weekend, or in the weeks leading up to the Festival. That is when you get the most volunteer time. And there are two or three of us who have to keep on it through the year, and that can be tiring. And it is a challenge for us to delegate the work load evenly. Events take just one or two people to really get the ball rolling, but it is not fair if three years down the road they are still doing the same thing. There has to be some way of getting other people involved who will get the job done too. That is easier said than done, though.

P—I had a feeling at the end of this year's festival that you were getting a little bit worn out. You were talking along the lines of "I'm not going to do this practically all by myself next year." Is it getting to be too much for you? Are you getting burned out?

G—I was speaking from sleep deprivation! Every festival co-ordinator should go through that at least once; it's a rite of passage! Now over a month later, I can look at it in a broader perspective. I wasn't the only one doing things. This year we actually delegated a lot more than the previous year. What I did discover is that despite the delegation, the amount of time you put into it doesn't go down, it just stays the same. That was disheartening. On the plus side, Comhaltas sold itself out, so that was a show that was a promoter's dream. Our cash flow was brilliant.

In '95, we had a really good, successful year, but we relied a lot on the walk-in crowd for our show's attendance, so it was a little more stressful. That was my first year really co-ordinating the thing and I was on a roll from picking up the challenge to make sure it worked well. That year was good because the weekend ran more or less the way I hoped it would. This year I didn't have as much input as to who we brought in, or how the weekend was going to work. In spite of that, as Festival Co-ordinator, I still had to put the same amount of time in, so it was a different experience to be sure.

P—So what are you going to be doing next year? What will your involvement be?

G—Well I haven't yet thought about that because I still have one bill left to pay on this year's! But I do know I will be around for it, definitely. I've put too much time into this festival to not be involved with it in some way. And I promise myself I'll play more flute and worry less about bills.

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A Perfect Strain

Isabella Valancy Crawford

O bid the minstrel tune his harp,
And bid the minstrel sing;
And let it be a perfect strain
That round the hall shall ring:
A strain to throb in lady's heart,
To brim the warrior's soul,
As dew fills up the summer rose
And wine the lordly bowl!

O let the minstrel's voice ring clear,
His touch sweep gay and light;
Nor let the light of ruddy June
Shine in his joyous eyes,
If he would wake the only strain
That never fully dies!

O what the strain that woos the knight
To turn from steed and lance,
The page to turn from hound and hawk,
The maid from lute and dance;
The potent strain, that nigh would draw
The hermit from his cave,
The dryad from the leafy oak,
The mermaid from the wave;
That almost might still charm the hawk
To drop the trembling dove?
O ruddy minstrel, tune thy harp,
And sing of Youthful Love!

Crawford (b. Dublin 1850, d. Toronto 1887) seems to be an acquired taste. I've acquired it. Her verse is pretty high cholesterol, so one might take a little at a time, but there's nutrition lurking in it, as well as the delights of an extravagant imagination. You'll be hearing more from her; it may surprise you. [GWL]