

MISTRAL.*

A STRONG emotion seizes me as I write the name of Mistral. That name, so full of sound, brings back to me my youth like a wind blown suddenly from the past; I see a vision of blue sky and I feel an impression of delightful warmth. It gladdens me as once the bells of Avignon made me happy, when, escaping the north and the tumult of Paris, I heard their chimes ring out through the limpid dawns of Provence.

I met Mistral for the first time in 1859. He was just being "born into celebrity" by his first poem, "Mirèio," and came to Paris to give his thanks to Lamartine, who had made himself the godfather, the herald, of this budding fame. I was ten years younger than Mistral, who himself was not thirty. So I was almost a boy still, but a boy already smudged with printer's ink; as a rhymester my name had begun to get about among the newspapers and be read in the reviews, and I had begun with all my might, with all my lungs, and all my heart, to blow away on my little trumpet in honor of the great poet of my own province.

I had a room as big as your hand in the Hôtel du Sénat, Rue de Tournon, where my next-door neighbor was a student called Gambetta; it was thither Mistral was brought to see me by the poet Adolphe Dumas. A big, fine-looking chap, but lame, this Dumas was known through a few tragedies which were not lacking in cleverness. A native of a little village close by Mistral's place, he instituted himself Mistral's guide about Paris. Well, well, it seems as if it were yesterday (so clearly have I held it in memory), that little dinner in my small bedroom in the Rue de Tournon, twenty-five years ago!

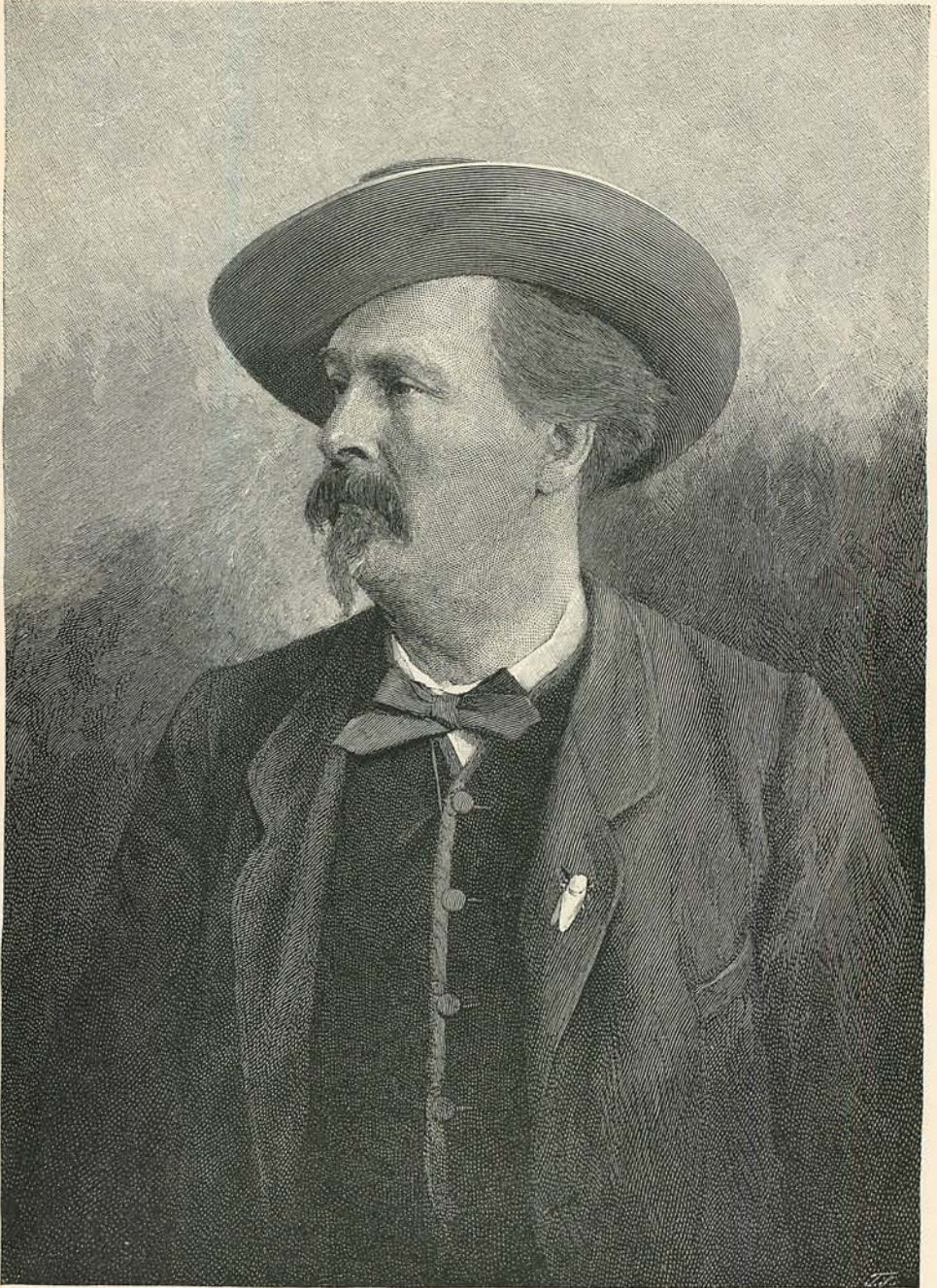
Mistral, large, powerfully built, sunbrowned, with his head carried proudly, his ample bust buttoned into a frock-coat, was a good representative, notwithstanding that garment, of the fine type of peasantry that belongs to the valley of the Rhone. He wore the military mustache and long imperial, but his own spirit and the vivacity of the poet were easily visible on his lofty forehead, in his widely opened eyes and the dark and deep pupils in which lurked a little rustic suspicion of everything having to do with Paris, that city so much feared and

