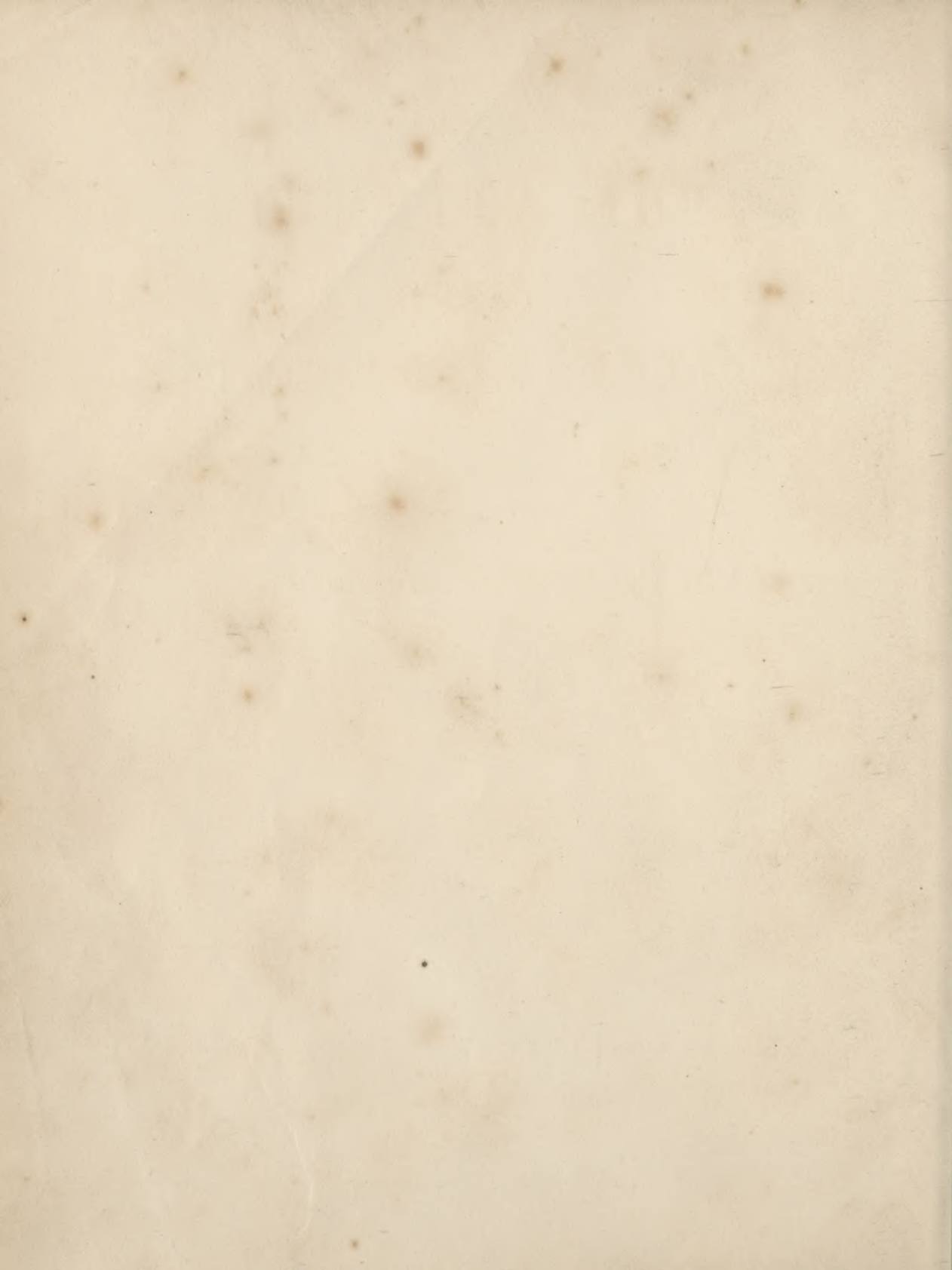




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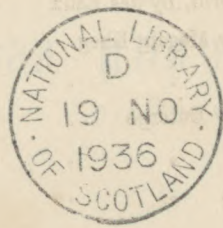
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THE ATTEMPT.



Hints to our Readers.

“THE ATTEMPT” again has just begun,
And if you look alone for fun,
Please close the book.

And don't just read it for yourself,
Then lay the paper on a shelf,
But lend the book ;

Of sober sense it has its share,
A partial friend might e'en say *mair*,—
So read the book.

That so we may more readers get,
For we have just begun as yet
To print our book.

You must not too severely try
Our pieces, though they do aim high,
In this our book.

And if you glaring faults shall find,
We ask you once for all to mind
'Tis young our book.

We all our very best shall do
To please as well as profit you
With this our book.

INCOGNITA.

Halcyon Days.

THE most complete idea of the nature of man's earthly sojourn is that of a pilgrim's progress. Life is indeed a weary pilgrimage. To the ungrateful it is a dreary wilderness of dissatisfaction, whose cloudy sky is scarce illumined by one cheering ray; but happier constituted minds, when tossed about by cares and difficulties, will often arrive at delightful spots of relaxation and refreshment, where they may for a little "rest and be thankful." Oh, these oases in the desert! to sit in whose shade it were worth while to undergo all one's share of the fagging, and tearing, and wearing of the work-a-day world, are surely blessings that cannot enough be appreciated; and we cannot too warmly welcome L'Allegro, when, to brighten us by her "fair and free" companionship, she comes attended by mirth and youthful jollity—

" Quips and cranks and wanton wiles,—
Nods and becks and wreathed smiles,—
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimples sleek;
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides."

Perhaps some one of my readers may think she has enjoyed very little of the happiness I am talking about. What! my friend, say I, Is it possible you know nothing of the joys of Midsummer and Christmas Holidays? Have you never gone pic-nicing, fern-hunting, or boating excursions in the country, or climbed to the top of Arthur's Seat, and admired the beauties of Edinburgh when in town? Have you never seen a Christmas tree, tasted plum-pudding, or played blind-man's buff? If not, poor little dear! you have indeed missed considerable enjoyment; but, unless you were an old woman in your cradle, you have known innocent happiness as intimately as have any of Euphrosyne's darling little cherubs of attendants. You have been a child. Fresh from the hands of our great Creator, not undimmed, though scarce tarnished by the common corruption, "a heaven lies round us in our infancy;" and while we bask in the bright sunshine of our childhood, handling our toys and enjoying our game at romps, innocence brightens every enjoyment, and makes life indeed a succession of Halcyon Days. Ah! darling childhood, thine were the happy days.

But though as we get up the aged ladder the pleasures of childhood satisfy not, we girls who are past childhood have our Halcyon Days still, and enjoy them too,—

witness the ardour of youth, or other cause unknown to the writer, making us view the country in such a pretty rose-pink colour, that we are sorry to leave it for loved Edina, even to write for "The Attempt," in whose pages I am sure I had no idea of moralising about doing so. And older people still than we are have holidays, and enter with keen zest into their enjoyment. The lawyer has his long vacation—the banker, merchant, and tradesman have their holiday of different lengths; even the labourer takes a jaunt with his wife and bairns; and, oh, there are Halyon Days in store for all when Father Christmas, whom we expect so soon, pops his hoary head in our midst. Till he comes, bringing "the daft days" with him, we shall talk about how he was welcomed and kept in the olden time.

Father Christmas, since the first and second centuries, has, by different nations and seats of people, been welcomed at all times of the year, from its not being known at what exact season he should make his appearance; but he has come to us for such a very long time on the twenty-fifth of December, inaugurating the first of "the daft days," that we should be sorry to see him when he cannot have snow wherein to leave the prints of his kind old feet, and red-berried holly wherewith to crown his venerable head. We are particularly glad, at any rate, that he comes at all, as old and young make a point of seeing everything through rose-coloured spectacles, to celebrate his return with fun and festivity.

The mode of keeping the Halyon Days of Father Christmas has differed according to the manners and customs of different times; but on Christmas Eve, among the first preparations for the approaching festivities, the mistletoe, holly, and ivy have always been the favoured evergreens with which the apartments have been decked in his honour. Since the time of the ancient Britons, the mistletoe has been to us an indispensable accompaniment of our Christmas festivities. Gathered off the oak by the chief Druid with a golden knife, and received by the inferior priests below as they chanted their heathen hymn, it was regarded by our superstitious forefathers as a preventive against disease, and an all-heal for evil of every description. To the early Christian the mistletoe was peculiarly interesting, as the only remnant of his old idolatry, with the use of which the wise policy of Pope Gregory prompted him not to do away; and its being an interesting link between Christianity and heathenism, should make us glad that "its berries white add mirth to Christmas cheer." As the holly occupies that place among the trees, when in the nakedness of winter, which is held by the oak in the full-blown prime of summer,—according to Southey's lines—

"When the bare and wintry woods we see,
What then so cheerful as the holly tree?"

the grey locks of Father Christmas are very appropriately encircled by a garland of evergreens and flaming rubies, independently of the fitness of the decoration suggested by the holly-seller in the following lines:—

“ For, according to the story, prickly leaves like these before ye
Round the Saviour's brows were circled eighteen hundred years ago.”

At this season, when friends meet friends, and everybody is expected to forgive everybody's enemies, what more appropriate to complete a triune-wreath of evergreens than the dark-waving trails of friendship's ancient emblem, “the ivy never sere,” which seems so sacred to time and old ruins that it serves to remind us of Christmas feasts long, long gone by, when its green leaves were looked upon by bright eyes now closed in death. The tall Christmas candles having been lighted, and casting their fitful glance along the green-clad walls, the servants were wont to obey the injunction of Herrick—

“ Come, bring with a noise,
My merrie, merrie boys,
The Christmas log to the firing;
While my good dame she
Bids you all be free,
And drink to your heart's desiring,”—

by inveigling the guests into the yard, on pretence of seeing the arrival of the Dey of Tripoli and his gallant suite, to assist in bringing the Yule log into the hall, while with stentorian lungs they shouted the ditty—

“ Old Dun up draw out of the mire,
To burn upon our Christmas fire,—
So dance and sing and make good cheer,
For Christmas comes but once a-year.”

The log was then placed on the ample fire-place with great rejoicing, and lighted with a brand from last year's clog, while the company regaled themselves with Yule cakes, bowls of fermenty, spiced ale, and beef, and entertained each other by the singing of carols or the telling of legendary tales. The Yule clog is still burnt in many farm-houses in the north of England, where there are some superstitions attached to it by the peasantry.

Herrick commands us on Christmas Eve to

“ Wassalle the trees, that they may bear
You many a plum and many a pear;
For more or less fruits they will bring
As you do give them wassailing,”—

a ceremony which was generally performed by the oldest servant, who preceded the rest of the household to the best-bearing apple-tree in the orchard, round which a circle having been formed, the wassail-bearer chanted such a carol as the following:—

“ Here’s to thee, old apple-tree,
 Whence thou may’st bud and whence thou may’st blow,
 And whence thou may’st bear apples enow !
 Hats full ! caps full !
 Bushel, bushel, sacks full,
 And my pockets full too ! Huzza !”

and having taken a draught from the wassail bowl for the sake of luck, threw the remainder of its contents of ale and lamb’s-wool upon the tree, amid the shouts of the beholders.

The revellers generally retired to rest about midnight, the peculiar sacredness of which hour on Christmas Eve is thus commemorated by Shakespere—

“ Some say that ever ’gainst this season comes
 Wherein our Saviour’s birth is celebrate,
 This bird of dawning singeth all night long ;
 And then they say no spirit dares stir abroad.
 The nights are wholesome ; then no planet strikes,
 No fairy takes, no witch hath power to charm,—
 So hallowed and so gracious is the time.”

The practice of singing carols on Christmas morning dates as far back as the first and second centuries ; but of these we have no authentic record, so that those of the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman period may be said to be the earliest with which we are acquainted, except, of course, the greatest of all, thus mentioned by Milton—

“ His place of birth a solemu angel tells
 To simple shepherds keeping watch by night ;
 They gladly thither haste, and by a choir
 Of squadron’d angels hear His carol sung.”

Carol singing is now almost extinguished, its only remnant being left us in the Christmas waits, who in some towns sercnade the citizens with sweet music.

The Christmas dinner has ever been eaten with more relish and greater importance attached to it than any other dinner during the whole year. In olden time

great preparations were made for a splendid banquet, and at the appointed time it was marshalled with great ceremony into the dining-hall:—

“Just in this nick the cook knocked thrice,
And all the waiters in a trice
His summons did obey;
Each serving man, with dish in hand,
Marched boldly up like our train band,
Presented, and away.”

After the guests were seated, a pause ensued till the butler entered, with a servant on each side carrying a huge wax candle, and himself bearing the principal dish, viz., a boar's head decked with rosemary, and a lemon in its mouth, which was placed with great ceremony at the head of the table, while the attendant minstrels gave it a musical greeting. This ancient ceremony is yet observed in Queen's College, Oxford, where a carol is sung on its entrance, of which this is the first verse—

“The boar's head in hand bear I,
Bedecked with bays and rosemary;
And I pray you, my masters, be merry.
Quot estis in convivio,
Caput aprī defero,
Reddens laudes domino.”

After dinner the butler again entered, and with the cry of “Wassail, wassail,” the wassail bowl was placed before the host, and its contents mixed according to Herriek's injunction:—

“Next crown the bowl full
With gentle lamb's-wool,
Add sugar, nutmeg, and ginger,
With store of ale, too;
And thus you must do
To make the wassail a swinger.”

The Christmas revels were wont to be presided over by a temporarily elected “Lord of Misrule,” who took the lead in the most extravagant sports that could be devised, especially the masquerades, in which such great characters as Father Christmas, Dame Minee Pie, Robin Hood, Maid Marian, Roast Beef, Plum Pudding, the Turkish Knight, the King of Egypt, his daughter the fair Sabra, and St George and the Dragon, played important parts. Though such extravagant sports are hardly in store for us at the approaching Christmas season, there is enough of fun to be had at that time to make it deserve the appellation of the Daft Days, and I am sure I heartily wish

all my readers such great happiness in the coming joyous season that they will not hesitate to mark it in the calendar of their Halseyon Days,—more fully enjoying their own Christmas holidays from the charitable remembrance of those poor unfortunates whose merry Christmas depends upon the kindly hearts and helping hands of their happier brethren.

This paper, my readers, though written in anticipation of Christmas festivities, you will not see till they have become of the things that are rolled into the past, and the year of 1864 will have been gathered to his fathers. Though a sadly used old man by all of us, our affection still elings around his tottering steps, and with kindness in our hearts we shake him warmly by the hand as he bids us adieu. He is even now departing, and but a short time will elapse before we may, with Lockhart, exclaim—

“ Hark! friends, it strikes: the year's last hour,—
 A solemn sound to hear!
 Come, fill the eup, and let us pour
 Our blessing on the parting year.
 The years that were, the din, the gray,
 Receive this night with choral hymn
 A sister shade as lost as they,
 And soon to be as gray and dim.
 Fill high: she brought us both of weal and woe,
 And nearer lies the land to which we go.”

ELFIE.

Training the Little Ones.

THE beginning of education seems at first sight a much less difficult problem than its riper development. For the latter, the influence of a well-cultivated and commanding mind is recognised as indispensable; for the former, a correct acquaintance with the rudiments of learning, combined with an exhaustless fund of patience, is often deemed sufficient. But, as one has truly said, “All is but lip-wisdom that wants experience.” Let us put our hand and mind to the work, and other thoughts than these will dawn on us. There will appear in our task a magnitude and responsibility that we little dreamt of. We find, to our surprise, that it is no building which we are called on to rear in which a stone wrongly though laboriously laid may be removed and placed aright. Our work is to sow, and in a fruitful soil from which we can

pluck no grain that has fallen from our hand, be it weed or flower; to nourish and train the young life of a tree, which will indeed live and grow on, whether we watch or slumber at our post, but whose future beauty must depend in great measure on our wisdom and care,—whose deformity may be the result of our neglect or rash pruning. The more tender the twigs, the more our slightest touch will tell.

Only a small part of the whole training of a child falls to our charge. We have but a line here and there of the great picture to fill in. Yet how can we hope for a harmonious result unless we can grasp the great ideal of the whole? That whole no man ever yet filled up in its completeness. The child, the youth, the philosopher labour towards it, yet the end is still far off; for it is nothing less than the perfect development of every faculty of body, of mind, of soul. This is the goal towards which all true education must tend. Truly, it is a fearful thing to set working powers that will never die,—to direct the course of those gathering waters that will flow on for ever. The most precious parts of that little being are not now, however, in their infancy. The heart and conscience have already received their most indelible impressions; the will has either been subdued or has grown fearfully strong. It is with the intellect that we have to do.

And though thus limited, our field is wide enough. The mind grows, not by pressure from without, but by energy from within. No labour of ours will unfold a single faculty unless we can excite its power of self-development. It is no easy task that of understanding the various faculties at work in a child's mind, so as to be able to set each to work in its own natural way. Still more difficult is it to reach the powers that lie hidden there, but half awake, and to stimulate them to vigorous action. But the perplexing path will become more plain, if we will but continue as nature has begun. Let us make her key-note ours, and the vibrations of each separate string will awake, not by our touch, but by the mysterious sympathy that dwells in the instrument.

Let us, then, try to understand the natural growth of a child's mind. Its history has been one of ceaseless wonder and inquiry, experiment, and discovery. Each new sight and sound has opened up to it a fresh world of wonder. The first view of the blue, restless, limitless sea, with the fairy rock-pools by its shore; the town child's first glimpse of the wonders of the meadow and the wood; the country child's first mingling with the full tide of city life; the strange tale of a traveller;—what thoughts, what questionings will not these awaken? Thus, by Perception, by Memory, by Thought, the mind grows. Now, which of these three is our key-note? Perception continually grasps new images, Memory folds them in her treasure-house; but were

this all, those precious germs of knowledge would lie for ever in confusion and darkness, unproductive, apparently dead as the grains in the withered hand of an Egyptian mummy. The alchemy of *Thought* alone can draw from them their hidden life, nay, transform them into part of the life of the mind itself. This is the royal power which all others do but serve and feed. It is at once the root, the life, the sap, and the fruit of the tree. Let us call Thought into vigorous exercise, and the other powers will not sleep. Memory will no longer work in the dreary monotony of forced labour, but in the alacrity of a joyful service. The knowledge laid up by it will appear no longer as a jewel deposited in a casket, to be brought out unchanged or tarnished for occasional show, but as a seed which will spring up sooner or later, to refresh and enrich the child's whole nature, as a stone cast into the water, whose eddies will spread outward long after the stone itself has sunk to the bottom.

There will be joy, both for teacher and scholar, in teaching animated by such a spirit; for every living thing must rejoice in feeling its own strength, in putting forth the life that is in it. It is only when work is excessive, objectless, or unsuited to the powers employed in it, that it becomes pain. Real, earnest work, if stopped the instant the little mind becomes weary, and succeeded by perfect freedom, is the way of happiness as well as of progress. The powers of endurance must be gradually taxed as they increase in firmness. Hard, even dull tasks must come to be plodded through. But the child who has felt the delight of rising ever higher and higher will front with energy the dark and toilsome ascent, trusting that it will lead him to clearer daylight.

M. L.

Lines on Resignation.

Move gently, for we enter here
 The chamber of the dead;
 Behold her stretched upon her bier,
 And her last words are said.

Two days ago she little thought
 To be among the dead;
 But when the awful summons came,
 She meekly bowed her head.

Though first of all she gently said,
 Oh, God, I am afraid!
 Then He the Holy Spirit sent,
 And all her fears were stayed.

He words of comfort to her said,
 "I will be with thee still:"
 "I am content, I do not fear;
 Father, do thou Thy will."

“My life,” she said, “Oh mother,
Is ebbing fast away;
I would not have it other—
I have no wish to stay.”

We weeping knelt beside her,
Our hearts to anguish given;
But when we rose we calmly said,
“She is now safe in Heaven.”

E. H.

On Making a Noise in the World.

THE desire of making a noise in the world pervades our age to such a degree as to have become almost a fever. For surely the delirium of the poor fever-stricken patient is not more strange and inconsistent than are the absurdities into which many of us are led who wish to make a noise in the world. We would here draw a distinction between Fame and making a noise in the world. True Fame is indeed glorious and ennobling to the minds of men. It is a gift from Heaven, for

“Fame is no plant that grows in mortal soil,
Nor in the glistening foil
Set off to the world, nor in broad Rumour lies,
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in Heaven expect thy meed.”

This, we see, is very different from that petty momentary publicity in which some of us delight. Men in all ages have been prompted by the desire of Fame to perform great and stirring acts; but this wish of astonishing the minds of weak people seems to be a plant of more modern growth, or, at least, its branches to be spreading wider and wider among all classes.

A clear proof of the pettiness of this wish of making a noise in the world is, that it displays itself in such very insignificant affairs. For instance, a lady thinks to herself, “I wish to be remarkable, but I have no particular talent. My abilities are very ordinary, but I *must* be remarkable—so I will be strong-minded. I will eschew crinoline, and flowers and ribbons in my bonnet; I will carry a cotton umbrella; and then people will say that I am above caring for appearances.” Poor lady, she quite misunderstands the true meaning of the term, a strong-minded woman. She confuses what it ought and does really mean, viz., a woman who has fixed principles, and acts up to them, with the “Punch” caricature of those good people. And thus she devotes her time to making herself peculiar,—that time which might be more pro-

fitably spent in almost any other way. This petty desire, like most other faults as well as virtues, is shared by both sexes. The gentleman who leans languidly against the door or mantel-piece at an evening party, refusing to dance, is in reality denying himself a great pleasure for the sake of peculiarity. What a perversion of self-denial is here! surely, as we go through life, we find abundant opportunities of exercising self-sacrifice without such unnecessary additions.

Those of my readers who are acquainted with that charming book of Miss Ferrier's, named "The Inheritance," will at once think of dear old Uncle Adam; for he was a dear old man, in spite of himself. He tried in every way to be morose and unamiable, and could say sharp, satirical things; but there was a soft place in his heart, though few could reach it. His indignation could not be more effectually roused than by any allusion as to what the world might say of him; and, in truth, he took more pains to avoid the imputation of caring one whit for the world than many of its votaries take to please it. This old man, unknown to himself, wished to be peculiar; and though we could not dislike him for it, still it is when his hard manner thaws, and his heart opens to his new-found niece, that we love him most. Though somewhat of a digression, still we cannot here deny ourselves the pleasure of reminding our readers of Uncle Adam's talkative friend, Miss Pratt, and how on a cold winter afternoon she arrived at the house of her cousin, the Earl of Rosville, in a hearse, no other conveyance being at hand. Now, this was not done so much with the desire of making a noise in the world, as because she wished to undertake the journey and could not arrange otherwise. We see by this that acts of eccentricity may be perpetrated without the unworthy desire of gaining peculiarity. However, it is not our wish here to recommend hearses as the usual means of conveyance.

Surely, in our time, it is a depraved state of feeling which gives such notoriety to a criminal. The worse his crime, the more strange the manner of its perpetration, the greater is the desire of the public to see him. Did you not feel it bad taste, when you walked along Princes Street the other day, and saw in the shop-windows eartes-de-visite of a celebrated criminal in different attitudes? How do we know but that the mind of some poor uneducated boor, from hearing so much said of some hitherto obscure man, and seeing him raised at once to consequence and notoriety, may be filled with the desire of having *his* name in every one's mouth,—of having his picture offered for sale, like that of other celebrities? And the poor deluded man, not having more sense than his betters, may be led on to do some dreadful act, which gains him indeed a short-lived notoriety, but for which he pays with his life.

Now, it seems to us that there is a sort of grandeur in the character of the man

who, feeling that he has no genius, settles quietly down to his everyday life, without troubling himself with the thought that the world beyond his immediate circle of friends knows not even his name. Such a man is a much nobler creature than those of us who are eternally fretting ourselves with vain longings after notoriety, which will never be ours by the absurd measures by which we endeavour to attain it,— unless, indeed, it is the notoriety of contempt. We do not wish here to disparage those young aspirants to fame whose desire it may be to attain it either by physical or mental ability. They are right to do their best, and to multiply the talent, whatever it may be, with which they have been entrusted, and ill will they fare if they “hide it under a bushel;” but those whom we would and do condemn are they who do peculiar things merely for the sake of peculiarity, and who go through life secretly resolving to differ in every respect from the rest of their kind. Then let those of us who are mere ordinary mortals be content with our lot. It may not seem to us a brilliant career which lies before us, but it may be a very happy one, cheered by the love and esteem of those around us.

DES EAUX.

Address to the Ramsheugh.

[The Ramsheugh, a small but beautifully-wooded dell, is romantically situated at the foot of the Ochil Hills, about five miles south-east of the town of Perth.]

SWEET dell! though all unknown to tourist fame
 Thy modest beauties and thy humble name,
 Though artist's pencil and though poet's lays
 Have failed their skill to lavish in thy praise,
 Endeared thou aye shalt be, as now thou art,
 Within the inmost chambers of my heart,—
 Endeared by memories of the happy hours
 I've passed beneath thine over-arching bowers,
 That proud defy, with wild exultant glee,
 Man's power to fashion aught so fair and free.
 Ah! who shall say that, 'midst the world's gay throng,
 Where whirls the dance and floats the midnight song,
 Where, unregarded, time fleets swift away,
 And night fulfils the office of the day,

As true, as full, as pure a joy we find,
That stills as well the pleasure-craving mind,
As when 'midst God's own works we take our stand,
And see His power displayed on every hand,—
The curtain of His glory drawn around,
New beauty adding to each foot of ground.
How sweet at morn, at noon, or evening still,
To stand beside thy dreamy, murmuring rill;
To watch it wimpling gaily through the glade,
With mimic torrent, eddy, and cascade;
To climb thy banks that green and rugged rise,
To seize with ardent joy the ferny prize,
The modest Splcenworts,* in the clefts that hide,
And Buchler,† wearing well its plumes of pride;
Or, 'ncath thy frowning precipice of rock,
Scarr'd by the print of many a tempest's shock,
And ever moistened by the thread-like stream,
That o'er its face descends with silver gleam,
Within the solemn twilight of the leaves
To stand, and gaze into the sky, that heaves
Its broad blue banner o'er the world of green,
And dream of days when all this glist'ning sheen
Was changed for blackest gloom and wildest storm—
When this calm rill, that mirrors back each form
Of ash and birch and slowly sailing cloud,
Rushed on with torrent dash and thunder loud—
And that cascade, that like a vapour seems,
As white and shadowy in the dusk it gleams,
Swelled high by ceaseless rains and melting snow
Foamed o'er the cliff and boiled in wrath below.
O thou most sweet, most fair, sequester'd spot,
Though view'd but seldom, ne'er to be forgot!
On thy loved beauties shall mine eyes no more
Enchanted feast as they have done before?

* *Asplenium trichomunes* and *Asplenium adiantum Nigrum*.

† *Lustrea Felix Mas.*

It may perchance be so ; yet ever bright
 O'er the fair scene shall Mem'ry throw her light,
 And in my heart, while life endures, shall last
 Remembrance of this pleasure of the past.

MEGAIG BHEG.

A Christmas Tale.

THE old German peasant, Carl Holz, sat in a cosy nook beside the close iron stove, the black and grim substitute for our cheerful, open English fireplace, diffusing, however, an ample degree of warmth through the large old-fashioned kitchen. At the other side of the stove sat his wife Gretchen, still a comely woman, though time had imprinted some furrows on her brow, and plentifully streaked with silver the hair that shaded it. Dame Gretchen was busily knitting, for she was a thorough German, and would have felt ill at ease had she not been engaged in that favourite employment of the women of her country. Carl was carving with great care a wooden figure, destined in time to be added to a long row of knights and ladies, soldiers and woodcutters, that stood on a low shelf behind him. The figure on which Carl was then working was one of the last mentioned individuals, and wanted but a few more strokes to be completed; but the old sculptor seemed thinking of other things than his work, and frequently paused, as if deeply musing on some important subject. At last, when the woodman's axe had received the finishing touch, Carl laid it aside, and sighed so deeply, that his wife looked up in some alarm; but the kindly smile that beamed on her husband's countenance speedily reassured her. "I was only thinking, my Gretchen," he said, in answer to her look of inquiry, "that Christmas will be a lonely time for us this year: we shall miss our Ludwig and his little ones most of all on that day, which used to be so happy." "Yes, yes, indeed we shall," assented good Dame Gretchen, who was a woman of few words, and whose remarks were in general only the echo of her husband's; "we shall miss our Ludwig sadly to-morrow," (for the next sun that should appear in the east would rise on Christmas morning).

To understand the allusion made by Carl and his wife, it will be necessary to mention that the only son of the worthy couple had, until a few months ago, been a farmer in the immediate neighbourhood of his parents' cottage; but a succession of bad harvests had so impoverished and disheartened the young man, that he had,

though not without reluctance, seen fit to emigrate, along with his wife and children, to the backwoods of America, there to seek that fortune which had failed to attend him in his native land. His parents felt that the light of their life had departed when their son bade them farewell, and the thought of the lonely Christmas that awaited them filled their hearts with heaviness. "Our hearth will be lonely on that happy day," repeated the old peasant, "and our cupboard is full. Is there no one whom we could comfort out of our abundance, and whose precious blessings we might hope to deserve? Gretchen," he exclaimed, rising up as the thought seized him, "our old neighbour Dorothea can have but little since her loving son was taken away: it is the duty of the rich to help the poor, and rich we are compared to the desolate widow. What think you, my wife; would it not be seemly that she should partake of our Christmas bounty?" The kindly housewife did not reply in words, but looking up in her husband's face, gave a pleasant smile and approving nod, and was soon again busily engaged with her knitting. With the somewhat impetuous Carl Holz, to determine anything was at once to do it; so, rising up, he began to prepare for a walk of some four or five miles through the dense forest in which his wooden hut was situated. Gretchen would have objected. It was too late, she said, though it yet wanted several hours before the sun should go down, and Carl knew the windings of the forest by night as well as by day; there would be plenty of time for Carl to see their old neighbour on the morrow. In short, the old woman had, or thought she had, many cogent reasons why her husband should not leave the house at that time. But the stout peasant had a will of his own, and gently silenced his wife by telling her that it was not late, and that he could with the greatest convenience do his errand to the old woman and return to his own dwelling before nightfall. Dame Gretchen gave a resigned sigh, and quietly submitted to the will of her husband. Carl wrapped himself snugly up, for the snow lay thick on the ground, and the air was sharp and cold; and taking with him his trusty dog, a native of one of the high Swiss Alps, he set out on his errand of kindness, and began to walk with an alacrity that could hardly have been expected from one of his years. He had not gone above a mile when, in passing a somewhat dilapidated dwelling to which an old man, who seemed a stranger to the neighbourhood, had lately come with his two grandchildren, he was startled by hearing sounds of violent weeping from within. Carl paused a moment, for his heart was tender, and readily touched by sights and sounds of suffering; but while hesitating whether he should go in and inquire the cause of grief, the uncertainty he felt as to how he should act was removed by the appearance at the door of one of the children, who, in a voice interrupted by sobs, implored his

aid. A few words explained the cause of his trouble. His grandfather, who had been ailing for some time, had suddenly died, and left the children, who had previously been deprived of both parents, in the utmost consternation and distress. The heart of the kind peasant was moved with compassion at the sight of so much misery, and having ascertained that the poor little ones were without food and money of any kind, he persuaded them without much difficulty to accompany him to his own home.

We need not describe the kindness with which good Gretchen Holz received the trembling children, and comforted their aching hearts with tender loving words and caresses; nor how the next day the board, so plentifully spread, was surrounded by happy faces, and the sweet voices of children again rang through the old kitchen. And who shall say that, as Carl and Gretchen saw the placid contentment that illumined the features of the aged Dorothea (who had not been forgotten), and heard the fervent blessings that she poured on her benefactors, and listened to the glad voices of the children, there had ever been a Christmas fraught with more real and enduring happiness to them; for, as Carl afterwards remarked to his wife, had not "the blessing of them that were ready to perish come upon them?"

AGATHA.

The Shoehorn.

ONE fine day in spring, when the London season was just commencing with its heat and bustle, and the streets were once more thronged with busy passengers, a tall military-looking gentleman entered a fashionable shop at the West-End to make a few purchases. When about to leave the shop, he was detained by the shepman producing a beautiful mother-of-pearl shoehorn, and saying, "This, sir, would only cost you two guineas, and would make an elegant present for your lady. I sold just such another to the Queen." "But my wife is not the Queen," replied the customer. "Sir, she is *your* queen," said the ready shopman, with a bow. This argument was unanswerable, so the gentleman paid the required sum, and carried off the shoehorn. On his return home, his young wife was much pleased with the present, and laid it on her toilet-table, determining to use it only with the greatest care.

Several years had passed away, when a manly-looking boy, of some ten or twelve years, ran eagerly into his room to prepare for some Saturday excursion with his school-fellows. But when it came to putting on his shoes, his shoehorn was no where to be found, and his strong shoes resisted all his endeavours to pull them on with his

hands. What was he to do? His companions would call for him in a few minutes, and it was clear he could not undertake the proposed excursion in his house-shoes. "Oh! mamma has one," thought the boy, and away he rushed to his mother's room. Yes, there the mother-of-pearl shoehorn lay, bright and beautiful as ever. The boy seized it, thrust it into his shoe, gave a tremendous pull, and snapt the horn in two pieces. The delicate shoehorn was intended to assist a satin slipper on the small foot of a lady, and could not stand its present rough usage. The boy was really sorry for what he had done; but he was a truthful child, and not at all afraid of his mother, so he ran down stairs with the broken pieces in his hand, and told her all about it. "Mamma," said he, "I did not mean to break it, and you shall have mine instead, if I find it." His mother could not be angry with him, but she was vexed at such a pretty thing being broken; so she took the pieces and put them carefully away, "for," thought she, "they are still too pretty to be lost."

And now many years have passed away, and have brought with them their usual changes; but the pieces of shoehorn remain the same as ever, and the mother sometimes looks at them, for they have grown dear to her: they remind her of her absent soldier son, fighting for his country in a distant land—and as she looks, she longs that he were at home again, though it were only to break more two-guinea shoehorns.

DES EAUX.

The Sailor's Wife.

A BALLAD.

KIND ladies, list my sad, true tale
 Of humble cottage life,
 Of all the joys and sorrows known
 To a poor sailor's wife.

Well Jamie lo'ed me, and I him,
 And we together wed,
 And swiftly, swiftly, o'er our heads
 Our honeymoon time fled.

But when the raging tempest roared
 In wrath across the lea,
 My Jamie wasna by my side,
 For he was far at sea.

Ah! slowly, slowly passed the days
 When I was all alane,
 And aye, when ae day passed, I thoct
 That he'd be nearer hame.

And i' the dark and dreary nicht,
 When all was calm and still,
 Save the sad souchin' o' the wind
 And ripplin' o' the rill,

I'd gaze out on the darkness drear,
 That now spread all around,
 And think I heard his welcome voice
 In every mocking sound.

And thus I'd sit for weary hours
 I' the cauld dreary nicht,
 Till frae the east wi' feeble ray
 Broke the first streak o' licht.

And then I laid my weary head
 To take a short repose,
 But aye afore my sleeping eyes
 His weel-lo'ed figure rose;

And I wad dream that he was back
 Anee mair to hame and me,
 And that he'd left for ever mair
 The angry raging sea.

But when the winter's frost and snaw
 With noisy tempest eame,
 A golden ray of sunshine broke
 Upon my lanesome hame.

I was the mithers o' a bairn,
 A lovely baby boy;
 And who but mithers can describe
 A mithers' holy joy?

Ah, yes! it was no idle dream,
 It was a baby fair,
 Wi' rosy lips and bricht blue e'en,
 And bounie auburn hair.

And quickly passed the spring hours now,
 Wi' him upon my knee,
 Watching the giant vessels dance
 Upon the angry sea,

And thinking o' my Jamie dear,
 Wha long had been frae me.
 Oh, could he be a stiff cauld corpse,
 Borne by the ruthless sea;

And wad he ne'er again return
 To kiss his ehubby boy,
 And wi' his welcome voice and form
 Complete a mithers' joy?

Ah, ladies! these were hard, hard thoehnts,
 An' yet I felt 'twas true,
 That I my husband never mair
 I' this cauld world should view.

And aye I thoehnt my heart wad break
 Wi' grief and sorrow keen,
 Had I no had a heavenly Friend
 On whom my heart to lean.

But oft I felt 'twas very hard
 To say "Thy will be done,"
 When I gazed upon my darling bairn,
 My fatherless wee son.

But it pleased God that I should bide
 I' this strange warld alane,
 While all I loved and cherished were
 Beyond the reach o' pain ;

For when the bonnie flowers o' spring
 Their fragrant blossoms shed,
 And, stript of their late beauty, lay
 All lifeless, cold, and dead,

My early blossom withered too,
 And slowly drooped away,
 Till a wee corpse, still fair in death,
 My ehubby bairnie lay.

Yes, there he lay, my rosy boy,
 All stiff, and cold, and dead ;
 The fresh bloom from his infant cheek,
 Ah! far too soon had fled.

He came to cheer my lanely heart,
 On a bleak winter's day,
 And then he went, that sunbeam sweet,
 In a spring morn's first ray.

He's gone to pave the way to heaven
 For his lane mither's feet,
 Where faither, son, and mither too,
 Shall all thegether meet.

At first I felt it couldna be,
 I thoecht he was asleep—
 I couldna think that cruel Death
 My bonnie bairn could keep.

An' everything went roun' about,
 I wished that I were dead,
 And that from me, instead of him,
 That strange thing, life, had fled.

And thus I sat for weary hours,
 Thinking I wad go mad ;
 For oh, my heart was choked, and I
 Was stubborn, lone, and sad,

Till mourners came, and took my son
 Off to his lonely grave ;
 Then did the anguish af my heart
 The doors asunder rave,

And tears, kind tears, free outlet found
 From their fast closed abode,
 And washed away in rapid streams
 My sad affliction's load.

Then to the Good Physician's cure
 I showed my broken heart,
 And He of his almighty graec
 Did a sweet peace impart ;

For I can look up to the heavens,
 And watch yon twinkling light,
 And think of him, an angel fair,
 Than that great star more bright.

And wi' my wark I sit and sing
 The sweet, sweet summer long,
 Beside his tomb who's gone to learn
 In heaven the angel's song.

EUTERPE.

The Little Foundling.

It is Christmas day, and the snow is falling thick and fast. The ground is already covered with a soft white carpet, and the trees seem to have put on their holiday dress in honour of the occasion. "No going out for me to-day," sighed little Mabel Gray, as she looked out upon the falling feathery flakes; "what a pity that it should snow on Christmas day! Mamma," said Mabel, turning to Mrs Gray, who was sitting near the fire, "why are you so sad to-day, and why are there tears in your eyes?" "Listen, Mabel, my child, and I will tell you a story, which will keep you from wearying, and also explain my sadness. Sit down on this stool, and listen attentively.

"Many years ago there lived in the town of L——, a lady and gentleman, who were very good and kind. They had an only daughter, a beautiful but fragile little creature, too good to live long in this sinful world. She was her mamma's only care, who tendered her sweet little flower with all the love which can fill a mother's bosom. But she could not ward off the cruel hand of Death, which was blighting her fair young blossom. Day after day passed, and little Alice grew paler and weaker. She was no longer able to skip about the house as was her wont, but lay on a sofa placed before the window in her own little room, pale and exhausted, watching the soft white snow as it fell (for it was Christmas day, and snowing like what it is just now). There she lay, thinking how good the great God was to send down such beautiful white snow, as an emblem of the purity and peace that reigned in heaven above. While she was thus lying in silence, she heard the feeble cry of a little infant, and told her mamma, who sent one of the servants to see where it came from. The maid found a little baby girl lying among the snow before the house, wrapt in a shawl. She brought her in, and gave her to her mistress, who laid her in Alice's arms. The dying girl kissed the infant, who received the caress with an innocent smile, as she said, 'Mamma, is not God very kind to send this pretty little baby to be your daughter when I am gone? will you call her Alice, mamma, and love and take care of her for my sake, so that you may have an Alice on earth as well as an Alice in heaven?' Little Alice died that night, and her mamma adopted the little foundling, and when she grew old enough to understand it, told her the story of her little sister Alice in heaven."

