

lingly sees relegated to the peasantry all that now remains of a once proud and refined tongue.

Such was the position of affairs until quite recently. As usual, one enthusiastic soul started the movement, which is known as the Provençal revival and the literary *fashion* in Paris. The son of a gardener in Southern France, named Roumanille, received the best education that the most thorough French schools could give him, and developed an ardent taste for poetry. He wrote at the age of twenty some simple unpretending verses which gained an unusual measure of success. They were designed chiefly for the pleasure of his old mother, and, sitting up late one night to read them to her, he found to his dismay that the poor old woman could not understand them. She had long since forgotten what little French she had learned at school and those verses of her own son's were written in a *foreign* tongue, not in the smooth and beautiful Provençal which alone she could speak. "And so," said the young man to himself, "my own mother is debarred the intellectual joys which delight me. Our Provençal tongue has been for centuries dishonored by low singers, in tavern catches, vulgar squibs, uncouth and licentious rhymes. If then our mothers cannot understand our French, let us sing in the language of our mothers. Since we have no popular literature save that of the *ale-houte*, let us *create* one for the hearths of our sires." And to this high task he set himself at once. As a modest country school-master in his native land, he continued to inspire a class of young and brilliant men with his own enthusiasm, striving by voice and pen and daily exhortation to further the good work begun. There is not space for tracing here the gradual advance of the sides under the skillful guidance of his pupils and there comrades. Roumanille, Aubanel, Crousillat, Anselme, Tavau, Adolph Dumas, Garcin are names dear to the Provençal heart and not elsewhere unknown. But the youngest and most brilliant member of the set was Frederic Mistral, whose very name suggests his land,—the *mistral* or northwest wind of Southern

France being the old *ventus magistralis*, the master-wind that sweeps all before it; all the keener since the woods were cut off the lower valley of the Rhone and the Island at its mouth.

The poem which has made his fame and secured the success of the whole movement first appeared at Paris in 1859, with French and Provençal on opposite pages. A single edition of the Provençal text had previously been printed at Avignon. The French translation, the only part which was understood in Paris, captivated the critics, and soon many desired to read the original of which this was soon found to be a rude and inadequate rendering. The first translation of "Mireio," *was made into English prose* by Mr. C. H. Grant,—remarkable for fidelity, vigor and simplicity. A metrical version was published by Mr. H. Crichton in 1868, but it is inadequate and misleading. The best translation into metre is that of Miss H. W. Preston, Boston, Roberts Bros., 1872, improving in form with every edition, though the verse needs no change from the state in which it came from the translator. In this translation one gets a full and appreciative treatment of a poem which breathes the very spirit of Southern France and gives us a fair picture of its life and scenery. It crowns the new literature.

Alphonse Daudet has been a keen and appreciative friend of the movement and has cast as it were side lights upon Provençal life. In a very quaint deed he acquires possession of a ruined mill half hidden in climbing vines in the very heart of the country, whence issue his "Letters from my Mill,"—a series of graceful sketches, many of which recall to us the scenes, the landscape, the very odors of that country, on land, on river and on sea-shore. As a native of the ancient city of Nismes, Daudet has a certain birth right in the land which even "Thirty Years of Paris" have not set aside. He has been a sympathetic friend and companion of Mistral and others interested in the new literature of his native soil. Yet all this has not kept him from so overwhelming with his satire the little town of Taracon, in three separate books, that