respected! Very agreeable, very courteous, he spoke and answered with a soft and singing voice, at once attractive from its musical quality. But now and then the voice rose high; he forgot to be polite and smiling as soon as he was asked why he wrote in Provençal. You may believe Mistral was roused at that; he almost lost his temper; then, with a fieriness entirely southern: "Why? — why I write in Provençal? Because Provençal is my language — the language of the land where I was born. Because my father, my mother, speak Provençal. It was in Provençal I was rocked in my infancy. Everybody about me in the village speaks it — that beautiful tongue of Provence; women plucking the olives, little ones trotting about the roads in the sun, speak no other tongue. The farmer speaks it to his oxen, the village priest among us preaches from his pulpit in Provençal, and it is in Provençal that the very birds sing their songs!"

French! To him that language was only a foreign tongue learned at school. He told us about his life, spoke of his boyhood passed in the open country among the vineyards and olive orchards, described for us the farm near Maillane where he was born and brought up, the village into which every Tuesday the whole family marched — father, mother, children, and servants — in order to hear the mass read. The farm near Maillane where Mistral grew up is the very farm of Mirèio, the *Mas des Micocouliers*, with its solid thatch of boughs casting deep shade on the tiled walk, with its beautiful fountain running into the fish-pond, its hives of bees that festoon with their swarms the great *micocoulier* trees. Under the *micocouliers* of Mirèio, there it was that the poet was born.

His father, whom I never knew, but whom I imagine to myself one of those old-fashioned peasants, unflinching in labor, proud of property amassed, and whose glory it is to see their sons in the robe of the priest or the lawyer, instead of the peasant's frock, — this father of Mistral, dreaming doubtless for his boy Frederick a larger horizon than the few roods of cultivated land he owned, wanted to turn him into a man of learning; so he sent him at an early age to the Avignon Lyceum.

*American readers are greatly indebted to Miss Harriet W. Preston for a knowledge of the Provençal revival. See her translation of Mistral's "Mirèio" into English verse; also her book on "Troubadours and Trouvères, New and Old," both published by Roberts Bros., Boston; also her article in "The Atlantic" for November, 1884, on "Mistral's Nerto." See also this magazine for May, 1872: article on Mistral by M. E. M., with translation of the song of Magali by the Rev. Charles T. Brooks. Another American who has made versified translations from the modern Provençals is Mr. Alvey A. Ade, of the State Department. — Ed.