“But, mamma, why should that make you sad?” “I was the little foundling, Mabel, and your good grandmamma was the kind lady. I was thinking of my little benefactress when you spoke to me, and hoping that both you and I might be like her, that when we come to die we may go to heaven, and be for ever with our little angel Alice.”

UNA.

Katie.

Golden hair and blue eyes,
 Full of laughing glee,
 Merry little Katie,
 Who so wild as she?

The echoes sleep unwakened
 Around the silent Hall;
 Dreary gloom and stillness
 Rest now over all.

Dimpled cheeks and red lips,
 Teeth as white as pearls,—
 Katie 'neath the lindens,
 Daisies in her curls.

No more beneath the lindens
 Does little Katie play,
 No more we hear her singing
 Through all the summer day;
 The joy and the life-music
 Of our home have passed away.

Waking all the echoes
 Round the silent Hall;
 Joyous little Katie
 Singing through it all.

Our little angel Katie,
 We will not grieve for thee;
 Thy heavenly home is happier
 Than thy earthly one could be;

Happy-hearted Katie,
 Full of life and love,
 Brightest little sunbeam
 Given us from above.

And the crown that now thou wearest
 Is not of fading flowers,
 And the angel's songs are sweeter
 Than those tearful ones of ours.

* * * *

VERONICA.

Royal Hospital for Sick Children.

THERE may be a few in this fair city of ours who have not as yet visited this most interesting Institution. To such I would address a few words, in the hope that my feeble efforts may not prove in vain. The Hospital was first contemplated about six years ago, by a few philanthropic members of society, who, seeing the dreadful destitution among the lower orders, and the consequent increasing mortality among children, sought means whereby to alleviate the great suffering. The idea of a Hospital for Sick Children was eagerly taken up by some, while by others it was utterly rejected. "For," argued they, "it will take children away from their parents; it will make mothers neglectful of their children; and it will make the little ones discontented with their homes, when they are taken from warmth and comfort to their miserable cellars again." In spite of such arguments, however, the idea gained ground. Subscriptions were raised, and a committee formed, for the organization of the Institution. A house was taken in Lauriston Lane, the rooms of which, after some expense, were converted into wards suitable for the reception of children. A matron was provided from the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, London, nurses engaged, a few of the beds occupied, and thus the work was regularly commenced. The numbers increased rapidly,—accommodation could not be found for all,—and finally, after about two years, a more suitable house being purchased at the foot of the lane, the Hospital was removed, and it is in connection with the present house I am now writing.

The house is pleasantly situated within an enclosure, and commands a view of the Meadows. The building is perfectly plain, bearing no ornamentation of any kind. The entrance lobby is small, but communicates by a glass door with the inner vestibule, which is large and airy. On the right side, as you enter, are the doctor's apartments; and on the left, the wing apportioned to the fever wards. Ascending by a stone stair, you reach the general ward, a fine large room, well ventilated, with five or six windows, and a fireplace at each end. It contains about twelve or fourteen beds, whose occupants are the victims of all manner of maladies, fevers excepted. The beds are of iron, and always clean and tidy. The walls exhibit quite a picture gallery in some places; while the mantel-pieces are rich in toys, many of them bearing the marks of hard usage. The ward above is a much finer room, more lofty, and the windows larger; but in all other respects it corresponds with the one below. This is intended for convalescent children, many of whom are up and running about during

the day. It is indeed a touching sight to see the little faces, so quiet, so patient, so contented, and yet so happy. At the same time, it is such a satisfaction to know that they have everything that can be desired—the best medical advice, food in abundance of the very best quality, warm clothing, and kind nurses to attend to their every want. When the patients are admitted they are put into a warm bath, have the hair completely cut off, and the clothes in which they came either returned to their parents or burned, and new things provided; and one would hardly credit the improvement on a child after a day or two of cleanliness and nourishment, these being almost the only medicines requisite. On the contrary, again, some are brought in only to die, disease having so weakened them, that neither medicine nor stimulant has any effect.

Imagination, too, sometimes has its part in the malady; for the last time I visited the Hospital, the matron told me of a girl, of about ten or twelve years of age, who had once before been a patient for several months, paralysis having completely deadened some of her faculties. Speech and the power of movement were gone, hearing and sight only were left; but after about two or three months' treatment, her system becoming stronger, the once latent powers began to awaken, and she left the Hospital a different child. Again, however, she is an inmate—this time with severe lumbago. She was treated accordingly by the doctor, who, after having tried different remedies, said he could do no more for her. She would walk and lie down, but nothing could persuade her to seat herself. All their persuasions were in vain, for she remained obstinately determined not to sit down. The matron, seeing it would not do to give in, told her one day she must either leave or take some part in the duties of the ward. If she consented to do the latter, she should have a teapot and cup and saucer for her own use, and a certain allowance of tea every week, as the other nurses had; "but you know, Katie," said she, "I cannot have my nurses *standing* at their meals,—they must either sit down or do without." The next day, on asking the nurse if the result had been favourable, the answer was, "If you please, ma'am, I promised not to tell." The day following, the answer was more decided. The once obstinate will was conquered, and the child, feeling that she must succumb, seated herself, at first with apparent difficulty, for she feared the nurse's betraying her, but after a little time, when she forgot about it, as easily and as naturally as any one else.

Another little fellow, who had broken his leg, looked so happy in his little bed, that one would think it was the greatest blessing in the world that such an accident should have befallen him. He is only two or three years of age, and his merry ringing laugh resounded all through the ward.

Many more instances I can give of the "wee bairns," but space fails me, and I want, before closing, to interest some of my readers in behalf of the Institution. It may be that every one cannot do *much*, still a *little* may be done, and "every little helps." Clothes are wanted; for each child, when dismissed, is furnished with a suit of some kind of clothing; consequently, a good stock is always required on hand. Little petticoats, dresses, or jackets, all are useful, and very soon find owners. They do not take much material; and even though they may be made of odds and ends, they will only be "coats of many colours," and variety will lend a certain enchantment to their beauty. And by speaking about it, the *existence* of the Hospital will be more widely known. People will be induced to go and visit it; people, perhaps, who have imagined that to go there would necessitate their carrying away with them the infection of fevers. Such an idea is perfectly erroneous; but I am sorry to say it does prevail with some people. No contagion of any kind is there in any ward open to visitors, and the fever patients are in quite a separate part of the house. And let me add, if we choose to apply our minds to it, we may learn many lessons from these little ones. Thankfulness that our "lot" is so differently cast, and that we have the means of helping them;—patience, when we see their contented and cheerful faces, even though the form be weak and emaciated;—unselfishness, when we think that by a little self-denial we may make one little heart happy by a kind word, or clothe a shivering form by a little gift, however small;—and, above all, our sympathies will be drawn out, until we feel we cannot help loving them, for the sake of Him whose children they are.

C. E. M.

A New-Year's Hymn.

ANOTHER year is ebbing fast
 Into the shades of night;
 Another year is coming forth
 Into a morn of light.

Look back upon the year that's gone,
 The joys and sorrows there,
 And think on all we might have done
 To please our Saviour dear.

Through all its eireling changes
 He has been with us still,
 To guide, tend, and direct us,
 And keep us from all ill.

Then let us lift our hearts to Him,
 That ever-list'ning Lord,
 That He may still direct our feet,
 And guide us by His Word.

UNA.

Sketches from the Reign of Louis the Fourteenth.

“For within the hollow crown,
 That rounds the mortal temples of a King,
 Keeps Death his court, and there the antick sits,
 Scoffing his state, and grinning at his pomp,
 Allowing him a breath, a little scene
 To monarchize, be feared, and kill with looks,
 Infusing him with self and vain conceit,—
 As if this flesh, which walls about our life,
 Were brass impregnable; and humoured thus,
 Comes at the last, and with a little pin
 Bores through the castle wall—and farewell King.”

NOTHING more strongly impresses the mind with the evanescent nature of all human events, plans, or actions, greatness, glory, fame, or triumphs, than the thoughtful perusal of the pages of history, particularly those containing the account of some more than usually brilliant reign. Like the slides passed quickly through a magic lantern, dazzling us for moment, and then leaving no impression of what seemed so real behind them, so, as we read, each scene passes away to give place to another, and what appeared to its actors so momentous or so memorable, so wondrous or so likely to influence the world throughout all succeeding ages, only engages the attention for the passing moment; and as event crowds after event in the brief record of many years, each new one effaces the impression made by the former. It is difficult, nay hardly possible, to realize the truth, that what at present seems to us so important, will perhaps so little interest posterity. This may seem to us a painful thought, but it may not be without its use, if it leads us to see how small a space in Time is occupied by the greatest of earth's potentates, and seeing this, to remember that, although forgotten here, their most insignificant action is recorded in Eternity.

We are about to describe some of the principal events connected with the Life and Times of Louis XIV. of France; and when perusing all the minuteness of petty detail in which the biographers of his time indulge when recounting the long and glorious reign of this monarch, many and various opportunities are afforded of observing, that what at the time in which it happened appeared to be memorable, will eventually be considered of but slight importance.

The state of society in France at the time when Louis, a mere infant, succeeded to the throne of his father, under the regency of his mother, Anne of Austria, was very low. The nobles were ignorant, proud, and tyrannical; while the poorer classes were trampled on and degraded, and scorned by those who ought to have been their protectors. Superstition, which ever tends to lower the minds and morals of those who are under its deadly sway, had even penetrated into the palace, and lodged in the breast of royalty itself, in proof of which, on the day on which her infant son was born, the Queen mother caused an astrologer to be secreted in her chamber, that he might cast the horoscope and foretell the future fortunes of the heir of France. The affairs of the kingdom were at this time principally directed by Cardinal Mazarin, who was nominated by Anne her prime minister, and who in some respects was superior to his predecessor Richelieu, although in others he was greatly his inferior, and being a foreigner, the welfare of France could not be expected to possess such a deep interest for him as if it had been his native land. He, however, succeeded in gaining the confidence of the Queen, to whom he had been during the life-time of her husband an object of dislike and distrust, and so entirely did he overcome all her prejudices, that she appointed him sole director of the education of her son. He did not, however, find it so easy to secure the favour of her Majesty's other friends and advisers; but the numerous cabals against him—originated chiefly by the Duchess of Chevreuse, the Bishop of Beauvais, and the Duke of Beaufort—while they seemed to threaten the downfall of his power, only served to strengthen his authority, to install him more firmly in the favour of Anne of Austria, and to procure from the indignant Queen a sentence of banishment for the two first conspirators, and a prison for the third.

During the minority of the King, under able commanders, such as the Duke d'Enghien (afterwards better known as "Le Grand Condé) and Marshal Turenne, France gained for herself much military glory. She was successful under the former nobleman at Rocroi, a strongly fortified frontier town near Ardennes, on the borders of Champagne, where the Spanish general, Francisco de Mello, who laid siege to it, although possessed of superior forces, was completely routed on the 19th May 1643. Several engagements followed this, d'Enghien's first victory gaining for him that reputation for bravery and talent which he never afterwards forfeited.

It would be in vain to attempt giving a detailed account of the social history of France during the regency, as it consisted of a series of political intrigues, in which every one seemed to seek his own aggrandizement, without regarding the public welfare, and so, as has often been the case since, the interests of the many were sacrificed to the ambition of the few, under the specious mask of patriotism and public

virtue. The event most worthy of notice, however, is the civil war of the Fronde, which must elaim a few sentenees before passing on to the personal reign of Louis XIV. When Mazarin became prime minister he discovered, on examination, that, from various causes, the public treasury of France had become almost exhausted; and seeing the absolute necessity of appointing some one who might superintend the state of the finances, he decided on a man named Emery, an Italian like himself, who, although possessed of all the talents requisite for such an important office, proved to be a hard-hearted, unscrupulous, and cruel extortioner. The means which he adopted for improving the condition of the public funds were by levying taxes and imposts, and otherwise burdening in the most grievous manner a people, whose rights were already crushed and trampled on by a proud nobility. He also created new offices, which were bestowed on those who could pay the most for them, and resorted to many other plans equally unjust, for procuring money. Of course, the people, indignant at these aggravations of their already unhappy condition, were roused from the sort of despairing lethargy into which they seemed to have been thrown, and symptoms of an approaching outburst were appearing daily in different quarters. The name of "the Fronde," by which this rebellion was afterwards distinguished, originated in the following somewhat whimsical manner:—The boys of Paris were in the habit of assembling in groups under the walls of the city, and amusing themselves in a most dangerous way, by fighting with slings, from which they threw stones at one another, and were in consequence often severely hurt. The police interfered in vain, for they no sooner disappeared in one place than they perseveringly reappeared in another; and that being somewhat the style of the disaffected within the walls of Paris, a wit of the time chose to designate them "Frondeurs," or "Slingsers," by which appellation they were ever after recognised. The cause of the people was soon espoused by Parliament, and by some of those nobles whose own grievances led them to take an active part in anything which resembled opposition to the Court and the Cardinal. Reinforced by their powerful aid, the party of the Fronde soon became most formidable, and a civil war was the ultimate consequence. The principal leaders of this insurrection were the Cardinal de Retz (nephew and coadjutor of the Archbishop of Paris, an avowed enemy of Mazarin), the Duke of Beaufort, the Duke of Longueville, and the Prince of Conti: while the heads of the Royalist party were, the Queen, Cardinal Mazarin, the great Condé, added to whom they had the somewhat doubtful assistance of the vacillating Duke of Orleans. The most extraordinary feature of this civil war was the total want of sincerity evinced by every one on both sides, no tie seeming to have the power of binding them to any party, or causing them to consider its interests

as sacred. But as this famous insurrection would form a history of itself, it would be impossible for us here to enlarge further on the subject, and we shall therefore pass on to the period when Louis XIV. first appears as something more than a mere tool in the hands of Anne of Austria. But this subject must be reserved for a future Number. Z.

Lorelei.

FROM THE GERMAN.

I KNOW not why so sadly,
 Like the sound of a mournful chime,
 In my mind keeps ever floating,
 A tale of the olden time.

The air is cool in the twilight,
 And peacefully flows the Rhine,
 With the dying light of the sunset
 The peaks of the mountains shine.

And far on the distant summit,
 There sits a maiden fair,
 Her golden jewels glistening,
 As she combs her golden hair.

With a golden comb she combs it,
 And sweetly singeth she
 A strain of the softest music,
 And wonderful melody.

In his little bark, the sailor
 Hears it with wildest woe;
 He looks but on the singer,
 He sees not the cliffs below.

Till, lured by the Lorelei's singing,
 To the rocks on the fatal shore,
 The mariner and his vessel
 Are lost for evermore.

VERONICA.

Highland Homes.

DURING a visit last summer to Perthshire, I was invited one day to accompany my friends on an excursion among the hills, to visit some of the very poorest of their tenants. The drive was steep and very rough work for the horses, the rain poured in torrents, and the view was lost to us. As we neared our destination, however, the

sun broke through, and, like a fairy wand by its magic power, caused a thorough transformation scene. The mountains came out in the brightness of their green, brown, and heathery tints; the trees, now beautiful in the colours of autumn, glanced with the drops which lingered like diamonds among them; whilst the brook, swollen to double its ordinary size, dashing onwards past rocks and stones, gave life to the whole. In the hollows there nestled some very picturesque but utterly miserable-looking cottages; and as it was our object to visit the inhabitants of these, we left the carriage, and proceeded to the nearest. On entering (a very difficult process for crinolines), we found the hut consisted of two rooms, a but and a ben, the floor and walls of which were composed of mud and stones. Dark, smoky, and dreary it looked, but not in this light did its owner regard it; to her it was her castle, containing all her household gods. She was a half-crazy sort of body, with a good deal of vanity, and innate love of finery. She welcomed us eagerly, and contrived to find seats for all. "Hoo's a' wi' ye, Laird?" she began. "Ye see I've a fine time here, wi' my grand window looking oot at a' the folk passin' by. It's unco' cheery; and I've gotten a present sin' I saw ye—a real goud brooch, that canna hae cost less than a pound, and I pit it on when I gang to the kirk, and when I'm braw." "Ay," said the Laird, "and I see you like a bit smoke too, and some one to join you; there are two pipes on the hearth." "Ou aye, I'm unco' fond o' a pipe—it's company ye ken; and whiles a neebor draps in, and we hae a crack thegither." "And you would not like to leave this broken-down cottage, and live in one of the fine new houses that some kind folks have built at B—— lately?" "Na, na, Laird; I wanna leave the auld place—it'll last my time; and ye canna find it in your heart to tak the roof frae my head, and send me to thae new-fanglet places." This argument was conclusive; she would rather perish amid the ruins of the hovel in which she had spent her life, than lead an easy existence with many comforts, and be subject to rules and regulations.

The next cottage was even more wretched than the last; the rain found entrance at every point, and the poor woman who lived there complained bitterly of a crack right above the middle of her *bed*, which admitted the water more freely than was comfortable. The fire, in primitive fashion, was made on the floor, and though the hovel had a chimney, the smoke seemed to prefer making its exit by the door. Even this, however, was not so bad as the next we entered, where there was no pretence of a chimney at all, but where we found a cheery old woman, who seemed determined to make the best of everything. The Laird and she were great friends, and had a wonderful joke between them of the *lad* that was always coming and never came. But she had not given up hope yet, though he would need strong lungs that comes

a wooing in that smoke-dried habitation. It was the same story with all; "Home, be it never so homely," was all they wanted, and the model cottages were at a discount. The Highlanders are a people of strong attachments, both to place and kindred, and do not easily take to new scenes and new faces. They seldom care to leave their native glens, and often are heard to glory in the fact that they were never twenty miles from home in their lives. Be it remembered that I am speaking of the very poor. Let us be lenient in our judgment of the landlords, and not blame them for what is probably self-imposed misery.

On leaving the cottages, we found that our duty would not be completed till we had visited the farmers, and accepted their hospitality. There is a time-honoured custom prevalent among them, of drinking healths in their native dew, and any one declining this would incur their displeasure and contempt. Woe be to him or *her*, for sex makes no difference, whose head is very easily affected; they had better give up all thoughts of seeing life in the farm-houses of the Highlands. Be it one or dozen you have to visit, you must *taste* at each, any plea of previous health-drinking being an affront to the house you are in. Sometimes an excuse of being very fond of milk will procure you the exchange, but they are rather suspicious even of that. They think much of a visit from the Laird and his Leddy; whilst the little gifts of dresses, &c., to the gudewives are highly prized. A few kind words of interest find an echo in their hearts, and sweeten their life of labour. The "Landlord at Home" is the secret of success. If he is seen going about amongst his people, encouraging, advising, directing them, they are pretty sure to respond with willing hearts and willing hands, and so master and man working together, their existence is a nobler poem than ever was written—man fulfilling his work in the station God has appointed him.

INCHA.

Shadows.

WHEN the red firelight glows,
 In kindly radiance through the twilight gloom,
 And on the threshold of the quiet room,
 Fantastic shadows throws:

Unto the soul they come,
Visions of bright ones that have left the earth,
Soft smiling lips and tones of childish mirth—
Voices that have gone home.

When in the golden day,
Tracing with lonely feet some reed-fringed stream,
While the soft shadows and the sunshine's gleam,
Through quivering foliage play :

Then to the musing thought,
Heart thrills to heart, as in the olden time,
And forms that strayed with us in life's fair prime,
Unto our dreams are brought.

And in the haunted night,
When moonlight shadows lie upon the floor,
And the sick heart, its fitful slumber o'er,
Prays for the morn's grey light :

They meet his gaze,
Eyes that in love looked on him long ago,
Stars in the old home skies, now quenched and low,
That lit departed days.

J. I. L.

On Quotations and Misquotations.

IN making quotations, there are three things to which we ought to pay attention. First, we should see that the quotation is an apt quotation; secondly, that we make the quotation correctly; and thirdly, that we know from whom we quote.

The first of these three things is absolutely necessary to make the quotation of any value whatever, for a quotation introduced either into conversation or writing merely for its own sake, without stopping to consider whether it is appropriate or not, is an atrocious breach of good taste. The man who brings in a far-fetched quotation, must

be either a pedant or a fool,—he must either be anxious to display what a deeply-read man he is, or else so obtuse as to be unable to distinguish between apt and inapt quotations.

As regards the second thing requisite, we must all feel that it is a duty which we owe to the authors from whom we quote, as well as to those who may hear us, not to propagate misquotations. It is not right that the beautiful sayings of those poets who have passed from us, should be so misquoted as to lose half their beauty and frequently much of their sense.

There may be differences of opinion concerning what has been classed under the third head of things necessary towards the perfection of the art of quoting. Some may say, that as long as we quote correctly and aptly, it signifies little whether we know whence our quotation is taken or not. But let us suppose that in conversation we make a quotation, and that we are then questioned about the poet from whom we have quoted, and our opinion is asked about his works and the style of his writing, surely we should look very foolish when acknowledging that we perhaps have not even looked into the works spoken of. Should we not lay ourselves open to the suspicion of wishing to appear learned, when our acquaintance with literature was in truth very shallow, having been obtained principally second hand, and not from our own research?

Among the many examples of quotations which have been misquoted or attributed to wrong authors, is the following, with which we are well acquainted, but of which few persons can name the true author—

“When Greeks joined Greeks, then was the tug of war.”

We have heard it attributed by one to Shakespere, and by another to Milton; but if we stop to consider in what play of Shakespere, or in what book or poem of Milton it is to be found, we shall see that it is not in the works of either of those great authors that we must look for it. In order to find it, we must turn to Lee's Tragedy of “The Rival Queens, or the Death of Alexander the Great.” It occurs in that speech in which Clytus so exasperates the great Alexander, by boldly declaring that that hero's father Philip was a braver warrior than he had ever shown himself to be; as a proof of this, he recounts how Philip marched forward all undaunted, to meet and vanquish the gallant Greeks. This quotation also furnishes us with an example of a line which is often misquoted, and rendered thus—

“When Greek *meets* Greek, then comes the tug of war.”

The meaning conveyed in this version of the line is, that the "tug of war" was when Greek fought *against* Greek. Now, of course, we all see that this sense is quite erroneous, and that the "tug of war" refers to the desperate combat which always ensued when the *joined* forces of the Greeks met the enemy; indeed, so strong were the Greeks when not distracted by internal factions, that an enemy wishing to attack usually felt that his only chance of success, was in dividing them among themselves.

We suppose that our readers, like ourselves, have often been much puzzled to find out where some quotation very familiar to them is to be found. If any of them, like ourselves, have ever been at a loss to know who is the author of the following lines,—

"Beware of desperate steps, the darkest day;
Live till to-morrow will have passed away"—

they may be surprised to hear that they are to be found in the works of a no less familiar poet than Cowper. Speaking about quotations from familiar poets, have we not all of us been astonished that quotations for which we have been searching through the works of poets almost unknown to us, are often to be found in some author with whose works we had considered ourselves thoroughly acquainted?

There is a story told which shows how phrases and lines are repeated by persons who are totally ignorant as to from whom they are quoting; it is that of two young men, who for the first time in their lives went to see the play of Hamlet acted. They seated themselves in a box fronting the stage, and watched and listened to the actors with great interest. The first act was not finished before one of the young men turned to the other with astonishment, exclaiming, "A remarkably odd play this—why it's all made up of quotations!" They had evidently not led a very literary life, but could not breathe the air of Britain without imbibing many of the sayings of our great poet, and having his expressions "familiar in their mouths as household words." Not long ago we heard a clergyman in his sermon, when explaining something about names or appellations, say, "As it is somewhere said, 'What's in a name?'" Could the clergyman really have been unaware that he was quoting from "Romeo and Juliet?" not but that he was perfectly right in so doing, for our ideas are not so cramped as to think it wrong to quote in a sermon from our great dramatist.

Now we have a proposal to make to the contributors to "The Attempt," which is this—Will they inform us, through the medium of this Magazine, whence the three following quotations are taken? They are well known to us as quotations, but as yet we have failed to discover their respective authors—

“The common air, the earth, the skies,
To me were opening Paradise.”

“Oh! blindness to the future kindly given.”

and that beautiful expression, so comforting to the mourner, reminding him that the Lord will

“Temper the wind to the shorn lamb.”

DES EAUX.

Light in Darkness.

No one of any education in our land can there be, I may safely aver, who has not heard, and few who do not remember as household words, those three lines of our great national dramatist,

“Sweet are the uses of adversity,
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head.”—

lines in which he appears before us no less successfully in the character of the profound thinker and true moralist, than in that of the most justly celebrated poet of our own or perhaps of any land. This simile, quaint and curious, but true to the life, by which adversity is likened to an ill-favoured toad, possessing the one recommendation of a bright, jewel-like eye, is uttered by the exiled Duke, in “As you like it,” who, finding himself in a state of hopeless exile, does the wisest thing in the circumstances, viz., tries to reconcile himself to his situation, and not only so, but to bring sweet out of the bitter, and light out of the darkness of his trial, by pointing out to his “co-mates and brothers in exile” the blessings accruing from it. And, truly, although to the short-sighted vision of the natural man trouble seems a dark cloud, through whose gloomy veil not one ray of sunshine dares to force a passage, yet when the eye of faith penetrates beyond, it beholds the “sable cloud’s silver lining.”

Adversity resembles the diamond, which, by an apparently harsh and merciless process, cuts through the crystal, but only for the purpose of rendering it more perfect in its beauty. Those who have read Gray’s “Hymn to Adversity” must have noted

the powerful and appropriate language in which he addresses the subject of his poem, naming her

“Daughter of Jove, relentless power,
Thou tamer of the human breast,
Whose iron scourge, and torturing hour
The bad affright, afflict the best :”

bearing out well the declaration of the apostle Paul, that “no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous.” Happy he who can add, “nevertheless, it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness.”

But adversity should not be viewed in this gloomy aspect by one who professes to tread in the footsteps of the “meek and lowly” Jesus. He ought not to look upon it, and shrink from it as an evil to be dreaded, as all are too apt to do, but should regard it as a message sent in love by his heavenly Father, bidding him walk more humbly with his God, and more lovingly towards his fellowmen. Well would it be if we would carry ever in our minds that noble injunction from the pen of Cowper,—

“Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for His grace;
Behind a frowning Providence
He hides a smiling face.”

“Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.” Scripture, indeed, teems with passages which point us to the Lord’s hand as working throughout all those trials so inexplicable to us. And who, that has passed through a sanctified furnace of affliction, dare deny that to him and others the “torturing hour” has left its blessing behind it? Many and important are the benefits emanating from the fiery furnace. Numerous sincere commiserating friends may surround the bereaved one in the mourning hour, pouring out their sympathy; but, ah! who can administer such healing balm to the wound as he or she who from sad experience knows how bitter is its smart?

Again, when a man is in prosperity, he has no lack of so-called friends, eager to fawn on and flatter him; but Fortune’s frown is a far surer discernor of true friendship than her smile. Let the fickle goddess treat her former favourite with cold neglect, and he will be surprised to find the ranks of those whom he may count friends so much thinned, but will, no doubt, at the same time feel surer of the good faith of those who remain.

Yet another blessing, ranking higher than those already named, remains to be

mentioned. In some cases, happily in not a few, trials have had the beneficial effect of awakening sinners to a sense of the weight of their sins. Many a time has affliction turned the tiger into a lamb, and the drunkard into a sober God-fearer. Numerous are the records of persons who have resolved on a sick bed, that if restored to health, they would seek the Lord with "a pure heart, fervently;" and in several, though, alas! it is to be feared not the majority of these cases, the promise has been performed. Many a mother, gazing on the cold clay of her child, has vowed over that silent preacher of righteousness to lead a new life, and has from that day forward been a better wife and mother, and a Christian.

Where shall we find a more fitting close to this paper than in the following verses from the author of the hymn already quoted?

“ When first thy sire to send on earth
 Virtue, his darling child, designed,
 To thee he gave the heavenly birth,
 And bade to form her infant mind.
 Stern, rugged nurse, thy rigid lore
 With patience many a year she bore:
 What sorrow was, thou badest her know,
 And from her own she learn'd to melt at others' woe.

Scared at thy frown, terrific fly
 Self-pleasing Folly's idle brood,
 Wild Laughter, Noise, and thoughtless Joy,
 And leave us leisure to be good.
 Light they disperse, and with them go
 The summer friend, the flattering foe,
 By vain Prosperity received,
 To her they vow their truth, and are again believed.

Wisdom, in sable garb arrayed,
 Immersed in rapturous thought profound,
 And Melancholy, silent maid,
 With leaden eye, that loves the ground,
 Still on thy solemn steps attend:
 Warm Charity, the general friend,
 With Justice, to herself severe,
 And Pity, dropping soft the sadly-pleasing tear.”

Psalm lv. 6.

O COULD I soar with airy flight
 With dove-like wings on high,
 To seek repose from troubled thoughts,
 I'd range the earth and sky.

O'er mountain crag I'd wing my flight,
 And o'er the troubled sea,
 But could I find the rest I seek,
 Where'er I chose to flee?

I'd soar with morning's balmy breath,
 Nor pause at mid-day's glare,
 I'd visit every earthly clime,
 To seek for comfort there.

O'er ocean deep I'd wing my flight
 To seek some favoured spot,
 Where I should find a calm repose,
 Free from each troubled thought.

But, ah! there is no earthly shore,
 Where perfect peace remains;
 No joys that this vain world affords,
 Can heal the spirit's pains.

Then whither can I flee for rest
 If none this world can give?
 How can I ease this tortured mind,
 And free from trouble live?

I'll lay my cares before the throne
 Of Him who answers prayer;
 I'll come with all my griefs to Him,
 And seek for comfort there.

Yes, gracious Saviour, thou wilt hear,
 Thy kindness soothe my mind,
 With Thee, at length I'll peace obtain,
 The longed-for rest shall find.

AGATHA.

A Funeral at Sea.

SOME years ago, on the broad Atlantic Ocean, a ship might have been seen sailing gracefully along, defying the heaving waves that ever and anon dashed against her sturdy bulwarks. All around was calm and beautiful. The morning sunbeams glimmered among the masts and shone upon the sails, casting a faint and holy golden tint upon the green and wavy waters. The ship sailed slowly and majestically on, cutting the waves with a dull and melancholy sound. Alas! that sound corresponded but too well with the inmost feelings of every heart, which swelled with emotion at beholding

the sad and solemn scene which was going on aboard that mighty vessel. Laid upon a plank was the cold and lifeless form of a man in the prime of life. A blanket had been carefully wound around him, as if the gentle hand that performed the last sad office for the dead, would fain have brought back the loving spirit, which but that morning had taken its departure from its earthly house of clay.

Not a hush is heard. The captain stands by, with clouded brow, heaving many deep sighs for him who long and faithfully had served his earthly as well as his Heavenly master; and the gallant tars shroud their dim and tearful eyes, as they gaze upon the lifeless form of their much-loved and regretted companion.

Now the time has come. The holy man of God lifts up his voice in heartfelt, fervent prayer to the afflicted's Friend, to bless for the good of the spectators the solemn scene which they are called upon to witness, and for grace to comfort his friends at home, whose hearth will never again be cheered by his welcome voice and fatherly counsel. What a moment of heart-rending grief and horrid suspense! One seems almost afraid to breathe, as gently they raise the willing plank, and the loved form glides slowly into the water, the white blanket floating lingeringly above, as if unwilling to consign the victim to his watery grave.

But the sad scene has closed, and all is over now. Beneath the green waves they have laid him, far from country, friends, and home, with naught but the coral reefs for his tombstone, and the green waves for his sod.

EUTERPE.

A Tale of the Last Century.

CHAPTER I.

ONE Christmas evening, towards the close of the last century, a lady might have been seen hastily threading her way through some of the most crowded and fashionable streets of the Scottish Metropolis. The evening was bitterly cold, but notwithstanding the uninviting aspect of the weather, the streets were crowded, and as friends met, good wishes for the coming year were exchanged, or a "Merry Christmas" hastily and cheerfully spoken as each one hurried on his way, pausing only when a gaily decorated

shop offered some unusual attraction, tempting the rich man to lose his purse strings, and the poor man to sigh and wish for wealth.

But nothing seemed to attract the attention of the lady we have before spoken of. On she passed with a quick, noiseless step, utterly regardless of the cheerful greetings that were heard on every side. She was dressed entirely in black, a thick veil concealing her face and a heavy cloth mantle enveloping her tall figure. An unmistakable air of refinement about her told at once that she was unaccustomed to proceed thus alone and on foot, but the firm and independent pace at which she walked spoke of a character which rose above the studied rules and regulations of society. After rapidly traversing some of the quieter and more aristocratic streets, she paused before a lordly-looking mansion, ascended its broad steps, and rang for admittance, which after a few minutes' delay was granted to her by an elderly-looking female, whose appearance was that of a housekeeper. She seemed to have expected and longed for the lady's appearance, for, quickly closing the door, she ejaculated, "Thanks be to the Virgin, sweet lady, for your safe return! My master has already asked twice for you, and but this instant the library bell has again rung." "And thanks to thee, good Marjory, for keeping watch so well; for though my errand was a sad one, yet my heart is eased, and methinks I could well bear my noble father's displeasure." "Then, my sweet lady, I am recompensed a thousand times; but make haste, for I am sure your good father will wax impatient if you tarry longer, so go and throw off these wrappings, whilst I tell him that you will be with him immediately." Leaving worthy dame Marjory to proceed to the library, the lady tripped lightly up the massive steps of a marble staircase, and entering an elegantly furnished apartment, flung off her cumbersome disguise, displaying as she did so a tall and elegantly-formed figure, which a jacket of violet-coloured velvet displayed to the fullest advantage. Her head was small, though finely formed, and well set upon her beautifully rounded neck and sloping shoulders; her features were strictly regular; her eyes of a dark grey were large and lustrous; but the haughty curl of her short upper lip gave to her face a proud and determined expression, it would otherwise have wanted; her hair was of a rich dark brown, wound tightly round her head, and fastened behind by two large pearl pins; her hands were white and delicately formed, and as she proceeded to rearrange her dress, trembled so that they almost refused to do their office. After a few minutes' rest, she was sufficiently calmed to descend to the library, where, with your permission, dear reader, we will leave her, whilst we give a fuller account of her position and the circumstances under which she has been introduced to your notice.

My Dog.

I AM going to tell you about my dog, not that I think him better than any other dog, but because he is more interesting to me; and, of course, I shall begin by describing his person.

His head is fine, with a good facial angle, although, never having measured it, I cannot give the exact number of degrees. The eyes are expressive, indicating great canine intelligence, and the nose and mouth are decidedly aristocratic in outline. The ears are beautiful in shape, covered with fine silky hair, deepening into a rich brown, and becoming attenuated at the point like the faun of Praxiteles. The body is finely proportioned, though rather inclined to *embonpoint*, terminating in a remarkable tail, which a facetious friend asserts might very well represent a patent shaving brush. He was named after the estate from which he came, but I do not intend to give it here, as I must not only preserve my own incognito, but the dog's also; although, had I deferred naming him until I knew his habits, I should perhaps have called him Vagabond, Runaway, or (John Bunyan fashion) Escape-the-Maid, as whenever the street door is opened he bolts past her like an arrow, and is at the head of the street before she observes him. He has various curious ways of his own. As soon as he knows I am awake, he comes into my room, keeping very quiet till I get up, when he gets extremely excited, which I interpret as a demonstration of joy that the business of the day has begun. He then stations himself at the window, barking a good-morning to every dog that passes, quite indifferent whether his salutations are returned or not, till we proceed downstairs to breakfast, during which meal he is entirely engrossed with himself, begging equally from friend and stranger, in season and out of season. After breakfast he takes an airing in the garden, exercising himself in barking at a stray cat, and showing great hostility to any of the feathered tribe that leave the trees and venture near him. Having returned to the house, he is my constant attendant during my morning occupations. He evidently likes music exceedingly, listening to it with devout attention, comprehending emotionally, if not scientifically, the art of the divine Cecilia.

When he knows the hour has come for our walk, he shows great excitement. The canine manner of expressing delight is not always agreeable. One's dresses had need be made of some very substantial material to stand the tugging, tearing, and tumbling by which he evinces his impatience until the door is opened, and we get

fairly into the street, when all at once he resumes his usual calmness, and shows by his demeanour that he perfectly understands his province is to take care of his mistress, not to think of himself. Being worn out both in mind and body with his exertions, on returning home he is fain to retire from public life, and enconce himself in a corner of the lobby window, where he enjoys a solitude unbroken save by an occasional ring of the door bell, when a low growl shows that he is still alive, and sensible that it is his duty to take care of the house as well as of his mistress, but that the latter is a pleasure, while the former is a compulsory obligation that he would rather shirk if it were in his power. He has his own share of vanity, a weakness appertaining to dogs as well as to men, and looks very conscious when I send for him to be exhibited to my friends. With regard to the afternoon and evening, he is allowed to follow the bent of his own inclination, as it might cramp his genius to subject him to rule the whole day long, and his behaviour during his hours of *délassement* show he is worthy of all confidence.

But while I am interested in all his ways, and find pleasure in describing his habits, I must not forget that I may thereby tire others who are indifferent to the doings of the canine family. My dog and I therefore will now make our obeisance to the audience, asking pardon if we have been so occupied with ourselves as to forget that their time and patience may be exhausted.

SIRIUS.

A Plea for Authors.

I WONDER if the many readers who seize with avidity the new numbers of their weekly or monthly Magazines, and plunge eagerly into their details (comfortably enconced in their easy chairs, prepared to enjoy, or more frequently to criticise and murmur in disappointment at their contents), ever give a thought to the labour and weariness of brain and body which the writers may have endured to fill these pages they skim so lightly, or dissect with such cutting scorn? All composition is at times irksome, even to the most talented; and it seems to me that no writers are more tried than contributors to periodicals, that none should be so leniently judged. Who that has ever made the attempt does not know to his cost the fatigue such work too often

entails? The dread knowledge, that to an hour, a moment, a fixed amount of paper, covered with thoughts spun from his brain, must be forthcoming—that there can be no respite, no reprieve—such a knowledge is but little short of misery! There is now and then a feeling of such utter exhaustion of all thought, which none perhaps but the initiated can know or sympathize with. Could those who read but once experience it, I think their judgments on the results would be for ever gentler. And this exhaustion is but one of many troubles to which those who work for our amusement are exposed. There is the rush of thoughts and ideas, rapid as the lightning flash, which ere the mind can grasp and shape are gone! There is the struggle to put these thoughts into language, which, when written, is all inadequate to their power, and seems quite to change and mar their beauty, while every attempt to improve or clear does but make “confusion worse confounded.” And countless other trials too numerous far to speak of. They are, of course, only transitory, depending greatly on physical strength and mental temperament, both at the mercy of circumstances. Time can overcome them, but that essential is just what those for whom I plead often cannot obtain. I would not speak of the rule, only of exceptions, and from them ask sympathy for the whole—of bitter suffering in many instances I know. The effort to write must be made, the battle with disinclination (it may be with a worse malady, though that alone is hard enough to combat!) must be fought—ay, it is for bread, for life!—and so, with aching head and throbbing pulse, the weary hand moves over the blank sheets, hurried it may be by an impatient summons, or by threats ere the task is done. And for what remuneration, think you, cold critics? A wretched pittance, but a drop from what is *often* a shower of profit. We may be thankful, however, that such is not always the case. There are many too just and noble for such grinding avarice, who out of their abundance pay their contributors liberally and well. Poverty, however, is but too common in many instances; and when we read, in our luxurious ease, before we judge too hardly, let us pause to remember the homes where the pages we esteem so poorly may have been written, under pressure of what misery. There are wretched authors as numerous as distressed workwomen, and their lot is twice as hard. Who does not know how mechanically the fingers can move at their work, while the sad heart grieves on; but brain work cannot be done by rote—every thought must go to it entirely, or failure be the inevitable result. Let us think of the dim eyes that looked on these sheets with a harsher judgment perhaps than your own. It may be that man wrote in hunger, cold, and sorrow,—that he saw, with a double pang, those dear to him suffer with him. Need you marvel that the pages drag, that the tale you have waited for fails to satisfy your glowing expectations? Perchance he felt despairingly the faults, even the worth-

lessness of his writing, with a keenness far greater than yours,—he may too, if talent be his, have felt what it might have been in other circumstances, he would fain have kept it for a happier hour, if such should ever come—but it goes for bread! Heaven pity him, and such as he. Let us, with that “charity which hopeth *all* things, and endureth all things,” forbear to censure.

