSYNE.

AN OLD TALE OF THE NEW WORLD.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CONCLUSION.

A crowd had by this time gathered on the balcony, all eager to watch the coruscations of the aurora, and there were many who saw in them a shadowing forth of hosts engaged in battle—portentous of impending war to the loyal garrison of Quebec. But no such superstitious fears paralyzed the courage of its brave defenders: and stanchest among them, and of firmest resolve to maintain the rocky stronghold against all odds, was the governor himself, the Comte de Frontenac, a gallant old noble, bred in the warlike school of Louis XIV., and a true believer in the great Henry of Navarre.

M. de Frontenac possessed the entire confidence of his sovereign, and it was his endeavour to deserve it, by his wise administration and judicious policy—seeking earnestly to advance the interest of the Canadian colony, and render it a more valuable appanage to the crown of France. But though just, generous and brave, the count's imperious temper often balked his good purpose; towards those, especially, who in any way thwarted his views, he displayed his strong feelings, becoming frequently so irascible, that his most familiar friends dreaded to approach him.

In these dark and stormy moods, Madame de Lavasseur was the only one who could exorcise the evil spirit that possessed him. She was never moved even by his wildest tempests of passion; and if manifested in her presence, they seldom failed to subside into calmness when she tried her feminine magic. He delighted to have her near him; "She seemed," he said, "to surround him with an atmosphere of joy and peace;" and the dutiful and tender affection she rendered him in return for his fond indulgence, might have been that of a loving daughter. Louis St. Ours shared with Euphrosyne the favour of the stately count—for, like most persons who are fond of power, he loved to have his favourites, though they were not always so well chosen as in the present instance. The young man being attached to the personal suite of the governor, occupied apartments in the castle, and was thus thrown into intimate association with Euphrosyne in the daily and hourly courtesies of domestic life—a dangerous position to the enamored Louis, especially as M. de Frontenac seemed in no ways displeased at the intimacy which was rapidly knitting the young people more closely together.

It was late that night before the gay assembly broke up. The dancing was continued languidly towards the close of the evening, and when it ceased, though the sound of music was heard at intervals, few heeded it. Some sat discoursing over their wine; others were gathered in knots here and there in the lighted rooms, or on the airy balcony; but every mind seemed engrossed by the one exciting topic of the hour. Indeed, the whole city was astir; lights gleamed in all directions; a ceaseless hum of voices, and the tramp of hurrying feet, rose on the air; and the blazing watch-fires on the heights brightened with their ruddy flames the rocks and cliffs, over which brooded the shadows of night.

It was past midnight when St. Ours said adieu

to Euphrosyne, and left the castle on a private mission to the intendant; and the yellow dawn was tinging the horizon, when again he found himself alone in his chamber. Wearied, yet too much excited to feel the want of sleep, he opened a small cabinet which stood in his apartment, and drew forth his writing materials, desirous of improving the short time that remained before the sound of the morning reveille, in inditing a letter to Madame de Lavasseur—perhaps the last.

Full of manly tenderness was this letter, and as full of sad and bitter regret at the fate that forbade him to consecrate to her his life. All was told—his whole soul was laid open to her gaze, with its anguish, its deep remorse for the wrong he had done in seeking, even inadvertently, to awaken her tenderness.

The letter was sealed and addressed; and the half hour that remained before being summoned to active duty, he employed in looking over the contents of the cabinet, which contained his private papers, and other articles of value. Letter after letter was given to the flames; but several brief notes, bearing the signature of "Euphrosyne," and containing, it might be, some half dozen lines of acknowledgment for a book or other trifling favour, were gazed upon till the delicate characters became dim, and then restored to the cabinet.

Unclosing a private drawer, which he had almost forgotten, Louis started at the sight of a miniature that had lain there undisturbed for years, though the rich gold of its setting was undimmed by time, and the gems that incrustated it remained as lustrous as ever. It was the picture of his child-wife, upon which he had never looked since the day of his fatal marriage, when it was given to him by her father. With an involuntary shudder of aversion he closed the drawer; but immediately a sudden impulse impelled him to re-open it, and scan the lineaments of the face, which had almost faded from his remembrance. As he did so, a pair of soft dark eyes looked full upon him—eyes that startled him he knew not why, and which he might have thought beautiful, had there been in them any deeper expression than the mere bashful innocence of childhood.

He forgot that with the lapse of years the child had ripened to maturity, and that those eyes, so exquisite in form and colour, might now be radiant with the sweet and tender emotions of woman; that the thin unformed features might now be rounded into beauty, and beam with intelligence and love. But, no; Louis neither could or would picture such a development to himself. He looked upon the young face as that of his evil genius; and in contrast to it, beamed before his mental vision the soul lit eyes and sunny smile of Euphrosyne, he cast the miniature from him with disgust. As it fell upon the floor, the spring opened, and revealed a ringlet of fair hair fastened within the case. But what to him was this child's curl? He saw only the dark braids which lent such classic grace to the matchless head of Euphrosyne; and taking up the miniature, he threw it back in the drawer; and locking the cabinet, he passed through a glass-door to the terrace, to inhale the morning air.