F. M. Distral

With what bitterness did he not tell us of those sorrowful days at college, where the free spirit of his childhood, used to the open air and broad sunshine of the fields, found itself suddenly imprisoned! Having secured the diploma of Bachelor, it was necessary to go to Aix to study law. No longer the narrow prison, still that college was a species of exile, the exile of the poet among the Scythians, of the young Provençal lost in the foreign surroundings of the French language! At last he returned to his country, to Mas; and when his father asked him, "What do you want to do?" he answered, "Work in the fields and make verses." In those words alone lay all that was to be his after life.

His poem "Mirèio," wherein he sings the youthful loves of a lass of La Crau and a little sluice-tender, that touching poem built of love-thoughts and impressions of nature, is the mirror of his early years. In it he unrolls by the aid of light stanzas the sketches of that rustic life which charmed his infantile eyes,—labor, the sowing, sheep-shearing, reaping, the silk-worms, winnowing,—everything which he himself has called "the majestic deeds of rural life, forever harsh, but eternally honest, wholesome, independent, and calm."

It is worth knowing how this poetic nature became revealed to itself. In his college at Avignon Mistral made the acquaintance of an instructor named Roumanille who made verses in Provençal. They were soon friends, and when the pupil had read the lines of his teacher he exclaimed with a thrill, "Behold the dawn that my soul was waiting for, in order to wake to the light of day!" He set himself to translate into Provençal the Eclogues of Virgil, in which he found living the labor, the ideas, the customs and manners of his rural home.

Mistral related to me those recollections of youth while we were at table in my little furnished room. It was a wretched dinner from a tavern, brought up cold from the heater of its kitchen, and served on thick plates. The dessert! I see it now—Rheims biscuits of mournful aspect, dusty and uneatable, that appeared to have been found beneath some pyramid of Egypt. But the unspeakable commonplace of the lean and hungry student's dinner, the wearisome look of the room itself, with its well-worn carpet, old desk and lounge of Empire style, its horrible clock,—all that disappeared while we listened to Mistral. He declaimed a few bits from "Mirèio."*

The whole evening passed after this fashion, and while he spoke, pointing his lines with his liberal gesticulations, it seemed to me that the narrow room was filled with a delicious odor, fresh and living, exhaled from my own country, left so long before. I knew again, in my little corner of Paris, the delightful fragrance of Provence, while listening to that sonorous, musical tongue, as it mingled with the rolling of cabs and omnibuses rising from the pavements of the Rue de Tournon.

From that first meeting on we were friends, and upon leaving him I promised to come very soon to see him in his fields of Maillane, whither he was in haste to return. The next year I kept my word; that journey is one of the most delightful reminiscences of my life.

Oh the waxen impressionability of early years! Never shall I forget the little station at Graveson between Avignon and Arles where I stepped out one morning, happy, jovial, impatient to get there, shaking myself free from the numbness of the long journey, and already driving out of mind all recollec-

* We here give two stanzas,—the Provençal, the French version, and a translation in English:

I.

* "En desfuiant vòsti verguello,
Cantas, cantas, magnanarello!
Mirèio es à la fueio, un bèu matin de Mai.
Aquèu matin, pèr pendeloto,
A sis auriho, la faroto!
Aviè penja dos agrioto. . . .
Vincèn, aquèu matin, passè 'qui tournamai.

"En défeuilleant vos rameaux,
Chantez, chantez, magnanarelles!
Mireille est à la feuille, un beau matin de Mai.
Ce matin-là, pour pendeloques,
A ses oreilles, la coquette!
Avait pendu deux cerises. . . .
Vincent, ce matin-là, passa là de nouveau.

"Plucking mulberry leaves in masses,
Sing ye, sing ye, plucking-lasses!
Who's perched among the boughs this lovely day in May?
Mirèio sweet, Mirèio brown as berry!
Mirèio's hung, the mad and merry,
In either ear a ruddy cherry—
By chance, that very morn, Vincen must come that way!

II.