FIDES.

Epitaphs.

WE do not mean to enter here into a learned disquisition on the subject of Epitaphs, nor yet to inquire into the meaning or derivation of the word; we charitably suppose our readers to be aware of that, or capable of making the discovery for themselves; therefore we shall only try to give them, in the words of the great Mrs Malaprop, “a nice *derangement* of Epitaphs,” in hopes of thereby affording their minds the relaxation which they may find necessary after the more edifying reading which our Magazine affords.

Perhaps one of the best known English Epitaphs is that of Ben Johnson on the Countess of Pembroke:—

“ Underneath this marble hearse,
Lies the subject of all verse,
Sydney’s sister, Pembroke’s mother;
Death, ere thou hast slain another
Wise and good and fair as she,
Time will throw his dart at thee.”

A fine old Epitaph was discovered by Sir Walter Scott on a decayed tombstone in Melrose Abbey:—

“ Earth walketh on the earth glistening in gold,
Earth goeth on the earth whither it wold,
Earth builds on earth palaces and towers,
Earth says to earth, all shall be ours.”

Poets have not unfrequently been the composers of their own Epitaphs. Prior's is one of the best known:—

“ Nobles and heralds, by your leave,
Here lies what once was Matthew Prior,
The son of Adam and of Eve ;
Can Stuart or Nassau claim higher ? ”

Also that of Pirou, written in a spirit of revenge against the French Academy :—

“ Ci-gît Piron qui ne fut jamais rien,
Pas même Académicien.”

Most of us have seen the Epitaph on Frederiek, Prince of Wales, which appeared in Thackeray's "Lives of the Four Georges," in the Cornhill Magazine :—

“ Here lies Fred, who was alive and is dead.
Had it been his father,
I had much rather ;
Had it been his brother,
Still better than another ;
Had it been his sister,
No one would have missed her ;
But since 'tis only Fred, who was alive and is dead,
There's no more to be said.”

We shall close this short selection of Epitaphs with the beautiful one composed by Benjamin Franklin on himself:— “The body of Benjamin Franklin, printer (like the cover of an old book, its contents torn out, and stripped of its lettering and gilding), lies here, food for worms ; yet the work itself shall not be lost, for it will (as he believed) appear once more in a new and more beautiful edition, corrected and amended by the Author.”

VERONICA.



Wishing.

“If wishes were horses, then beggars would ride.”—*Scotch Proverb.*

I suppose a so-called critic would say it is a palpable sign of want of brains when an author commences his article by speaking of the possibility of things happening which can never be, but as the harshest critics—viz., those of the other sex—have condescendingly allowed that women may always be forgiven for *wondering*, surely a contributor to “The Attempt” may do so without being thought less hard-headed by those clever people on that account. Of course, from members of our own dear sisterhood I expect that ready sympathy which cannot be hoped for from the uninitiated in the pleasures of imagination, when I say that I often *wonder* what sort of world this would be if every one in it had all they wished for. I rather incline to believe that there would be no world at all, as, from the universality of appropriation, there would be nothing left, rival claimants very possibly cutting the globe in halves as they would divide an orange, a beggar perhaps getting the tropics, and the King of Dahomey the poles. Whatever we may think of it set in this light, our actions might often lead to the conclusion that we would like nothing better than such a division, as everybody wishes for something very difficult or impossible of obtaining. People may say they are exempt from the common craving or not, but whether dignified in a male sense by the round-about term ambition, or made to appear frivolous by being called a whim or caprice when applied to ladies, wishing sits at every one’s door, and influences the child who cries for the moon, as well as the Alexander who weeps for more worlds to conquer.

The restoration of a mythological age of Cinderella godmothers would be needed for the fulfilment of many wishes breathed by people of a more authentic period of history; nay, the days of Pythagoras, and his doctrine of Metempsychosis, revived, in order to the realization of the poetical aspirations of the songsters of the present day, some of whom long to be birds, daisies, violets, butterflies, and such like airy fairy existences. Of the possibility of the accomplishment of such visions I say nothing, as it would be a pity to drown in Cocytus all the poetical effusions which begin with “I would” and “I wish.” It may be that a more favoured generation will see such

an improvement on the railway travelling of the present day, as will enable wistful songsters to land by the side of Naney in the Strand, or present themselves in time for tea in the land of Dixey, immediately on the expression of their desire so to do; but as civilization advances gradually, we may content ourselves with wishing for the coming of such golden days, and therein have perhaps more pleasure than their possession might afford us. Grapes often look much sweeter than they taste, and the anticipation of many a day of pleasure is far superior to what is often a dull reality. Preach of the blessings of contentment who will to those who can be contented (and they are few), but do not check the harmless wish, whether possible of fulfilment or not.

Though wrong to covet, we have no prohibition as to wishing; so, my dear lady readers, and you of the stronger sex who have any respect for girlish advice, be sure to visit a wishing-well when in the country next summer, and there drink to the accomplishment of all your wishes, whether they be ridiculous or not. Make as merry as you choose with hoping for the occurrence of impossible events, but forget not to send round this toast, "Long Success to 'The Attempt,' and may all the contributors to that wonderful Magazine write books which will go through half-a-dozen editions."

ELFIE.



Flowers.

FLOWERS! with their name they bring
 A thousand memories of pleasant hours;
 Of birds upon the wing,
 Of cloudless skies they breathe, earth's radiant flowers.

Draw, draw ye softly hgh,
 Bearing bright buds, and lilies of the stream,
 And strew them silently
 Where the young heart doth in its gladness dream.

Flowers ! for the holy shrine,
Lay the pale passion-flowers reverently there,
Emblems of love divine,
Those flowers meet, those flowers so wan and fair.

Flowers ! lovely though they be,
A mournful knowledge mingles with their light,
Showing man's history
As evanescent, and how far less bright.

Earth's fragrant heritage !
In each cup lies a depth of holy thought,
Each leaf is as a page,
With many a lesson of deep wisdom fraught.

J. I. L.



Bible Incidents.

THE WIDOW'S MITE.

OF all the stories of the Bible there are few more touching than that of the widow and her two mites. Never was the true spirit of self-denial more strikingly shown forth. Jesus is sitting in the midst of his disciples, warning them to beware of those who make great professions, and a show of religion, merely as a cloak for their grasping natures, which spared neither rich nor poor. Hypocrisy is a sin especially condemned by our Lord, and his strongest denunciations are heaped upon those who are guilty of it. A noble mind must ever scorn this vice, how much more the pure soul of the Redeemer? He accuses the scribes of devouring widows' houses, of using their arts and gaining influence over the weak and bereaved, in order to appropriate their substance to their own ends. They make a pretence of long prayers, and all this

as a blind for their avarice and ambition. Some of them were just then throwing their gifts into the treasury, perhaps the spoils of the oppressed ones, and amongst them was seen a certain poor widow, who east in two mites. In the eyes of the disciples this was a very poor offering indeed, not worthy to be laid beside the splendid donations of the others; but Christ, who searcheth the heart, judged far otherwise. Fancy what it would be to give up our all—to sacrifice everything to benefit our fellow-creatures; and yet this woman did no less, for she east in all her living. Perhaps she was left alone in the world; her husband taken from her; her children, if she had possessed any, gone also; and now she feels she must give up everything to God, and not grudge her last mite in his cause. In her humility, she little thought of the reward that awaited her—the commendation of her Saviour, and a record of her deed that should last through the ages of time. Yes! this simple tale endures, when all the pomp and glory of that epoch are as though they had never been. The Temple, the beauty of which the disciples began immediately after to extol, was soon to be destroyed, leaving not one stone upon another; and Mount Sion, the joy of the whole earth, was to become a desolation. Have we not here the best commentary on the value of earthly things? Glory, riches, power, endure for a time, and then pass away for ever. The greatest schemes and proudest conquests are all subject to the scythe of the destroyer, Time; whilst the “ornament of a meek and quiet spirit” is, in the sight of God, of great price, and has an influence in the world that survives its many changes. Let us strive to emulate the unselfishness and humility of the poor widow, that we may be remembered in that day when the Lord maketh up his jewels.

INCHA.



Sketches from the Reign of Louis the Fourteenth.

AN event occurring when Louis was only sixteen years of age will serve to show the decision of character and courage which he early evinced. After having issued an edict about a new coinage, which he had caused his Parliament to ratify, he joined a hunting party at Vincennes. On being informed, however, that the deputies had re-assembled for the purpose of again considering the matter, he instantly returned to the hall where they were conducting their deliberations, and entering it in his riding dress, commanded that the assembly should be dissolved immediately, and never again venture to discuss any edict which he might think proper to issue. Having delivered these few words with great spirit and dignity, he strode out of the hall, without waiting to receive any reply. Although Louis had seen many battles while a mere boy, the first in which we find him actively engaged was the siege of Dunkirk, undertaken with the assistance of England, then ruled by Cromwell, with whom Cardinal Mazarin had entered into an alliance. The French troops were commanded by the famous Marshal Turenne, and those of Spain by Don Juan of Austria, and the Prince of Condé. This siege was considered by the admirable commander just mentioned as a rash attempt, but his prudence had to give way before the orders of Mazarin, who himself was obliged to yield to the wishes of Cromwell, who insisted upon raising the siege, as the town if conquered would fall to the share of England. After a brilliant display of valour on both sides, the allies were victorious; as they were also during the rest of the campaign, at the end of which Spain was willing to conclude a peace on almost any terms which her opponents chose to offer. The arms of France having also been successful in other quarters, it seemed now as if that long-desired blessing was to be granted both at home and abroad. It was thought, both by the Queen and the Cardinal, that the marriage of the young King of France and the Infanta Maria Theresa would secure that friendship between the two countries, which was so desirable; and after several negotiations, conducted with the usual policy of Mazarin, this alliance was agreed to, and the Marshal Duke of Grammont was despatched to Madrid formally to demand her hand. His suite is described as most magnificent; and it is said, that after entering the gates of the town, the whole cavalcade urged on their horses at the most furious gallop until they reached the palace, thereby increasing considerably the effect of the

scene. Louis and his bride arrived in Paris in the beginning of September 1660, and were received with the greatest enthusiasm by the inhabitants of the capital, who, ever excitable, were enchanted by the splendour which attended and followed their arrival. But now, while all was gaiety and thoughtless mirth in the Palace and Court, death laid his cold hand upon the heart of the early friend and instructor of the King. Cardinal Mazarin had long been complaining of indisposition, and had suffered a sort of morbid melancholy to gain possession of that once sound and vigorous mind, in proof of which a most affecting incident is related. The King, on one occasion consulting him on some subject about which he wished his advice, received this touching reply, "Sire, you ask counsel of a man who has lost his reason, and who wanders." Louis is said to have been so overcome by the appearance of such deep suffering in one who had served him so long and so faithfully, that he withdrew into a neighbouring gallery and wept. These expressions of the Cardinal were soon proved not to proceed from mere hypochondriacism, for his health gradually declined, and on the 9th March 1661 Mazarin breathed his last. After his death no one was nominated as his successor, Louis answering haughtily to the inquiries made by aspirants to that dignity, "I am my own prime minister," determining to undertake alone all the arduous duties involved in such a position.

Soon after this the financier Fouquet, by his extravagance and dishonesty, incurred the just displeasure of Louis, who appointed in his place Jean Baptiste Colbert, a man of the first talent, and one in whom the King could place all confidence. Fouquet was arrested and imprisoned, but his subsequent fate remains a mystery. Some imagine that in the strange history of the "Iron Basilike," or man with the iron mask, we read that of the last years of his life, while others think that, after a long imprisonment, he was set at liberty; but although there are various suppositions with regard to the end of this unfortunate man, none seem to be well founded, and the mystery remains one. The King's choice of Colbert was amply justified by that minister's after character and conduct, although his treatment of the disgraced Fouquet must always be considered harsh and cruel. Louis always aimed at a despotic government, and certainly succeeded in acting with an independence, of which we have few examples among the sovereigns of France. He also succeeded in gaining the love and submission of his people, carried in some instances to the length of romantic devotion. How deeply it is to be regretted that a King, capable of so much that was great and good, should have nevertheless lived as if this world was but a vast stage on which to exhibit the pageantries of an almost fabulous luxury, "Le grand Monarque" himself its centre and sun. With all his vanity, however, and with all his faults, Louis

had many virtues, and was naturally both kind and generous. He also often proved himself a most disinterested friend—as, for instance, in the generosity and delicacy of his kindness to the exiled Stuarts, which was at once worthy of a good man and a great king.

France was now prosperous both at home and abroad, as the King and Colbert did much for the encouragement of commerce, manufactures, and the fine arts. Both colonization and trade with India and America were encouraged; and in the latter country the city of Quebec was founded. Under the direction of the famous artist Le Brun, the wonderful manufactory of the Gobelin tapestry was established. Schools at the Louvre, and elsewhere, were also instituted for painting and sculpture; and everything was done by the King and his minister for increasing the glory and prosperity of the French nation.

Louis about this time engaged again in a war with Spain, which was principally carried on in the Spanish Netherlands. The Dutch, fearing and disliking the encroachment on their territories, put a stop to it by the triple alliance, or league with England and Sweden, and Louis was compelled to agree to a treaty of peace, signed at Aix-la-Chapelle 2d May 1668. In 1672, however, he again declared war with Holland, in which he was joined with England and Sweden, alleging as his reasons the ingratitude and insolence of the Dutch. With Marshal Turenne as commander, the French troops met with the most brilliant successes, until they penetrated to Amsterdam, which, encircled by its canals, defied their utmost efforts, and completely baffled their skill. Fortune from that time began to be less favourable, and the death of their brave leader almost paralyzed them. The loss of this great and gallant general was severely felt, and all mourned him sincerely. His talents and character were universally respected even by his opponents; and, on hearing of his death, one of the most distinguished among these is reported to have said, "There died a man who did honour to man." In the Prince of Condé the French would have had a commander worthy to succeed the lamented Turenne; but, his health being now much impaired, he requested and obtained leave to give up the service altogether, and finally retired to Chantilly. After this Louis conducted a brilliant campaign in person, and took many important towns in Flanders. He was accompanied by his brother the Duke of Orleans, Marshal Luxembourg, Crequi, and other distinguished leaders; but the man to whose wonderful genius and skill the French were principally indebted for the success which attended their arms, was the celebrated engineer Vauban. Peace was at last concluded between the Dutch and the other powers, by the treaty of Nimègue, 10th August 1678.

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The darkest stain on the latter part of the reign of Louis XIV. was the persecution of his Protestant subjects, followed by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. This celebrated edict had been passed by the brave and good Henry of Navarre, on 15th April 1598, granting many privileges to the Huguenots; and it was now causelessly and unjustly repealed by Louis, while he suffered the greatest barbarities to be inflicted on, and the greatest injustice to be done to the unhappy Protestants, by their blood-thirsty persecutors. In all his cruel bigotry the King was aided and abetted by his minister Louvois, rival to the great Colbert, and very unlike that minister in character. He was the chief instigator of all the atrocities perpetrated by the priests and soldiery, and spared neither time nor exertions for the extermination of the unfortunate Huguenots. In Dauphine especially the most cruel and heart-rending scenes were daily witnessed, bearing some resemblance to the persecutions of the Scotch Covenanters; and the barbarities of the soldiers, known under the name of "Dragonades," cannot be remembered without a shudder.

The Ryswick treaty in 1697, concluded a war between William of Orange, now King of England, and France, and also with Spain and Holland, with whom Louis had again been at enmity. This was soon, however, followed by the war of the Spanish succession, which had before been set at rest by Charles II. succeeding his father Philip IV., but which Louis now renewed in favour of his grandson the Duke of Anjou, whom he asserted should be King of Spain, in right of the claims of Maria Theresa, choosing to set aside altogether her renunciation at their marriage of the right of her descendants to the throne of Spain. This renunciation was now said to have been made solely to prevent one sovereign uniting the two crowns, and that objection disposed of, Charles II., a weak prince, was easily persuaded to make a will, appointing as his successor the second son of the Dauphin of France; and upon his death, which took place on the 1st November 1700, the Duke of Anjou was proclaimed, under the title of Philip V. of Spain. This disposition of the Spanish throne was disputed by the Emperor of Austria, and a war ensued of thirteen years' duration, in which Louis, opposed by the most able generals of the age, Prince Eugene of Savoy, and the Duke of Marlborough, lost much of the military glory acquired in the earlier part of his reign, although these conflicts ended eventually in the establishment of the Bourbons on the Spanish throne.

The King of France was now advancing to the close of a long and prosperous reign; and the last public act of importance in which he engaged was the signing the treaty of Utrecht, between France, England, Portugal, Savoy, Brandenburg, and the States General, on the 11th April 1713. The last years of the life of Louis XIV. were clouded by the

loss of his children, as both the Dauphin, and his eldest son the Duke of Burgundy, died within a year of one another. The latter was a young man of great promise, and had already obtained much of the confidence of his grandfather. As the King of Spain had renounced all right to the throne of France, the next heir was the Duke of Anjou, a boy of about four years old, and it cannot be wondered at that Louis was much cast down at the thoughts of leaving so vast an inheritance to this child, whose circumstances, although resembling those of his own youth, were yet more to be lamented, as, unlike the son of Anne of Austria, he was motherless. In August 1715 the King was seized with an extremely painful and dangerous disease, which terminated fatally on the 1st September. When he felt death approaching, he summoned the future Louis XV. to his bedside, and taking him in his arms, calmly and solemnly addressed to him these memorable words—"You are about to become the King of a great kingdom. That which I recommend to you most strenuously is, never to forget your obligations toward God; remember you owe Him everything that you are. Strive to preserve peace with your neighbours. I have been too fond of war. Neither imitate me in that, nor in the too great expenses which I have incurred. Seek counsel in all things, and endeavour to find out the best always to follow it. Lighten the burdens of your people as soon as you can, and do what I myself have had the misfortune not to be able to do."

Thus closed the life of Louis XIV., one of the most brilliant and popular, if not one of the greatest sovereigns that ever ruled in France. It is, however, scarcely possible to rise from the history of his long and prosperous reign, without feeling that, amidst the glitter and adulation that surrounded him, and the dazzling events of which he was the hero, we have been witnessing the performance of some splendid drama, in whose actors we feel only the interest of the passing moment, but who make little or no impression on our hearts. The splendid palace of Versailles, L'Hopital des Invalides, and many other monuments, remain of Louis the Fourteenth's power and greatness, but who does not feel that a life spent for the glory of God and the good of his fellow-creatures, is the only monument that outlives a man, and that the memory of a Luther or a Howard will endure, when Louis XIV. and all his glory will have been forgotten?

Z.



The Precious Diamond.

AN ALLEGORY.

WHILST walking one sunny afternoon in a lonely garden, I entered an arbour, and sat down to read. The hum of insects and gentle murmur of the breeze was very soothing, and yet after a while I seemed obliged to rise and pursue my walk. I had not proceeded far when I saw in front of me a great gate, standing wide open, with apparently none to guard the entrance. I felt compelled to enter, but no sooner had I done so than a figure in shining raiment stood in my path, demanding my object in entering. "The prospect is fair," I replied, "and I see others are here before me. Is the way open to all?" "Yes," was the reply, "to all, young and old; every one comes hither to seek a treasure, though many, as you see, do not appear to be looking for it very carefully." "What is it they seek?" I asked; "I see them picking up what has the appearance of stones." "They are looking for the Light of the World, a precious diamond of exceeding lustre, only discernible to those whose eyes are trained aright. There are countless other stones lying about, some valuable, and some often but glass, which have only a false glitter about them; the latter, however, are most chosen by the inexperienced and vain." "How can they distinguish the false from the true?" I inquired. "There is a wonderful touchstone, which, if resorted to in faith, is certain to guide them in their choice; but, alas! many neglect this, and are only recalled to recollection by a certain furnace which they are obliged to pass through." "That is surely not required by the King of the country? could he not find some gentler method of bringing them to their senses?" "Very often not, and their gracious King does not do this from any wish to harm them, but in his wisdom he knows that it is for their real good, and that they will thank him when they have found the true diamond." "But if this diamond is the object of their search, why occupy themselves with these other stones?" "They are all of use, at least those proved by the touchstone, for even when the diamond is won, these gems give it additional lustre, and are pleasing in the eye of the King; but the false are worse than useless, for they not only draw away the attention from the true, but often completely turn the traveller out of his course. You are a traveller likewise, for none can enter these gates and turn back; see that you keep the touchstone carefully, and be not misled. Here is a paper of directions, to which you must often refer for help, as its careful study will lead you to the true diamond."

I was much alarmed at this, as the thought that I was obliged to follow the rest had not occurred to me, so with a heavy heart I took the paper from my guide, and began to toil onward. What an innumerable host did I see around me of all ages, from the old man bent with years, to the laughing, happy child just entering on his course! I quite forgot my own mission in watching the others, many of whom had done likewise, and were enjoying the pleasure of the hour, and rejoicing in the green fields and sunny sky. But again there were others whose heart and soul appeared to be engaged in the search, and often enchanted with what they found. The stones they gathered seemed to shine with great brilliancy, and quite eclipsed some others I saw lying near, and unheeded. For a time these travellers spoke of nothing, thought of nothing, but the treasures they had found; but after a while I saw a look of disappointment steal over their countenances, and they began to sneer at what they had once held as valuable, which I now saw was only glass. They did not, however, throw them away; for whenever they seemed inclined to do so, a terrible giant rose up before them, armed at all points, on whose forehead I read in burning letters, "The World's Laugh." Before him they cowered in the most abject terror; and though he openly smiled upon and praised them, I saw a look of contempt curl his proud lip.

A little farther on I came upon a fearful sight—a fiery furnace, in which numbers of poor creatures were groaning and crying aloud. Some seemed utterly prostrated by its fierceness, and incapable of uttering a cry for help, while others bewailed bitterly their cruel fate, and complained of the injustice of their King in punishing them more than they could bear. Some were just issuing forth, more or less scorched, many bearing marks for life on their countenances, and a hardening process appeared to have acted on a few. Others, again, wore a look of extreme sadness and depression, and no longer took any interest in what passed around them; but, oh! wonder of wonders, what an atmosphere of calm and peace hovered about a select company, who, appearing again in the world, spread abroad the praises of their King, who had brought them out of darkness into his marvellous light. Every one of these held his touchstone in his hand, and rejoiced in the possession of the wonderful diamond. To outward eyes it was not visible, but that it was a treasure real and beyond price was not to be disputed, from the effect it produced on these happy ones. Their humility was as conspicuous as their joy; for I noticed, that although they had obtained the object of their search, the inestimable diamond, still they did not disdain the other stones, after proving them, and now it was clearly visible to my eyes, that the very ones I had seen despised by the multitude were those best worth having;

outwardly they had no show, nothing to dazzle the beholder, but on looking closer, I beheld, through a veil called humility, a clear beautiful gem, that adorned the wearer, and was never dimmed unless the touchstone was neglected. To one of these people I addressed myself, and inquired by what means he had attained to his present state. "When I set out," said he, "I was as gay and idle as the rest, and the hours flew by without thought of the future. As I went on, the dazzling splendours of the world attracted me, and giving myself up to them, I soon lost myself in dissipation and extravagance. By gentle means my King tried to draw me out of danger, but whenever I felt half-inclined to yield, and sick with remorse and disappointment, the giant of the world's laugh rose up before me, and frightened me out of my good intentions. At last, in his great love, my Master plunged me into the furnace of affliction, and, blessed be his name, I came out purified and refined; and now I am seeking to add jewels to his crown, to show forth his praise and glory. My touchstone and book of directions never leave me, and when the former waxes dim, the study of the latter gives me fresh strength, and restores the spirit of prayer." Thus he ended, and with a heart braced for my own conflict, I took leave of him, and set out on my way; but in the very act of so doing, the fair scene in which I seemed to move, melted from my view,—I awoke—and behold it was a dream.

INCHA.

King Robert's Bowl.

A BALLAD.

THERE's blude upon the banks of Urr,
 Its bonny banks sae green,
 An' mony a knight lies bleedin' there,
 O' mettle true, I wcen.

An' twa, the fiercest o' them a',
 Twa noble knights an' gude,
 Fight han' to han' wi' visors down,
 And swords fu' red wi' blude.

The swords they clash'd, and the fire it flash'd,
 An' the blude ran out between,
 An' out has come Mark Sprott's gudewife,
 To see what this may mean.

She's grasped the hair o' the English knight,
 An' twisted her fingers roun',
 And wi' ae lock o' that yellow hair
 She's pu'ed him to the groun'.

“Lie doun, lie doun, thou fause Southron,
Where better men hae lain,
And yield thee prisoner to this knight,
Or lie among the slain.”

The English to the Scottish knight
Has owned him vanquished man,
And they hae washed their bludy han’s
In the stream that by them wan.

An’ side by side they’ve sat them doun,
In the house o’ gude Mark Sprott;
There wadna twa dear brithers then
Mair friendly been, I wot.

O then outspak the Scottish knight,
“Twa days nae food I’ve seen,
Or the bravest knight in a’ England
Nae match for Bruce had been.”

O then outspak the English knight,
“I did not think, I trow,
With the leader of the Scottish men
To answer blow for blow.”

An’ syne outspak Mark Sprott’s gudewife,
Wi’ muckle scorn spake she,
“Leader o’ the Scottish men!
King is his degree.”

An’ while this roof is owre your head,
Ye, Sir, shall hail him king,
Or in your comely English face
This sealding brose I’ll fling.”

Then smiling spak the gude De Bruce,
“’Twere pity great, I ween,
To spoil a comely face wi’ brose
Would feed a hungry king.

Then of thy stores draw forth, gude dame,
For this gude knight an’ me,
For baith o’ this thy tempting fare
Wad fain partakers be.”

Then answer made Mark Sprott’s gudewife,
“Brave king, that mayna be,
Shame fa’ my hand gin it should feed
Our mortal enemy.”

Were I a man, hemp to his han’s,
Thrieve Castle for his hame,
Cauld bread and water for his food
Should serve this knight o’ fame.”

“Fair fa’ thy true Scots heart, gude dame,
Fair fa’ thy loyalty,
Now by my royal word, I swear,
Rewarded thou shalt be.

This bonny holm fu’ fertile is,
Yon hill is fair an’ green,
A goodly heritage ’twould make
For kindly Scot, I ween.

Of all round which thy feet can rin,
While I thy brose do pree,
Thou, by my kingly word, I vow,
Shalt be the fair ladie.

The bowl is deep, the brose is het,
 As het as weel may be;
 King's hunger 'gainst a woman's speed!
 Now kilt thy coats an' flee!"

O, she has kilted up her coats,
 An' bound her flying hair,
 An' sie a rae as she maun rin,
 I trow ran woman ne'er.

She stinted not for briar bush,
 For stane, nor yet for thorn,
 But aye she wan, an' aye she ran,
 Wi' limbs and garments torn.

An' first she saw a wily fox,
 Was running roun' the hill,
 Wi' fatted goose from her ain store:
 She liked the sight but ill.

"May huntsman find ye wily beast,
 That comes at sie a time,
 But better 'twere fat goose to want,
 Than rood o' land to tyne."

An' syne she saw a miller man,
 Slept on the Sheeling Hill,
 An' roun' him played the fiery flames
 On rafter, roof, and kiln.

"Now soundly sleep, thou miller man,
 An' fire burn merrilie,
 For an' I stop to wake an' queneh,
 Urr's dame I ne'er shall be."

And when she gained the house again,
 She gave but ae peep in,
 But that ae peep showed sight wad cheer
 The heart o' living thing.

For side by side the twa knights sat,
 An' smiling merrilie,
 Wi' but ae spoon between them twa,
 They sopped right heartilie.

Four words she spak, she spak but four,
 "Fair play, my liege, fair play,"
 Ere wi' ae bound by bank and stream,
 Anee mair she was away.

Then spak the Southron to the king,
 "I like thy fare not ill,
 An' for the dame that made the food,
 I like her better still.

Were hearts like hers within the breasts
 Of half your Seottish men,
 We Southrons might from this fair land
 Turn bridles home again."

An' aye the sturdy dame ran on,
 An' ere the brose was done,
 Fu' mony a mile o' bonny land
 For heritage she won.

An' thus she said, "O' a' this land
 I shall be ea'ed ladie,
 An' Sprott of Urr in time to eome
 An' honoured name shall be.

An' by this deed it shall be held,
 When passes Scottish king,
 The laird of Urr gude butter brose
 In lordly dish shall bring."

The king has heard her musing speech,
 An' ta'en her at her word;
 That race has made her Urr's ladie,
 An' Mark its gallant lord.

MEGAIG BHEG.

The Old Times and the New.

"Well, I feel more thankful than ever that I was not born an American," Aunt Phillis spoke from her favourite seat, an old oaken chair, polished and darkened by years (but never by contact with human shoulders), which had seemed to me from infancy part of herself, and worthy of equal veneration. Her figure was even more erect than usual, and her mild placid features now glowed with strong indignant feeling. "Has there been more bloodshed?" I asked. "I was not thinking of that," she replied; "I was reading a short account of the sewing-machine, and I can have no sympathy with a people who have invented such a source of misery." Seeing my look of surprise, she continued, "The brave men who are cut down in battle get their full share of sympathy and admiration. Whether their cause be worth dying for, seems a matter of no consideration now a-days. There is always something of romance about a soldier's death, but the struggle, the toil, the grave of the poor oppressed needlewoman are silent and secret; yet she is not less surely than the soldier slain by the selfishness of society. There were always too many of those unknown sufferers, but soon they will be counted by thousands. Those tradespeople who can afford to purchase this cruel machine, will grow rich on the spoils of those poor females whose labour is their life." "Perhaps we may want more sewing done," I suggested, "by the time the machines get common, so that the rich will be obliged to employ the poor and pay them as they deserve. Besides, you know, new ways are being opened up for the employment of women." "I have no faith in new ways," replied my aunt; "my mother always taught me to be on my guard against them. She spun all her own linen, while her neighbours were buying their flimsy cotton, for she said the unnatural system of factory labour only encouraged ladies in idleness, while weakening the bodies and minds of those engaged in them. Poor child, you never saw a spinning

wheel," she added abruptly. "Yes, aunt Phillis, I once saw one used by a poor worn woman, in a desolate region of Ireland. She rocked her infant's cradle while she spun her yarn, which was none of the purest. That poor woman interested me a good deal, I scarcely know why; I shall never forget her truly Irish welcome, and the relief she seemed to find in pouring her sorrows into pitying ears. Her tale was proved but too true by the aspect of everything around, and the entrance of two ragged little boys, crying for bread. The trifle we gave was received with such warm over-flowing demonstrations of gratitude, as I never witnessed before; but in spite of this delightful element in our visit, it was with a sense of recovered freedom, that we stepped out from the darkness, and smoke, and filth, into daylight again." "Those poor Irish need help sadly," rejoined my aunt, "or rather they need to be taught to help themselves. Poor fellows, it was lamentable to see them lounging about, last autumn, idle and starving, because the farmers, forsooth, will now do their reaping by machinery. The harvest fields are fast changing from those I used to know in my young days." "It always does give me a pang of regret to hear the whirr of the machine instead of the merry voices of the reapers, but I hope good will come of the change. You know, aunt, how the corn that was not quickly cut down was destroyed by wind and rain last summer." "Better the farmers should lose a little than the poor people be deprived of their means of subsistence," was the reply. "The more grain can be saved throughout the country, the more there will be for every individual in it," was my thought; but I did not utter it, for I knew that arguments were thrown away, and I loved my dear old aunt the better for her clinging to the customs of the older times. I left her in a few days, after a vain attempt to persuade her to accompany me to my home. Having never travelled on those dreadful railways but twice, she thought an old woman might be permitted to rest at home, though all the world was driving towards perpetual motion.

One result of my visit was, to convince me of my extreme ignorance on the subject of the conversation I have related. This I resolved to remedy as soon as possible, and judged that the best way to gain a knowledge of the present influence of mechanical inventions, was to study their history in the past. Looking back on the middle age history of our country, I found that though its population amounted to only one-tenth of what it now does, its produce seemed barely sufficient to supply the wants of the inhabitants. Kings and nobles were, according to our modern notions, scantily supplied with the conveniences of life; while the lower ranks were exposed to constantly recurring seasons of distress, far more wide-spread and hopeless than at the present day. A poor harvest, scanty pasturage, disease among the cattle, were

enough to plunge the nation into a desolating famine, and there were few in those days whose abundance might relieve the sufferers. Thus two or three millions dragged out, or oftener recklessly squandered their precious existence. Now, our little island supports 23,000,000 in comparative comfort. This is no doubt partly owing to the peace and order which prevail in our days, contrasted with the spirit of lawless adventure which then prevailed; but a stronger cause, intimately arising from the first, is to be found in the steady application of science and art to develop the resources of our country. This wonderful change has not been effected without breaking up cherished customs and associations. But if those increasing millions are to live, and increase also in knowledge and comfort, necessity, and not taste, must be mistress in this matter. A man cannot now be his own housebuilder, carpenter, and shoemaker. A woman may no longer grind the family meal, or spin her flax by the fireside. Such a system would entail a waste of time and skill which we cannot afford. Human skill must be perfected, human energy concentrated, that each man, by labouring for others in his own special department, may procure from them what he himself needs; and this system of exchange spreads itself far beyond the circle of the British Isles. Their produce of itself no longer suffices to feed their inhabitants, and their industry must draw supplies from distant shores, and a system of commerce bind the continents in mutual dependence. Human hands no longer sufficed either to furnish the goods required, or to expedite their transit over sea and land. A power, long known, and yet long hidden, was called for, and *found*—the simple, yet gigantic force of steam. Thus we see that our locomotive, and our factory systems have their roots in *necessity*.

It is amazing to notice the determined resistance which each succeeding innovation had to encounter. After George Stephenson's "Rocket" had silenced the sneers of those who deemed it an idle chimera, and quieted the almost superstitious terrors of the multitude, it had still to struggle with the jealousy of coach-drivers, and the foolish prejudices of innkeepers, who feared that this rapid mode of conveying travellers would interfere with a due regard for their hospitalities. The saw-mill, so invaluable in house, and especially in ship-building, struggled during a century for admission into England. The first spinning-jennies were destroyed just a century ago by the Lancashire people, who drove the inventor with fury from his home. Wyatt's scheme of spinning by rollers was crushed in the bud, to be revived thirty years later by Arkwright. If we go back as far the sixteenth century, we shall find the Legislature interfering to discourage machinery. Most of this opposition was founded on the notion, that machines tend to throw men out of work, and such is often their first effect, but the lapse of time will show a very different and most beneficial result.

We see this in past history, and may firmly trust it for the future. Would any one now mourn over the invention of printing, considered simply as a trade, because a few monks might find their copying work grown slack? There are now hundreds of busy hands employed for each solitary scribe of the sixteenth century. Let us look at a manufacture of later but even more wonderful growth. Our cotton trade has risen, through the most inveterate opposition, to such perfection, that one man, with the aid of machinery, can perform what a century ago was the work of a hundred. Yet, for the thirty or forty thousand labourers then employed, we find 415,000 at work in the mills in 1859, before the Transatlantic springs of the trade were dried up. Yet those directly engaged in this way are few compared to the multitudes who gain a livelihood by raising the metal from the mines, constructing the machinery, erecting the mills, and building and navigating the ships required in this one branch of trade. We can but faintly estimate the stillness that would have prevailed, where the tide of the world's industry now flows, had this, or such as this, never been, and the all-pervading shock that must be felt when the full current is rudely checked.

In another respect invention is the poor man's friend. Besides introducing many luxuries wholly unknown to our forefathers, it has brought many comforts, formerly only attainable by the wealthiest, to the very doors of the poor. In former days, salt meat was the winter food of the people; and habits of cleanliness were difficult, in consequence of the expense of linen, and the almost exclusive use of wool for clothing. Now, a labouring man may, if he be provident and his wife a good manager, sit down to a meal that a prince might once have envied for its wholesome variety. His house is warmly lathed, and slated or tiled, so as to exclude cold and damp—sometimes, it is to be feared, so as to exclude air also. His furniture is comfortable, and even elegant; his coal fire blazes brightly, and his clothing is cheap and clean; he may visit his distant friends now and then, and place their likenesses on his chimney-piece.

We hear much of the unhealthiness of many kinds of labour. We must, while keeping in mind that the worst of all enemies to the human frame are cold and hunger, acknowledge that all is not right here. Science has done but half her duty, while she has ensured the excellence of the work, without providing for the health of the workman. But we might reproach her less bitterly did we know all the instances in which she has interfered to preserve human health. Even work which we know to be yet imperfect must often win our admiration, as in the ventilation and management of coal-mines, where machinery supplies a free current of air to an atmosphere otherwise poisonous. The voltaic battery has rendered harmless a once deadly method of gilding.

The ship's galley for distilling fresh water from the ocean, together with the discovery of the means of preserving meat fresh, have driven the once fatal scurvy from our navy. The sewing-machine has already proved a great boon to shoemakers, whose eyes were injured by straining closely over their black material.

One last objection which has been brought against our present system is, that men themselves are reduced to the level of machines, by the precise and monotonous nature of their occupations. No doubt, machine work cannot give free scope for the energies of man or woman. But shortened hours of labour allow in many cases of the devotion of this spare vigour to other objects. The labourer may have many evening hours of intellectual and family enjoyment. It is only the man whose habits are depraved, and whose mind is empty, who will be debased, if further debasement be possible, by his employment.

It seems plain, then, that opportunities for advancement, both in comfort and intelligence, are far more widely diffused than ever before. Are men, therefore, better and happier than they used to be in the old world? Would we could say they were! Would we could forget the misery and degradation that fill so large a space in all ranks of society! But while we cannot shut our eyes to the evils around us, let us not attribute them to that which is neither their cause nor their cure. We hope the world is tired of fighting with wind-mills and steam-engines. Not science, nor manufactures, but *sin*, is the source of sorrow. With real, not with imaginary evil, then let our conflict be.

M. L.

Punctuality.

THERE was a request made not many weeks ago, at one of our meetings concerning "The Attempt," that a member should write an essay on Punctuality. I waited some time, hoping that a more able pen than mine would give us a paper on that subject; but when no notice was taken of the request, I began to think that a few words from me might be better than nothing at all. Because I write on this subject, I do not mean to imply that I am a person of very punctual habits; if questioned, my friends would give you to understand that I am rather the reverse. Notwithstanding, I do not think I am the less fitted to write on the subject; on the

contrary, perhaps more so, for have I not learned from the greatest of all teachers, "Experience," how much time I have lost from want of attention to that virtue?

Punctuality, according to Johnson, means *scrupulous exactness*; therefore I am always surprised to hear one person praise another for punctuality, remarking at the same instant, "He is always before his time." A man who is always before his time is certainly not a punctual man; nor do I think the great Johnson would approve of our altering the meaning which he has affixed to that word. It may be less objectionable to be before your time than after, but both faults are often the cause of great inconvenience to your friends. How tiresome it is, when dressing for a dinner party, to hear that Mr and Mrs —— have arrived; you look at your watch, and find that they ought not to have appeared till at least a quarter of an hour later, and are putting you in the disagreeable position of seeming rude to your friends, by not enquiring whether you are dressed in time to receive them or not. On the other hand, who does not know the excessive dulness of waiting for the arrival of some one, who seems as though he would never come? every one sitting in expectation, and not thinking it worth while to be agreeable for so short a time. At evening parties it is now an established rule that one must not make one's appearance till at least half-an-hour after the time appointed. Surely this is an uncourteous custom; for would it not be more polite to allow the lady of the house to fix the hour most convenient to herself for the reception of her guests? In regard to evening parties, I think gentlemen, from a want of punctuality, are often guilty of a great breach in good manners. I think any gentleman who has happened to enter the dancing room rather earlier than usual must have observed in most cases that it is filled with ladies. What are those ladies waiting for? They are waiting for the arrival of some gentlemen before they can begin dancing. It is our humble opinion that the case should be reversed. One lady sometimes says to another, "I wonder why gentlemen are always so late." "O they think it grand," was the reply. I have never yet found out in what the grandeur consists. To be unpunctual requires neither riches, talent, nor birth; any fool or beggar may rival the finest gentleman in that respect.