The dawn was slowly advancing, painting the east with hues that cast their splendour on the mist which enshrouds the landscape. As the sun ascended, the veil lifted and flickered, hanging like a soft cloud over the St. Lawrence, and wrapping in aerial robes the snow-capped mountains of St. Charles. St. Ours stood silently watching the tissue of vapour, curling and wreathing itself into a thousand forms of fantastic beauty, till it floated slowly upwards, when the English fleet, lying off the shore at Beauport was revealed. Every stitch of canvas was furled, and the only sign of hostility presented was the red-crossed flag of England, floating from the mast-head of the admiral's vessel.

The morning passed away; noon arrived, and still no sign of intended purpose or action on the part of the English was manifested. The hostile flag streaming out on the quickening breeze, and the guns bristling in formidable array through the port-holes of the vessels, alone gave evidence of the intent of the couchant lions who waited to spring upon their prey. But just as the bell in the tower of Notre Dame proclaimed the hour of twelve, a boat, conveying an officer, with a flag of truce, shot from the side of the admiral's ship, and soon touched the pier at St. Roch's.

Springing on shore, the young officer, with a courteous salutation to the commander of the detachment waiting to receive him, requested to be conducted to the Comte de Frontenac, to whom he was the bearer of despatches from Sir William Phipps. The consent of the governor being signified, he was blindfolded, and led up the steep rocky street of the lower town, past frowning batteries, and through formidable rows of chevaux de frise, to the lofty platform on which stood the castle of St. Louis.

Admitted within its gates he was conducted to

the council chamber, where M. de Frontenac, surrounded by high dignitaries of the church, and officers both civil and military, sat in state. An imposing audience, thought the young man, when his eyes were unbandaged, and he stood, the bearer of a haughty message, before that silent and dignified assembly.

The stern proud countenance of the imperious governor, one would have thought, was in itself enough to daunt the courage of any ordinary man under such circumstances; but the English Herald, with a bearing as haughty as that of the aristocratic noble he confronted, advanced towards him, and with a stately obeisance, awaited his permission to unfold his errand. Slightly returning the stranger's greeting, the governor said, in a brief and peremptory manner:

"Read on, sir, and you shall have your answer."

The Englishman coolly drew forth his document, and read in a voice as unmoved as though the words he uttered were of the most agreeable import the bold summons of his admiral, demanding, in the name of his sovereign lord, William, King of England, the immediate surrender of the fortress and city of Quebec; "to which demand," added the imperturbable messenger, "your answer, Count de Frontenac, is required in an hour hence, upon the peril that will ensue." And laying his watch upon the table, he coolly said: "It is now one o'clock and I shall await your excellency's answer till the time specified has expired."

By a simultaneous impulse the whole assembly rose from their seats, surprised out of their dignity by the insolence of the message and the audacity of its bearer. Rage and astonishment were depicted on the countenance of M. de Frontenac. For a minute, excessive anger prevented his utterance; but when at last his white lips parted to speak, a torrent of scorn and defiance flowed from them.—Shaking his clenched hand with a menacing gesture:

"I do not recognise the supremacy of William of England," he said; "I know him only as the Prince of Orange—a usurper, who, to gratify his selfish ambition, has outraged the most sacred rights of blood and of religion, striving to persuade the nation that he is its savior, and the defender of its faith, even while he has violated its laws, and overturned the Church of England. Those offences the divine justice will not long delay to punish as they merit."

Perfectly unmoved by this hurricane of wrath stood the messenger of Sir William Phipps, except that a haughtier light gleamed in his clear blue eye, and a scarcely perceptible curl of his lip shewed his contempt for the accusation alleged against his sovereign. He only asked:

"This, then, is your excellency's only reply?"

M. de Frontenac deigned no word in return to the question, but, with air of frigid determination, slightly bent his head in token of assent.

"May it please your excellency, then," resumed the officer, still in the same imperturbable and authoritative tone, "to cause that this, your answer to our summons, should be rendered in writing, for the satisfaction of my commander, to whom I would not willingly bear a false interpretation of your message."

"I will answer your master, sir, by the mouth of my cannon!" thundered the exasperated governor, whose scarcely smothered wrath leaped into a flame at the audacious coolness of the herald.—"Thus, and thus only, will I hold parley with him, and that ere long; for it is time to teach him that the Comte de Frontenac, the viceroy of the greatest monarch in the world, is not to be dealt with in this manner even by his peers!"