"A sa barreto escarlantino,
Coume au li gènt di mar latino,
Aviè pouldamen uno plumo de gau;
E'n trapejant dins li draiolo
Fasiè fugi li serp courriolo,
E di dindànti clapeirolò
Emè soun bastounet brandissie li frejau."

"A son bonnet écarlate,
Comme en ont les riverains des mers latines,
Il avait gentiment une plume de coq;
Et en foulant les sentiers,
Il faisait fuir les couleuvres vagabondes,
Et des sonores tas de pierres
Avec son bâton il chassait les cailloux."

"And like the men of Castel'maré
Within his scarlet bonnet wore he
Right spruce and gay a plume of chanticleer.
Across the road the lizards cunning
Before his stick were swiftly running;
Each stone-heap slashed with volleys stunning
Sonorous rang, and echoed loud and clear."

tion of Paris, like a lingering remnant of sleep. A wee, wee rustic station in the midst of the plain; on the horizon shaved and fragrant hillocks,—a genuine landscape of Provence, clean-cut, precise, a little spare, with its distances unclouded by mists beneath its light sky. Leaning against the openwork bar, a man. It was Mistral come to meet me, but no longer the Mistral I saw in Paris; another entirely different, a red *tayolle* wound round his loins, a little peasant's hat tipped over his ear, his jacket hung on one shoulder, a stick in his hand. I like him better in this costume; I find him larger, handsomer, more himself. We fall into each other's arms and start off. From Graveson to Maillane it is a long hour to walk. All the way great walls of standing wheat, enormous fields of the vine (there were vineyards there then) whose tangled boughs cover the earth. The wind is tremendous; one of those transmontine gales that cut the words off at the lips. I walk side by side with Mistral, arm in arm, and we scream to make ourselves heard. Great cypresses, with pointed heads like dervishes, wave their thick branches and make walls of somber green, which bend low in the wind. Around us the plain, full of scattered sunlight, has a color of the Orient; the small mountains of the Alpilles, which rise far off warm and golden, seem near by, so transparent is the atmosphere. An hour's walk through that lovely landscape, and all stiffness has disappeared; our friendship seems an old story; we call each other *thou*, and when we get to our destination we are brothers!

Maillane is a largish village which resembles, with its shady boulevards round about, some old Italian small town. You find water running through it—no very common thing in Provence. Water runs in the moats, where one sees a water-wheel turning. From the houses comes a continual noise of the looms of silk-weavers.

Mistral's house was at the other side of Maillane, the last on the left. While we crossed the village he was met at every step by hearty good-days. Young girls, their little velvet ribbons arranged with coquetry, threw him, laughing, a "*Bounjou, Moussu Frédéri,*" and he answered, in his strong, joyous voice, "*Bounjou, Azalaïs; bounjou, Vinceneto!*" Farther on an old man, bent by work in his vineyard, straightened himself to salute in like manner *Moussu Frédéri*. This simple cordiality, this friendly warmth, showed what the man was in his own home, on his own soil, free and at his ease in the midst of all these honest folk whose ancestors had known his own.

The house before which we stopped differed little from the others. A poor little house of a well-to-do peasant, with one floor and an

attic. Only the ticking that is stretched across the door to keep out mosquitoes was replaced by a network with fine openings, a kind of metallic curtain, which is a luxury in villages and a sign of wealth.

To the left on entering is a small room, very simple, furnished with a lounge with yellow squares and with two straw arm-chairs. In a corner is a desk, a poor little registrar's desk, covered with books and blotters. On the wall unpretending plaster-casts, a picture of a first communion. Later on I was to pass many wonderful hours in that workshop, which I then saw for the first time.