A gentleman in London one day asked a friend to dine with him, mentioning a certain hour. At the time appointed his guest arrived, and found the master of the house preparing for a long ride. "I thought I was to dine with you this evening," said the friend. "Yes," answered the host, "but I did not ask you to spend the day with me." I see some fun in the story, but none in the gentleman naming too early an hour to his guest. But there are many other occasions where unpunctuality proves itself a great nuisance. Being late for a lecture, concert, or reading may almost come under

the head of one of those small social selfishnesses which many people seem to perform with so much indifference. For how annoying it is, when listening with wrapped attention to a beautiful song, or to some impressive scene, to be interrupted by some one coming in, looking for a seat, and perhaps slamming a door? If the delinquent be a lady, and the room crowded, some gentleman feels bound to offer her his seat; thus she not only disturbs the audience, but has made one of the company very uncomfortable.

Again, how unpleasant is an unpunctual Doctor! How slowly the time passes when one is waiting for him; and when at last he does come, one finds perhaps how much anxiety one might have been spared had he only kept to his time. I need hardly mention how disagreeable it is to be late for a train; there are few persons I suppose who have not had that fact unpleasantly impressed on their memories. But it is not only the unpunctual person who may suffer in this case. Before he can arrive his friends may have suffered much by supposing that he has met with some accident. Perhaps he telegraphs, but even then there are few among us who are brave enough to open a telegram without first experiencing a very disagreeable sensation.

In every case unpunctuality proves itself a great disadvantage, but I mean to mention only one other instance of it; and I would address myself to the contributors to this Magazine. I happen to be well acquainted with our valued Editors, and therefore know to what great inconvenience they are often put, by papers arriving too late. How often have I heard them say, "———'s subject is good, but it is too hurriedly written; what a pity she had not taken more time to it!" By not writing our papers soon enough, we may cause others to do themselves injustice; for when "The Attempt" seems in danger of appearing before the public with a number of blank leaves, the Editors have either to beg some good-natured contributor to send an extra paper, or hastily write something themselves, feeling all the time how much better they could have done it if only they had not been so much hurried. Therefore, it is hoped, when it becomes known to the contributors, how earnestly it is wished that they would send in their articles in time, they will no longer defer writing them till within the last day or two, but try to believe what the poet Young has told us, that

"Procrastination is the thief of time."

E. H.

Sleep of the Wayfarer.

WAKE him not yet, while balmy sleep is shedding
Its freshening dews upon his careworn heart;
Let the tired feet, so late earth's dry ways treading,
Into green bye-paths for a while depart.

It may be that his native breezes straying
By his glad boyhood's woods and singing streams,
Once more upon his faded cheek are playing,
Laden with parted echoes through his dreams.

Wake him not yet—its weary lines unbending
Care from his furrowed brow hath passed away,
Some old home strain, perchance, even now is sending
Through his hushed soul its long-forgotten lay.

Some household song, through many a sad year sleeping
In the lone depths of memory's haunted cells,
Heard on fair eves, when twilight skies were weeping
Soft dews upon the wild flowers' trembling bells.

Wake him not yet—his dimmed and languid vision
Is gazing on a brighter world than ours,
Where his departed roam through fields Elysian,
Bright with the hues of amaranthine flowers.

Familiar tones and parted smiles are greeting
His wandering spirit on that radiant shore;
And gentle hands, in fond embrace are meeting,
That clasp his own in happy homes no more.

Wake him not yet—his sleep-bound soul forsaking,
Those dreams will fade when stars and shadows wane,
And he once more, with early dawn be taking
Along the earth his lonely way again.

A Tale of the Last Century.

CHAPTER II.

MANY years before our story opens, an Italian nobleman and his family came to reside in Edinburgh, at the earnest solicitation of his wife, who was a Scotchwoman by birth. On his arrival in Scotland he dropped his title, and took the name of Campbell, which had been his wife's. He was immensely wealthy, proud of his noble descent, and of a haughty and overbearing disposition to all, save his wife and only child, upon whom he doated with a love almost akin to worship. They lived in strict retirement at their country seat, a few miles from Edinburgh, satisfied with each other's society, their sole care being to rear their boy to be an honour to his illustrious origin, and an adherent of the Roman Catholic faith, of which they were both zealous and bigoted supporters. The education of Reginald was intrusted to an Italian priest, who lived with Mr Campbell, in the capacity of private chaplain, and father confessor to himself, his wife, and such of his retainers as professed the same faith. On attaining the age of nineteen, Reginald grew weary of the monotony of the quiet country life he had hitherto led, and expressed a strong wish to enter the army. To this his parents offered no objection—indeed, his mother strongly urged him to join the Royalists, who were then endeavouring to suppress the cause of the Stuarts, which had been gaining ground under the popular leadership of Prince Charles Edward. He accordingly joined the Duke of Cumberland, and had the glory of distinguishing himself most honourably at Culloden, that field so fatal to "Bonnie Prince Charlie," but which, so happily for the country, ended the rebellion in Scotland. Reginald Campbell returned to Edinburgh after this victory, just in time to receive the parting blessing of both his parents, who died within a few weeks of each other. He felt their loss very keenly, and for a time was inconsolable; but he was young, and life, with all its pleasures, lay before him, so, need we wonder that when other interests sprung up around him, he thought of them only with a saered and a sad regret! He was left the heir to a princely fortune, the only condition to his enjoyment of it being, that if he did not marry a Roman Catholic lady, all his wealth was to go to the endowment of a convent. He soon, however, set all doubts aside, by marrying the Lady Mary, eldest daughter of the Duke of Hamilton. This marriage was a brief but happy one, for before two years of wedded bliss had passed, Mr Campbell was a widower, with twin children, a boy and girl, left to his care to rear and educate! Stricken and

bowed down with this heavy bereavement, he gave up all society, resigned his commission in the army, and set himself to the task of supplying to his motherless children (as far as lay in his power) all that that mother could have been, had she been spared to them. His love for his wife had been of a true and lasting character, and her image could not easily be effaced from his memory; so, young as he was, he grew tired of the world, and grief had set her stamp so heavily upon him, that he looked old and careworn before his time. No softening influence was at work within him; his better nature was hardened, and his very looks austere and forbidding.

CHAPTER III.

Passing over a period of twenty years, we come to the time when our story opens. Mr Campbell is still a man in the prime of life, and although, for the sake of his children, mingling a little in society, he has never forgotten his own early sorrows, and looks even now a man who has seen great grief, but will allow no one to offer him sympathy—one of those proud, cold, impassive natures, who go through the world, creating in the minds of those who mingle with them dislike, rather than friendship. His children are grown up, and it is only when conversing with them, that any gentler emotions are visible in the face of this stern man; but they too are somewhat afraid of him, and render him implicit obedience. His daughter we have already described in the first chapter of our story, so we have only to introduce her twin brother to notice, and we have the hero and heroine of our tale before us.

Charles Campbell was very unlike his sister in appearance, save in the possession of the same lustrous dark eyes. His features were not at all remarkable for their regularity, but the expression of his open ingenuous countenance fully made up for the want of mere beauty of feature, and then his tall and muscular figure was

“ Moulded in such just degree,
That giant strength seemed lightsome ease.”

He had a happy, careless disposition, inherited from his mother, was warm and impulsive in his affections, but when they were fairly awakened, immovable in his opinions and determinations.

Having now, as best we could, given a description of the principal personages who are to figure in our tale, we must explain what induced the proud and haughty Catherine Campbell to steal into her father's house as if she had been guilty of some evil deed. No such errand had been hers; she was actuated by pure and pious motives,

and in doing what she thought was right, had her own reward. Catherine had been educated in a convent situated somewhere in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, and whilst there, had formed a strong attachment to one of the Sisters. On her return to her father's house, she had corresponded with Sister Agnes (as the nun was called), and at intervals visited her, the rules of the convent allowing a former pupil to see the Sisters when desired. Latterly, the letters Catherine had been receiving were of a very heretical character, and begged Catherine to read for herself the Bible, and judge if the religion they professed was not mistaken. For a time, Catherine replied to these letters without consulting any one, and tried to show Sister Agnes that they must believe what the priest told them, and that it was very wrong in her to study the Bible as she had been doing, without consulting her confessor. To this Agnes replied, that she was convinced of the utter fallacy of the faith in which she had been brought up, that she considered the greatest blessing she ever had received, the finding of an old copy of the New Testament, and that she had resolved to declare her change of views, and ask to be absolved from the vows which she had taken, and which she now considered sinful. In closing, she again besought Catherine to seek the truth for herself, and told her that she had never known real happiness till now. As a good Roman Catholic, Catherine was grieved and dismayed on the receipt of this letter, and at once relieved her mind in the confessional; of course, the priest prohibited all further intercourse, and Mr Campbell, who was consulted, agreed with him. To poor Catherine this was a sad grief, for she really loved the nun, and her visits and letters (although in these days necessarily few) were to her pleasures^m to look forward to, in the quiet uneventful life she led. For some months she had heard nothing from the convent, and when she thought of Sister Agnes, she crossed herself and prayed to the Virgin to reclaim her erring daughter. On the Christmas morning on which our tale began, Catherine had received a small ill-written note in the handwriting of Sister Agnes, begging her to come and see her for the last time, as she was ill and dying. Such an appeal could not be resisted, and as the place where poor Agnes named was not very distant from her home, Catherine resolved (without asking her father's consent, as she knew it would be withheld) to visit her friend, and take her such comforts as she thought she would stand in need of, and perhaps, by her persuasions, have the joy of reclaiming a sister to the bosom of the Church.

LADYBIRD.



The Legend of St Christopher.

“If thou wouldst win eternal life,
Do some great service for the Lord,
Then will He deign perchance to give
The life thou seek'st for thy reward.
See, yonder flows a bridgeless stream,
And through it must the pilgrims come,
The pilgrims, that with weary feet
Seek the Eternal City, Rome.

“Thou Offerus * hast a giant form,
And when they come unto the shore,
On thy strong shoulders through the flood
Bear thou the faithful safely o'er.”
Then Offerus to the Prior said,
“This work I gladly undertake,
Since it will please my Lord and King,
I do it for my Lord's dear sake.”

And so he built himself a hut,
A hut of reeds upon the shore,
And through the dark and angry flood
He bore the faithful safely o'er.
And if to Offerus for his toil,
The pilgrims offered some reward,
He turned away, and simply said,
“I do it for my King and Lord.”

And now, when many years had fled,
And Offerus' hair was snowy white,
As in his hut he lay asleep,
One wild and stormy winter night,

He heard a voice above the wind,
A little plaintive voice, that cried,
“Oh! dear, great Offerus, strong and good,
Bear me across the angry tide.”

Then Offerus rose, though faint and tired,
And with his staff of pine in hand
He plunged into the rushing stream,
But saw no pilgrim on the strand.
So thinking that he must have dreamt,
He turned him to his hut again;
But scarcely had he sunk to sleep,
When on his ear the cry of pain

Rose clear and sad upon the wind,
The little childish voice that cried,
“Oh! dear, great Offerus, strong and good,
Bear me across the angry tide.”
Again he crossed the stream in vain,
No little pilgrim could he find,
So Offerus once more on his couch
His weary head in rest reclined.

But scarcely had he sunk to sleep,
When once again the sad voice cried,
“Oh! dear, great Offerus, strong and good,
Bear me across the angry tide.”
And patiently with staff in hand
The old man crossed the stream once more;
This time his toil was not in vain,
For when he reached the farther shore,

* The name of St Christopher before he was canonized.

Upon the bank a child he found,
 A little tender child most fair,
 With gentle eyes of love and trust,
 And flowing locks of golden hair.
 And lightly in his giant arms
 The slender burden Offerus bore,
 And plunged into the rushing tide,
 But could not win the homeward shore.

For in his arms the little child,
 So light at first, now heavy weighed,
 The giant scarce could bear him up,
 And Offerus trembled, much afraid;
 And underneath the heavy load
 Below the tide he almost sank,
 But struggling bravely to the shore,
 He set the child upon the bank,

And gently said, "My little Lord,
 Prythee come by this way no more,
 For it has almost cost my life
 To bear thee safely to the shore."
 But the fair child to Offerus said,
 "Know, that thy sins are all forgiven;
 Fear not, for thou hast borne across
 Thy Saviour and the King of Heaven."

And then from Offerus' wistful sight
 The Saviour vanished in the sky,
 And Offerus fell upon his knees,
 And said, "I know my end draws nigh."
 "I thank my heavenly Lord and King,
 I feel my sins are all forgiven."
 And in three days the angels came
 And bore St Christopher to heaven.

VERONICA.

Double Acrostics.

I.

A Magazine of modest name,
 And the Conductors of the same.

1. "Fresh as the foam, new bathed in Paphian wells."
2. "Wears yet a precious jewel in his head." *"As you like it"*
3. "Vien poi—e nou è alcun fra tanti,
 Tranne Rinaldo, or feritor maggiore,
 O piū bel di maniere e di sembianti,
 O piū eccelso ed intrepido di core."
4. "But pleasures are like poppies spread,
 You seize the flow'r, its bloom is shed;
 Or like the snowflake in the river,
 A moment white, then melts for ever." *"Sam o' Shanter"*
5. "Look round,
 And know that where we stand, stood oft and long,
 Oft till the day was gone, Raphael himself,
 He and his haughty rival."

6. "I envy not in any moods
 The captive void of noble rage,
 The linnet born within the cage,
 That never knew the summer woods." *Michael Lovelace.*
7. "Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour
 Draws on apace."

II.

"Like —, all —."

1. "Thou sober-suited matron, all in black."
 2. "Still in thy right hand carry gentle peace."
 3. "Sweets to the sweet, farewell!
 I hop'd thou should'st have been my Hamlet's wife:
 I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
 And not to have strew'd thy grave." *Hamlet.*
4. "Where to his accusations,
 He pleaded still not guilty."
 5. "See how the morning opes her golden gates."

F. B.

Information for "des Eaux."

THE Editors are happy to have gained for "des Eaux," the information desired in her essay on "Quotations and Misquotations." The passages and their authors are as follow:—

- "The common air, the earth, the skies,
 To me were opening Paradise."
 —Gray's *Ode on the Pleasure arising from Vicissitude.*
- "Oh! blindness to the future kindly given."
 —Pope's *Essay on Man.*
- "God tempers the wind to the shorn lamb."
 —Sterne's *Sentimental Journey through France and Italy.*

The Editors are themselves unacquainted with the works of the last mentioned author, and do not advise "des Eaux" to become so, beautiful as is the expression above quoted.

On Madame de Sévigné.

As you read of philosophers, such as Socrates, meeting in the market-places of the great Grecian towns, with all the youth of the place crowding around them, hearing and questioning the great teacher of wisdom, have you not wished that it were possible to have such reunions in this Modern Athens of ours? But this is past wishing for, and must take its place among the many other Utopian wishes which must at times come into the heads of us all. There is another state of literary society which, though of much later date, has, we fear, passed from us as completely as have the schools of Socrates, Plato, or Pythagoras. We refer to the brilliant society of wit and talent which formed the court of Louis XIV. It is of Madame de Sévigné that we wish particularly to speak, not only because her talents were of so high an order, her wit so sparkling, and her manners so charming, but because we feel it pleasant to write of one who, living in an age of dissipation, breathing its pernicious air, yet received no taint on her own fair name.

Madame de Sévigné was the daughter of the Baron Chantal, a noble and skilful soldier, whose career was cut short by an English hand in the year 1627, while engaged in the defence of Rochelle. Thus his little daughter Marie was left fatherless when not two years old, and a few years later she was completely orphaned by the loss of her mother. When eight years of age, it was arranged that her home should be with her uncle, the good Abbé de Coulanges, who resided at Livry, not far from Paris. Here her studies were of a nature well adapted to form the thoughtful yet spirited woman who in future years was to dazzle the world. The merry child studied Latin without losing any of the freshness of her nature over the dusty folios, and Italian and Spanish also formed a part of her education. Her early life, spent thus in study and solitude, strengthened and fortified her mind against the temptations of the gay world, and of one brilliant group in which she was afterwards to be the most brilliant star.

We need not here stop to rehearse what many have already said of the beauty of Marie de Rabutin-Chantal when, at fifteen years of age, she was presented at the court of Anne of Austria. We know that she was beautiful, that her hair was fair and luxuriant, that her eyes were of a soft blue colour, her expression sweet, her face of a fine oval, and her complexion clear; but we know that she had more than all this,

viz., a talented and educated mind, and we would rather interest our readers in her thoughts and actions, than in her personal attractions.

When in her eighteenth year, she married the Marquis de Sévigné, to whom she ever continued much attached, in spite of his faults, which were many. It was, and still remains a mystery, how the Marquis could fail to love so amiable a creature as his young wife; but so it was, for he made no return, and did not even care for all the affection which she lavished on him to the last day of his existence. After her marriage she entered that centre of wit, the Hôtel de Rambouillet. In this society Madame de Rambouillet reigned supreme. Her Italian origin had inspired her with a love for those little sonnets and madrigals in which the poets of Italy so delight, and through her they were introduced into France, and form a style of poetry peculiarly the property of the seventeenth century. In this court it was that woman especially reigned; for, says Demogeot, "Aux femmes seules pouvait appartenir l'éducation d'un siècle de convenances et de bon goût." In this society, we can well imagine how such a character as Madame de Sévigné would be appreciated. To all the graces and talents of the other ladies she added a more thorough education than that received by any other of her sex and age. Homer and Virgil were not closed books to her, as, alas! they were and still are to so many of us,—for she could roam at pleasure through the sacred groves of classical literature. The writings of the thoughtful Pascal had also a place in her studies, and to this we may partly attribute the shade of thoughtfulness which in after life gave a greater sweetness to her correspondence. Notwithstanding the very high place which she held in the literary and fashionable world, there was a longing to retire sometimes to the freedom of a country life; but her husband did not enter into this feeling, so it was with difficulty that she persuaded him to share with her the retirement of "Les Rochers," one of his estates. In 1647 a little son came to receive the love of Madame de Sévigné's heart, which as yet had found no object worthy of it. But the little boy had no time to acquire spoilt habits, for he soon had a sister, not only to share, but to monopolise his mother's love. This child occupied at once all the first thoughts of Madame de Sévigné; she ceased to look any more at the world, but as it might possibly affect her daughter. The career of the Marquis de Sévigné, who was once more in Paris, threatened destruction not only to the happiness but to the fortune of his wife and children, had not the good Abbé de Coulanges stepped in to use his influence with his niece, in persuading her to permit measures to be taken for the security of some part of it for the use of herself and her children. Loving her husband as she still did, it must have required some determination to leave him for ever, and to take up her residence with her children at "Les Rochers." But there was a harder

blow yet to bear, which was to crush more completely the heart of the young wife, which was to render her a widow at the early age of twenty-six years. Her husband fell, not in battle fighting bravely for his country, not in risking his life to save another, not by the stroke of sickness, but in a disgraceful duel with the young Chevalier d'Albret.

For the next few years the Paris world saw little of Madame de Sévigné, for her time was devoted to the care and education of her children. All her thoughts were her children's, and their little interests were hers. Thus it was that that perfect confidence between mother and children was nurtured, which no after difficulties nor separations could efface. When her daughter was of an age to enter society, Madame de Sévigné returned to Paris, and took again that place in the highest ranks of the literary world which, for her children's sake, she had for some years vacated. The world received with a welcome its recovered favourite, and extended it at once to the beautiful young daughter, who seemed about to rival her mother in grace and talent. What strikes us Englishwomen as strange is, that with all Madame de Sévigné's love for her daughter, her first wish should be to dispose of her in marriage, and that she should, while her daughter was still in her first youth, be continually watching for a good opportunity of parting with her heart's idol. As we may suppose, there were many aspirants to the hand of "La plus jolie fille de France," as the young Mademoiselle de Sévigné was termed, but the one selected was le Comte de Grignan, neither young nor handsome, but, as Madame de Sévigné describes him in a letter to her cousin, the Comte de Bussy Rabutin, "un des plus honnêtes hommes du royaume." Madame de Sévigné was partly influenced in her ready acquiescence to this marriage by the fact of M. de Grignan being engaged at court, and she indulged the hope that he would be appointed to a higher place, and retained in some Parisian office. Promotion indeed came, but, alas! only in the shape of the governorship of Provence, a noble post certainly, but far removed from Paris. Poor Madame de Sévigné! here was a blow indeed! her daughter called to a distant country home! Her tears flowed, her lamentations were great, and her heart was like lead within her when she thought of the bitter parting with her loved child, yet the idea of quitting the literary world, and taking up her abode in a quiet provincial home, with a society so different from what she was accustomed to, never seemed to enter her thoughts. But we must here remember how the society of clever and brilliant acquaintances had become one of the wants of her nature. Her spirits would have drooped and her talents flagged, had she only associated with dull minds; and life in Paris, with an occasional visit to "Les Rochers," or living where she could collect her friends around her, was the life best

suiting her temperament. When the stroke had absolutely fallen, and she was left without her daughter, she felt a misery which in its intensity surpassed her worst anticipations; and her daughter had been but a short time separated from her, when the mother seated herself at her desk, and found relief to her sorrowful feelings in penning the first of those letters to her daughter, by which her name is familiar to all lovers of good writing. Her letters express much of the grief with which her heart was filled at this separation; but she would not allow this to be her only topic, for in all that was going on about her she sought for something or other which might interest her daughter, and render her letters sources of amusement to the Provence home, where the Paris news could not fail to excite an interest. We have only to read a few of the letters of Madame de Sévigné, in order to see what a pleasant style of writing is hers. How easily she describes what is passing around her; how clearly she relates public events. She does not weary us with an endless repetition of what she thought and wondered, she does not go out of her way to bring in pieces of knowledge, and yet her letters tell much which would have otherwise been lost to the world. What newspapers could have described so well the minutiae of the trial of Superintendent Fouquet as Madame de Sévigné does in her correspondence with Monsieur de Pomponne? We might naturally suppose, now that the daughter was at a distance, her son, the young Marquis de Sévigné, would take the first place in the mother's affections, but it was never so; her daughter had so secured them, that there did not seem to be more than a moderate quantity left for the luckless son. But jealousy was not a part of the young Sévigné's nature; he never dreamed of supplanting his sister, and was content to remain in that secondary place, not often filled by an only son. Occasional visits from Madame de Grignan, and return visits paid to Provence, were the brightest spots in Madame de Sévigné's later life. Years passed in this intercourse of letters, no diminution of affection taking place in either mother or daughter. In 1694, Madame de Sévigné made her last visit to Provence, in order to be present at the marriages of her grandchildren; but she was fated never to return to Paris or "Les Rochers;" for her untiring care of her daughter through a severe illness so weakened her own constitution, that in a short time her life was despaired of, and on the 16th April 1696, she ceased to live. It seems a fit end to the history of this devoted mother that her life should have been accepted for that of her daughter, and that her daughter's roof should have been the last to shelter her.

Eel Fishing on a Highland Loch.

HAVE you preserved, somewhere among the many-coloured pictures of your childhood, one of a Highland loch, seeming locked among its mountains, yet by its ebb and flow, its shingly beach, and wealth of shell-fish and sea-flowers, proclaiming itself kin to the ocean? Do you remember your free ramblings, unchecked by erag or burn—your boating, your brambling, your nutting, and the full health and vigour that gave zest to every enjoyment? Do you remember how gladly you went to rest with the summer's sun, to sleep so soundly that you never saw the twilight fade, nor the stars come out, nor knew of the lapse of time till another bright day had dawned? If you can recall such images in anything like their first freshness, you will fully understand the enthusiasm with which we hailed the promise of a new adventure—a midnight sail on the loch. We were all equipped, and peeping impatiently out into the night, long before our less-excited seniors gave marching orders. We soon groped our way down the rugged pathway to the shore, and were closely packed into the boat's stern, leaving a wide berth for the unquiet neighbours we hoped to meet with. The sleeping village showed little light, and there was neither moon nor twilight to dim the clear stars above us. But the sea was holding a fairy illumination of its own. Wherever the oar dipped, there was a sudden gleam, flashing and vanishing in a moment; and as I leant over the boat's edge, in an ecstacy of wonder and admiration, I saw the same magic shimmer rippling along, as her sides cut through the water. I passed my hand through the resisting current, and my fingers were traced in faint lines of flame. It was very wonderful. My reverie was rudely broken by the call of our head boatman. "Mind your hand, Miss," he shouted; "the eels wouldna think muckle about giean you a bite—they're unco forret in the night-time." I drew in the offending hand, and wrapt it up in my cloak, glad to have it there safe and sound.

We were now near the middle of the loch. Our oars were scarcely needed, as we glided over the floating corks that marked the fishermen's nets, and there lay motionless, while strong hooks were baited with great pieces of herring, and let down into the sea. The perpendicular wall of nets we had just passed quivered with a silvery light sufficient to show itself, not to chase away the deep darkness round. Here and there an entrapped herring struck a glimmer of phosphorescence in its vain struggles for freedom. But our men looked down with disappointment, for the fish as usual were few, and the fishing promised little profit. Enemies,

too, were on the field, devouring more than the fishermen would bring to land. Serpent-like forms were gliding about, far below, seen only by the sparks they struck out along their track, sailing with the most provoking calmness and self-complacency on their nightly round of depredations. The eels evidently considered it their prerogative to have their supper caught for them. They seemed the very tyrants of that lower world, hiding meanness and cowardice in a blaze of borrowed beauty, moving with kingly majesty on their unblessed path, as if guilt might wear the front of innocence, because it sees no avenging sword. But punishment is often nearer than it seems. A jerk, a struggle, then a slimy head emerging from the water was stunned by a blow from an iron instrument. In a few moments a huge eel, nine or ten feet in length, and thicker than a man's leg, was stretched, in all its native ugliness, at the bottom of the boat. We have been reprov'd for calling any of God's creatures ugly, and, no doubt, there are points to be admired even in eels, discoverable by discerning persons. Such were not we; one look of the slimy skin, the livid colour and snaky shape, was enough for us. We sought no opportunity for further inspection, for which, even had we been so disposed, there was then neither time nor light. An unwary eel, swimming too boldly past, was harpooned and laid beside its companion. Another, as gigantic, was soon laid low; and another, and another, till our uncut neighbours threatened to take the boat to themselves. Now, gentle reader, we were not utterly steeled against the sufferings of dumb creatures, nor was it without a twinge of pain that we viewed the long struggle for life of our captives. But, at the risk of forfeiting your esteem, the truth must out. We were, even to the youngest, hardened fishers, accustomed to still all compunction with philosophy about the cold-blood and insensibility of fish. Besides, our present victims were condemned criminals, daring marauders and thieves, whom to slay was an act of strict justice. Our indignation was soon raised to the highest pitch by the appearance of a giant, whose mouth contained *a herring and a half*, besides the bait he had so greedily swallowed. We now panted for the next tug as earnestly, and in our own fancy, as heroically as Sir Calidore longed to rush upon his foul Blatant Beast. Fairly tested, our heroism would, I daresay, have come to this, that we should as willingly have faced that monster as have engaged in a hand-to-hand battle with a conger-eel. Our dubious valour was not destined to be put to further proof. No tug was felt. The mountain tops began to show black and sharp against the whitening sky. Presently the rim of a harvest moon peeped out. The glimmering lights of ocean were quenched, and her prowling denizens shrunk afraid into their secret haunts.

Moonlight is always beautiful, but here, among the mountains, their rugged

summits flooded with the softening radiance, their recesses still black and full of mystery, their dark shadows thrown down upon illumined lake,—here, its beauty must be felt to be understood. But we must say, good night to it all. Our boat touched the shore, and our steps were swift over the now lighted pathway.

We inquired next morning for the health of our last night's victims, and were told that, after extraction of the oil they contained, they had been shipped off to London, to be made into most delectable pies. We could only wish the Londoners joy of their feast; and, with all due respect for their contempt of our Scotch kail and haggis, heartily congratulate ourselves that we, at least, had never eaten eels.

M. L.

The City of Tears.

The town of Pleurs, buried by the falling of a mountain.

CITY OF TEARS! the solemn night hath bound thee,
 In her dream-fraught embrace;
 But through the mantle she hath folded round thee,
 We can a deeper, darker shadow trace;
 A long, long night, which no glad morn shall chase
 Back to its sad and silent dwelling-place.

The golden day reluctantly hath parted
 From thy vine-claspéd walls,
 Bearing its glad light from the sunny-hearted,
 And like a cloud, dew-laden, slumber falls,
 With its bright dreams, on the young heart it calls,
 And with a spell of peace the weary soul enthrals.

Stilling the joyous feet that trod thy dances,
 The graceful forms that seemed
 Like fabled beauties of the old romances,
 Wood nymphs, of which some ancient poet dreamed,
 Threading the mazes of the forest wide,
 While from each flower-wreathed brow the sunlight died.

Hushed in thy vineyards is the voice of singing,
 And from the fruitful plain
 There pass no merry bands, in gladness bringing
 The gathered sheaves, the ripe and golden grain ;
 Life's restless tide is stilled, its toil and strife,
 But the soft air with lighter sounds is rife.

Hearts to the old sweet tale of love are thrilling
 Amid thy citron bowers,
 Like silver stream the bulbul's song is trilling
 Through the fair visions of the folded flowers ;
 And the high strains of the bard's words of fire,
 Rise to the music of the voice and lyre.

And from thy fanes, a solemn swell of voices
 Mingles upon the air,
 And the tired ear of weary earth rejoices,
 As the sweet tones tell of the close of care,—
 Of the grave's silence when life's day is done,
 Of heaven's repose after life's labour won.

And with the night, oh, fated city ! covering
 Thy beauty and thy wealth,
 Even as a spoiler, with dark footsteps hovering
 Round a fair dwelling and its joys by stealth ;
 To the destroyer's step awakes the air,
 Hushing the festal song, the voice of prayer.

Noble and peasant, beauty, youth, and age,
 Palace and vine-wreathed home,
 Red gold and gems, a glorious heritage,
 For death and thee, oh, wide unbroken tomb !
 Holding with iron hand thy goodly prey,
 Till earth, and seas, and mountains pass away.

J. I. L.

More about Epitaphs.

EPITAPHS, epitaphs, more about epitaphs! why do you keep harping on so "grave" a subject? do you say, my readers? But you know there are such things as gaieties and gravities, and there is said to be but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous; so I fancy I can find some epitaphs which will amuse you, among many which ought to make us think of the passing nature of all the glory of this world. "*Sic transit gloria mundi*" might be written, as a very fitting epitaph, over everything sublunary. Before proceeding to give you as many as I can collect, I must confess that our friend "Veronica" has, in her nice little sketch, taken a good deal of the cream off the subject; but, notwithstanding this, I think that I have at least one or two new and very good ones. Derivations and the origin of old national customs are two of my weaknesses; so you will pardon me if I detain you a little with a short account of the derivation of the word epitaph. It comes from two Greek words, "*epi* and *taphos*," the former meaning upon, and the latter a tomb. The Greeks applied the name to verses sung in memory of the dead, on his or her funeral day and its anniversary. The Athenians, by way of epitaph, put generally only the name, with the word "good," or hero, by way of epithet. I am not learned enough to give the original words, but some of my gentlemen readers at least will be able to supply them. The Lacedæmonians gave epitaphs only to those who died in their country's cause in battle. The Romans wrote theirs in a style peculiar to themselves, often representing the dead as conversing with the living reader of the epitaph. The oldest epitaphs of which history tells us, are thought to be of Simonides, upon Megistias, the soothsayer of Leonidas' army; and on the heroes of Thermopylæ, preserved by Herodotus. No one can say with certainty whether epitaphs were used by the Saxons and Danes; but English ones are first heard of in the eleventh century, then *all* written in Latin, which is *often* done to this day. Two of the earliest were written on William de Warren, Earl of Surrey, in 1089, and Gundreda, daughter of William the Conqueror, and wife of the Earl of Surrey; but as they are in an unknown tongue, at least to me, I shall not attempt to write them. The few epitaphs written in the twelfth century seldom included more than the name. In the next century there appear French ones, with occasionally promises of absolution added. In the fourteenth the true English form appears. The earliest is thought to be one over the Saville family at Thornhill, in Yorkshire, but it is such very old English, that I cannot read it. The Latin epitaphs

were generally on strips of brass. From the time of Elizabeth and James I., the style of epitaphs became more classical, though in these reigns very few were pure.

I think every one will agree with me, that the shorter and simpler an epitaph is, the better; yet no nation is more guilty of long-winded, laudatory nonsense than the English. On a monument to Washington, who does not prefer the simple "Washington," to any attempt to sing his praises on a tombstone? In St Paul's Cathedral, in London, one of the best epitaphs is the one on Sir Christopher Wren:—"If you ask for his monument—look around." On the field of Nordligen there is this one to Merci:—"Stop, traveller! 'tis a hero thou treadest on." The Marchioness of Santa Cruz caused one to be made for her daughter, intending it to serve also for herself—"The most unhappy mother—to her daughter and herself!" Count Tessin ordered to be inscribed on his tombstone these simple and very suggestive words—"Happy at last." How much of misery in this world do these words call before your imagination as you read! Surely *truly* happy at last might have done; he must certainly have had some of the joys of earth. I dare say you all know Sir Isaac Newton's epitaph, but for those who may have forgotten, here it is:—"This marble acknowledges Isaac Newton mortal, whom time, nature, and heaven prove immortal." Dr Johnson wrote the following for the tomb of a great musician—

"Philips, whose touch harmonious could remove
The pangs of helpless power and hapless love;
But here, distressed by poverty no more,
Find here that calm, thou gavest oft before;
Sleep undisturbed within this peaceful shrine,
Till angels wake thee with a note like thine."

Have any of my readers ever visited Dryburgh Abbey? if so, they must have read and admired the following, which seems to me to possess great meaning:—"Here lies the race of the House of Yare." Has it not a very solemn cadence? does it not put you in mind of those words of Israel's wise king, "Vanity of vanities, vanity of vanities, all is vanity!"

And now, passing with the one step before mentioned, I come to give you a few epitaphs, which excite more laughter than serious thought, and so I think miss their end and aim. For instance, over Burbridge, the great tragedian, are these words—"Exit Burbridge." Here methinks there is something solemn too, if we just in our minds add "for ever," thinking of the world as the stage on which he was an actor. I have discovered one somewhat resembling that on Dr Benjamin Franklin, which you have been told. It is to the memory of a certain watchmaker. "Here lies in horizontal position

the outside case of ——, watchmaker. Integrity was the mainspring and prudence the regulator of all his actions of this life; humane, generous, and liberal, his hand never stopped till he had relieved distress; so nicely regulated were his motions that he never went wrong, except when set agoing by people who did not know his key; even then he was easily set right again. He departed this life wound up, in hopes of being taken in hands by his Maker, and of being thoroughly cleaned, repaired, and set agoing in the world to come." The following, on a blacksmith, is in a similar style:—

"My hammer and my anvil lie declined;
My bellows, too, have lost their wind;
My fire's extinct, my forge decayed,
And in the dust my vice is laid;
My coal is spent, my iron gone,
My last nail driven, and my work is done."

The following very gallant epitaph, is said to be on a stone in Old Greyfriars churchyard, in this city:—

"Here snug in grave my wife doth lie;
She's at rest, and so am I."

Written about Montamaur, a man of remarkable memory, but great lack of judgment:—
"In this black surtout reposes sweetly Montamaur, of happy memory, awaiting his judgment." Another of the same brotherhood is this:—"Here lies Malcolm Downy, whae lost his weicht, ae market nicht, by fa'en aff his powny." At Elsham, in Northamptonshire, was found the following rather striking one:—

"My name it was Nathaniel Freer,
I lived and laughed, but now I'm here;
Such as I am, such you must be,
Then make your game, and follow me."

One on Richard Button, Esq., in a cemetery near Salisbury, is—

"Oh sun, moon, stars, and the celestial poles!
Are graves then dwindled into Button-holes?"

On a cricketer in the same churchyard—

"I bowl'd, I struck, I caught, I stopped—
Sure life's a game of cricket—
I blocked with care, and caution popped,
Yet death has hit my wicket."

In Gateshead churchyard there is a very good one to the architect of the Exchange and Guildhall:—

“Here lies Robert Trollop,
Who made yon stones roll up;
When death took his soul up,
His body filled this hole up.”

Here is a very ludicrous one—

“Here lies John Freer, Dumfries piper.
What, young John? Fie! Fie! Old John? Ay! Ay!”

And the following is highly complimentary to a lady:—

“Beneath this stone, a lump of clay,
Lies Arabella Young;
Who, on the twenty-fourth of May,
Began to hold her tongue.”

The shortest one I can find is—“This corpse is Tommy Thorpe’s;” and another, which follows, is the epitome of a long tale of woe—

“Poorly lived, and poorly died,
Poorly buried, and no one cried.”

And now, lest I take too much room, I shall finish my collection with a very common sense sort of one:—

“Here lies the wife of Simon Stokes,
Who lived, and died, like other folks.”

INCOGNITA.

Moonlight Scenery.

THE sun sinks in the west,
In a clear and cloudless sky,
And the fair moon in rest
Rules silently on high.

O'er mountain, lake, and fen
She calmly sheds her light;
O'er desert, wood, and glen
She shines with lustre bright.

The traveller on his way,
She cheers and urges on;
The sailor on the sea,
She looks with love upon.

Over the village church
The moonbeams softly play;
The calm and rest of such a scene
Is ne'er beheld in day.

THE LITTLE WAR EAGLE.

A Plea for the Scottish Language.

WHEN we walk through the dingy streets of old Edinburgh, and gaze upon the tall tenements now begrimed by the smoke and dust of centuries, it is difficult to realize that not so very long ago those crazy domiciles were the abodes of lords and ladies, who made the once stately halls echo with sounds of mirth and revelry. In like manner, when we listen to the somewhat uncouth language of the common people of our land, it is not easy to believe that that dialect was once used by kings and nobles, who did not fear to merit the title "vulgar," if the broadest Scotch dropped from their lips. But the reign of Scotch is over, and, like many other things in this changing world, it is thrust into a corner, when the polite have no further need of it: but, though no longer a queen, she yet, as a subject in what was once her realm, is deserving of our regard, and worthy of a better fate than to be cast away as something quite beneath our notice.

We are so accustomed to hear Scotch proceeding only from the mouths of the vulgar; our ears are so often regaled with poor Scotch rhymes, which profess to be Scottish Lyrics, but are in reality mere admixtures of pure and corrupt English, interspersed with a few words of Scotch; and the language of the common people, especially of those residing in towns, is so frequently composed almost entirely of English words pronounced with the broadest Scotch accent, that it is no wonder that we turn away in disgust, and heartily wish that English might be spoken everywhere in its purity, or that at all events *we* might be spared the pain of hearing it so barbarously mutilated. It were indeed a pity to ascribe to good old Scotch the errors which do not properly belong to it, but to spurious imitations of it which exist in our degenerate days.

The philological antiquary would tell us that the English of Chaucer resembled in many respects the modern Scottish dialect, and that Scotch has remained for many ages substantially the same: but this is not the proper place for discussing such a subject, as this article merely professes to be a short plea for the Scottish tongue, and lays no claim to being a critical essay on the respective antiquity of the dialects existing north and south of the Tweed. Most of us who have not been thoroughly possessed with an "Anglomania," have surely been at times struck with the singular beauty and expressiveness of some of the Scottish words. Who has not admired and used the tender word "wee," which indeed has now almost passed into the English tongue; and the pleasant-sounding "bonny" and "bairn," which lose much of their

kindliness when translated into the English synonymes, "pretty" and "child?" It is indeed impossible to translate into adequate English some of the finest Scotch expressions, such as the beautiful words "Auld lang syne," which can only be rendered literally by the awkward term, "Old long ago;" and the fine beginning to the immortal patriotic song, "Scots wha hae," which when expressed by the English words "Scots who have," has a most ludicrously commonplace sound. Indeed, the songs and poems of Robert Burns are full of genuine Scotch forms of language, which defy all attempts to translate them into any other tongue, and which derive not a little of their beauty from the pithy dialect in which they are written. Among the many properties which Scotch possesses, the broad humour which every native of Scotland who enjoys *fun* must surely thoroughly relish, and that true and tender pathos which we often find inhabiting the same mind, are perhaps, the most distinguishable. Most of us can recollect how we have enjoyed the merry tale of one who, by the comically expressive Scotch words with which he or she interspersed the narrative, imparted a vivacity and interest to the incident, which would otherwise have been wanting; and who that has read the sweet songs of "Highland Mary" and my "My Nannie's awa," will deny that, as a means of expressing the tender emotions of the human heart, Scotch is a tongue possessing singular richness?