With a haughty wave of his hand, the angry old noble rose and left the council-chamber, attended by his suite. It was the signal for the herald's departure, and again, with bandaged eyes, he was conducted through the fortified city to the boat which had borne him on his fruitless mission thither.

The hostilities which almost immediately ensued on the conclusion of this brief conference, are matters of history; and upon them, even did the limits of our tale permit, we have no desire to dwell.—Hour after hour, the dreadful cannonade continued; but directed, as was the fire of the English colonists, against the heights of the upper town, their balls fell harmless; while the numerous guns of the rocky fortress, replied with a power that told fatally upon the enemy's flotilla, and stilled the beating of many a gallant heart that fought upon its decks. All day the fearful strife went on—weeping eyes watched its progress—on aching hearts its sounds fell like the knell of their life's happiness; and in darkened chambers some lay unable to move, with tearless eyes, and ears muffled, to shut out the incessant booming of the cannon. But the weary day declined at last; twilight, brief and bright, came on; and then the welcome night, shrouding all things

in darkness, and stilling for a time, the desperate fight.

St. Ours hailed the approach of night with joy. All day he had been active where peril was rife, and had escaped unscathed; but he was sick of the noise of battle, and even a brief respite was grateful to him. Another evening might not find him breathing—loving, on that earth made radiant by the presence of Euphrosyne; for there lay the black hulks of the hostile vessels, waiting for the morrow to renew the strife, and among the victims marked for death, might not himself be numbered?

With this thought sprang up an intense desire to see Euphrosyne, if only for a few moments, to learn how she had borne the trials of the day, and to draw comfort and courage from her smile. But he had been left for the night in command of one of the batteries; and to forsake his post, even for an instant, was impossible. So, sadly resigning himself to the hard necessity, he stood dreamily gazing at the turrets of the castle, as they stood against the evening sky, and picturing to himself the beloved image which had never left him even in the perils of the fight. He was interrupted by a message from M. de Frontenac, who required his immediate attendance at the castle. He needed no second bidding to make him obey the summons, trusting that when he had received the count's commands, he should be able to steal a short interview with Euphrosyne before leaving the castle.

He was detained but a few minutes by the governor, who desired to charge him with a secret mission to the commander of a distant redoubt; and as Louis passed from his presence, he made a slight detour, in order to traverse the corridor in which the private apartments of Madame de Lavasseur were situated. His heart beat high with the hope of meeting her; but the place was vacant; though, seeing the door of her boudoir stand partly open, he paused opposite to it, irresolute, yet fearing to enter unbidden. No light gleamed from within, and he ventured softly to breathe her name; but there was no answer; not a sound broke the deep silence; only a faint odour of the flowers she most loved stole balmily, like her own sweet presence, upon his senses.

A glass door at the end of the corridor stood open, and with a trembling undefined hope he passed through it to the balcony, and there he found the object of his search. With the traces of emotion still lingering on her face, she lay upon a cushioned seat, the folds of her white garments falling gracefully around her, and her attitude one of profound repose. The moonbeams trembling through a fleecy cloud, quivered on her face—their pale, soft light seeming to surround her head with a halo, and thus lending a celestial character to her beauty.

St. Ours stole towards her, shrinking at the sound of his own step, yet drawing nearer till her low measured breathing fell softly upon his ear. It seemed as if she had wept herself to sleep, for tears were yet glistening on her cheek, round which her hair fell in disorder, descending in rich folds to the floor. One hand pillowed her head, the other lay passively across her breast, and in its clasp glittered the jewelled setting of a miniature. Louis felt a pang of bitter jealousy shoot through his heart; he knew the picture could be no other than that of him whom she had wedded and lost in early youth, and he could not bear to have her steal one thought from him, to lavish even on the dead.—Suddenly her sleep became disturbed; she moved, and murmured softly, but his ear caught the whispered words, and the blood bounded wildly through his veins. Could it be?—Yes, again she speaks, and his own name was on her lips—his father's name; that which he had borne since he became known to her was his mother's.

He bent again to listen—a smile was on her lips. She seemed visited with happy dreams; and stooping low to catch her inarticulate murmurs, he again heard "Louis de Mornay," coupled with another name which had been familiar to his childhood. He was amazed—how could she have come to the knowledge of this name? He wished she would awake, she seemed sinking into a deeper slumber; and he felt that he must depart without the interchange of a word. Still he remained, as if spell-bound, bending over her till her breath fanned his cheek, when, yielding to a resistless impulse, he slightly pressed his lips upon her brow.

Light as was the touch of that impressed kiss it awoke her, and she sprang to her feet. In her terror, she failed to recognise him; she saw only a tall figure standing beside her; and with a bound, she rushed from him towards the door which opened from the corridor. Her dress was caught by some slight obstacle as she was passing through; and in her eager haste to disengage it, she cast a furtive glance at the intruder, when she was struck by a certain something in his air, and in the outline of his figure, which arrested her flight.