There his mother met us: an old peasant woman with a wrinkled, placid face and clear eyes, a *cambresine* on her head. Breakfast was all ready and waiting for us in the middle of the room, which was study, drawing-room, and dining-room at one and the same time. It was the simplest of meals,—potatoes, olives, sweetmeats,—because it was fast-day; and, to wash the lenten meal down, there was some excellent wine. While eating and chatting I looked about. On the wall hung two miniature plows of wood, very cleverly done, like models for patents; they were labors of patience and dexterity, with which he had amused himself. As a child, the son of farming folk, Mistral pleased himself in this way, just as in seaports the children of sailors will fashion little boats. The poet's mother did not breakfast with us. In Provence, as in all parts of South France,—a custom that makes one think of Oriental fashions—women do not eat with men. *Fremo noun soun gen*, says a proverb of the thirteenth century: "Women are not folks." Madame Mistral never seated herself at the table with her husband, never with her son. She ate in the kitchen with the help, the *chato*, the maid-servant. After breakfast we made her a visit and had a chat. She was seated on the stone slab of the wide hearth, and I recall the happy and frank look she gave me as I talked to her about her son. Her ignorance was a bar to understanding fully the fame of her child. Nevertheless she felt in him something above and beyond her peasant understanding, and she told me that, one day, while Frédéri read her "*Mirèio*," she did not appreciate it entirely, but she had seen a shooting-star! O dear old woman! soul of the mother! she had seen indeed a star shooting through the distant sky of poesy!

I dwelt there, in that little house, almost a month. We slept in the upper story, in a big room with two beds of most rural aspect, with posts reaching to the ceiling. To get to it one had to cross the mother's bedroom and pass close by her bed covered with a canopy. When we came in at night, returning from the little

café on the village square, we walked on the tips of our toes; but old folks have tardy slumbers and light; she always heard us, and from behind the canopy came her hearty mother's voice, "You are there, children? Well, good-night—sleep well." And in good sooth we did sleep well in our big dormitory with our tall bed-posts overhead. One day Mistral be-thought himself to cause the old roof of his decked bedstead to disappear; he dreamed of decorations and improvements to be made with the three thousand francs of the prize from the Académie Française obtained by "Mirèio." But on second thoughts he gave up the project; the prize was disposed otherwise; he put the little sum to one side, in a corner, and that money, won by his verses, he employed, to the last *sou*, in giving aid to poets.

In the course of that month passed with Mistral, I lived entirely his life, companion to all his hours, accompanying him on all his walks, comrade in all his labor. He took me to the farm where he was born, and there I saw his brother, much older than he, a large old man with white beard, who superintended the work. To get from Maillane to the *Mas* one follows the St. Rémy road,—a white highway along whose entire length great Spanish reeds border the absent streams which are dried up at the bottom of the ditches; the sound of their leaves rubbed together by the wind gives the impression of fresh-running water in that waterless land. Near the farm I found once more the same evergreens with pointed tops and thick boughs. Behind those trees, which ward off the wind, beneath the cradling movement of their boughs, Mistral wrote his first lines. He made them singing, and he has kept up the habit. He chooses a rhythm and sings his verses like a genuine *cantaire*, like a real troubadour of the old time; he sings them and gesticulates them, casting forth his sonorous rhymes upon the open air and into the noise of the wind. Whilst I listened, enthusiastic, delighted, I watched below us on the plain a sower who threw,—he also!—with the same magnificent wide gesture, the yellow rain of the seed across the furrows.

He was at that time at work on his poems called "Iles d'Or," a collection of popular songs of South France; and I saw him produce, or rather improvise, while singing them, the verses of "Lou Bastimen."

"The saucy sloop hails from Majorca
With oranges in many a group;
The crew has decked with fresh green garlands
The topmast of the saucy sloop.
Good luck a-poop,
Hails from Majorca
Our saucy sloop!"

"The saucy sloop is from Marsilia;
Believe, her venture's of the best!
The ocean holds his breath, and smoothens
Before the prow that has been blessed.
Now, God you rest!
She's Marseilles-built,
And has been blessed.

"Her captain, first a sunbrowned sailor,
Was courteous when he quit the helm;
He carried off a good man's daughter
(No better father in the realm)—
Came home good man,
Good merchant captain
And fisherman.

"Then with his wife's abundant dower
He builded him a handsome sloop;
He would not stay a simple rower
And fisherman, but off he'd swoop.
'Nay, do not droop,
My wife so bonny'—
And off he'd swoop.

"The saucy sloop like balsam fragrant
Is calked and pitched all fresh and new;
Like scaly sea-fish bright and vagrant
She glitters fair from ear to clew.
She's painted well,
And smells like balsam
From ear to clew.