To our refined ears the broad accent which properly belongs to Scotch, is its least agreeable property, but in reality this cannot seriously be urged as an objection, for in German, which certainly is no vulgar tongue, the vowel "a," as for example in the substantive "mann," the equivalent of our English "man," is pronounced with a fulness of sound which in the Scottish dialect would at once be stigmatized as uncouth and vulgar; while the guttural "ch," which our neighbours across the border find such a stumbling-block, is one of the most striking peculiarities of the German language.

While thus standing up in defence of the ancient language of our country, it is certainly not our intention to advocate the return of the natives of the northern part of this island to the use of an almost obsolete tongue, a course which would be by no means desirable, even if it were practicable, which the constant and increasing intercourse of the Scotch with the English would effectually prevent. But it is yet sincerely to be hoped that the Scottish peasantry may long retain their national dialect, and never suffer it to be exchanged for the odious Cockney jargon, which is equally removed from pure English, without possessing any of those beauties which are still so deservedly admired in Scotch. Far may the day be distant when the genuine Scotch language, that poured from the lips of the heroes and heroines of Sir Walter Scott's immortal tales, shall be no longer understood, and only read as a means of exercising the faculties

and patience—when it shall be one of the things that were—when it shall be left to the care of the antiquary alone, who looks with favour on all that, from its antiquity, has ceased to awaken interest in the ordinary mind.

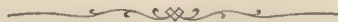
One or two true Scottish incidents, which it is believed have not yet been committed to paper, may not perhaps form an uninteresting conclusion to this article. One of the last of the Scottish noblemen who kept up the old custom of retaining in his family a “fool” or “jester,” was the Earl of W——, who, seventy or eighty years ago, had in that capacity a half-witted man named Willie Howieson. Like many others of the same class, Willie possessed not a little shrewdness, but wanted one great qualification for ever becoming greatly elevated above his position as fool, viz., that of being able to read. Taking advantage of the latter circumstance, but not apparently calculating on the strength of the former, Willie’s master despatched him one April Fool’s day with a written message to a neighbouring laird. Arrived at his destination, Willie was informed that he had made some mistake, and that he must continue his walk to another house at some distance. There he was similarly received, but the same thing being repeated once or twice, the shrewd jester suspected that some trick was being practised upon him. Perceiving one of his acquaintances, who he knew was able to read, he begged him to decipher the writing on this mysterious piece of paper, which had sent him thus from house to house. Judge of poor Willie’s indignation when he discovered that he had been unconsciously carrying about with him a message to this effect, “Send the govk another mile!” “Wattie wull pay for this,” the mortified fool exclaimed, and forthwith devised an original means of revenge, which he was not slow of carrying into execution. The Earl, who was perhaps no very ready scribe, was sometimes in the habit of inviting his friends to dinner by issuing cards of invitation in the form of verbal messages, carried by trusty Willie Howieson. Remembering this custom of his master, he thought that a trick no more palatable than that practised upon him, might teach his lordship to forbear in future from making him the victim of any such practical jokes. Accordingly, a few days after this occurrence, when the Earl was on the point of sitting down at table, he was not a little astonished by the arrival in full dinner costume of a lady and gentleman who were in the habit of visiting at the castle. His lordship received them with politeness, but we may believe with some embarrassment, which would not be diminished when other carriages drove up, and other friends stepped out with the bearing of invited guests. Lord W——, totally unprepared for such an influx of visitors, assured his friends that they were most welcome, but that he feared there must be some mistake, as he was not aware of having issued invitations for that day. The guests looked at each other with surprise,

and informed their host that Willic Howieson had come a few days previously and invited them in due form to a dinner-party in his master's house. Muttering imprecations on the head of his insolent retainer, the Earl rang the bell, and desired that Willic might be brought instantly before him to give an explanation of his unaccountable conduct. The offender's footstep was soon heard on the stairs, then the door half opened, the head of the unabashed fool was thrust in, and exclaiming, "Wha's gowk noo, Wattic?" the privileged jester escaped, no doubt to enjoy in full measure the success of the trick he had played on "Wattie."

In spite of his tricks, Willie Howieson seems to have been no small favourite with his master, who conferred on him the high honour of having his features transferred to canvass. In this portrait Willie was represented holding a beer-mug in the legitimate manner, that is to say, by the handle. The portrait, when finished, was pronounced an excellent likeness, and was of course exhibited to Willie himself, that he might give his opinion as to its merits and demerits. "It's no a bit like me," he exclaimed, when he was shown his painted self. "Not like you! why, what is the matter with it? everybody says it is a capital likeness." "I dinna care; it's no a bit like," returned the imperturbable Willic. "I never held a jug like that; I aye took a sickerer grip," meaning of course, that not trusting to the handle, he grasped the vessel with his whole hand, and so raised it to his mouth.

As showing how few luxuries the Scottish peasants of last century were accustomed to enjoy, the following incident may be cited:—The supper generally partaken of by Geordie Showswood, a "hind" or farm-servant in one of the eastern counties of Scotland, was a dish completely Scotch, known by the name of "sowens," which in his case was usually eaten with sour milk; but the worthy peasant's ambition soared much higher, as the following admission, made doubtless in confidence to one of his friends, will serve to show. "If I was a king," he confessed on one occasion, "I wad be a dear king tae the country, for I wad hae sowens and sweet milk every nicht tae my supper!" Poor simple Geordie, how our gracious Queen would smile if she were told that, in virtue of her regal dignity and nothing short of it, she might indulge in the unheard-of luxury of "sowens and sweet milk every night!" It is to be hoped that, though never a king, Geordie might, in his old age, if not sooner, not unfrequently enjoy that luxury, which in his simplicity he deemed only fit for royal palates.

AGATHA.



The Blind Girl.

“ For ever night, and no blue sky ! ”

The blind girl cried,

And gently sighed,

“ Mother I wish that I could die !

Oh ! what a beauteous world, methinks,

This earthly one must be,

With glorious sun, and birds, and trees ;

I wish that I could see !

I hear the merry thrilling laugh

Of children on the green ;

The bounding mirth of village Tom—

The song of little Jean.

The bubbling brook and cascade wild,

The birds upon the trees,

The rustling leaves, the thunder's roar,

The gentle evening breeze—

I hear them speak in lisping tones

Of nooks where violets grow,

And of the pretty wreaths they make

With daisies white as snow.

All join the universal song

Of praise to God above,

For all those tokens of His power,

And of His wondrous love.

I hear the forest songsters small

Send forth their matin lays,

And 'midst the gathering shades of night,

Trill their last note of praise.

And shall not I, blind though I be,

Join in the endless strain,

And praise my Maker while I live,

My blessed Saviour's name ?

Softly the kindly zephyrs play

Among the trembling leaves ;

Gladly the harvest reapers sing

Among their golden sheaves.

But all this world is dark as night,

And though I know 'tis wrong,

The wish that I could now depart,

Is very, very strong.

They tell me that the velvet sod,

Which 'neath my feet is spread,

Makes for the fragrant, blooming flowers

A soft and easy bed.

For then my eyes in heaven will ope

Upon those regions bright,

Where all is peace, and joy, and love,

And never any night.”

EUTERPE.

A Tale of the Last Century.

CHAPTER IV.

ACTING on this determination, Catherine had seen her old friend, and listened to her history, of which we need only give a rapid sketch. After receiving Catherine's last letter, Agnes had revealed her state of mind to her confessor, and had then been subjected to cruel fasts and penances, till, worn out and longing for sympathy, she had managed to escape from the Convent! Friendless and alone, she knew not where to seek help, till the hand of Providence led her to the dwelling of a pious minister, to whom she told her story, and since then she had been receiving great kindness from him and his only daughter. They had rented the room for her in which Catherine found her, and she had been able to support herself by embroidering (an art in which nuns generally excel), till her own illness, and that of her benefactor, reduced her to her present destitute condition. Then she ventured to make her whereabouts known to her former pupil, trusting that she would, at least, receive relief from her most pressing wants, confiding in her generosity to conceal her hiding-place from the priests. Catherine's tears fell fast when she heard the account which Agnes gave of the many privations she had undergone, and readily promised to send her such an allowance as would prevent her ever again suffering from the pangs of hunger. On the subject of religion they touched but slightly, as the poor invalid was, as Catherine saw, in too weak a state to endure any excitement, and was besides, as she had feared, in very truth a heretic, to hold conversation with whom was deadly sin, from which grievous penances could alone absolve her. She even feared to show her all the kindness that was in her heart, so she bade the desolate woman farewell, saying that she dared not renew her visit, but faithfully promising to keep her secret. Agnes thanked her in broken accents, and as she pressed her hand at parting, murmured, "When I am gone, which cannot be long now, O! sometimes think of your poor old friend; and may you yet experience the joy I now feel." She then slipped her rosary round her neck, saying, "I have no need of that now; but keep it for my sake, even should it become to you (which I pray it may), as it is to me, a useless ornament." As Miss Campbell was leaving the room, she met a lady entering, and turning round, saw the sick woman's face lighted up with such pleasure, that she at once concluded her to be the clergyman's daughter, who had left her sick father for a time to cheer the cheerless

Christmas of the lonely sufferer. On reaching the street, Catherine discovered that she had left her veil, so she had to return for it, as she feared being recognised. She pushed the door gently open, so as not to disturb the lady who was reading, and would have entered, had not her face riveted her attention. It was that of a young girl not more than eighteen years of age, but so perfectly lovely, that Catherine almost feared to breathe, lest by so doing the fair vision should vanish. She had thrown her bonnet aside, revealing a mass of clustering curls of that rare colour called golden; her eyes were soft, and of deep violet; and her mouth was sweet and feminine; her round and dimpled cheek rested upon the hand; and a gentle smile flitted across her face as she read and explained the different passages to her attentive listener. For a minute or so Catherine stood and gazed in silent admiration, then recollecting herself, she entered, got her missing veil, apologised for her intrusion, and hurried home, which she reached in a much shorter time than we have taken to tell the circumstances of her absence. For this long retrospect, my dear readers, I must ask your pardon, and endeavour in future to keep more strictly on "the even tenor of my way."

CHAPTER V.

ON reaching the library, Catherine received such a loving greeting from her father, and gentle chidings for her long delay, that her heart smote her for acting as she had without her father's approval, even though doing what she judged to be right; and as she met the affectionate glance of her twin brother, she sighed to think that for the first time she had a secret that she dared not share with him. Father Clement glanced toward her as she entered, and in his usual smooth tones, said, "Welcome, daughter; we have all been pining since deprived of your presence. I trust the potion I recommended has cured your headache, and that we may enjoy our nightly treat of listening to the tones of your sweet voice; nay, as this is Christmas, we shall expect something even finer than usual." Catherine blushed as she replied to these inquiries, for she had pleaded a headache to account for her absence from the family circle.

Father Clement was a priest who had for some years been tutor to Charles, and although no longer required in that capacity, he still remained as a sort of family chaplain. As such, he played chess, talked on politics and religion with his patron, and counselled and advised Catherine, with whom he was as great a favourite as with her father. Charles had a great dislike to the admonitions which the sleek-tongued Padre (as he laughingly termed him) thought fit to impose upon him, and generally

contrived to cut his lectures short, by a lively sally or broad hint that his patience was exhausted for the time being. Soon after Catherine joined the party, they all adjourned to the drawingroom, where Mr Campbell and the priest sat down to their never-failing amusement, chess, and Charles and his sister prepared to give their father his nightly concert, which he expected should continue as long as the game. Indeed, he used to declare that when they were otherwise engaged, and could not indulge him as usual, he was invariably the loser. The twins rarely spent an evening apart, as they were devotedly attached to each other; but lately Charles had been often absent, and Catherine paused as she was humming a song, and turning to her brother, exclaimed, "How comes it, Charles, that you have not been an evening with us all this week, and even now, although it is at my earnest sollicitation that you spend Christmas evening with us, you seem quite restless to be gone?" and in a rallying tone she added, "Has a fair lady aught to do with it?" As she made this joking allusion Charles coloured, and looked so annoyed that she dared not press the matter further. He turned to the piano, and said, "Come now, Kate, one more song before I go; for I have an engagement that must be kept." She complied silently with his request, but resolved that she would sit up till her brother's return, and learn from his own lips the secret that oppressed him, as for some days he had appeared unlike himself, being either moody and reserved, or almost uproarious in his sallies of humour. Song succeeded song, and still Charles lingered, but at last he started up, and bidding his sister an affectionate good night, left the room without either the priest or his father noticing his departure. Prayers were read and supper served, and at an early hour all retired, Mr Campbell merely remarking, "Charles seems to have numerous engagements now-a-days, Kate; but I think he might have spared us Christmas evening," as he took his candle and left the room. Kate retired also, but after all was quiet, she descended to the library, and prepared to wait for the truant's return. She took up a book, but her thoughts were so busy with the events of the day that it failed to interest her, so releasing her long bright hair from its fastenings, and wrapping her furred dressing-gown closely round her, she drew an arm-chair to the fire, and leaning back among its luxurious cushions, closed her eyes, whilst her mind busied itself in conjecturing all possible and impossible things about her brother; the wasted features of poor Agnes, and the bright young face of her fair visitor, ever and anon flitting before her eyes.

LADYBIRD.



The Exhibition.

PRINCES STREET, our bright, sunny, glorious Princes Street, quite loses caste during the month of February and the early days of March, for there is a rival attraction just round the corner—a fashionable rendezvous, where one can chat and gossip by the hour with chance acquaintance or friend, without braving the bleak east wind for which our northern capital is so famed, and from which even our prince of streets is not exempt during the spring months.

A stranger might give us residents in Edinburgh the credit of being an art-loving, art-criticising people, who never seem to weary of the Exhibition of Paintings, who do homage, by the careful and earnest study of each picture, to the genius and painstaking efforts of every artist, be he distinguished in his profession or but a tyro in the study of the fine arts. We acknowledge, however, in all humility, that even when conversant with every painting, we naturally follow the crowd that day after day wends its way to the National Gallery, for the force of habit of doing as others do is strong in trifles as in more important matters.

We can easily distinguish the select few who visit the Exhibition for its legitimate object—that of admiring the paintings with which its walls are hung. They are recognised by the almost desperate looks they wear, as they endeavour to force a way through the languid crowd of promenaders, who could, to quote themselves, “find every picture blindfold,” and therefore cannot be expected to understand how the poor stranger is eagerly desirous of “doing” the rooms before train time. Our rustic critic hurries on, catalogue in hand, impeded every moment, chafing inwardly at the delay, and wondering secretly how such a crowd of reasonable beings can have patience to saunter away so much precious time, when it is evident they are not there to admire those pictures of which he is so anxious to catch a glimpse. Indignantly he pushes past an exquisite, who is gracefully positioned in front of one of the *chefs d'œuvre*, whose every feature seems to petition for its tribute of merited admiration, while the whole expression of the face declares, “I am worthy of scrutinising notice, as a correct embodied representation of Adonis himself.” The graceful attitude, the turned toe, the decidedly Paris cut of the coat, are thoroughly wasted on our farmer friend, whose feeling of irritation soon, however, gives place to the more wholesome one of gratitude, as he pictures to himself the stalwart figure of his own son, proud and able to take charge during his father's absence, whose manners might want the polish of the town-bred youth by his side, but in whose bright eye the glad father sees clear good sense, practical knowledge, and Virtue herself reflected. Now he has to insinuate himself

into a perfect bevy of ladies eagerly discussing the delights of last night's ball. They are young and bright, and joyous and pretty, and his heart softens as a silvery peal of laughter rings on his ear, as he watches the sparkle of the eyes, telling how light-hearted and innocent their merriment is, and even he, the stoic of a few minutes before, forgets the prime object of his presence there, and delights his eyes with these living pictures of grace and beauty. All unconsciously he continues to gaze and listen till he is suddenly reminded that his bright fascinators are but beings of this every-day world, by hearing somebody's awkwardness decried in no gentle terms, and seeing a pair of bright eyes dart glances of reproach at the possessor of the clumsy foot which has wrought such damage to her trailing robe. Intuitively our would-be cynic knows himself to be the defaulter, and the colour of the bronzed and furrowed cheek, upon which mid-day suns and winter blasts have no effect, is momentarily heightened as he hastily begs pardon, and continues his round of inspection, for his feelings have received a rude shock, and as he eyes remorsefully the rent he has so unwittingly caused, he acknowledges that he is out of place in this gay scene—that he is far more at home in the corn market or Cross of Edinburgh than in this true Vanity Fair.

There are children here too, little old men and women of the world, who carry juvenile season tickets in their muff, and criticise with adult severity both the pictures and assembly. We remember the day, and it is not so far distant either, when a visit to the Exhibition was the grand Saturday treat, when we looked upon its suite of rooms as the best place in the world for a game at hide-and-seek. Quite tranquil and self-possessed we required to be, or we would soon have been called to order; but few who have not experienced can understand how we enjoyed the mere idea of losing and finding one another in that throng of people; and as young ladies, even while delighting in the retrospect, we blush to think how very undignified and improper such behaviour must have appeared to the rest of the world. But the little ones of to-day give no such uneasiness to anxious guardians; romping and rioting are almost out of fashion, and childhood, with its innocent joys and weaknesses, has now a very short reign. Lounges running the length of the rooms are monopolized by the dowager belles of our fair city (each a petty sovereign, robed in fur and velvet), who hold an almost daily audience in the Exhibition of Paintings. Graciously they sit in state, scattering condescending bows of recognition right and left, while winning smiles of welcome reward the favoured few who have courage to approach their august ladyships. Let us not for one moment suppose that an innate love of adulation, or even a selfish craving after excitement, is the motive of their daily visit. A chaperon has arduous duties to perform, all gratifying though they may appear to the rest of the world; for where

etiquette requires the presence of a matron's dignified surveillance, there the fond mother is found delighting in the enjoyment of her own particular charges. However engrossing the conversation may be, the mother's eye follows admiringly one of the graceful forms in the motley crowd, while her partial judgment whispers, in love's assuring accents, that her own precious daughter is the fairest, the sweetest, and the brightest flower that blooms in the gay parterre.

While musing and moralizing on the depth and blessedness of a mother's holy love, sacred to every rank of life, we willingly lose sight of the Exhibition topic, with its attendant pomps and frivolous vanities.

STELLA.

Misquotation.

THE necessity of avoiding misquotations was ably advocated by "Des Eaux" in the February number of "The Attempt." In the one for March we have an interesting historical paper marred by the very fault against which it warned us; for, turning to page 52, our readers will observe a rather ludicrous mistake. Speaking of the fate of Fouquet, "Z" says, "Some imagine in the strange history of the 'Iron Basiliké,' or man with the iron mask, we read that of the last years of his life." Basiliké is a Greek word signifying *royal*, and not *mask*, as "Z" supposes. There is, therefore, no meaning in the phrase "Iron Basiliké." One knows how the remembrance of a strain of music long since heard, lingers in the memory, and may return at any moment. So it may be that, in school days "Z" has read of the "Iron Basiliké;" and now, writing about the iron mask, an indistinct and confused remembrance of the old story has come up. Hence the confusion of ideas.

"Iron Basiliké," or "Royal Portraiture," was in fact the *title of a book*, alleged to have been written by Charles I., but which is now generally believed to be the production of Gauden, an author who lived during that reign. As to who the unhappy prisoner was, various conjectures have been made, and one of the most plausible is the supposition mentioned by "Z." But there is now unquestionably much more reason for believing that the "man in the iron mask" was a brother of Louis the Fourteenth, whose presence might have proved inconvenient, seeing that his claims to the throne were equally well founded. We may add, that the mask was of velvet, fastened by a padlock at the back of the head, and not an iron one, as is generally supposed.

Double Acrostic.

III.

A man who many countries saw,
And sailed the broad blue ocean o'er.

1. " See there his tenement,
Whom well inspir'd, the oracle pronounc'd
Wisest of men."
2. " Dimly I could desery
The stern black-bearded kings with wolfish eyes,
Waiting to see me die."
3. " I remember
The first time ever Cæsar put it on ;
'Twas on a summer's evening in his tent,
That day he overcame the——"
4. " Hear it not, Duncan ; for it is a knell,
That summons thee to heaven or to hell." *Macbeth*
5. " As sweet and musical
As bright Apollo's lute, strung with his hair."
6. " Come, let me clutch thee :
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still." *Macbeth*

F. B.

Answers to Acrostics.

I.

Attempt—Editors.

1. *Aphrodite.*
2. *Toad.*
3. *Tancredi.*
4. *Evanescent.*
5. *Michael Angelo.*
6. *Prisoner.*
7. *Theseus.*

II.

Niobe—Tears.

1. *Night.*
2. *Irene.*
3. *Ophelia.*
4. *Bar.*
5. *Eos* (Greek name of Aurora).

F. B.

Some Thoughts on Writing, and its Tone and Style.

IN all ages, men have been found with power to rule others by their command of language ; nevertheless, it is only in the enlightened centuries that they have written and spoken well. True eloquence supposes the exercise of genius, and cultivation of mind. It is very different from that natural facility of speech which is only a talent—a quality accorded to all those whose passions are strong, organization pliant, and imagination prompt. Such persons feel vividly, are easily affected, and show it markedly. It is body speaking to body with them : all the movements, all the signs co-operate. What is necessary to move and draw the multitude ?—what to shake the greater part of mankind, and even to persuade them ? A vehement and pathetic tone, frequent and expressive gestures, with rapid and sounding words. But for the few with firm head, delicate taste, and exquisite sense, with these—tone, gesture, and the vain sound of words go for nought. They must have facts, thoughts, and reasons, with power to present, balance, and order each. With them, it is not enough to strike the ear and occupy the eye ; the speaker must act on their souls, and touch their hearts while speaking to their minds.

Style is only the order and movement in which thoughts are placed. If these are chained and kept within bounds, the style becomes firm, nervous, and concise ; if they are left to follow each other at random, connected only by means of words—however elegant it may be, the style will be diffuse, lax, and protracted. But before arranging the order in which our thoughts are finally to be presented, we should have another plan more general and fixed, where we need only enter on our first views and principal ideas. It is in marking their place in this first plan that our subject becomes circumscribed, and we find its breadth ; it is in recalling incessantly these first outlines that the proper intervals separating our leading ideas are determined, and accessory ways and means are developed which serve to complete them. By force of genius, all general and particular ideas are thus represented from their proper point of view ; by keen and delicate discernment, sterile and barren thoughts are distinguished from fruitful and productive ideas ; and by that sagacity which the habit of writing gives, we feel beforehand what will be the effect of all these workings of the mind. However, if the subject selected be vast or complicated, it can rarely be embraced at once, or penetrated by a first and single effort of genius, and rarer still is it when, even after much reflection, all its bearings are grasped and understood. We cannot occupy ourselves too much

with our subject; it is the only way to strengthen and consolidate, extend and elevate our thoughts. The more substance and force we give them by meditation, the easier we shall afterwards find it to realize them by expression.

This plan is not yet style, but it is its foundation and basis, and reduces it to laws, without which the best writer wanders, the pen moves without a guide, and throws off at hazard irregular traits and discordant figures. However brilliant the colours employed, or the beauties sown in the details, if the main idea fail to be clearly understood throughout, or if its uniformity clash and jar, the work is not properly constructed, and while admiring the mind of the author, we suspect a want of genius. This is the reason why those who write as they speak, although they may speak very well, write badly; that those who abandon themselves to the first flight of their imagination take a tone which they often cannot sustain; that those who fear to lose isolated and fugitive thoughts, and who write from time to time detached pieces, never unite them save with forced transitions; this is why there are so many writings mere patch-work, and so few grounded on a single sketch.

However extended a subject may be, it is capable of being comprehended in a single essay (unless in some few exceptional cases); and interruptions, pauses, and sections should only be employed when writing of different subjects, or when treating of things vast, intricate, and incongruous. The march of genius finds itself interrupted by the multiplicity of objects, and constrained by the necessity of circumstances. In other instances, a great number of divisions, far from rendering a work more solid, only destroy its connection; the book appears clearer to the eye perhaps, but the design of the author remains obscure. It cannot make an impression on the reader, it cannot even make itself understood except by the continuity of its thread, by the harmony and successive development of its ideas, a sustained gradation and climax, and uniform movement, all of which any interruption slackens or destroys.

Why are the works of Nature so perfect? Because each is a whole, because she works on an eternal plan, from which she never deviates. She prepares in silence the germ of her productions; she outlines, develops, and perfects all by one continuous movement, and in a given time. The work astonishes, but it is the "stamp divine" the features bear which ought to strike us. The human mind can create nothing, it only produces after being fructified by experience and meditation; its knowledge and attainments are the germs of these productions. But if it imitate Nature in her walk and work, if it elevate itself by contemplation to the sublimest truths, if it unite them, bind and weave them in one system by reflection, it will establish on immovable foundations an everlasting monument!

It is the fault of our plan, of a want of sufficient consideration of our subject, when our mind finds itself at a loss, not knowing where to begin. We perceive a flood of ideas, and if we have not properly compared them, there is nothing to determine us which to prefer, and thus we remain in perplexity. But when a plan is made, when once we have assembled and put in order the thoughts essential to our subject, we instantly see to which to turn, we understand the final point in the mind's production, we long to reach and disclose it,—it is a pleasure to write, idea precedes idea easily, the style becomes natural and flowing, warmth springs from our pleasure spreading over all, giving life to each expression, growing more and more animated as we advance, the tone is elevated, objects take colour from it, light kindles, increasing and lured on from what is written to what is yet to come, and the style grows insensibly clear and interesting.

Nothing is more at variance with warmth and animation than a desire to introduce striking effects. Nothing is more opposed to that clear light which ought to shine equally over our whole writing, than those flashing sparks produced by the clash of words against each other; they dazzle you a moment, to leave you in darkness deeper from the momentary flash. These are the thoughts which shine only by opposition; they present only one side of the object, throwing all the rest into shadow, and generally this side is an angle, round which the wit can the more easily play, that it is farthest removed from all those points from which good sense is in the habit of considering things. And nothing is more against true eloquence than the employment of ingenious conceits and tricks of expression, and a search after ideas light and delicate, but without consistence, which, like the beaten gold leaf, gain brilliancy only through loss of solidity. The more we find of these frothy sparkling fancies, the less we shall have of nerve, fervour, and life in style, unless the foundation of the subject is pleasantry, when indeed the art of saying little things is admirable, and perhaps more difficult than the art of saying great ones.

Nothing is so incompatible with natural ease and fluency as taking great trouble to explain common things. Such unfortunates as do so, begin in a stilted and pompous manner; nothing so degrades a writer! Far from admiring it, we pity them for having spent so much time in making new combinations of syllables, only to say what all the world says. This is the fault not of cultivated, but barren minds. They have words in abundance, but no ideas; they work with words, and imagine they have combined ideas, because they have arranged phrases; they fancy they have purified the language, when they have only perverted its acceptations. Such writers have no style, or, if they will, only the shadow of it. Style should be the engraving of thoughts;



theirs is but a tracing of words. In order to write well, we must thoroughly master the subject; we must reflect on it until we see clearly the order of our thoughts, and form them into a chain, every link of which is an idea. And when we take up the pen, it must be made to move successively along this chain, without permission to wander, or to dwell unequally on any point, its movement regulated by the space it has to traverse. This constitutes severity of style. This will compel unity, regularity, and rapidity, and will also suffice to render it precise and simple, equal and clear, quick and coherent. To this first rule, if we add delicacy of taste, care in the choice of expression, and attention to calling things only by their most general names, our style will have nobility. If we combine with these, diffidence and distrust of its first beginning, contempt for all that is merely brilliant, and a constant repugnance to all ambiguity, equivocal, and jocular, our style will have gravity, perhaps even majesty. In fine, if we write as we feel and believe, if we are firmly convinced of what we wish to persuade, this good faith with ourselves will make us courteous to others, and is the truth of style. This alone will enable it to produce its effect, provided that this internal conviction be not marked by too strong an enthusiasm, and that it is characterized throughout by more candour than confidence, more reason than warmth.

No amount of rules can supply genius, and without it they are useless; but to it they are most important, as its happy possessors will be the first to acknowledge. To write well is at once to do three things—to think, understand, and express well; it is to have mind, soul, and taste. Style supposes the combination and exercise of all the intellectual faculties, and ideas alone form its basis. Harmony of words is only an adjunct, depending on organic sensibility; it is enough to have a little ear to avoid any dissonance or discord, and having exercised and perfected that gift by a careful study of poets and orators, we are mechanically led into imitation of poetical cadence or oratorical tones of expression. But imitation is never creation, so that mere harmony of words never makes the basis and tone of style, and is often found in writings totally devoid of ideas. Tone is only the fitness and suitability of style to the nature of the subject. It should never be forced; it springs naturally from that subject, and depends mainly on the point of observation to which our thoughts are carried. If the object be in itself great, the tone will seem to rise to it; and if in sustaining it at that elevation our talent is able to give to each object a strong light; if we can add the beauty of colouring and energy to the design; if, in a word, we can represent each idea by vivid and well-finished imagery, and render each chain of thought a harmonious and touching picture, the tone of our writing will be not only elevated but sublime.

Well written works alone will be those to pass to posterity. A mass of information,

singularity of facts, and novelty of discovery, are no sure guarantees of immortality; if the books containing them treat only of little things, if they are written without taste and genius, they will perish, because knowledge, information, facts, and discoveries easily arise, pass, or change, extending and improving by being put into operation by skilful hands. These things are beyond and without the writer; but the style is the man himself, and cannot alter. If that be elevated, noble, and sublime, the author will be admired equally in all time; for truth alone is enduring and eternal, and a pure and beautiful style is so only in effect of the infinite number of truths it presents. All the intellectual beauties found there, all its bearings are as much useful truths (and perhaps even more precious to the human mind) as those which formed the groundwork of the subject. The sublime cannot be found save in great subjects. Poetry, Philosophy, and History have all the same object, and a vast one it is—Man and Nature. Philosophy describes and depicts Nature. Poetry paints and embellishes it; she paints men also,—she exalts and exaggerates them, creating heroes and gods. History paints only man, and portrays him as he is. Thus the tone of history only becomes sublime, when it gives us the portraits of the noblest men, when it relates great actions, movements, and revolutions—everywhere else, it is enough that it be majestic and grave. The tone of the philosopher may become sublime when it treats of the Deity, of the laws of Nature, of space, of matter, of motion and time, of the soul, the human mind and its sentiments and passions; at others, it is enough that it be noble and elevated. But the tone of the orator and the poet, if the subject be great (and no other is worthy them), should be ever sublime. They are masters, and add to the grandeur of the subject as much of colour, animation, and life, as much of illusion as they please, that so, besides enriching and elevating each object, they may employ their utmost force, and unfold the full breadth of their genius, of their great and glorious gift.

One word in behalf of the present writer is, she thinks, called for, at the conclusion of such a subject. Faults she has, and these “neither few nor far between;” her readers (if she gains any) may probably find illustrations of what she has condemned, in this paper itself. To save them all further trouble and search, in extenuation she has one merit to plead—a firm conviction of the truth of all she has said. It is founded on authority far higher than her own limited experience could dare to urge; she need not refer to it here, it is well known, and on that ground she offers some thoughts and suggestions in and out of order, to all, and especially to her sister writers in “The Attempt.” To the most talented they can do no harm, and to the less so (in all humility), they may be of some small use to aid them in their work. HILDA.

Red Riding Hood.

UNDERNEATH the swaying branches,
By the summer breezes fanned,
Smiling at thine own sweet fancies,
Dreaming of kingeups and pansies,
Which thy little hand
Will gather from the thymy dells,
When the sunset's rosy light rests on their purple bells.

Long shall anxious eyes outlooking,
Watch for thee, when twilight deep
Gathers o'er the whispering woods,
And the moorland solitudes;
Or in silence weep
By the joy-forsaken hearth;
Vainly seek by woodpaths shady, emptied of thy mirth.

Lingering in the golden sunlight,
Did no shadow strange and cold
Fall upon thy happy heart,
Chilling it with sudden start,
By the tale it told,
Of all thy wayward wanderings o'er,
Ne'er to roam the wildwood with its thousand daisies more?

Sadly shall thy little playmates
Think of thee, when the sweet spring,
With its tears and rainbow gleams,
Wakes the silver voice of streams,
And glad carolling
Of wild birds in leafy bowers,
While thy step in ferny dingles greets no more its flowers.

J. I. L.

The General Assembly.

As the time for the General Assembly approaches, visions of black coats pass before us, gathering in misty clouds as locusts before the wind. This is a holiday time for both town and country; great preparations have been going on in rural manses for months beforehand, for the wives and daughters must by no means be left out at the carnival of the Scottish Church. Then is Princes Street rendered yet more glorious by the lustre of many-hued garments; whilst gazing from afar on the garden promenades, parterres of living flowers dazzle our eyes, and, roused by the festive sound of music, flocks of ravens swoop down from the grey towers above.

At this season, provisions become alarmingly dear. The flight that has darkened the whole heavens leaves not a green thing behind; weeping and lamentation are heard in the hen-roost and the poultry yard, whilst our ears are perpetually greeted by the lowing of cattle and bleating of sheep on their way to execution. From every quarter of the land these "most potent, grave, and reverend seigniors" assemble. From the barren wilds of the North, from the flowery vales of the South, from the rocky shores of the East, from the balmy retreats of the West, from the dark mountains and peaceful glens of Perthshire, from the gloomy passes of Argyleshire, "they come in vast array," railroad and steamer contributing their quota to the great gathering.

In honour of the opening of the Assembly the Lord Commissioner holds a levée, which is generally pretty largely attended. When this is over his Lordship attends Divine service in the High Church, thence proceeding in state to the Assembly Hall. When the preliminary matters have been settled, the subjects to be discussed are read out, and the battle commences. Wonderful are the flights of oratory, marvellous the powers of sarcasm, deep the erudition displayed by the combatants. The exhortation to "be courteous" is now and then lost sight of in the heat of argument, and the Moderator's repeated calls "to order" are by no means unnecessary. One member goes droning on till the patience of his listeners is exhausted, when, like schoolboys enduring a lecture, they testify their weariness in a very obvious manner. Often the drone is interrupted by the sharp sting of a busy bee, startling the unfortunate victim by the suddenness of the attack. Sometimes a young member, desirous of airing his newly-acquired dignities, like Phaeton of old, takes the reins of argument in his hands, anxious to conduct his reverend fathers through the dangers that lie in their way. No sooner has he undertaken this enterprise than unforeseen difficulties beset his brain; all is

confusion, and, too late, he repents of his rashness. Pitying his inevitable discomfiture, his career is suddenly interrupted by the kindly intervention of some Titan in church matters, his young brethren vouchsafing his maiden speech a decent burial. On the other hand, how often are we enchained by the calm good sense and logical acumen of some learned speaker, thoroughly acquainted with his subject, yet open to debate, and ready to receive the opinions of others! With what respect is he listened to! how his admirers hang upon his every word, whilst even his opponents cannot refuse their meed of praise! How wonderful is the power of one strong mind over others! as a great wheel in a piece of mechanism sets all the rest in motion, the powerful intellect involuntarily influences those around, producing perfect harmony in the sphere in which it works.

But our reverend friends are not so entirely wedded to business as utterly to forget recreation. Released from their duties, they are often light-hearted and joyous as children—perhaps not quite so infantile as to be “pleased with a rattle, tickled with a straw,” but still ready for any amount of “jest and youthful jollity.” Croquet is in great request, our clerical brethren reckoning this a permissible pastime, where the field is open to all adventurers, and conquests may be achieved by hardy knights. That arm, so often raised in a burst of stormy eloquence, is now uplifted to scatter the balls of its unfortunate adversaries; and that voice, calm and gentle in another sphere, now resounds over the field in shouts of victory. What looks of self-satisfaction are visible in the eyes of those who are accustomed to teach humility, on achieving a successful stroke! and oh, could ye believe it? whisper it not in the courts of the Assembly, have we not detected the sly shove, the hidden wiles, supposed to further the rival interests? Sometimes these games are prolonged to so late an hour that the players have barely time to prepare for their ministerial dinners, and yet they must be ready at the appointed time to enter the drawing-room with spotless bands and hair unruffled, however discomposed their feelings may be by the chances and changes of Fortune’s wheel. These dinners are by no means melancholy affairs; joke and repartee fly across the table, and

“Many a shaft at random sent,
Meets mark the archer little meant.”

Though out of the order of succession, the Moderator’s breakfasts are great attractions, and are adorned by a galaxy of youth and beauty. On commencing the repast, the table groans with every delicacy that can tempt the eye and palate; on concluding, the nakedness of the land is clearly visible. The wife and daughters of the Moderator

stand ready to receive the guests in the ante-room: when all are assembled, the doors are thrown open, and the crowd pours in. The sight that greets the eye on entering is very pretty. The tables are laid out in the shape of a horse shoe, decorated profusely with flowers: in the centre of his guests sits the Moderator, distinguished from the rest by his official dress. Though the chatter of tongues is great, the clatter of knives and forks is yet greater; and some sensible old gentlemen think it better to defer their remarks till the repast is concluded, when they can give their undivided attention to more ministerial affairs.

In the evening there is always a select reception held at the Palace by Lady —, and one grand reception, open to all connected with the Assembly, by the Lord High Commissioner himself. And here the stranger will not fail to moralize on the changes time has wrought in that magnificent hall where royalty once trod, and Charles Edward, in the days of his short-lived prosperity, led out Flora Macdonald in the stately minuet. Another race now tread its oaken floor, and douce ministers, leading their portly wives and bashful daughters, approach, making their bows and curtsies to the great man of the occasion. Fashions are long in reaching the recesses of Scotland, and we are often startled by seeing those, obsolete for some years, revived in the dresses of to-day. When the wearers are unconscions, what does it matter?

“Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise.”

It might be well, however, if the faces of the gay and fashionable always wore as happy and contented an expression; and the simple, guileless life of our country pastors and their families is a lesson to those who seek pleasure as the aim of their existence. All honour to the General Assembly! May its members ever continue to uphold the purity of doctrine and independence of the Established Church of the land!

C. M. C. T.

Thomas the Rhymer.

WALKING one fine summer day in the “auld kirkyard” of Earlston, I discovered a small stone in the wall of the church, on which, in very ancient characters, were these few simple words, “Auld Rhymer’s race lies in this place.” Now, however indicative of ignorance on my part, I must confess that “true Thomas” had been to my mind

neither more nor less than a myth, till the sight of his tombstone brought forward the reality of his existence in such an unmistakable manner, as to lead me to inquire what he had done to merit a stone to his memory in such a very conspicuous place. As I think that the fruit of my researches might form not an uninteresting subject for the pages of "The Attempt," I shall endeavour to bring Thomas the Rhymer before the notice of its readers in as attractive a form as I can.

It is now five hundred years since this prophet lived, and his memory appears to be still fresh in the minds, at least, of the peasantry of the district in which he was born. According to tradition, his birthplace is a small village called Ereildoune, on the Leader, near which is still to be seen a ruined tower bearing his name. Some suppose his true surname to have been Learmont, but that is uncertain; at least he is much better known as "Thomas the Rhymer," or, "true Thomas." The thirteenth century is stated with some certainty as the time at which the Rhymer flourished, his prophecies being held in repute at the time that Bruce slew the "Red Comyn." Besides having renown as a prophet, "true Thomas" gets also the credit of being a poet; though Maekenzie says he only turned into verse, prophecies uttered by "Eliza," a nun of a convent in Haddington. The only existing poem attributed to this earliest of Scotch poets is "Sir Tristrem," to which Sir Walter Scott added part, and hence it is to be found bound up in his works. The Rhymer's skill in prophecy was traditionally derived from a visit to fairyland, which he at one time had the good fortune to pay, and certainly he must have had more than one communication with the "good folk," if we believe the following legend:—One day, while Thomas had a feast or merry-making with some of his friends in his ancestral tower, a messenger from the neighbouring village burst in (sans ceremony) with the tidings that a hart and hind were slowly walking up and down the village street. No great cause for excitement or wonder one would fancy, except that they had strayed so far from their native woods. "True Thomas" must have thought otherwise, as no sooner did he hear the wondrous news than he rose, leaving all his friends, and followed the two animals into the forest. From that day to this, he has never been heard of, though he is expected to return from his supposed abode in fairyland, and make his appearance on this sublunary scene. The date of his return has not been precisely set down, but as it is so late in arriving, I think you will agree with me that he must be well pleased with his present quarters. The place where the Rhymer gave forth his oracles was under the "Eilder tree," which, though no longer to be seen, has its former situation marked by the "Eilder stone." Near this stone runs the "Bogle Burn" (Anglice, goblin brook), so named from the Rhymer's supernatural visitants.

The prophecies of Thomas the Rhymer are mentioned by Winton, Barbour, and Blind Harry, or Harry the Minstrel. For most of the words of the prophecies we are indebted to Pinkerton. The Rhymer's most noted instance of prediction relates to the death of Alexander III. One day Thomas told the Earl of March that on the next day there would be very windy weather. The day dawned, and continued throughout lovely and calm, but towards evening there came the news of the death of the king. So our prophet's credit was kept good, and his prediction took the form of an allegory. When the news came, Thomas is said to have uttered the words, "Yone is the wynde that sall blaw to the great calamity and truble of Scotland." He is also said to have foretold the exploits and succession of Robert Bruce. Another of his well-known instances of foresight was when Sir William Wallace, for some cause or other (or more likely no cause at all) was put in prison by the English, where, through great hardship, he became so weak as to be thought dead. His old nurse having got permission to perform the last sad offices for him, discovered that his noble heart still beat, though very feebly, and whilst tenderly nursing him in secrecy, the rumour spread abroad that the great patriot was dead. None of these reports convinced "true Thomas," who continued to declare that such was not the case so distinctly, that when a messenger was sent to the old woman's cottage, and secretly shown the knight of Ellerslie, the fame of the prophet of Ereildoune was greatly increased. One old writer has collected a whole string of prophecies said to have been delivered to the Rhymer by his friend the fairy, but I have not been able to find them as a whole; and *entre nous*, my readers, I think we have suffered no great loss. Our friend Thomas has added to his numerous soubriquets that of Laird Learmont. He is supposed to have married a daughter of the Knight of Thirlstane, ancestor of the Lauderdale family, and prophesied that his race would die with himself or his son, which proved true, like the rest of his predictions. So now, as all the particulars I can gather of the life of this ancient hero have been related, I proceed to give you a few specimens of the style of his oracle.

He himself is said to have asserted the truth of all his sayings in the following rather striking couplet—

" When the saut gaes abune the meal,
Believe nae mair o' Tammy's tale."

Probably he meant when salt became proportionably more expensive than meal, which being not likely soon to happen, you must give him full credit for wonderful foresight. I find one of these predictions about our native town, which some thought well fulfilled

when the Crawley spring was brought into the city, and a troop of yeomanry marched out to quell the radical rebellion. It reads thus—

“ When the white ose comes to Edinburgh eors,
Ilka man may tak his horse.”

Another, supposed to be fulfilled in the stormy winter, 1818-19, the wet spring which followed, Peterloo massacre, and the death of George III. 1820, was this—

“ A windy winter, and a wet spring,
A bluidy summer, and a deid king.”

And now let me give you one in praise of “ mine own romantie town,” and surely you are all bound to believe every word of it—

“ York was, London is, and Edinburgh 'll be
The biggest and the bonniest o' a' the three.”

We shall all agree about the bonniest at all events. The explanation of the following I may safely leave to my readers' imagination—

“ On the water fa' and the water shed,
When is seen the nest of the ringle-tailed gled,
The lands o' the north 'll a' be free,
And ae king rule owre kingdoms three.”

There is about an old thorn tree, near his native town, the following—

“ This thorn tree as lang as it stands,
Earlstoun sall possess a' her lands.”

The original lands have been in course of time all sold or given away. In 1821 this noted tree fell, and the circumstance which gave weight to this old propheey was, that all or nearly all the shopkeepers were then bankrupt. The following prediction regarding the famous Eilder tree is unexplained—

“ Atween Craik eors and Eilder tree,
Is a' the safety there sall be.”

The prediction contained in the couplet—

“ At Eilder tree if you sall be,
A brig owre Tweed you there may see,”

seems to have been amply verified, as if your curiosity tempts you to go and look, you may now find three brigs spanning Tweed's silver stream. Referring to future im-

provements in the agriculture of this country, which was his favourite subject of prediction, the Rhymer says—

“The waters sall waste, the winds sall wane,
Hill and moss sall be a’ torn in,
But the Banno ’ll be nane the braider ;”

And also—

“There sall a stane out o’ Leader come,
That’ll mak a rich faither but a puir son,”

which was explained thus—The fathers took all the lime, and in so doing, impoverished the soil for the future crops sown by the sons.

And now that I’ve said all I have to say about Thomas the Rhymer, might I suggest that some of our writers search even farther back, and tell us something about that still more mythological character, Merlin ?

INCOGNITA.

“Call upon Me in the Day of Trouble.”

JESUS, our Saviour, guide us home ;
Faint is the starlight, and deep the gloom,
And the glare of the torch that the world holds out
Seems but our sorrowing hearts to flout,
But lights not our homeward way.

Jesus, our Saviour, guide us home—
From fainting hearts the cry has come ;
Our feet have wandered so long astray,
That we find it hard to tread the way
That leads us back to God.

Bright Sun of Righteousness, lighten us home,
Shed Thy warm beams through the midnight of gloom,
Till the clouds and mists roll far away,
And the rosy dawn of effulgent day
Shine on our gladdened eyes.

Lord, we are weary and weak and sad,
 Come to our help and make us glad ;
 Without Thine aid, we cannot pass
 Mountain, and river, and deep morass,
 To the goal that o'er them lies.

Lord, thou *wilt* come, for no cry of pain
 Ever reached Thy kindly ear in vain ;
 When the night of weeping is past and gone,
 What joy will come with the coming dawn !
 What praises rend the air !

Till all our weary wanderings o'er,
 We tread the desert paths no more,
 But, laying our long-borne crosses down,
 We take instead the radiant crown,
 For evermore to wear.

MEGAIG BHEG.

On Conventionalities.

AMONG the many subjects which have of late occupied the thoughts and pens of satirical writers, it could hardly be expected that so universal a custom as that of conventionalities should escape their sarcasm. But while agreeing with such writers in thinking it a mistake to bow too implicitly to the conventional rule, we would here say a few words in favour of innocent conventionalities. We may divide the little customs which are termed conventionalities into two classes, viz., the innocent and the culpable.

Strangely enough, it is the former class which has come in for the greatest share of derision from modern writers. For instance, the custom of commencing conversation by remarking on the weather has been, in our days, severely censured, or at least

much sneered at. Now, it strikes us that this much-despised subject is as likely a means as any other to discover the disposition and thoughts of our companion—whether he is of a cheerful temperament, and likely to make the best of things, or gloomy, and fault-finding. At least, we must all allow that it is a safe ground on which to begin an acquaintance, and one on which we can tread without the risk of hurting the feelings of any one. How much better it would have been for that gentleman, while sitting next a casual acquaintance at the Opera, had he contented himself with discussing the weather, instead of rushing into personal remarks on the audience, and asking his companion, “could he tell him who that frightful woman opposite to them was?” “Why,” replied his companion, “that is my sister.” “Oh, I could never have meant that lady; it is the one next to her.” “*That*,” replied the gentleman calmly, “is my wife.” Then, there is the custom of making inquiries after the health of our friends’ relatives. It has been asserted that no such inquiries should be made unless we feel a deep interest in the subject. Now, without such profound feeling, we surely all like our fellowmen sufficiently, to prefer their being in good health to bad, which being the case, may we not in all sincerity express our hope that they are well?

Then there is the conventional good feeling which makes us try to appear pleased when in company with dull people. Would it be more in accordance with Christian feeling to permit a decidedly bored expression to rest on our countenance, because in our inmost heart we cannot deny that we feel so? We think that there is no lack of truth in the polite interest with which we have all at times to listen to household details and private plans, which can affect us but little, if at all.

These and many other conventionalities have their use in our society; indeed, there can be no civilized society where these little things are not attended to; for it is only in the life of the savage, where each acts from the impulse of the mere animal nature, that they have no place.

Having said thus much concerning innocent conventionalities, let us glance for a moment at those which we cannot but denounce as culpable. In general terms, we may class all conventionalities as culpable which in any way compromise truth. Speak of “innocent subterfuge,” “little evasions,” or what we will—anything that throws beautiful truth into the shade must be culpable, and, as such, cannot be too severely anathematized by us all. There are a certain number of small temptations to depart from the strict truth, which can only assail members of a civilized community. Our life is to a certain degree artificial, and, as such, there are intricacies in our temptations which can scarcely have been experienced by the simple fishermen of eighteen hundred years ago; but let us not for a moment imagine that we have not been given instructions to help

us through those temptations which prove snares to so many of us. We have heard it wished, and have joined in the wish, that there might be a Bible, or a few additional chapters at least, telling us exactly what to do as regards those culpable conventionalities which are continually assailing us, and tempting us to escape from some little dilemma by a slight prevarication. But a moment's thought showed us that every difficulty into which we can fall has been amply provided for, and that we must hold fast to the truth as much in the small conventionality as in what seem to us more heinous crimes.

We only wish to mention here one or two seemingly very small temptations, but which are often more successful stumbling-blocks in our way than those of greater magnitude. Some of us, when invited to an evening party to which we do not wish to go, send back to the inviter a neat little note excusing ourselves on the plea of a previous engagement, knowing all the time that no such engagement exists. How we excuse ourselves to our consciences, or ever respect ourselves again, we know not. Would it not have done, to have merely expressed in general terms our regret (such as we all feel in not complying with the wishes of others) that we could not accept their kind invitation?

There is a temptation which can only be felt by young ladies, at which other people may be inclined to smile, but it *is* a temptation, and comes naturally among our culpable conventionalities. It is this—when at a ball, or any place where dancing is the amusement, we must all have felt the annoyance of being asked to dance by some one to whom we feel great indifference or even aversion. But oh, let us never be tempted to say that our card of engagements is filled, when we know that we have still several disengaged dances. We may gloss it over to our consciences by saying that it is only said to save the feelings of our would-be partner; but much better it would be to say quietly that we would rather not, or, better still, to sacrifice our own wishes, and for one short quarter of an hour to devote ourselves, for the sake of another, to what we cannot but feel to be tiresome. Those who make such false excuses, harm not only themselves by their want of truth, but cast a shadow of untruthfulness over all young ladies which is unpardonable. This reason alone should be sufficient to prevent our saying such things, for already society is too ready to class us all together, and say, “Oh young ladies always say this or do that,” taking all individuality from us, and unfortunately taking for their type not the best of us. But it is well for us to have a higher reason for observing truth in everything than this *esprit de corps*, one which having its root in principle, will be less likely to fail us in the moment of need.

There are, of course, many other conventionalities which will suggest themselves readily to our minds, if we think on the subject, and it is a subject which merits our

serious consideration, for it is often by such little things that the great principles of our lives are put to the test.

Then let us lay aside all false shame, and speak the truth boldly, yet in that kindly spirit, which will prevent us from giving pain to those around us.

DES EAUX.

A Rhyming Epistle.

DEAR FRIENDS,

To give a true and full account,
 Of a short ramble round that lion mount,
 That takes its name from fable's fav'rite king,
 Whom artists paint, and poets love to sing;
 I now with pen in hand sit down to write,
 And beg the lyric Muse to aid my flight,
 While I attempt to tell, in humble verse,
 What one might speak in easy, free converse.

It was the bright and flowery month of May,
 When Nature wears her gayest, best array;
 But not for us did azure deep appear,
 Nor Phœbus' rays shine bright through ether clear,
 For all the sky was clad in sober gray,
 With only here and there a straggling ray,
 That seeming wished from out the gloom to peep,
 And coax its lazy father Sun from sleep.
 The rain, however, was content to stay
 Snugly at home among the clouds that day,
 So, vasculum in hand, we sallied out,
 Though not without a certain lurking doubt
 That down might come the cold relentless shower,
 To spoil the pleasure of the happy hour.

Onwards we passed through our "romantic town,"
 On which Dunedin's castle old looks down,
 Till Holyrood's vast stately pile appeared,
 As high its roofs and rounded turrets reared :
 There, still in beauty, but in ruins, stood
 The ancient chapel of the Holy Reed,
 A relie of those long-forgotten days,
 On which the antiquary loves to gaze.
 But soon the town itself was left behind,
 With all that charms the antiquary's mind,
 And round the drive that bears our Sov'reign's name,
 With pleasure-taking step we onwards came :
 We passed the lake, on which, with sails of snow,
 Light, tiny barks were heaving to and fro,
 And o'er the gentle ripples seemed to ride,
 As giant ships o'er ocean's swelling tide.
 There, standing in relief against the sky,
 Famed Arthur's Seat arose with pride on high,
 The prickly furze, with golden-wingéd bloom,
 Diffusing far and wide its rich perfume.
 O'er the green sward, with footsteps light and free,
 The merry lambkins gambolled in their glee,
 While their grave, ruminating mothers lay,
 Or slowly walked, to while the time away.
 Amidst the hills, Dunsappie's silver sheet
 Murmured in tiny ripples at our feet ;
 Ranunculus, from water drawing sap,
 Lay calmly floating on the lake's clear lap ;
 While tiny minnows darted to and fro,
 Now near the bank, now in the depths below.

At length to home we all returned once more,
 And all our sights and doings counted o'er ;
 Till evening came, and then the hour of rest,
 To weary limbs and sleepy eyes the best.

A Tale of the Last Century.

CHAPTER VI.

SHE sat thus till the hour of midnight had rung out, and then sank into a dreamy, half conscious slumber, from which she was aroused by hearing her name pronounced in a tone of surprise, and, looking up, she saw her brother standing before her. She replied to his astonished look by saying, "You see, Charles, I have waited for you. I thought there was something weighing heavily on your mind, and I was determined either to know the cause of your anxiety, or be persuaded that it was my own fancy." "Then believe the latter, dear Kate, and off to bed, or we shall have pale cheeks to-morrow morning; thanks to this midnight vigil." "No, Charles, I cannot be thus easily answered. Your only sister has surely some claim on your confidence; and if aught distress you, who can better sympathize with you? Rest assured, I will not force your confidence, but I would rest with a lighter heart if I shared your care." Charles did not reply to this appeal, save by drawing a small miniature from his breast, and after gazing on it with a look of mournful tenderness, he placed it in her hand, and watched her earnestly as she regarded it. Kate's face was a study, as surprise, admiration, and inquiry were all depicted on it, for the face she was now looking upon was a most faithful likeness of the fair girl she had left ministering to the sick nun. Refraining from any expression of recognition, however, as she was anxious to hear her brother's story in his own words, she warmly expressed her admiration of the miniature, and returned it to him, anxiously waiting the explanations which were to follow. Charles drew his chair closer to her side and began his tale as follows:—

"I daresay you may remember my telling you, about six months ago, that I met a lady and gentleman walking round the Crags whilst I was enjoying my eustomary ride, and that I had been fortunate enough to save the lady from falling from a considerable height, up which she had serambled in search of some rare plant. I did not, however, tell you that next day we met, and for many days after that I assisted them in their search for plants and flowers, accompanied them in their daily walks, that I exchanged cards, and that when illness prevented Mr Howard from accompanying his daughter in walks which he insisted she should have, I offered my services, which were accepted. What wonder was it, that thus thrown into the society of Aliee Howard, I learned to love her, with a love so devoted, so unchangeable in its nature, that I cared only for life so that I might spend it in her service. You have yourself

acknowledged her surpassing loveliness, but can form no adequate idea of her gentle, confiding, loving disposition. When I found words in which to confess my love, imagine my happiness, in finding that the heart of Alice was my own. For a time my bliss knew no restraints, till Alice in her own artless words told me her history, and tears stood in her eyes as she dwelt on her mother's death, her father's grief, and her own desolate condition. They formerly lived, she said, in the North of England; and listen, Kate, but do not hate me," and his voice sunk to a low pleading tone, "her father is a *Protestant clergyman!*" He paused for a moment, as if to gather breath to proceed, then continued, "but he was obliged to give up his charge on account of his health, and his physicians recommended him to come to Scotland, and they have been here for about a year. On finishing her own history, Alice entreated me to tell her something of myself, and can I ever forget the expression of grief, nay, almost of abhorrence which passed across her face, when I avowed myself a Roman Catholic? But it instantly changed to smiles when she saw it grieved me, and gently she murmured, 'Dearest Charles, you cannot, you must not believe in that dreadful religion.' She then dwelt eloquently and feelingly on the doctrines of her faith, and for the first time I saw the simplicity and truth of the Protestant religion, though not yet converted. I did not see Alice for a week after, as she was closely confined to her father's room, he being at that time very ill, and my own mind was so shaken and distressed, that I could not bear to grieve her with my doubts. During that time, however, I had read and thought much upon the doctrines of both faiths, and when I next saw my Alice, I was a Protestant. I have longed for and yet dreaded this interview, dear sister, for I now see the utter falsity and absurdity of your faith, and would have you turn and believe in mine. Nay, then I'll go on with my story, for the haughty curl of your lip says, 'Am I to forsake the creed of my fathers for the rantings of a love-sick boy?' But love has not blinded me, reason and truth have convinced me. After declaring myself a Protestant, no obstacle prevented us from telling Mr Howard of our engagement, and the poor man, lying now as we fear on a dying bed, sanctioned our betrothal, blessing God for raising up a protector to his unprotected child. He does not know that I am the heir of a proud and bigoted Roman Catholic, who would spurn his cherished child from his door, as I only told him that I was possessed of a small independence (which you know at my majority I shall inherit from my mother). I did not name you to them either, so both Alice and her father suppose me to be without near friends. And now, Kate, that you have patiently heard me out, I have but to ask of you to keep my secret till the expiry of my minority, when I can boldly avow my change of creed, and my unalterable attach-

ment for the sweet girl whose happiness is so entirely trusted to my keeping. I have my fears that my absence from confession must have excited Father Clement's suspicions; but it matters not—I only hoped to keep my own counsel for a few months longer, when I could leave my father's house independent alike of his anger and his bounty."

As he finished speaking, he threw his head proudly back, whilst the flash of his dark eyes warned Kate that she might pour out all her anger and hatred on his head, but to say aught against his chosen bride would be the sure way to lose his love for ever. As Catherine rose, the proud quivering of her lips betrayed the anger which she strove to hide; but she spoke calmly and in a low distinct voice, as she said, "Charles, I will not upbraid you, as your own conscience must ere long do that, but know that in future there is a wide gulph between us; as to the cause of it I shall say nothing, save that her own beauty and your untarnished descent might have covered the blot of her lowly birth, but, a heretic! O! Charles, her very loveliness has lost its charm; I name her not again, and your secret is safe with me, on condition that you never attempt to lead me into controversy on our different faiths. To say that I do not grieve at this estrangement, would be false (and her voice trembled as she proceeded), for not till now did I know how much I loved you, and my heart feels ready to burst at the thought of my father's anger, and the storm which is now impending, not to be warded off." Tears now choked her utterance, and throwing herself into her brother's arms, she sobbed convulsively. Charles had expected an outburst of grief, but not such as this, and for a time its violence unmanned him.

Catherine was the first to recover, but afraid of trusting herself to speak, she imprinted an impassioned kiss upon his forehead, murmuring, "May the Virgin and all the saints protect thee, my poor brother!" and hastened from the room, not daring to tell her brother that she recognised the likeness, lest more controversy, from which she shrunk, should ensue. Charles soon followed, but not to rest. Towards morning he fell into a troubled sleep, from which he awoke feverish and unrefreshed. The first glance at Kate's pale face told him that her sleep had been as unrefreshing as his own. True to her promise, however, she was before the priest and her father the same loving affectionate sister as before, although Charles could see that her pride rose against the deception which she was obliged to practise, and he sorrowed to think it was for him. When breakfast was finished, Mr Campbell demanded to see him in the library, where he followed his father, expecting to be consulted on some ordinary business. He did not notice the deep malicious glance of Father Clement's dark eyes, as they rested on him for a moment before he left the room.

LADYBIRD.

Something to Think of in a Picture Gallery.

CAN any one inform me why on the one particular subject, Painting and Pictures, the enlightened British public, as a whole, is by no means eager to exercise its boasted privilege of "speaking its mind?" Why must a mass of criticisms and artistic comments be studied, and professional friends and connoisseurs be consulted before they venture to approve of a picture (nay, as such a statement is perhaps too strong, let me rather say)—before they presume to mention their admiration—admiration, which they would gladly control if they could, only, alas! our emotions are, in spite of us, somewhat involuntary. However, they do their best to conceal it, and are quite uneasy under it until authorized in its indulgence by some judgment which they consider better than their own. Yet these same people are, in general, quite ready to discuss freely any other subject (comprehended by them or otherwise)—to say what book and author, what music and composer, what preacher or orator they prefer, with charming frankness, while the slightest imputation of leading strings would be indignantly scouted and repelled. But directly pictures are the topic of conversation all their independence vanishes. Doubtful and hesitating, they "don't pretend to understand the subject," they "believe this or that is much admired," they (with humility) "are no judges," and so on *ad infinitum*. Why, in the name of common sense, should this state of things be? No judges! Does a really fine picture want you to be a judge? The very idea insults it. Have you eyes and senses? let it speak to them, and let them pronounce its sentence. Surely of all arts, Painting is the easiest to understand, appealing, as it does, so directly, by its very nature, to every human being in full possession of his mental faculties. There it is, showing you actually, palpably on its canvass, every human passion, each varied aspect of nature, such as poetry at the best only can describe, and music, through the grandest masterpieces of her most gifted sons, but very vaguely hint at. To perceive these subtle indications of genius, much study and training are indeed required, not to appreciate, but to understand, if the one do not involve the other. I almost question if the whole soul of the poet or composer is ever clearly unfolded to the gaze of their warmest admirers, at least, it seems to me, such genius must have genius for its interpreter. Next to possessing it, is probably the power of appreciating it at its true worth, which power is, perhaps, almost as rare as the gift itself. With Painting this difficulty does not exist—at all events, by no means in the same degree.

To appreciate a really true and eloquent picture, a clear eye and a feeling heart only are necessary—surely nothing more. That picture speaks to you; do you speak of it as that heart prompts, and your judgment will be sound and good as far as it goes, even if you be destitute of all knowledge of conventional laws and phrases, the rules and regulations which the few initiated in art jargon would so arbitrarily force on the many.

I would not for a moment be imagined to disparage or under-rate intelligent criticism, when its dictum is echoed by the general voice; for that I have the highest possible respect,—it is invaluable. But for the criticisms of the pedant, who stands aside, and utters opinions dictatorially, un-echoed, save by a few of his own immediate partisans, I have none. Such criticism, if not positively mere individual conceit, is something marvellously like it. By all means let these learned critics have and hold their opinions, let them enjoy them, but I would humbly suggest that it should be in a limited degree, not insisting, as they are apt to do, on their universal adoption. Involuntarily impressed, however, by the seemingly highly superior knowledge of such connoisseurs, I listen, in the hope of some improvement in mine, while they descant at pleasure on the grandeur and sublimity of the “old masters;” that I observe is their touch-stone; before that mighty title you are expected to bow down, and blindly and unquestioningly admire. For a time I assent quietly, but at length I am compelled to break silence, and remonstrate, simply because I cannot divest myself entirely of reason and common sense, even at the bidding of the potent names they quote. These two qualities I find are quite incompatible with the views of my critic friends. They tell me the ideas represented are vast and sublime, the beings are of a superior order, with nothing in them to remind us of our kind. This is “High Art;” there lies the proof of its sublimity. I see paintings which, to my unenlightened eyes (being neither an Idealist nor a Pre-Raphaelite) are simply grotesque and preposterous; but I am not a critic, and therefore incompetent to speak. Do I hint at my thoughts? I am overwhelmed at once—“Grotesque indeed!”, Look at that “fine fore-shortening,” this “masterly detail,” this “splendid muscular anatomy,” these “technical merits.” Do I suggest, that if these painted figures are, or once were, human beings, I ought surely to be able to recognise some of the usual appearances, and ordinary proportions of such? I am angrily silenced. What I ignorantly presume to deprecate and censure, says the critic, is the transcendent merit of the great painting. Verily, if that be to transcend humanity, in depicting nature, he is right! Let me abandon my judgment, and struggle to save my gravity! I have conscientiously striven to admire to order, and have so often signally failed, that I have given it up in despair.

Now, is my experience singular? I fear not; if so, in that may probably be found the answer to my first question. That is how we learn to look at pictures with no self-reliance; some recklessly take their opinions from others, some take care to keep any they may have to themselves, and the rest cautiously avoid having any opinion at all, as the easiest and safest plan.

Do any say I have exaggerated or misrepresented facts? Let them investigate the case for themselves by all means; if they be honest, I feel sure they will ultimately agree with me. I hope I can see and heartily appreciate the merits of any picture, if I may be allowed to judge of it on uncritical principles. Many of the works of these same "old masters" I dearly love, as all must who will trust their pictures to explain themselves to their unbiassed judgment; but I cannot and will not admire by rule, and as a mere matter of course. Let each and all see and judge for themselves; and further, let them have the moral courage to express their opinions openly and honestly on all occasions without hesitation, unshackled by those of others—above all, untrammelled by the picture's age and the artist's name. Thus acting, we may expect real enjoyment and benefit from the noblest art, perhaps, that God has given to man.

INA.

Answer to Acrostic.

III.

Sinbad—Sailor.

1. *Socrates.*
2. *Iphigenia.*
3. *Nervi.*
4. *Bcl.*
5. *Apollo.*
6. *Dagger.*

F. B.

John Knox and his Times.

“There lies one who never feared the face of man.”

A GRAND eulogy this, a noble epitaph, and one fully deserved by the living man over whose dead body Morton pronounced the words. He was gone to his rest, the fierce, zealous, honest-hearted Reformer. Wearied with long years of incessant toil, his heart wrung with the terrible news of the massacre of St Bartholomew, he preached one of his fervid discourses against those who had wilfully broken his Master's laws, and imbrued their hands in innocent blood, and then, after desiring, with a final flash of his warlike temper, that the French ambassador should be informed of his protest, he “took to his bed, and died” on the 24th of November 1572. It was a strangely quiet ending for that eager spirit; but, as Morton also said, “He had God's providence watching over him in an especial manner when his life was sought;” and so the old gladiator who had fought against Pope and priest—in perils by sword, dagger, and stake, as well as by curses pronounced with bell and book—was allowed to lay down his arms at last in peace, and letting the Bible slip from his relaxing fingers, and the stern look of care and thought fade from his weather-beaten face, he passed away from the earth on the same day which saw the ruthless Morton take the reins of government into his hands.

The character of John Knox is especially one of those which can only be judged fairly if judged sympathetically. It is not for us, standing here on the smooth ground of a highly-wrought civilization, to say such and such hard measure would we mete to this man did he live now. We must carry ourselves back to his age, and tread the rough paths and face the stormy councils of his day beside him; we must feel to our very heart's core that our country is in danger; that a rotten faith is dulling the hearts of the people, and a scheming priesthood betraying the true interests of Church and State, and that in all the land no one man has courage to take the helm and guide the sinking vessel into port. When we have realized all this, we shall be better fitted to see that Knox was actuated by noble and disinterested motives—that he was doing, however roughly, what he conceived to be his duty, and doing it with a steadfastness and singleness of aim not often shown by reformers.

In Geneva, in England, in Scotland, he steadily declined offers of emolument involving concessions he was unwilling to make, and continued to work in his own

straightforward manner, facing personal danger with a coolness that is only not marvellous when we recollect with how simple a faith he trusted himself to the hand of the Lord. His was the spirit in a religious cause that made Wallace stand to arms in a political one, and both are among the number of fervid patriots who are dear to their native land.

Like the more enlightened of the reformers, Knox was averse to many of the violent measures adopted by the lower orders, but, like other leaders, he could not perfectly control the rude mass inflamed by his fiery eloquence; and however severe we may be on the vandalism which destroyed works of art that can never be replaced, we must remember that to the education and moral wellbeing of the nation these were of little worth, compared with the newly-awakened spirit of inquiry after truth, and resistance to religious oppression and falsehood. There was idolatry in the land, and these things, paintings and statues, were the outward emblems of the sin;—away then with the idols, and let our hands be clean!

A gentler spirit than that of Knox might, perhaps, have shrunk from the violent speech, the unmeasured boldness with which he hurled forth his scorn of all that seemed to him blamable in the constitution of his time; but a gentler spirit would have been lost in the turbulence and discord that reigned everywhere, would have given way where he stood firm, leaving his mark on that age and all succeeding ones in the country where he laboured. And not there only; there is no doubt that his vivid words and earnest exhortations helped to bring about that exalted state of enthusiasm which, a few years later, enabled a small and comparatively weak nation to enter a successful protest against the three systems which were then subverting men's minds to all evil—"the Romish supremacy over all human thought and belief, the Anglican sycophancy to the absolute power of kings in church and state, and the Hobbist's dead prostration of body and mind." We might almost say that with Knox originated the movement which ended in the constitutional settlement of 1688, a movement of far wider and more profound effect than at first sight appears. Those who carried it out, the Covenanters, "were the party who, as far as the circumstances of their time would permit, did battle for the cause of human liberty. Their errors, follies, crimes even, were such as adhere to poor humanity even in its best efforts, especially in an age such as theirs was, of ceaseless revolutions. On the other hand, their merits were all their own.....They are not men to be forgotten and despised as poor silly fanatics; but men of every species of talent, every variety of character: faithful witnesses for principles yet sacred to ourselves; heroes, whom, if we cannot always agree with, we cannot fail to admire; patriots, who in life and death were

animated with the noblest zeal to make Britain a free, a pure, a brave, a religious nation, and always the first Protestant power in Europe." It has been too much the custom to adopt extreme views on the subject of Knox and the history of the Covenanters; those who argue for them, forgetting their weaknesses—those who argue against them, ignoring their virtues. Let us take them as God made them, keen, upright, God-fearing souls; the only men with force enough to stem the currents of their day and do their work manfully, in the spirit of our old proverb, "He that tholes, overcomes." They and their great leader alike rest in their graves, and thinking of the white bones that have mouldered among the grass and heather of the land they loved so dearly and died for so bravely, let us respect them for their earnestness, their courage, and their truth.

They realize, some more, some less, the description of "our old Scottish severe unsparing character; calm to coldness outside, burning to fierceness, tender to agony within;" and reading over the oaths under which they bound themselves, their sons might do worse than lay them to heart. There must be somewhat noteworthy and grand in the men who could engage "for ourselves, our followers, and all other under us, both in public, in our particular families, and personal carriage, to endeavour to keep ourselves within the bounds of christian liberty, and to be good examples to others of all godliness and soberness, of righteousness and of every duty we owe to God and man."

ELSIE STRIVELYNE.

On Mixed Metaphors.

Most people are accustomed to think of Metaphors as figures of speech used chiefly in poetry, or in literary compositions of that kind to which the embellishments of the imagination are an appropriate ornament. Yet, if we carefully note the senses in which words are used in common life, we shall find that a great part of our ordinary speech rests upon an actual, though almost unconscious use of metaphors. Thus the words or phrases which are literally applicable only to outward things, have come to be applied with almost equal readiness to an entirely different class of objects, and in many cases the original meaning is almost lost sight of in the metaphorical one.

When we speak of "concocting" a scheme, we have no vision of pots and pans; when we speak of being "edified," we have no thoughts about stone and lime. We

give our courteous readers credit for being "acute," without fancying them sharp-pointed in any physical way; we should call them "clearsighted" (from what we know of them), even although some of them must wear spectacles; and we trust that our readers will acknowledge that we ourselves deserve to be regarded as "many-sided," without being supposed to be actual polyhedrons.

But our present object is to speak of "mixed metaphors," the distinctive peculiarity of which is, that while the meaning intended is usually sufficiently plain, the words or phrases used to express it form grotesque and often extremely ludicrous combinations. We have heard of an Irish orator having said, in the course of a speech upon some exciting subject, "I smell a rat—I see it brewing in the storm, and I shall nip it in the bud." And a celebrated Scotch divine, who took a leading part against the Non-Intrusion party in the General Assembly, before the Disruption, is reported to have launched at them an indignant denunciation in the following words, "With one hand you ask the Government for endowments—with the other you turn your back upon them." The following specimens of mixed metaphors, though not so striking, are confused enough to be amusing:—"Hope, the balm of life, darts a ray of light through the thickest gloom." "No human happiness is so serene as not to contain any alloy." "Let us be attentive to keep our mouths as with a bridle, and to steer our vessel aright that we may avoid the rocks and shoals which lie everywhere around us."

We are reminded that even the greatest authors are not always infallible when Shakespeare makes Hamlet talk of "taking arms against a sea of troubles;"* and in Addison there is the following passage—

—————"Fired with that name—
I bridle in my struggling Muse with pain,
That longs to launch into a nobler strain."

Doctor Johnson, in his life of the poet, quotes the passage, and thus criticises it—"To bridle a goddess is no very delicate idea; but why must she be bridled? because she longs to launch, an act which was never hindered by a bridle; and whither will she launch? into a nobler strain. She is in the first line a horse, in the second a boat; and the care of the poet is to keep his horse or his boat from singing."

Having steered safely thus far, we shall now rein in, and rest on our laurels.

VERONICA.

* [It is thought by some commentators that the correct reading of this passage is a "siege of troubles," which would preserve the propriety of the metaphor.—ED.]

The Sleeping Beauty.

GOLDEN visions bore my soul
Unto the olden time,
The purple mist of evening stole
Round a dreamy Eastern clime ;
To the charmed woods and haunted streams,
When earth was all enchanted ground,
And hearts, by a magic power were bound,
My thoughts flew back on those bright dreams,
Those fairy dreams of her who slept,
While a hundred years o'er her tranced soul swept.

Guided by his happy fate
Unto the enchanted gate,
With resistless power,
Doth the "young deliv'rer" wait
At the starlit hour ;
Slowly are its leaves unclosing
Underneath the spell-bound night,
The soft fairy haunt disclosing
In a dreamy hush reposing,
To his wondering sight ;
No low wind the still leaf waketh,
Nor the charmed silence breaketh,
In that garden fair,
Save the destined path revealing,
Flute-like music ever stealing
On the quiet air.

Ever goeth it before him,
Onward 'neath the mulberry trees,
With their dark leaves bending o'er him,
Stirred not by a breeze.

Passeth he by fragrant bowers,
 Whence no wild bird's glad chant swelleth,
 As his tale of love he telleth
 To his love among the flowers.

Round his path fair flowers are sleeping,
 Fairy blossoms gemmed with dew,
 Stars their silent vigil keeping
 O'er their changeless hue :
 Fadeless are the glowing roses,
 Still the folded bud reposes,
 Tender leaves between,
 Unwithering, as when the spell
 Of neeromanecr coldly fell
 On that fairy scene.

The murmur of no rippling stream,
 On the trancéd spirit falleth,
 Stillness all the air enthralleth ;
 Silent as a dream,
 Lieth that enchanted ground,
 Stirred not by a sound.
 But a snowy pillar glaneing
 Through the starry night,
 Showeth where a fountain dancing
 Upwards in its wayward flight,
 Ere its crystal waters fell,
 Charméd was by that soft spell.

Flowers by no breeze are stirred,
 Carolleth no wakeful bird,
 Silver waters are not heard
 Lightly springing near ;
 Save the destined path revealing,
 Flute-like murmurs ever stealing
 Softly on the ear.

Ever goeth it before,
That low music leading on,
Staying by the golden door
Of lone pavilion,
Silent as the silent skies,
Where the charmed beauty lies,
By soft folds o'er-canopied,
Silken-woven, azure-dyed ;
Fringéd lashes slumber-laden,
On her cheek's soft crimson prest,
Lovely is that sleeping maiden,
In her lonely rest.

Sweet was that enchanted sleeping,
With long ages o'er her sweeping,
'Mid enchanted bowers,
Sweeter with those waking hours,
Love's unfolding flowers.

J. I. L.

On Sunday Reading.

WE Scotch have somewhat misty ideas on the subject of what we ought and what we ought not to read on a Sunday. We have an instinctive dread of being happy on our day of rest—we have a comfortable feeling of doing right when sitting of an evening with a dry book in our hands. Not that we think it necessary to give more than a moderate share of attention to its pages—it is sufficient for us to have it on our knee or on the table before us. Under cover of thus studying our deep book, we feel no qualms of conscience in indulging in a quiet sleep, only broken by the large book slipping from our grasp and falling noisily to the ground. How quickly we seize it up, how nervously we look around us, hoping that no observing eye is upon us. And then recommences the dull routine—a few pages read, a few moments repose enjoyed, to be again awakened by the tiresome book which will follow the force of attraction. Now,

why do we not read books which interest us? Why not books which are suited to our taste and capacities, and over which we have no inclination to become drowsy? "Oh," some one will say, "because Sunday ought to be a day of humiliation, we ought not to please ourselves on such a day." But what possible good are we doing to ourselves or our neighbours by pouring over books for which we have no sympathy? Our imaginary answerer may reply, "It is our own fault that such books do not interest us. We must subdue our hearts and train our tastes to them—they are excellent books for Sunday reading." Oh, there is the very reason of their dryness—they are "excellent for Sunday reading;" but we may trust their upholders not to read a line of them on a week-day, when they feel at liberty to read anything else. We are very careful to put no faith in forms; paintings, candles, and processions have no place in our churches, but where is the difference between the superstitious love of these things and our reverential awe of a dry book? Indeed, the former things are often great helps to religious feelings, whereas we can see none in the latter.

I suppose that our readers are acquainted with the Rev. Dr Norman Macleod's well-known story illustrating this confusion of ideas. It is that of the poor woman whose religious feelings received so rude a shock on discovering her son reading some religious work, for which she had great respect, on a week-day. "Oh," says she, "Jamie, are ye no ashamed to be reading sie a gude book and this no the Sabbath?" A confusion of the same kind came under our notice some years ago, when the conscience of a lady was severely tried by our reading in her hearing, on a Sunday, one of the Rev. Dr Guthrie's sermons on "Ezekiel," a book which we had been reading during the week. "Surely," said she, "a book in which you are interested on week-days is not suitable for Sunday reading?" Did she put her theory into practice? Did she reserve the Bible for Sundays, or did she consider it necessary to close it on that day that she might profit by it on week-days?

But let us be reasonable, and try to think a little on what is profitable reading for Sunday. We say at once not that which puts us to sleep—that is very easily settled. On the other hand, we can say as easily, that what dissipates the mind and sends our thoughts wandering on scenes of gaiety and worldliness, is equally unfitted to occupy us on Sundays. But between those two extremes lies a broad field, fruitful with food which will strengthen the mind for the duties of the day. Our forefathers were naturally led to read only dry books on Sundays, as a short time ago there were few books of a serious sort which did not partake of the nature of dryness. Let us be thankful that we at least are very differently situated. We need complain of no dryness in the sermons offered to us for Sunday reading, possessing, as we do, those sweet

kindly "Pastoral Addresses" from the pen of one who has but lately been called hence ; and the still better known "Graver Thoughts of a Country Parson," as well as the fresh vigorous sermons of Kingsley.