"The saucy sloop hails from Majorca
With oranges in many a group;
The crew has decked with fresh green garlands
The topmast of the saucy sloop.
Good luck a-poop,
Hails from Majorca
Our saucy sloop!"

Whilst he made his songs and poems Mistral watched his vines, which at that time were flourishing. Living always in the open fields, he loved to chat with peasants; stopping near a shepherd, or a plowman resting at the end of his furrow, he asked them questions, noted their peculiar terms and the original turns of their picturesque language. Even at that time he nourished the idea of the great dictionary of Provençal, a veritable monument to the tongue of his country, on which he has been working many years, and which is at present almost finished. As one does with a dead language, he undertook to restore and reconstruct his dear and beautiful Provençal tongue fallen into disuse, a tongue which is spoken only in the remoter parts by the working class, and is never written any more. Patiently he sought from the songs of the troubadours forgotten words belonging to Old Provençal, in order to bring them back to life. And if, at a café of the village, or on a farm where peasants were talking, he heard one mingle with the pure Provençal a word of the bastard, Frenchified dialect, such as "Baio me de *pain*" (Give me bread), instead of "Baio me de *pan*," he would jump up in wrath, and cry to the speaker, "Wretch, speak your own language!"

That was his aim, to reawaken the taste for Provençal in the peasants; and it was to reach that end that he composed his songs of "Iles d'Or," and even anonymous songs, like that of the "Sheep-Shearers," which he has not put in his book. "And the proud shearer who has made the song. Think not he has given his name." But I well knew who that proud shearer was; it was Mistral. His breath of poesy has gone abroad over the whole region; there is no village of Provence where one may not hear sung "Lou Bastimen vèn de Maiorco," or "Lou Renegat Jan de Gounfaroun":

"Jan de Gounfaroun, by the corsairs taken,
And his faith forsaken,
A Janissary turns:
Faith! amid the Turks, a Christian skin were better
Toughened for the fetter
And the rust that burns!

"With your mistress drinking,
Love and joys unthinking,
These are what Mohammed calls felicity;
But upon the mountains
Nuts and simple fountains
Sweeter are than warmest love that lacks of liberty.

"Jan de Gounfaroun, no longer to be martyred,
Soul and conscience bartered
At a paltry trade.
Ah, beloved Lord, this poor sinner pardon,
Who his heart must harden
Turning renegade!

"With your mistress drinking, etc.

"Like a dash of waves when the oars are sweeping
Thus a flood of weeping
Broke his heart so hard.
Then the exile longed for his home unsleeping,
Cursed himself for keeping
For the Turk a guard.

"With your mistress drinking, etc.," etc.

One of the finest pieces Mistral has composed is his "Song of the Sun" (*Lou Cant dou Souleu*), which opens his collection of "Iles d'Or." This has become the people's hymn of the south of France:

"Mighty sun of fair Provence,
Of the mistral comrade fine,
You who drain of waves Durance
Like a draught of La Crau wine

"Show your ringlets golden-spun,
Cause the dark and woes to run—
Soon, soon, soon,
Show your visage, lovely sun!"

Some time was needed before all these beautiful poems, all these sun-steeped songs, made of Mistral the celebrated poet he is today. At first he was hardly known, save by the citizens of Maillane, all peasants and the first persons who ever sang his catches. They considered the village songster a gay comrade, a

good fellow, a little cracked! In the towns the good cits of South France had indeed heard talk of Mistral, but laughed mockingly at the attempts of this rustic to reëstablish in its purity the Provençal tongue. They did not understand him; they did not begin to admire his "Mirèio," nor did they sing in their turn "*Lou Grand Souleu de Provenço*," until the talents of the poet had found an echo as far as Paris, even into the Académie Française. Oh, then Mistral passed for a prophet in his own land; all saluted him as the national singer.