But it seems to us that there are many books besides sermons which may be as profitably read on Sunday as on any other day. For instance, poetry can scarcely fail to find a nearer way to the hearts and sympathies of men on this their day of rest than in the turmoil of the week. But the poetry they read on such a day should be of that sort which tends to elevate their minds and fill their hearts with love to God. It is because of this that "Paradise Lost" is so suited for perusal by our fireside on a Sunday evening, or to be our companion in the woods on a Sunday afternoon, in remote places where service is but once a day. What nobler sermon do we look for than the history of the Angel Abdiel?—that servant of God of whom it is written that he was

" Faithful found
Among the faithless, faithful only he ;
Among innumerable false, unmoved,
Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified,
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal ;
Nor number, nor example, with him wrought
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
Though single."

Or, what hymn of praise can we desire more appropriate for Sunday than that of our great first Parents, beginning—

" These are Thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty !"

But we need not specify other poets, for none can say decidedly what poet will suit the taste of others ; for as some will find comfort and pleasure in the sad theme of "In Memoriam," so will others find what they want in the simple Cowper.

Then when the mind tires on a Sunday, as it sometimes will, of books of a graver description, and when, perhaps, the works of the poet offer no attraction to it, it can find relief in that most delightful reading afforded by Essays. Essays, moral or critical, loosen the tension of the mind without filling it with thoughts unsuitable to the day. It is not smart sharp essays which ought to please us most, but those which give us

high and liberal views of life, which will not jar upon those feelings which may have been awakened in us by what we have heard that day.

As regards children, it is specially needful not to close all their story books on Sunday. They may be for a time much interested in the beautiful Bible stories, but to secure not only their respect but their love for Sunday, we must be careful not to force their thoughts all day into one channel. Can we not all remember how some wet Sunday would have dragged heavily by, had we not had some liberty in the choice of our books? We remember, when not very old, passing some time very happily when confined to the house on a Sunday, in reading "Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia"—our anxiety was great to hear how the man fared who made himself wings and tried to fly. Not an unprofitable lesson for a child did he learn from this—how the fowls of the air are cared for by their Maker, and are provided with wings far past the ingenuity of man to imitate. Then there is that admirable book, "Ministering Children," so well adapted to form a part in the Sunday literature for children. It may turn their thoughts to what they, children though they be, can do towards spreading comfort over the homes of the aged and the sick; how they, by a little self-denial, can give some small pleasure to the poor, whether it be a bouquet of flowers to freshen the room of the sick child, or a basin of soup to tempt its failing appetite, or a play-hour devoted to reading to the old man whose sight has well-nigh failed him. Such are surely wholesome thoughts for the day, thoughts which may soon be actions, making many ministering children of those who never before knew how much may be done in this great world by a little child.

As we get older, many of us find that there are enough of serious books to interest us during the spare hours of Sunday; but what surprises us is, that people who have no interest in the subject should force themselves to read large deep books on such subjects as church history. On week-days we do not all select our books by one rule—the deep read deep books, and the light read light books; but on Sunday we all aim at reading dry books. Why may not our individuality show itself as well in the choice of our Sunday reading as in our other employments? We do not all go to one church, we choose for ourselves the one in which to our mind we hear the truth most clearly set forth. Then why not choose our books each one according to his taste? We have the one Book in common—it is enough; there is no need that we should all have another; if we but love it aright, there is no fear of our reading books which will harm us. Thus throwing off the trammels which have bound our choice (they could not bind our taste), we shall never find Sunday wearisome; it will be indeed a day of peace and gladness, enabling us to say, with the quaint poet—*Devine—di-*

put-divine

“Thou art a day of mirth ;
 And where the week-days trail on ground,
 Thy flight is higher, as thy birth ;
 O let me take thee at the bound,
 Leaping with thee from seven to seven,
 Till that we both, being toss'd from earth,
 Fly hand in hand to heaven !”

DES EAUX.

The Little Flame.

(FROM THE GERMAN OF KRUMMACHER.)

IN the caves profound of the human breast
 Reigns a silence dark and holy,
 And over this holy thing enthroned,
 Dwells a secret flame and lowly.

The little beam is silent and clear,
 As a heavenly-radiant star ;
 The breast is its temple, its altar the heart,
 Whence for ever it shines afar.

The evil darkness has sometimes power
 To veil the flame's bright beaming,
 Yet not for long—in wonted form
 Anew it soon is gleaming.

It lights the pilgrim's darkened path ;
 O'er the thorny road of duty
 It guides the humble struggling one
 To the heights of radiant beauty.

And when the combatant draws near
To the field of battle gory,
It stirs him noble deeds to do,
And to win the palm of glory.

The conquest won, the little flame
Returns to holy stillness,
And 'neath the victor's eyes there springs
A stream in lonely fulness.

And when th' unwary pilgrim's feet
To downward paths are tending,
Then stirs the flame within to point
The danger o'er him pending.

And then in flying sparks 'tis lost,
And in the cheek's shamed blushes ;
And, streaming through the heaving breast,
The foolish longing hushes.

Thou fool! delude not thou thine heart!
The flame thou quenchest never ;
Its light, though covered for a while,
Soon glimmers bright as ever.

And ere thou know'st, this beam awakes
Flames far too fiercely glowing,
And o'er thee through the darkness grey,
These restless fires are flowing.

MEGAIG BHEG.



A Visit to the Highest Village in Scotland.

SUCH a distinction does the village of Leadhills, in Lanarkshire, enjoy, and such a peculiarity rendered it an object of sufficient interest to induce a party of us, while residing at a village in the neighbourhood, to pay it a visit.

As in that primitive locality no conveyance was procurable, we set out on foot early one forenoon towards the end of August 186—, the air being sufficiently cool to render walking a matter of little difficulty. The road, after leaving the village, passed into a desolate region with wild hills on each side, and at the bottom of the valley flowed a pebbly stream, rendered interesting by the fact that centuries ago gold was obtained from its soil; and probably those very bonnet-pieces which James V. showed to his southern visitors, as the precious fruit of which his then barren country could boast, owed its existence to this burn. As we advanced, the scene became grander, the hills having more majesty, and the stony valley more wild ruggedness.

Two or three miles distant from our destination a fresh object of interest presented itself. Smoke issued from a chimney placed rather curiously on the side of a high hill, and the busy sights and sounds of industry prevailed on every side. A large building, a foundry for smelting the lead and preparing it for use, stood in this spot, and it was strange to observe in this romantic and previously desolate region signs of an activity which we generally find only amidst the bustle of crowded cities. The cottages of the labourers were neat and comfortable-looking dwellings of a superior description.

The road, after leaving this little colony, was very steep, and consequently rather wearisome, but all the weariness that we felt, disappeared when suddenly and unexpectedly, as such visions usually do, a green oasis in the rocky desert, a smiling undulating valley, upland indeed, but smiling nevertheless, appeared before our eyes. Trees were not wanting to render the landscape pleasing, and little heaps of yellow hay lying on the green grass, though testifying to the backwardness of this elevated district, gave to the scene an agreeable softness that we had certainly not looked for. The houses, running in long lines on the sides of the hills, are very numerous, though from their almost uniformly cottage character, they do not entitle Leadhills to aspire to any higher title than that of village. None of the dwellings, however, are of a wretched description; but, on the other hand, no shops, properly speaking, are to be seen—all the bread which is purchased by the inhabitants coming from the village where we were residing, and which is quite a hamlet in comparison with it.

Though only inhabited by simple miners, Leadhills has been for many years the abode of men who know the value of learning, as it boasts amongst its buildings a white-washed cottage erected before the middle of last century for a library by the labourers themselves, who spend a large portion of their time in reading. It may also claim a place in the affectionate regards of the lovers of the epic muse, if it be remembered that it was the birthplace of Allan Ramsay, whose father held some situation connected with the mines.

There is a peculiarity in this village which is, perhaps, to be found no where else in Scotland. Hens, which are generally to be heard cackling through the streets, are fowls unknown there, as from their habit of continually picking up what they can find, their lives would be endangered by swallowing the particles of lead with which the soil is impregnated. We observed several pigeons, however, which seemed in the enjoyment of excellent health.

The shaft of a lead mine, which has now ceased to yield any ore, is to be found in the middle of the village; but in order to gain any idea of how the lead is disinterred from the earth, it was necessary that we should go a mile farther to a mine which is still worked. Having secured the services of an old man who acted as guide, we took our way over hills which our eicerone informed us were the highest in the south of Scotland; Tinto, which is generally considered the most elevated point in Lanarkshire, being, according to his account, much inferior in height. Indeed, we heard that the door-step of the church is on a level with the top of Tinto, and the hills surrounding are of course several hundred feet more elevated. At the outskirts of the village we observed one or two patches of short green oats, which, we learned, never ripen, but are cut down and left to dry in the sun. Arrived at the mine, we peered down into its depths, and saw nothing very interesting, unless black buckets filled with lead and dirt be considered such. As the metal was taken out of the buckets it was received by workmen, who washed and separated it from the ore, striking it with a hammer and scattering the beautiful blue fragments over the sort of slab on which it was placed. The lead which is in common use does not give any very favourable idea of its beauty, and yet the pure mineral in its unmanufactured state is really singularly brilliant in colour.

On our return to the village, our guide took his departure, and we wandered at will through the streets and into the churchyard, the position of which is considerably elevated. A fringe of surrounding trees gives it that air of sheltered refinement and placidity, of which few country churchyards are entirely destitute. It is to be regretted that the church is not situated in this calm retreat, the place of worship being a plain

unpretending building, standing in the village. On leaving the churchyard we bethought ourselves of returning homeward, and as the road was a continuous descent the whole way, we flattered ourselves that we should have a pleasant six miles' walk. Alas! we were doomed to disappointment, for scarcely had we left the village than a violent shower of rain came on, and never ceased until after we had arrived at our lodgings thoroughly drenched. As it then cleared up, and continued fair the rest of the evening, it is not unreasonable to suppose that an ambitious cloud had descended for the double purpose of soaking us poor wayfarers, and showing us what clouds nursed amidst the mountains can do when in good earnest.

As no evil consequences ensued, however, the wetting which we received was set down as an adventure, and therefore rather added to than diminished the interest with which we treasured up the recollections of our visit to the highest village in Britain.

AGATHA.

A Ghost Story.

(TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.)

TOWARDS the end of the last century a young German nobleman came on a journey through Italy to Venice. As he liked the city he remained there for some time, and soon made acquaintance and formed a friendship with some young Venetians. However, not long afterwards, he observed, and at first not without amusement, that his new friends held their fatherland far above all the other countries of Europe, and especially above Germany. One evening they invited him into a company where theatrical performances were given, and he soon saw himself held up as a butt for their amusement, while the drunkenness of the Germans was made to play the principal part. Amongst other things were represented drunken Germans, who reeled about with bottles in their hands. This was received with great applause. The German shrugged his shoulders, and promised his friends that he would soon give them an answer to their entertainment. He kept his word. Not many days after, he invited them to his house, and many of them and of their acquaintances appeared, expecting

with impatience the beginning of the performance, and mocking about the probable failure of the barbarian, as they called the German.

The curtain rose. The scene was laid in an Italian town at the hour of midnight. A German traveller was seeking in vain for admission into an hotel, for all the inmates of it were fast asleep. He determined to wait there till morning, so he placed himself beside a lamp-post, took a book out of his pocket, and began to read. While he was standing there, the ghost of Cicero appeared to him. The ghost looked over his shoulder, and made him understand by signs that he was very much astonished, and asked him what he was doing there. The German showed him the book, and explained to him the art of printing, by which many such books could be produced in a very short time. "Then," replied the ghost at length, "surely my countrymen have invented this, for at the time in which I lived they were considered the most accomplished nation in the world." "Oh no," replied the German quietly, "the invention was that of a German." "Of a German?" exclaimed the ghost in surprise, "of one of those barbarians who lived in my time in the wild forests, and went about dressed in the skins of beasts, and had no notion whatever of either art or science?" "It is even so," replied the German. The ghost sighed, and disappeared.

Not long after, the German finding the time tedious, drew out his watch and looked at it. Then the ghost suddenly re-appeared, and asked the German what that was. The German explained to him very quietly that this was a watch, by which one ascertained the time of day, and also that one of his countrymen, who lived in Nuremberg, had invented it. "And none of my countrymen have invented it," sighed the ghost, and then suddenly disappeared.

Soon the German became impatient, and drew a pistol out of his pocket, and calling out, "Perhaps this will awaken some of these sleepers," he fired it off. Then the ghost started back, approached the German again timidly, and asked him for an explanation about the instrument which had produced the thunder. Thereupon the German told him about the invention of gunpowder, and explained to him the effect of the same. "Then surely this has been invented by one of my countrymen?" said the ghost. "This also," replied the German smiling, "is the invention of one of those barbarians; but if you wish to know how many of your countrymen are now-a-days employed, look here." At these words, he drew aside a curtain, and a Savoyard with a pair of bag-pipes came dancing in. The ghost then disappeared, as did also the German early next morning, to avoid the revenge of his false friends.

NO NAME.

The Ebony Cabinet.

OLD relic of the past !
Sweet memories, from the sunny golden time
Of happy childhood, whose enchanted clime
No shadow overcast ;

Come to me, as I press
Lightly, with aged faltering hand once more,
The spring that clasps thy quaintly carven door,
Thy perfumy recess.

Sweet, subtle, strange,
Breathing its charm from nook and silken fold,
The same faint fragrance meets me as of old,
After long years of change ;

Shells, from the gleaming sands
And palmy isles, of orient oceans sent ;
Grasses, that o'er some lonely river bent
In far-off lands,

Are gathered here, bright birds of plumage rare,
Some withered blossoms, dead, with not a trace
Of their lost bloom, and in thy inmost place
A tress of golden hair.

No alien's careless hand
Hath rifled thee, old friend ! since one by one,
The old home-faces vanished years ago
Into the angel land.

J. I. L.

A Chatty Paper.

THE gift which man enjoys of communicating his sentiments to his fellow is one not sufficiently prized, possibly because the commoner a thing becomes, the less is its value appreciated. And yet, if we would only think of the inestimable benefits resulting from the gift of speech, we might value them more highly in case of their being taken from us. If this planet had been filled with a race gifted the same as its present inhabitants, with the exception of the capabilities of speech, they would have been deprived of their chief solace in the trials and difficulties of their strange position here. Even gifted with reason, the inward workings of a great mind would devour its tenement unless allowed some audible vent. Hence springs the relief afforded by soliloquy, when no one can be the recipient of an aching confidence. Not that I would recommend my readers to indulge in the bad habit of thinking aloud, which, as admirably shown in Miss Edgeworth's story of "L'Amie Inconnue," as well as a stupid is a dangerous practice. A young lady talking nonsense, as most certainly if she talk to herself she will do, is almost sure to be overheard, and then, good lack! she may mourn for her departed dignity. Rather reserve soliloquy for the private solace of Robinson Crusoe in his desert island, where nobody would hear him but his dog and his parrot, or, for the ghost of Cowper in the shade of his much-wished for "vast wilderness," where he may preach aloud his thoughts to the great edification of the chiek-a-dees or the peaseweeps. This advice I merely offer *par parenthèse*, my main point being to show that the tendency to soliloquy, when no other mode of unburdening the mind is at hand, forms good evidence that the sympathies feel greatly indebted to the interpretation afforded them by speech, though that may be colder than its source, as feeling is much warmer in expression than any tongue, however well oiled.

Seeing the fine use to which the organ of speech is so admirably adapted, what a pity it is that it should so often be so deplorably misapplied as the channel through which are conveyed the expression of thoughts and feelings which no more exist in the mind of the person by whom they are spoken than they do in the head of one of M. Chaillu's gorillas. It is this perversion of its uses which makes the tongue a thing looked upon as so worthy of suspicion and distrust, that people are always anxious to peer behind the screen of civility, and get a glimpse of the real state of matters;—hence, a mind that finds a true interpreter in the tongue has grown so rare, that its language is often compared with that of the eye, in which the least shade of untruth is duly reflected, though few are gifted with the power of reading that reflection aright.

The entanglements of conventionalities (culpable they have been well called by our sister-contributor "des Eaux,") have done much to wind and warp the original use of speech, as to eringe to, fawn on, and flatter the opinions of others is considered rather a mark of good breeding than otherwise. It is not kind flatly to contradict any one in what they have been saying, any more than it is polite; but the social rule which demands acquiescence to a great deal said in society is certainly a contemptible one, which is more honoured in the breach than the observance. Instead of the smirking commonplaces in which society so greatly delights, of how much worth is the playful opposition, which makes a conversation a thousand times more spirited and piquant!

Such a turn to the conversation would introduce badinage, an excellent exercise for sharpening the wits and strengthening the reasoning powers, as well as a graceful and entertaining mode of expressing opinion. With playful wit should invariably be repaid those glittering small coins of conversation called compliments. To the temptation of accepting them as gold, ladies are peculiarly liable; but if, like the heroine of *Queechy*, they are properly jealous of these counterfeits, they will find them in reality but pinchbeck gilded. It is wisest as well as most convenient to betake one's self to a fortress of *badinerie*, and meet the gilded arrow with a sarcastic shaft or witty sally. Sarcasm is a capital weapon, but one which requires to be wielded carefully, that it may wound the sore spot with unerring aim, though neither too deeply nor too slightly. A sensitive spirit will find it too sharp a mode of rebuke, upon the feelings of a clear head it should work a complete cure, but from the mail-plated cervicle of a Dominie Sampson or a Bully Bottom it will glance off as easily as from the hide of a rhinoceros.

Of all the intolerable banes of conversation, that of exaggeration is the most unendurable, comprising as it invariably does the very essence of falsehood and egotism. Of all the variety of ways in which exaggeration shows itself, it would be hard to say which is the most detestable; but it is certainly true that if it is abhorable in a person called a bore by polite society, it is a great deal more reprehensible in an educated person, whose experience might at least teach him the disadvantages of helping on his narrative by putting it on crutches which he endeavours to conceal. That scandal is well known as using a powerful magnifying glass when describing any field of action, the notorious story of "The Three Black Crows" is ready to testify; but I question if people have much respect to, or even at all notice, the very common practice of extolling to the seventh heavens persons and things which after all do but grovel on the lower earth like all that is mortal. Probably, because ladies are more inclined to look on the bright side of things than the opposing sterner and gloomier sex,

to them particularly belongs this foible of speaking of people as "most charming, delightful, enchanting, interesting," and places as overpowering in their grandeur and magnificence, which in reality are not the best samples of either men or things. After all, one may derive some amusement from the prosy exaggerated recitals of an egotist, but every one of them should receive as signal a rebuke as was given to the innocent individual who was the hero of the following true story:—A gentleman of habitually kind disposition, but accustomed to see things through spectacles of rather questionable size and colour, entertained one day at dinner a gentleman who, to a fund of information and ready recital, added a thorough appreciation of humour. The host, with his usual kind-hearted garrulity, was detailing some of his wonderful experiences, and in particular related some impossible stories of favourite animals, to keep and train which was his principal hobby. After recounting to his amazed and disgusted guest the wonderful feats of a pet toad, which sat on his shoulder, leapt after him, and did a number of other things extraordinary for a toad to do, his auditor quietly replied, "There, sir, my experience outstrips yours, as I once had the good fortune to possess a pet oyster which followed me through the house, and opened its shell whenever I spoke to it."

Only an oyster in love could perform such marvels as the innocent hero of the foregoing story was not slow to believe, for indeed nothing is too extravagant for reality in the eyes of a person habitually given to exaggeration. Unconsciously it becomes a second nature, showing itself in all his intercourse with the world.

We have dwelt so long upon the evils with which conversation is so redundant that, with our small remaining space, very little can be said of its pleasures. And it is better that it should be so, as they cannot be understood, except through the teaching of experience;—no description on paper can give an idea of the infinite variety of the pleasures which an interesting conversation affords. The mouth closed with such a feeling of weariness and desire to remain inactive under the prosy recitals of dull egotism, is charmed into action under the influence of other highly-wrought minds; monosyllables unconsciously extend themselves into sentences; the sympathies are roused from their previous lethargy; and as idea after idea grows, expands, and arranges itself, the tension of the mind is loosened and its tone revived by contact with another of like powers with itself. The mental nutriment derived from reading should merely lay a foundation upon which may be built numberless elegant structures of talkative genius. In books, the imagination requires to be drawn upon to such a degree as to render inactive other powers which require to be brought forth; whereas in conversation, the feeling of want of reality is dissipated by the mind being

brought into lively contact with views and opinions invested with a peculiar freshness and vitality, from the real tone and speaking manner of their utterance. With the converser, indeed, lies the charm of conversation; so a good talker, being a deep thinker, an intent observer, a harbinger of wide sympathies, and therefore a polite opponent, will bring to bear the fruits of a wide and varied range of thought, reading, and experience upon the common littlenesses of life, with a talent so light and witty, yet so earnest and enthusiastic, so sarcastic and pungent, yet so kind and gentle, that Beatrice, with her wonted passing shrewdness of apprehension, would pronounce the author of such mighty powers, the happy medium between the Count John, who is "too like an image, and says nothing;" and the Signior Benedick, who is "too like my lady's eldest son, evermore tattling;" and Puck, would also bear his testimony that

"Certain stars shot madly from their spheres
To hear such mermaid's music.

ELFIE.

A Tale of the Last Century.

CHAPTER VII.

WHEN Charles entered the library, he was amazed and distressed to see from the angry expression of his father's face, that something unusual must have occurred, and he thought for a moment, "Can Catherine have betrayed me?" but the next instant banished the suspicion as unworthy of her. Mr Campbell did not leave him long in suspense, but sternly bidding him "be seated," demanded how and where he had lately spent the many evenings in which he had absented himself from the family circle. Indignant at being thus questioned, and guessing rightly that the "smooth-tongued Padre" was the originator of these inquisitorial proceedings, Charles refused to answer, and denounced the priest as a mischief maker, and one who sought to further the interests of his Church by sowing dissension between father and son. Mr Campbell did not reply to this stormy outburst till Charles was somewhat calmer, and then proceeded to tell him that for some time past his movements had been watched by one who had his best interests at heart, but he (Mr Campbell) had only been made acquainted with them that morning; that at first he had refused to believe what was told him (so dishonouring did he deem it), but at length he had been convinced. He then rose, and, opening the door, called in Father Clement, who, it

appeared, had been occupying the honourable position of eaves-dropper, and, true to the old adage, had heard "no good of himself."

Thus circumvented on every side, Charles saw that the time he had hoped to defer had come, so he resolved to make the best of it, and in as calm and dignified language as he could command, he avowed his change of creed, his attachment to Alice Howard, and his hope that his father, even though he disinherited him, would grant him his forgiveness, and at least see his intended bride, and judge for himself of her beauty and worth.

Opposition and anger Charles had expected to encounter, but the torrent of wrath that burst upon him, when he had finished his recital, was something terrible to witness. He was ordered to leave his father's house at once and for ever, and this threat Mr Campbell would have seen carried into execution, had not the priest interfered, by protesting that he could not stand by and silently witness such a parting between his beloved master and his dear pupil; and as he owned to have been the means of bringing the affair to a crisis, he begged that Mr Campbell would leave the matter in his hands, promising to try, by persuasion and reasoning, to make his disobedient and wayward son see the folly of his way. Mr Campbell silently acquiesced, and, pale with passion, left the room to seek his daughter, and pour into her sympathizing ear the story of her brother's dishonour, but which he little dreamt was already preying heavily on her affectionate heart.

Left alone with Father Clement, whom he never liked and now utterly abhorred, Charles gave way to his passion, and uttering all manner of invectives, declared him to be the author of all his misery, and would have left him before he had time to utter a word, had he not risen, and placing himself before the door, pointed to a seat, saying, "My son, in your fury you have forgotten you address a servant of the Church, unworthy though he be; but he forgives you, and only seeks your good." There was something in the seeming quiet dignity of this man that overawed Charles, and unwilling though he was, he felt compelled to obey him, and to listen to all he chose to say to him. Their interview was a very long one, but when it ended there was a complacent smile hovering round Father Clement's thin lips, which seemed to say, "I have conquered—he is in my power."

That evening, as Charles was leaving the house to spend some time, as usual, with Alice, he had a note given to him by a lad, who had been employed before by Alice for a similar purpose, and, on opening it, he found that Mr Howard was so ill that she could not see him, but begged him to come early the next morning, hoping that after a night's rest her father would be sufficiently revived to allow of her leaving

him for a time. The note was a very sad one, filled with sorrowful forebodings about her father, whom the writer feared would not be long spared to her, and Charles, as he read, felt more than ever how much she needed comfort, and inwardly vowed anew that, come what would, he would be true to her. Depressed and saddened by the events of that day, he slowly retraced his steps to that home which he felt must be his no longer, and trusting that he might see Kate, he betook himself, on entering the house, to her especial sanetum, a small room fitted up after her own fancy, and where she spent most of her time, when not with her father. He hoped that she would once more listen to his sorrows, and in some measure sympathize with him, and then he would nerve himself to say farewell to the dear companion of his childhood, who had shared every joy, however trivial, and had soothed every pain, however sharp; and on the morrow, as he had arranged to leave his father's house before any of its inmates were astir, go at once to Aliee, tell her his whole story, which now he wished he had done before, and entreat her to be his, that he might have the right to protect her when, as she feared, she would so soon be left an orphan, and her father's dying moments would be comforted by the assurance of his child's safety. Such were his plans, but, alas! for their fulfilment!

When he entered the house he was met by Catherine, who was weeping unrestrainedly, and when he tried to comfort her, she upbraided him as the cruel originator of all her sorrow, telling him in passionate language that her father was dying, and he had been the cause of it. So violent and unconnected was his sister's story, that it was some time before Charles could understand what really was wrong, but at last he learnt that his father had been seized with *paralysis*, brought on, the doctor said, by violent emotion; that he was lying speechless, attended by his confessor and two medical men; and that if he even heard his son's name mentioned, it brought on such paroxysms as, was feared, might hasten his end. Poor Charles was nearly distracted on learning these sad tidings, and to none could he turn for comfort. All looked coldly on him, and no one seemed to think that he even felt grieved for his father's illness. Father Clement was the only one who had the least consideration for him. As he was sitting alone in the deserted library, trying in vain to catch some sounds from the sick-room above that might give him hope, the priest entered, and sitting down beside him, reasoned with him, and bade him not blame himself as he was doing, for that, no doubt, good would come out of this trial, and that in the meantime his honoured master was somewhat better. Charles felt most thankful for these tidings, and when the priest told him that if he would cross the Frith, and proceed to the ancient town of Dunfermline, he would direct him to the house of a

venerable priest who was skilled in medicine, and who possessed the knowledge of compounding a certain potion which was said to be a sure cure for the malady under which his father was labouring, he eagerly caught at the proposal, and declared his readiness to set out at once, so glad was he to try and remedy what he felt was in a great measure brought on by himself. He even felt well disposed towards the "padre" for his kindness in asking him to be his messenger. He went at once to his own room, and there wrote a note to Alice, telling her that very urgent matters would prevent his seeing her for three days, but that on the evening of the third she might expect him. He ended by assuring her of his unalterable affection, and saying that he had much to tell her when they should meet. He judged it better that she should hear the history of his family and its disturbances from his own lips than that he should vex and annoy her by a written account. On finishing, he prepared for his journey, and, going down to the library, found Father Clement and Catherine waiting to bid him speed on his way. The priest gave him a letter which he was to deliver, with minute directions about the house and person he was to find; whilst Kate appeared to feel that she had been too harsh in her conduct to him, for her manner was more kindly than it had been since their estrangement, and as she kissed him at parting, she whispered, "I have hopes, dear brother, that yet all will be well."

We must now leave Charles to proceed on his errand of filial affection, and give a glance at his betrothed, whom we last heard of as in deep affliction. The morning that she had appointed for a meeting with Charles dawned upon her, and ere the sun was yet high in the heavens she was an orphan. Very bitter were the tears she shed as she gazed upon that face, now so calm and cold, that had so often beamed upon her with affection, and desolate and bereaved she truly felt on finding herself thus alone. Nor was the letter which she received that evening from Charles, with the tidings that she could not have him with her for three days, calculated to cheer her. Indeed, before these three days had passed over her head, much had happened which tasted more of sorrow than of joy.

LADYBIRD.

The Writers of the Age of Queen Elizabeth contrasted with those of the Age of Queen Anne.

No period of English history is adorned with so many great names as the Elizabethan age can boast. The reign of Queen Anne is also a great epoch in English literature. The writers of the two reigns differ, however, in almost every respect.

Their subjects were very different. In the time of Elizabeth, society was not in such an artificial state as in that of Anne. The spirit of chivalry had not entirely died out—indeed the greatest chivalrous romance of the world, Spenser's "Faerie Queen," was written in this reign. Spenser, Shakespeare, and Hooker, are most unlike Pope, Swift, and Addison. The language of the Elizabethan writers is much more forcible, more spirited, more abundant in flowing images and graceful conceits, than that of the writers who flourished in the reign of Anne. There is more polish and more neatness in the language of the latter, but they lose in vigour what they gain in elegance. The styles of the two reigns resemble each other about as much as one of Salvator Rosa's wild, glorious landscapes resembles a miniature on ivory. Shakespeare is the poet of all times and of all places; Pope, the poet of the drawing-room. No one can help admiring the musical flow of Pope's versification, and the harmony of his admirably chosen expressions; but compare his finest passages with an extract chosen almost at random from any of Shakespeare's plays, and the refined finical poet, the chief of the authors who adorned the reign of Queen Anne, sinks into nothingness when contrasted with the mighty master-mind, the chief not only of the poets of England, but of the poets of the world.

The Elizabethan writers had also more originality of conception. Spenser's "Faerie Queen" displays a more varied imagination, a more creative fancy, a more exquisite grace of expression, than any other poem in our language. Spenser lived in a different world from ours. His glowing fancy transported him far from the petty strifes and debasing pleasures of the world. He lived within an enchanted circle, peopled with noble knights and gentle ladies, cruel enchanters and graceful sprites.

Perhaps, in one of his poet-visions, he may have actually beheld the "Angel face," which,

"As the great eye of Heaven shined bright,
And made a sunshine in the shady place."

But, in vastness of conception, who can vie with Shakespcare? His wonderful genius embraces every object; nothing, from the far blue heaven overhead, to the smallest flower of the field, is too great or too minute for him. He may well be called by the ancient name of "Maker," for never was there such a creative imagination as his. Turn from this man, whose heart is as large as the great world itself, and his sympathies unlimited as the universe, to the narrow-minded, caustic Pope, who, having been ill-treated by one woman, avenges himself by making war upon the whole sex; gives deep wounds not easy to be healed, yet shrinks from the prick of a pin. No doubt, his sensitiveness was, in great measure, caused by his deformity, and this must not be forgotten in judging him. But the most ardent admirer of Pope cannot call him noble-minded or large-hearted. The "Rape of the Lock" is a very graceful and ingenious poem; and as we must not be so foolish as to expect the barn-door fowl to soar as high as the eagle, we shall not attempt to compare it with any of the wondrous productions of the "Swan of Avon."

Amongst the distinguished authors who lived in the reign of Elizabeth, we must not forget the "judicious Hooker," the first great writer of English prose. Comparing him with Addison, as we have already compared Shakespeare with Pope, we cannot fail to observe how far superior is Hooker's majestic eloquence to Addison's elegant, cold, faultless style.

Besides these great men, Elizabeth's reign boasted also the last of the "preux-echevaliers." The last knight-errant of the world, Sir Philip Sydney, is a stranger to none. Those who are unacquainted with his poems and his "Arcadia," are at least acquainted with his life. Perhaps no more noble character than his is to be found in history.

We have said that the writers of the age of Elizabeth had more originality of conception than those of the time of Anne. The writers of ancient times must, as a matter of course, be more original than those who come after them. In the first place, they have a choice of subjects. This vast beautiful world lies open before them; it is all their own. To them does the "tongue in every leaf" first speak a distinct language; to them does the dancing brook murmur its first sweet song; to them does the summer breeze murmur of all things beautiful. The vast book of Nature

interprets itself gradually to them, and they write, not ideas inspired by the writings of other men, but the secrets which they have learned in solitary communion with their mother Earth. They have an inexhaustible choice of similes. They are the first to tread on an enchanted pathway, and, as the beauties, so the similarities and dissimilarities of natural objects are clearly seen by them. Those who come after them can only tread in the path opened up to them by their precursors. The first true poet is the first true man, for he is the first who has been permitted by God to look on this glorious world aright. He sees the universe, not as a place where men may sow corn, and live as the beasts do, with no higher aim than to "eat, drink, and be merry;" but he sees it as a place which, although fallen from its primeval perfection, as from its primeval innocence, yet bears visible signs of the footprints of its Maker. Although sin has entered, and defaced the once faultless world, he sees that it is yet "very good." Such a man need not be learned in books: indeed, he could not be if he would, for books are not plentiful with him; but such lore is not necessary for him. The great poet of Nature has said truly and beautifully—

"One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can."

The nature of the times also exercised a great influence on the poets of the Elizabethan age. After great revolutions, or after any great national events, there is a stirring of the intellect. The dormant energies of the nation are awakened, and, "as a spirit from the charnel leaps," burst forth into new being. Take, for example, Chaucer. He lived at the time of the great wars with France. The victories of Cressy and Agincourt spread rejoicing throughout England; and literature, which during the inglorious reign of Edward the Second had been lying in a dead sleep, was awakened to fuller life than ever by the breath of glory. Chaucer, the father of English poetry, arose, and his song filled the land. More than four centuries and a half have passed since then, yet do his sweet notes sound most musically to our ears even now. His body has long since mouldered into dust, yet the song he sung is fresh as ever, and his name will never be forgotten.

And in what reign have great events happened, if not in Elizabeth's? When she came to the throne, she had hard work before her. In the first place, the Protestant religion must be established; for Elizabeth, although probably at least as much Catholic as Protestant in her heart, was too fond of power to recognise any one as her superior.

Therefore the Papal authority must be abolished, at least in England; and as, in the reign of her bloody sister, the flame of the funeral pyre of martyred Protestants had ascended to heaven, so, in Elizabeth's reign, must the blood of Roman Catholics also cry aloud for vengeance. It was a great work, but Elizabeth performed it. The woman sovereign, not being troubled with a tender conscience or a merciful heart, did her work well.

Having put down the Roman Catholics within the kingdom, Elizabeth required to turn her attention to the Roman Catholics without the kingdom. Spain was preparing to attack England, and the great Armada was nearing her coasts. Then arose that fearful storm, which destroyed the fleet that Spain, in her pride, had termed the "Invincible." "He blew with His winds, and they were scattered."

Add to these great national struggles and triumphs, that Elizabeth did all in her power to promote and encourage literature, and you will have no reason to be astonished at the number of great names which adorn the annals of her reign. The chivalry, which can never be wholly wanting in the court of a maiden queen, prompted Spenser to the writing of his great chivalrous poem. It is, as we all know, dedicated to Queen Elizabeth. This is, perhaps, the purest poem which the earlier ages have bequeathed to us. Its free, luxuriant grace contrasts curiously with the neatly-trimmed and pruned poems of the reign of Queen Anne, reminding us of a wild Swiss glen, whose sward is covered with beautiful flowers of every hue and form, compared with a prim, precise Dutch garden. Yet do we owe much to the reign of Queen Anne. Our literature had not been complete without the names of Pope, Swift, Addison, and Steele.

In writing of the authors who adorned the reigns of two of our female sovereigns, let us not withhold a tribute to the literature which has been produced during the reign of our own beloved Queen. It is true, England has now no Shakespeare, no Spenser; but has she not a Tennyson, a Browning, a Macaulay, a Kingsley, a Ruskin? and last, not least, the great master of fiction, the most genial and tender-hearted of satirists, who has our tears and smiles alike at his command—who, although dead, yet speaketh, and long will speak, to the hearts and sympathies of all—William Makepeace Thackeray?

ENID.

Something about Everything.

EVERYTHING seems at first sight a somewhat vague and comprehensive subject, certainly not to be exhausted in the limits of an article such as this. It is a fascinating subject, however, perhaps on account of its very vagueness, which allows a delightful feeling of liberty to pervade our lucubrations and inspire our erratic pen. After all, is there not something to be thought, felt, or said about everything in this earth of ours, some meaning and definite purpose in every note that goes to make up the great harmony, could we but get at the pith and heart of it. The passing breeze that scarce ruffles the surface of the lake and dallies softly among the water-lilies by the shore, is not more slight, more unheeded, than the multitudinous trifles that make up the sum of our daily existence; yet the floating down from the wing of the swan on the lake will show the direction of the breeze; and each of these trifles in a life tends somewhat, has in it a purpose, an influence such as we cannot hope to trace or understand to its fullest extent. It seems a small thing if we repeat a passing observation on another, yet by so doing, we may break or make a friendship: it seems a small matter if we turn to the right hand or to the left in our day's walk, yet on the one path happiness may be waiting for us, and on the other death. "Solemn enough did we think of it, which unhappily, and also happily, we do not very much! Thou there canst begin; the beginning is for thee, and there; but where, and of what sort, and for whom will the end be?"

This being so, Everything may be, after all, a profitable field for thought, serious or mirthful, as the case may be; and if the readers of "The Attempt" are not too hard upon our beginnings, we may endeavour sometimes to give expression to our fancies, only premising that, in the words of one of the wise men of the earth, "truth is a polygon," and therefore he who would study her must be prepared to take no one-sided view. Some grains of truth are to be found in almost every thing, place, or person, in the world; but so complex are the surrounding influences, the characteristics of each, that to judge them reasonably and with genuine perceptiveness, we must bring clear eyes and calm minds to the task. We must not mount, as many do, spectacles of a certain hue, rose or green, which impart their own colour to every object, so that the wearer announces, to the delusion of the world and her own soul,

that that particular shade is the true and right shade of the objects under examination, and the eyesight of whose denies it is diseased and at fault. Fortunate is it if *only* the wearer's views are thus distorted, if no obsequious Polonius be found to chime in with assenting tongue, "very like a whale," and so the confusion be spread and developed. Let us proceed to think then, and speak our thoughts (next month, if we can think so fast), trusting to glean some stray ideas even from so vague and vast a subject as this of Everything.

ELSIE STRIVELYNE.

The True Friend.

WHEN Fortune flings her smile on thee,
 Count not each one thy friend,
 Of those who ever by thy side
 In fawning homage bend.

Who hang enraptured on thy words,
 And court a smile from thee,
 As though in it the favour lay
 Of some divinity.

Who love the oil of flattering praise
 To pour into thine ear;
 And will not list one word of blame
 Whilst thou art by to hear.

Oh, trust them not! they sell their love
 To serve their own dark ends;
 They are thy wealth's base worshippers,
 Masked with the face of friends.

Oh, trust them not! for these are they,
 The butterflies of life,
 Who hover round the brilliant flower,
 While sweets within are rife.

But let the eup they helped to drain
 Robbed of its nectar be,
 The first who thronged it in its wealth,
 First flee its poverty.

Oh, trust them not! they will not stay
 Through good report and ill;
 They haunt the summer of thy life,
 But hate the winter's chill.

But mark the man thou dar'st call friend,
 On whose all-bearing arms
 May'st lay the weight of all thy cares,
 Thy pleasures and alarms.

'Tis he who in the summer noon
 Of thy life's chequered day,
 Would scorn to join with those who bend
 Their homage base to pay.

And should thy day of sunshine flee,
 And thou be stripped of all,
 And those who swore eternal love,
 From their allegiance fall,

Who loves thee for thine inward worth,
 And counts thy monied store
 But as a gift that God has sent,
 That thou may'st serve Him more.

His virtues in that testing hour
 Will but the brighter shine,
 His heart will in its changeless love
 Be closer knit to thine.

Who doth not squander all his love,
 Where thou its fruits may see,
 But in his chamber's solitude,
 Who thinks and prays for thee.

And when all other friends are gone,
 His voice thy thoughts will lead
 Up to the throne of that true Friend,
 Who filleth all our need.

Such is the man round whom thy heart
 Its fearless love may twine,
 Whom thou may'st trust with every grief,
 And every joy of thine.

MEGAIG BIEG.



Parting.