At the time I was near him, this reaction in his favor had only begun. But he hardly perceived it. We walked together from village to village, and went to every Provençal festival. Never a *ferrade* at which we were not seen! In the evening we went out to meet the little bulls of Camargue which came in by *manades* (herds), marshaled by cow-boys on little fierce white horses, men half-savage themselves, booted in big leathers, and bringing with them the distant smell of the bogs, where their troops of horses and bulls live in freedom. Their long three-pronged "punchers" stood out against the light background of the Provençal evening skies, like recollections of Don Quixote. At these village festivals I was passionately attached, with Mistral, to all our southern sports,—the three leaps, the leap *sur l'oultre* (on the wine-skin), the wrestling matches for men and half-men (men and youths),—sports in the open air, which, beneath that blue sky, recalled the games of ancient Greece.

And the *farandoles*! I still remember the one we danced on Saint Agatha's day, the votive saint of Maillane: a *farandole* with torches, which they call a *pisoulade*, led about the village during the entire night by the elder brother of Mistral; and the old farmer, despite his white beard, bounded like a young man. Hardly did we now and then stop long enough, breathless, to drink from a butt of wine opened on the village green, and then off went the band. From ten at night to seven in the morning, down the street, across the gardens, across the vineyards, the male and female dancers intertwined and unraveled the long serpent of the *farandole*, as if seized by a fit of insanity.

O the happy hours! O the joyous moments!

It was necessary that we should part, however; but I did not go without promising to return soon. Besides, I remained Mistral's neighbor. In order to work, I installed myself in an old mill two leagues from Maillane. It was a ruin, that windmill,—a tumbling heap of stone, iron, and old planks, which had not been put for many years to the test of the wind; it stood there with all its mem-

bers broken — as useless as a poet. Strange are the affinities between us and things. I loved that pariah of a mill. I loved it on account of its sadness, its road lost among the grass; and I have kept the most delightful impressions of it. I found this picturesque shelter for my work of “grinder, miller of letters” in the hands of relatives and friends who were allowing it to come to a natural and thorough old age in a corner of their estate, — a mill that turned no more, — just as they would allow to die in the pasture an old blind and foundered horse.

Often I thrust the key under the door of my mill, and, being tempted by a morning full of sunlight, set off afoot to Maillane, seized by a resistless desire to see Mistral. I always found him the same, open and warm-hearted, and always faithful to his beautiful literary belief, following his work with a robust will which nothing could distract from its aim. Thus I saw him produce almost all his books, page by page, the pages following one upon another, all wet with ink, covered with a fine handwriting, on the wretched little registrar's desk. Sometimes we made appointments with other Provençal poets, Théodore Aubanel, Roumanille, Anselme Matthieu, at one time at Maillane in Mistral's house, again at Arles on the forum in the midst of a crowd of drovers and shepherds, come to hire themselves out to the farmers of the *Mas*. Thence we branched out on expeditions without end. We went to the Ville des Baux, a powdery heap of ruins, wild rocks, palaces with escutcheons, crumbling, wavering in the wind, like an eagle's nest on a cliff. We dined at Cornille's tavern, and all the evening we strolled about, singing songs among the little short alleys, between crumbling walls, remains of stairs, fallen capitals — all in a phantasmal light which silvered the grass and stones as with a light fall of snow.

We also met together among the reeds of the island of Barthelasse opposite the ramparts of Avignon and the Papal palace; and, after a breakfast in a sailors' pot-house, we marched up to Château-neuf-des-Papes, illustrious by reason of its vineyards. O that Papal wine — wine golden, royal, imperial, pontifical! We drank it on the height, up there, while we sang the verses of Mistral — new fragments in the “*Iles d'Or*.”

These wild expeditions often lasted several days. Then we slept at some village inn, and I found myself again engaged with Mistral, as at his own house in Maillane, in the endless all-night gossip of a single bedroom for two. I shall always remember how, on one of these nights, he recited to me from his bed “*La Communion des Saints*.”

“With eyes cast down she presses light
The steps and stairs of Saint Trophime;
It is upon the sill of night
And vesper tapers cease to gleam.
The marble Saints within the door
The while she passes her have blessed,
And from the church to her own floor
Their marble eyes upon her rest.”

I cannot read over those lines without peculiar emotion; for I have heard them since under different circumstances. It was in the month of January, 1867. In the middle of one of Véfour's rooms, Mistral, standing, recited the stanzas of the “*Communion des Saints*” and I translated them as they were uttered. Around us was a circle of black coats and feminine toilettes — among the latter a little patch all white. Mistral had come to Paris to be a witness to my wedding.

Having married, my windmill became too small, and I returned to the south very little. Mistral wrote me a letter for each one of my books; on my part, I wrote to him whenever he published anything. He himself married, and I was to have been his witness, as he had been mine; but, being ill at the time, I could not be present at his wedding.

So the months and years passed, until last summer, when, finding myself in the south with wife and children, I took the opportunity of seeing Mistral. I hesitated a little to make this visit to the poet, because his mother had just died. Nevertheless, I resolved to go. Nothing was altered in the village when we crossed it in the carriage; only Mistral was no longer in his little peasant house; since his marriage he lived in a new house built opposite the old one, in a little garden which he owned. I ring, and with what feelings! It is Mistral himself who opens the door. We give a great cry, our arms open, and we hug each other with tears coming at the same moment to our eyes! I would not hear of it, that we should breakfast anywhere else but with him. Since his mother's death he remained shut in with his sorrow. “But you she loved” said he to me; and he talked to us of the dear old woman, who died more than eighty years old. Soon his wife came down and was presented. A tall young woman, very composed, a native of Dijon, who had learned Provençal and was living out her life in that little corner of Maillane, immersed with Mistral in his dictionary and his Provençal poems.

The new house was hardly larger than the old: two large rooms on the ground floor, two in the upper story. It was merely somewhat more comfortable. I recognized the same innocent pictures hung on the white walls, and in the hall I found the two little plows. Everything was upset for our breakfast. The poet himself wished to go and pull the

finest grapes from his trellis in the garden, the only vines remaining to him, the others having been ruined, destroyed, along with all the grape stocks of Southern France. Through the window I saw him walking in the alleys, always the same man, whilst the bees swirled about his broad hat. This breakfast was like those of the past — potatoes, grapes, of course good wines, champagne, an old bottle of Château-neuf-des-Papes, a remnant saved from the wreck of the vineyards. After break-

fast Mistral began to read his new poem, "Nerto,"— Provence, evoked from the middle ages,— consisting of scenes exquisite in color, and little condensed verses full of a light gracefulness. Whilst he read I saw outside the window the sunflowers of the little garden raising their heads; I saw afar off the fine lacework of the Alpilles hills traced on the blue sky, and all the wine of my own youth in Provence mounted once more into my brain!

Alphonse Daudet.

THE NEW TROUBADOURS.

AVIGNON, 1879.

THEY said that all the troubadours had flown—
 No bird to flash a wing or swell a throat!
 But as we journeyed down the rushing Rhone
 To Avignon, what joyful note on note
 Burst forth, beneath thy shadow, O Ventour!
 Whose eastward forehead takes the dawn divine.
 Ah, dear Provence! ah, happy troubadour,
 And that sweet, mellow, antique song of thine!
 First Roumanille, the leader of the choir,
 Then graceful Matthieu — tender, sighing, glowing,
 Then Wyse all fancy, Aubanel all fire,
 And Mistral, mighty as the north-wind's blowing;
 And youthful Gras and, lo! among the rest
 A mother-bird that sang above her nest.

R. W. Gilder.



A FANCY FROM FONTANELLE.

"De mémoires de Roses on n'a point vu mourir le Jardinier."

THE Rose in the garden slipped her bud,
 And she laughed in the pride of her youthful blood,
 As she thought of the Gardener standing by —
 "He is old — so old! And he soon will die!"

The full Rose waxed in the warm June air,
 And she spread, and spread, till her heart lay bare;
 And she laughed once more as she heard his tread —
 "He is older now. He will soon be dead!"

But the breeze of the morning blew, and found
 That the leaves of the blown Rose strewed the ground;
 And he came at noon, that Gardener old,
 And he raked them softly under the mould.

*And I wove the thing to a random rhyme,
 For the Rose is Beauty, the Gardener Time.*

Austin Dobson.