THERE is a remark often applied to the writers of "The Attempt," that their articles are too grave in their character--that a lighter vein would be an improvement. This is perhaps true, and it certainly seems strange that young ladies should forsake the themes apparently best suited to their age and temperament, and choose those

more likely to be selected by their seniors. But a little reflection will show that this is only natural. We find people constantly taking the deepest interest in subjects apparently foreign to their natures. For instance, does not a lively high-spirited girl often occupy herself with studies worthy of a philosopher? and, on the other hand, is it uncommon to see the learned student or toil-worn statesman solacing himself with a novel, sometimes even his children's fairy tales? The mind requires change, and the same relief may be experienced by a woman who writes and reads deeper subjects than she is accustomed to speak upon, that a man feels, who unbends from the height of his superior wisdom to frolic with the little things of earth. Lady Jane Grey, in her pride of position, youth, and beauty, found more true enjoyment in Plato than in all the pleasures of her companions; and, on the other hand, we might name some great authors, renowned for loftiness of thought and profundity of knowledge, whose most exquisite delineations have been simple portraiture of every day life.

There are some writers who carry our hearts in their hands—who can thrill us with grief, or convulse us with laughter. We know of none who have this power so eminently as Mr Charles Dickens, and yet, to the casual observer, he is quiet, rather silent, more apt to listen than to talk, and one finds it difficult to realize him writing “Piekwick,” with all its irresistible fun. But hear him *read*, and you understand everything—the exquisite humour, the pathos that brings the unwilling tear, of which one is ashamed, though needlessly. Have our readers ever heard Charles Dickens read the passage describing the last parting between David Copperfield and Steerforth? (This word *parting*, by the way, reminds us how we have wandered from our subject, all in the endeavour to apologize for another sober paper.) “Never, never more.” These are the words which conclude the reading, and they express a great deal. Never more were these two young hearts to meet, the one full of innocence and healthful impulses, and making a hero of his more manly friend; the other already clouded by the dark promptings of a restless, reckless nature, where perhaps his brotherly protecting love for the youth who idolised him was the single cord that bound him to honour and self-respect. Never seen again till the cruel waves, so soon to engulf him, lifted him for a moment within sight and recognition of his former companion, and then bore him beneath the flood, to be seen on earth “never, never more.”

There is something inexpressibly sad about these three words. The mind indeed refuses to believe them. When we are parting with those we dearly love, how seldom have we the courage to face the thought that we may never meet again, and how often we comfort each other with the assurance that some time or other we are to be re-united, that all will be again as it has been. Is this *ever* the case? Suppose that

in the course of years the wish is fulfilled, is all as we expected to find it, does our friend meet us with all the old warmth we prized so early, or do we feel the same joyous sensations that filled our hearts in days gone by? Very often the whole thing is changed, our views and ideas have altered, our estimate of people is different, and we wonder at the hallucination that possessed us formerly. With all the desire to return to the feelings of the past, we cannot—they have passed from our control. The son leaves his home to make his way in the world; he goes forth with filial devotion in his heart, firmly believing his parents to be the wisest of mortals, and their dwelling the acme of comfort and the summit of ambition. He looks forward to his return with delight, but ere that time arrives, change and contact with the world have enlarged his powers of observation; he sees everything with a different eye, the world is another thing to him, and he, perhaps unwillingly, acknowledges to himself that his parents are not all he fondly fancied, and that home is not the paradise he remembers it. We remember, when very young, visiting at some house, the dimensions of which astonished us, whilst its owners awed us, but on returning some years later we were surprised to find the rooms grown much smaller, and the people much more commonplace than formerly. Of course, they were just the same, but we had forgotten to make allowance for our different views of men and things.

Parting gives a child little or no pain, except in rare instances, and it is well it should be so. When we see one showing great sensibility and real sorrow at leaving friends, we cannot avoid fearing that such a nature will have much suffering to go through in the world—a blossom that will bend before the rude blasts that must come, perhaps wither untimely away. Children are naturally inclined to look to the bright side of things; their minds are so much occupied with the changes and pleasures in anticipation, that they have no thought to give to what they are leaving. There is a little boy who loves us very much, and whom we love dearly, yet when we go away and leave him, we know he will be more taken up with the horse and cab that conveys us to the station than with the fact that he is losing us for weeks, perhaps months. Sunshine and rain, smiles and tears—such is the infant's existence; the past is soon forgotten, and the future is all a golden dream. But when a few more years have passed over our heads, parting assumes a different aspect, the realities of life have begun, and the past and future have another signification. We may never meet again! We believe, we trust, we hope, we pray that this may not be the case, but we cannot be sure; life is uncertain, the world is an arena of perpetual change, and often when the actors reappear we are disappointed, and wish the old time back again, uncertain whether the difference is in them, or ourselves, or both. How do people feel when

they part with those who are very dear to them? Some, no doubt, feel much more acutely than others, though they may show it less. We can conscientiously say that we grieve more deeply an hour or a day after the departure of friends or relatives, than we do at the actual moment we are saying farewell. You do not realize the fact so well at the time—you have not yet missed them at the fireside, or at your table; the vacant place brings the reality before you, and the dreary certainty that they have gone out of the minutiae of your daily life is then painfully vivid. In the lovely Irish song “Kathleen Mavourneen,” the lover breaks out into the passionate entreaty—

“It may be for years, love, it may be for ever,
Then why art thou silent, thou voice of my heart?”

Just because grief is often too deep for words. When our tears flow fast, and we find words in which to express our emotions, be sure that consolation is not far off; but when the voice is mute, and the eye is dry, respect that sorrow, for it is probably very deep and very real, and will not very quickly pass away.

When Job's friends came to comfort him, how did they begin? “They sat down with him upon the ground seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him; for they saw his grief was very great.” And there, their kindness ceased, for the result of all their subsequent talking was Job's bitter exclamation, “Miserable comforters are ye all.” Certainly great tact is necessary to know when to administer spoken comfort. We have witnessed scenes where the mind was for the time being kept at too high a pitch to allow of breaking down. In particular, we remember well the departure of an emigrant ship for a far distant land, and we can recall everything distinctly, and by shutting our eyes, even bring back the very sensations of that day. There were above three hundred emigrants on board—men, women, and children—some tearful and anxious, with hearts yearning over the dear old country they were leaving; others apparently unconcerned, counting their packages and scolding their children; and some young and buoyant, too desirous to begin life afresh to have much regret for what was past. But when they were summoned to listen to the last prayer many of them would hear in their fatherland for ever, a hush fell upon all, and the solemnity of the moment impressed each one for a short time. They were commended to the care of Him who holds the waters in the hollow of His hands, and who would pilot them through the dangers of the deep. Then the last bell sounded; we who remained behind were borne back to the shore, after giving a last embrace and a last good bye, and the vessel slowly receded from our view, till it seemed like a speck on the horizon, and at length faded completely out of sight. But all that day we could not realize

that we had a personal grief to bear, only that we had seen one of the most solemn sights of earth, and that all was like a dream. But when one awakes the next morning, the romance is gone and reality begins. Shakespeare would have us believe that there are cases where leave-taking may be pleasurable and painful at the same time. Juliet says to Romeo—

“Parting is such sweet sorrow,
That I shall say ‘good night’ till it be morrow.”

Do lovers in general endorse that sentiment? I scarcely think so. It sounds pretty and poetical, but the sooner the partings of real life are got over the better.

As we said before, the deepest grief is ever the most silent. And there *is* a parting where words are indeed difficult—when the room is darkened, and the voices are hushed, and the angel of death hovers near. In that presence all stormy grief should be banished, calm and peace should attend that last solemn journey, and waft the soul on its way to

“That bourne whence no traveller returns.”

Anguish unfathomable may rend the heart, but oh, mourners! stem the torrent till the need of restraint is gone. Be ready to give a last look, a last act of love, a word of hope to strengthen the departing spirit. The peace that the world cannot give is the only consolation for sorrows such as these, for oh! such partings are bitter, bitter. None but those who have experienced them have any idea how deeply so. Most of our readers have no doubt passed through such trials, and have felt for themselves how true are the familiar words of the favourite German song—

“Parting, oh parting, gives the heart pain.”

We inhabitants of Edinburgh are all pluming our wings for a flight to other countries, or at least counties, and we look back with some feelings of regret upon the pleasant winter we have passed, and hope all to assemble again when the leaves assume their autumnal tints. The young ladies who have begun and carried on thus far “The Attempt,” have cause to thank their friends for the warm reception given to their little Magazine, and trust it will continue to sustain its character. Its contributors, now scattering for a time, will recruit their minds by travel and recreation; and with many good wishes for their health and happiness, we close our somewhat sober comments on a sad subject, with the hope that “we part to meet again.”

INCHA.

The Dead Warrior.

COLD on the blood-stained ground he lay,
A solid mass of lifeless clay,
His valiant arm all powerless now,
And dew-drops on that noble brow.

Yes, there he lay! none saw him die,
Save the wild foe when hurrying by;
No gentle maiden watched his breath,
Nor wiped the cold dark dew of death.

No mother praying at his feet,
Cooling the red lips' burning heat,
Telling, as soft she clasps that hand,
Sweet stories of the better land.

But there he laid him down alone,
His pillow but a hard cold stone;
Nought but the green moss for his bed,
And heaven's blue curtain overhead.

His soldier form was stiff and cold,
Death reigned upon his forehead bold;
That heart, such noble passions' seat,
So hopeful, young, had ceased to beat.

His trusty charger standing by,
The flash of war still in his eye,
Impatient paws the silent ground,
List'ning the distant battle sound.

Alas! kind friend, that silent form
No more shall mount thee in the storm;
His earthly warfare now is done—
His short career of life is run.

EUTERPE.

The Proper Extent of a Musical Education.

WHAT would the world be without music—without the intellectual manna which gives us a foretaste of angels' food? Fancy the consequences to our world were it deprived of the sun, and you may picture the mental world if it lacked the vivifying power of music. The flowers of imagination would droop, and the many hues of fancy

fade: the poet would be but half inspired—his verse, if made at all, would be “of the earth, earthy,” without that celestial fire which heaven-born music aids to kindle.

Was there not music in Eden long before Tubal called forth sounds which doubtless ravished antediluvian ears? Yes, before man was created, “the morning stars sang together;” and in that “blissful Paradise,” where lay

“To all delight of human sense expos’d
In narrow room, Nature’s whole wealth,”

was there not ceaseless music amidst the rustling branches, the harmonies of a thousand birds, and melody in the plashing water of the fountain, that

“With many a rill, watered the garden?”

Long years ago, the evil spirit fled before the spell of David’s harp, when the restless soul of Saul was calmed and soothed by its music; and still music has lost none of her power for good over the minds of men. See the sudden tear start in those guilt-hardened eyes, as the wandering outcast hears from village school the blithe voices of the children, the sweet notes of some old familiar hymn, so well known once, so long forgot. What heart does not thrill when we hear that simplest of all simple tunes, “Home, sweet home?” Hackneyed, tortured, and massacred by barrel organs and penny whistles, as it often is, it has an influence all its own, and our thoughts fly back to scenes long past; the mist of years falls from around us, voices and faces loved, and, it may be, in life’s many changes altered or lost, are before us, oh, how clearly! We hear it only as we heard it then, and give to the player with an open hand (though we shudder at his performance), for the flash of joy these old memories have brought to our hearts. The “Marseillaise,” the “Ranz des Vaches,” and many such airs, all attest the spell of “Music with her sister Song” to rouse and nourish the noblest passions of humanity. Can a Scotchman away from his native land listen unmoved to “Auld Lang Sync?” What Englishman does not feel a double throb of loyalty when the strains of our noble national anthem fall upon his ear? But such instances are endless, and the proofs of music’s power may safely be left to the individual experience of each. In joy, music increases, as it were, our happiness; in sorrow and sadness, it acts as a healing balm to the wounded spirit, and speaks to us of sympathy and coming peace in a wordless language all its own. Be we rich or poor, young or old, we owe more than we know, perchance, to its influence. We have much in this world for which our gratitude is due; let us never forget to thank God for music.

Boundless eloquence might be brought to bear upon the subject of music's power and charms, and yet leave much unsaid. I would fain (in all humility) offer a remonstrance which seems to me somewhat needed, in these days at least, as to an undue use of such a blessing. I may perhaps most clearly and concisely express my meaning if I quote the old saying, "Moderation in all things." Let us have it in music. It is a precious gift, worthy of careful training and development, as a gift not used is abused; but let it be with a limit, not to the exclusion of other things equally valuable. There is verily a "time for all things." Am I unreasonable, my musical sisters, if I venture to hint that you often give more than the legitimate portion of yours to your musical studies? A taste for music is truly an amiable trait in man or woman, and I rejoice when it can be consistently cultivated. I say consistently, because it strikes me that at present the musical part of an education is often carried to a ridiculous extent. When a young lady practises six hours a day (I have the pleasure of knowing many who do, or did) there is not much time left for more important branches of mental training. It is questionable if the owner of the nimble fingers that perform "Semiramide," "Les Huguenots," or the "Carnaval de Venise," in such a superb style of execution and finish, knows much of the Ancient Queen, the Massacre of St Bartholomew, or Enrico Dandolo, and Marino Falieri. I have met with such cases. Or, granting her a knowledge of such common historical facts, are there not many other fields of knowledge into which the young musician frankly confesses she has never entered, and in extenuation of complete ignorance pleads a want of time? Then I would urge, four out of the six hours daily would have been better spent there, more profitably too, even as she counts profit, seeing the additional information thereby attained would have greatly enhanced her charms, and assisted her musical powers by rendering her an intelligent and well-informed member of society, in which I suppose it is her ultimate ambition to shine. I am at a loss otherwise for a motive for such indefatigable labour, unless indeed she have any intention or prospect of gaining a livelihood by the exercise of her talent. For the steady patience and perseverance she deserves all praise, which we gladly accord, only regretting its limited application.

Besides the advantages of extra mental culture which a more judicious disposal of time would admit of, there would be a margin left for numerous other womanly vocations, which, alas! in these days when our sisters are so enslaved by overtures and operas, fantasias and reveries, are falling into disuse, and branded "old-fashioned." I mean comprehensively, domestic duties, such as every girl who would be the joy of her home, ought to understand well and thoroughly. Do not shake your head at the

prosaic sound, my readers. I do not wish you to do the work which in your sphere of life may with all propriety be left to your servants; still, I would venture to suggest that a perfect comprehension of the wants of a household, a moderate knowledge of the proper manufacture of puddings and pies, is by no means inconsistent with the most perfect refinement, or incompatible with almost any station, while at some time in the ups and downs of life such knowledge might prove an inestimable boon. Our great-grandmothers were far behind us in what we should call education; we speak of them commiseratingly in the pride of our superior acquirements, but perhaps if theirs and ours were justly weighed, our own might kick the beam. It is a matter of doubt, and a doubt not a little humiliating, that in this nineteenth century, with all its boasted march of intellect and improvement, with all its agitation about "woman's right," and "woman's mission," if they after all are as well fitted for a true woman's work as in the old times when the equality of the sexes never was thought of—when woman knew her place, and filled it well. I would not disparage study; learn all you can—I want more, not less; do both, not one to leave the other undone. For woman's work, that "work which is never done," we have names in good old Saxon—wife, nurse, and mother; these have an echo in every heart, high and low; these are proud titles; it were well if we were all assured of our worthiness to bear them. But I must pause, nor at this time suffer my pen, which has far outstripped its proposed limits, to venture into the almost endless question of what a woman's education really ought to be, and how far it should go. One may well be pardoned if their ideas be somewhat confused by the mass of conflicting views and arguments constantly brought before us. We can only repeat, "Let us have moderation in all things;" and, as a case in point, in the length of a dull essay.

I have wandered far from music and its delights, let me return to be thankful that these, with or without the labour I have gleaned at, are free to all. The rich enjoy the "concord of sweet sounds" by their harp and piano; the poor man's dwelling is cheered by many a humbler instrument in his well-earned hours of leisure; and those in both who have neither skill nor money to procure for themselves such a solace, may at least listen with rapture to the nightingale in the still twilight, or the lark singing upward to the very gate of heaven, and thus drink in the music which a gracious God has provided for all alike.

HILDA.



On Rising in the World.

I do not allude to the man who attains the height of six feet or upwards, enviable though that altitude may appear to the small men who breathe a lower atmosphere, but to those who, though accustomed in early life to the use of a horn spoon, are the embryo possessors of silver ones—those on whom the conviction grows that not on any beast that walks the field, but in the depths of the earth, lies the utensil which shall minister to their material wants.

Having attained the silver spoon position, where so many err, is in not acknowledging, nay, utterly ignoring their useful though vulgar friend of early days. I daresay you have heard this advice given by one who had studied human nature, and knew its weaknesses—"If your grandmother was a washerwoman, mention it occasionally." Depend upon it, if you don't, obliging friends will do it for you. Apropos of washerwomen. Have you ever noticed how many people who have "risen in life" have owned ancestors who followed this humble calling? Surely there must be some elevating influence in the contact with soap suds. I would suggest this as one way of attaining "the bubble reputation." Every one has seen the caricature in Punch of a couple just returned from the diggings. An early acquaintance with the horn spoon is written on every line of their gold-bedecked persons. But no matter, they have plenty of silver ones now, emblazoned with a showy crest—of course, their own—that is to say, it is paid for.

There is a subtle difference between the quiet, unobtrusive talent which must work its way upwards, and the noisy self-assertion which is often mistaken for natural ability. The latter, with elbows squared, pushes through the crowd, and does not even refrain from setting its foot upon a friend so that its own end be attained, and a place in the front rank secured.

But I have hitherto only alluded to those whose minds have not expanded with their purses. All honour to the noble men who, born to few advantages, nay, with hindrances at every step, have hewn a path through the tangled brushwood, and emerging from the wood where all their days might have been passed, find the whole world open to them, and the applause of civilized nations to cheer them on. But, alas! few of the hard-working bees of society meet with due appreciation. It is only when their place is empty that the drones exclaim, "Oh, if we had known sooner!" Then they buzz about, collect money, build statues; but, as I have already said, the place is empty.

If it were not an unsuitable position for any lady, I should say, Down on your knees, Mrs Grundy, and humbly apologize for your past conduct; and for the future, instead of truckling to snobs, clap till your hands are tired, cheer till your throat is hoarse the props of Britain, the men who do their duty—of course, I include women too.

A well-known writer thought it might not be uninteresting to his readers to hear that one of his essays was written on his horse's nose. Following his example, I may tell you that this one was composed during the unintellectual employment of darning stockings. While engaged in the foot work, my head has not been idle. And if, whilst filling up the holes, I have also amused a few of your vacant moments, my brain will not have been worried, nor my stockings darned in vain.

CARA.

Merlin.

IN concluding my paper on Thomas the Rhymer, in the May number of "The Attempt," I suggested that some more able pen should take up the life of Merlin. No one seeming inclined to take the hint, and deeming the subject worth the trouble, I have searched many a volume, and now give you as best I can the results. The accounts are so very confused and mythical that I have had some difficulty in picking out all that is recorded of one of three of this renowned name, and he the chief, if I mistake not. In my opinion, there has been but one, but authorities differ on this point.

Merlin the Wild, or Ambrosius, son of a demon, and a daughter of a king of Briton, is said to have been born at Caermarthen, in Wales; but others say, and with more apparent truth, in the Welsh kingdom of Reged, or Strathelwyd, in the south-west of Scotland. He flourished about the end of the fifth century, and delivered his oracles during the reigns of Vortigern, Uther the Pendragon, and the great Arthur of round table fame. The district of south-west Scotland, where he was born, still retains some legends of his magic art and wonderful predictions. Indeed, near the village Drumelzier, on the Tweed, a spot under a thorn tree, where the Pawsayle now joins the Tweed, is pointed out as the grave of Merlin, concerning which it was written—

“When Tweed and Pawsayle meet at Merlin's grave,
Scotland and England shall one monarch have.”

The natural fulfilment of the prophecy it is said took place on the very day that

James VI. was crowned, by a Tweed flood rising so high as to join the Pawsayle at the noted spot, whence it has never gone back.

And now allow me to tell you some of the prophecies, anecdotes, and magic feats related of Merlin. As I can find neither order nor date in the relation of these, I give none. "Once upon a time" Vortigern was building an impregnable tower, to defend himself against the Saxons, which, when all but finished, the earth opened and swallowed up. The king, in great consternation, consulted his magicians as to the cause of this wonderful disappearance, which, however, they could not satisfactorily explain. Merlin was then brought, and at once told Vortigern that there was a lake under the tower, and also two dragons, one red and one white, representing the British and the Saxons. On the foundations being dug up, and the dragons seen fighting, Merlin wept and uttered prophecies on the future of England. He himself is said at one time to have escaped from the Saxons in a glass ship. A poet, Minot Lawrence, who wrote about 1360, applied some of Merlin's prophecies to the victory of Edward III.

Sir David Lindsay used to amuse James V., when under his care, with the prophecies of Rhymer, Bede, and Merlin. One of the predictions of Merlin, it is believed, was fulfilled at the time of Regent Morton's execution. When he was given in charge to Captain James Stewart, then newly created Earl of Arran, to be tried at Edinburgh, the Regent asked, "Who is Earl of Murray?" On being told, he said, "And is it so? I know what I may look for," referring, it was thought, to the ancient prophecy about "the falling of the heart by the mouth of Arran"—the heart being the cognizance of Morton.

Merlin tells us that the stones of Stonehenge were brought by the giants from the coast of Africa, every one of which, he adds, is mystical, and contains medicinal properties. Spenser and an ancient British poet relate the following tale about this rather fabulous personage:—Merlin, while engaged building a wall of brass round his native town, assisted by rather questionable characters as his fellow-workmen, was hastily called away by some fair lady, and, it is said, slain by her perfidy. He left his demons at work, with orders not to stop till he returned. As this never happened, they are still to be heard at work, if one will but put his ear near enough a fissure in a certain rock, at the same time giving his imagination a free rein. The poet's own words on this subject are as follows:—

"Such ghastly noyse of yron chaines -
And brazen cauldrons thou shalt rombling heare,
Which thousand sprites with long enduring paines,
De tosse that it will stunn your feeble braines."

This tradition Spenser is said to have copied from Giraldi Cambresis, who, in the twelfth century, got it among the legends of the early British bards, who probably received it from the Arabians. To Spenser also we are indebted for the information that Merlin made a "glassie globe," and gave it to King Rynce, which showed him the approach of all enemies, and discovered treason; and a wonderful sword, whose metal was mixed with meadow-wort, that it might be proof against enchantments. It was forged in the flames of Etna, and to give it hidden virtue, dipped in the bitter waters of the Styx. Perhaps this was the world-renowned weapon of King Arthur, but we are not told so expressly.

Merlin is said to have roamed the woods like Nebuchadnezzar, in remorse for the death of his nephew; and, from his mode of life, got the name of Lailoken. St Kentigern, it is said, demanded an explanation of his mode of life. The wild Merlin replied, that he did penance for a contest which took place between Lidel and Carwanlow, of which he was the cause, and that Heaven imposed the penance. Waldhave says he was lying on Lomond Law one day, and heard a voice bid him rise and defend himself. On looking round he saw a flock of foxes and hares pursued by a savage scarcely like a man, who assaulted Waldhave with a club, and was defeated by him. He, however, refused any explanation of his strange conduct, and only uttered the following obscure saying, and vanished—"Go, musing upon Merlin if thou wilt, for I mean no more, man, at this time."

Merlin predicted the manner of his own death, saying he would die by earth, wood, and water. Thus it is said this prophecy was fulfilled. He was being chased and stoned by the countrymen, probably, for some disastrous prophecy, when he fell from a rock into the Tweed, and was caught on the point of a stake placed there for fish-nets. The death of Merlin of Caledonia is related as so much alike, that I think it gives good ground for supposing the two to be one and the same person. It is fabled of him by Fordun that his sister sent her page in three different disguises to consult the oracle how the person should die, who, in a manner pointed out, had deeply injured his mistress. The page, however, took care not to reveal that the guilty person was Merlin himself, who had assisted in putting an end to some of the wicked deeds of his sister. To the first messenger the oracle said, The guilty one should die by a fall from a rock; to the second, That he should die by a tree; and to the third, That he should be drowned.

And now, my readers, having come to the end of my tether, if I may so speak, I don't see how I could better finish this sketch than by a short quotation from "The Bridal of Triermain," which I hope will tempt you all to read it as a whole. The

passage occurs during the tournament among the knights of "the round table" for the hand of Gyneth, a daughter of King Arthur, just when young Vanoe was slain, whom fame spoke of Merlin's race:—

" But then the sky was overcast,
Then howl'd at once a whirlwind's blast,
And rent by sudden throes,
Yawn'd in mid lists the quaking earth,
And from the gulf—tremendous birth!—
The form of Merlin rose."

Gyneth, you may remember, had the power to stay the bloodshed had she pleased. Not using this power, she was spellbound for a hundred years, as thus described—

" Slow the dark-fringed eyelids fall,
Curtaining each azure ball;
Slowly as on summer eves,
Violets fold their dusky leaves."

Collections of the prophecies of Merlin were published at Paris in 1490; in English, at London 1529-33; in Latin, at Venice 1554. These are to be found in the Cotton and some few other libraries.

INCOGNITA.

A Tale of the Last Century.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON the evening of the day on which Mr Howard died, as Alice was sitting sorrowfully enough in her small sitting room, the door was opened, and a gentleman ushered into her presence, who bowed respectfully; and apologizing for intruding upon her at such a time, by stating that his reasons for so doing were immediate and urgent, without further preamble, asked her if she knew a Mr Campbell? Poor Alice trembled with some vague apprehension of evil, as she replied in the affirmative, and gazed eagerly on her visitor, as if waiting to hear of some new calamity. He at once read the meaning of her gaze, and replied, "Do not be alarmed; Mr Campbell is well." Alice drew a deep sigh of relief, and then recollecting that she had neglected

the common courtesy of asking her visitor to be seated, drew a chair forward to the fire, and invited him to occupy it, which he did at once, and threw aside a heavy muffler which had partly concealed his face, but he apparently felt the evening to be very cold, for he kept a large Spanish cloak closely wrapped round him. As he sat in the light of the fire, Alice had a full view of her strange guest; and as she surveyed him, a feeling of uncontrollable dislike took possession of her. He had a dark handsome face, but the expression was far from prepossessing; a pair of small dark eyes seemed to read her every thought; and his voice was soft and persuasive, but somehow jarred disagreeably upon the ear. He began the conversation by uttering some words of sympathy to her on her recent bereavement, and Alice was amazed to find that he knew all about her, still more so when he added, "The object of my visit is to learn all you know about Mr Campbell, and in return I will tell you what I know of him. My reasons for being so very curious are of great importance, so I beg of you to conceal nothing, but tell me the whole truth; don't fear for him." Seeing Alice hesitate, he added, "I am his friend; you will do him no harm."

Poor Alice, with no one to advise her, and feeling the power of this man's strong will, began her story. There was not much to tell; and as my readers already know all the circumstances of her intimacy with Charles, we need not recapitulate. Her guest sat opposite to her listening most attentively, and when she hesitated, or was for a moment overcome by sad remembrances, he gently encouraged her to proceed; so she hid nothing from him, even with a certain degree of pride telling him how Charles had renounced the faith in which he had been educated, and by her means had been brought to know the truth. As she ended, she said, "I am his betrothed wife, and on this earth have no other friend, so spare me. O! tell me nothing that can take that comfort from me." Her visitor muttered some words, which sounded like an attempt to console her, and without waiting for a reply, proceeded with his narrative, which was a true account of Charles' rank, wealth, and position. He entered very minutely into all the details, so minutely that he left not a doubt on his listener's ear of the truth of what he was telling her; dwelt long and feelingly on the stormy interview that had taken place between father and son; depicted the sorrow of his only sister; drew a most touching picture of the old man's sudden illness, his son's distress, and the object of his hasty journey; then sat looking at Alice without uttering a word. The poor girl was dumb with grief; she sat as one in a trance; the only thing that her mind seemed to grasp was the thought, "Charles has deceived me—he was not what he seemed!" Her guest let her sit thus for a time, then essayed to comfort her, but in such a way that, with every word he uttered, he left a sting. He lingered very

long over Charles' distress for having incurred his father's anger, insinuated that he would gladly return to his faith and to his home, but that his word was pledged to her, and his honour was dear to him; lastly, he boldly suggested that if she would voluntarily release him from his promise, he would be reconciled to his father (for which he earnestly prayed), the past would be forgotten, and she would have ample means given her to live independently and happily in some other place. But in all these hints he never altogether committed Charles; he spoke more as if they were ideas of his own, than as if he had been sent by another.

During all this long oration Alice had been sitting as if she did not comprehend what was said to her; but the last suggestion seemed to rouse her grief-stricken faculties, for rising she drew her slight figure proudly up, and in a voice so changed that her visitor started, exclaimed, "Who are you, that *he* has sent to insult the orphan in her sorrow? Had I not enough to bear without having this cruel wrong added to my sufferings? But go, tell Charles Campbell that Alice Howard sends him back scorn for scorn; she is not a beggar, that would eat of his bread! and that long ere he returns she will be far from here—far beyond the reach of his pity or his alms; and stay, tell him that if he ever wastes a thought upon *his once dear Alice*, she will pray to be enabled to forgive him, as she one day hopes to be forgiven." Pointing to the door, she added, "Go, sir; leave my presence—I would not have this room polluted longer by a man who could carry such a message." Her visitor rose, and actually slunk from the house—so abashed is guilt before conscious innocence. He rapidly gained the street, and paused not till he reached the security of his own private sitting-room, in the house of Mr Campbell, where he at last disburthened himself of his heavy cloak, and revealed the well-known figure of Father Clement, for it was indeed he who had been poor Alice's visitor; and had Charles but confided to her something of the character of his father's house and its inmates, she might not have lent such a ready ear as she did to the story of the wily priest.

In a short time he ascended to the dressing-room of Mr Campbell (who, by the way, had not been nearly so ill as was represented), and there related to Kate and her father the substance of his conversation with Alice. They all congratulated themselves that *the girl* had been so easily got rid of, and complimented the priest on the cleverness with which he had executed his plans. He did not, however, tell them that Alice's fixed look of despair still haunted him, nor how silent and confused he had left her presence as she scornfully rejected all pecuniary aid; neither did he add that her gentle loveliness might well grace any rank, however high, but touched slightly on her grief, which he said was natural, and would soon wear itself out; and

when Catherine, pitying her loneliness, spoke of sending her money, he said, "Ah! she must have more of her own than we know of, for she declined all help."

Thus on the very day after Charles had left to seek that which he believed would save his father's life, that father was aiding and abetting schemes which were intended to change his whole future career, and bring him again under the power of his father and the Church. They agreed amongst themselves that, when Charles returned, they should meet as if nothing had occurred to heal the breach that had been made amongst them; that they would say his father, although better, was still too weak to be agitated by an interview with him; and that not till he had confided to Kate (as he was sure to do) that Alice had left, and he knew not where to seek her, was any attempt to be made to bring him back to the old persuasion, and that then it was to be done under the semblance of sympathy. Kate readily entered into all these plans, and undertook to persuade Charles that his Alice had proved false to him, and was unworthy of his regard, trusting in his strong affection to herself for the rest. How eagerly she longed for his return (which the Padre assured her would not be for some days, owing to the directions contained in the letter he had sent with him), that she might begin her task, thinking all means justifiable in the service of the Church! Such were the arrangements made for Charles Campbell's welcome home, and we shall see how far they were successful.

When Alice was left alone, she tried in vain to collect her thoughts and form some plan for the future, but her brain seemed on fire—she feared she was losing her reason; her only clear idea was to leave the scene of her misery, for to stay longer where she was she felt was impossible. By the help of her kind landlady (Mrs Young), all necessary arrangements were made for conveying the remains of her beloved father to their last resting-place; and early the next morning the last sad scene was over, and Alice was indeed alone. She settled all her affairs in a sort of calm despair, left most of her own possessions and her father's library in charge of her landlady; bade her farewell, saying, she would give her no clue to her whereabouts in the meantime, refused all entreaties to remain, if but for a day to rest, and set out alone on her solitary way. She did not leave Mrs Young's till dusk, as she shrunk from observation, and she wandered on without any idea of where she was going to. At last her strength began to fail her, and she sank down unable to proceed farther. Terrified at finding herself alone and ill on the public thoroughfare, and feeling the gaze of passers-by fixed upon her, she tried to think of some refuge, and suddenly remembered that the poor nun, whom she had not seen for some days, lived at no great distance from where she was, so she gathered her faltering energies and proceeded to her humble dwelling.

The thought struck her—"Even if she should be dead (she was so ill I fear she may be), surely they will grant me lodgings for one night;" and she hastened on as fast as her strength would allow her.

Contrary to her fears, she found sister Agnes much better, and she gladly welcomed her kind benefactress, thinking that as usual it was merely a visit of benevolence. But Alice told her that her father was dead, that she was alone in the world, that she wished to leave Edinburgh, and for reasons that she could not explain she did not wish to return to her former abode, and begged of her to let her share her lodgings for the night, and that on the morrow she must leave her. Agnes, delighted to return in some measure Miss Howard's former kindness, did all in her power to cheer and console her, and a gleam of comfort entered the forlorn girl's heart as she lay down to rest on the humble couch of the grateful nun.

LADYBIRD.

Double Acrostic.

IV.

THE god whose music fills the wood and lawn;
Goddess who comes resplendent with the dawn.

1. "Sad maiden taken from the light of day,
Proud Queen who o'er the realms of night held sway."
2. "One of the three relentless ones who spied
Upon the track of every evil deed."
3. "Beautiful youth, hard-hearted as a stone,
Melted at last, but for thyself alone."

ELSIE STRIVELYNE.

On the Railway.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN OF "FRIEDRICH GERSTACKER."

How different travelling is now-a-days, in the new world of steam engine and electric telegraph, from what it was formerly. How quickly *we* fly, and how quickly the *time* flies; and how slowly some people still go, in their old-fashioned way, in comparison with the railway.

We must confess railway travelling is not so agreeable as travelling by post; but, in our practical days, pleasure in the mode of travelling has astonishingly decreased. Selfishness now rules the world, and whoever can get a corner place in the railway carriage leans comfortably back in it, stretches out his legs, and does not trouble himself about his neighbours.

In August, last year, I took the express train from Leipzig to Coburg, by Eisenach, and, for the first two stations, another gentleman and I were the only occupants of the compartment. The stranger was wrapped up in rather too thick a cloak for the weather, which was very warm, and he had his travelling cap well drawn over his ears. There was very little of his face left free, and what little was left was almost entirely enveloped in a thick cloud of cigar smoke. As I myself am in the highest degree unwilling to speak on a journey, and never do begin a conversation, and my temporary companion having the same inclination for quiet self-contemplation, we took the opposite seats in the carriage, and smoked in emulation of each other.

At Naumburg, another passenger came in who, as he sat down opposite to my first companion, whom I shall call the stout gentleman, appeared to be a perfect contrast to him. He was a thin, little man, perhaps about thirty years of age; but, as if in defiance of his opposite neighbour, he was dressed entirely in nankeen, and, still more, he had his coat unbuttoned, and he acted in such hostility to the feelings of his opposite neighbour that, before the stout gentleman could rise to prevent him, he had let down the till then closed window. "Pardon me, it makes a draught." It was the first word that the former had spoken, and, by the way, it was also the last that I heard from him, but it was useless.

"Nothing is better than fresh air," said the little man in nankeen; "there is smoke enough here to stifle us."

He now sought, as the train was again in motion, to begin a conversation with one of us, but it failed entirely. A not to be denied meteorological observation about "beautiful weather" was passed over in silence. A question to the stout gentleman, as to his destination, found no answer. I myself pretended to be asleep; and in this manner we rattled on to Weimar. The little man was, therefore, thoroughly restless; he was constantly looking now at his watch, now at his chart, which he had soon quite cut to pieces. He then pulled out a book as if to read, but quickly put it back again. Now he took a pinch of snuff, which he also offered to the stout gentleman, who only shook his head; then he drew off his boot, and took a little stone out of it: he really did not sit still one moment. Whenever the train stopped, he opened the door himself, and rushed about the platform for a little while. He was always looking for some one, but evidently not for any one he knew, only some being with whom he could converse. In despair he at last seized on the guard, who only remained long enough with him to give the little man time to open his snuff-box and present him with a pinch of snuff. At last we reached Weimar. There a rather withered looking old gentleman with spectacles stepped into the carriage, carrying a travelling-bag in each hand, and followed by his wife, a lively little brunette. We soon found out that this gentleman was a professor. A servant, who accompanied them, handed another large basket to the lady in the carriage, at the same time wishing them a prosperous journey. Just now the engine whistled, the little man having but time to spring into the carriage again. Then the professor began a search for his spectacles; and, when he had found them, for his cigar-case, which he discovered at last in his wife's work-bag. But now he suddenly missed the key of his writing-case, it must have been left on the table at home, and he appeared at one moment as if he would call a halt to the train. The mouth-piece of his cigar he had also left behind in the hurry, and, in short, in the course of the conversation, in which the little man in nankeen took a lively part, it came out that a number of things had been forgotten and left behind, and it required some time before the husband and wife were sufficiently composed to endure patiently the unavoidable misfortune. It was done and could not be undone.

We were now told, with incredible rapidity, by the little man in nankeen that he was going to Fröttstadt, where his fiancée and her parents, who had come from Eisenach, were already awaiting him. From Fröttstadt they were to take a post-chaise to Waltershausen, and from that they were to walk to Reinhardsbrunn and to the Inselberge. He also told us that he was an operative from Naumburg, but had obtained leave for two days, and he was going to employ this short time in making a hurried

tour through the Thüringer Forest with his betrothed. The professor and his wife could only stay from home one day, as their children and pressing business would not allow of a longer pleasure trip. This worthy couple were only going to Eisenach to visit the castle, to eat their dinner in some romantic dell, and then return to Weimar by the evening train. Man proposes, but God disposes.

In the course of the conversation, the professor's lady informed us that she had a sister in Erfurt, who wished, if it were possible, to join their pleasure party; at all events she was to be at the station to speak to them.

At that moment the train stopped at Erfurt. The guard opened the door, "Erfurt. Stop here four minutes." The little man shot like lightning from the carriage. There was a painful restlessness about the man. The professor's lady, in the mean time, was looking everywhere for her sister; but, in the bustle of the station, she could not recognise her, and as she thought she discovered a blue bonnet at a distance she told her husband so, and rushed out to find the long wished-for one. The professor showed very little interest in this member of the family, but made another search for his spectacles, which he remembered, as he told us, to have had with him when he came into the carriage, and which now seemed to have vanished into the ground. He knelt down to search in the despairing possibility that they might have got under the seat. He felt under the cushion, and opened his wife's work-box, and appeared quite inconsolable on account of this loss. He, therefore, did not hear the bell ring, and came again into the outer world only when the missing articles had at last been discovered in his cigar-case, into which he, absorbed in thought, had pushed them instead of into their case. At the same moment the little man in nankeen jumped into the carriage. He was immediately shut in, and the train started.

"Where is your wife?" asked the little man.

"Bless me, my wife!" exclaimed the professor, darting to the window which the stout gentleman had again pertinaciously shut down. The train began to move slowly, and, in trembling haste, the miserable man let down the window and thrust out his head. Far away a door was opened by the guard for the professor's wife, who came up at that moment in bustling haste.

"That is not my compartment," she exclaimed.

"Just step into this one," urged the guard.

"Eliza!" her husband called at that moment.

"I belong to that carriage," his wife answered, and ran joyfully along the platform opposite to us. But no other door was open here, and the train was in motion. The guard could do no more; but the lady cried, "Open the door, open the door,"

and clung convulsively to the handle of the door. But the door of course did not open, as it was held down by an iron bar; besides, the guards, who were standing near, immediately interfered, for the unfortunate lady might have met with an accident. To stop was out of the question.

“My husband is sitting in that carriage, and I must go to him.”

That was the last we heard of the professor's lady, and the professor, with his head still out of the window, kept his eyes fixed on his wife until the train shot below the tunnel, when he immediately pulled in terrified, sank down in the seat at the window, and groaned aloud.

“Oh, dear! what will become of her?”

The little man tried to console him. At the next station he could telegraph back for her to follow him by the next train. At about half-past five they would be again in Eisenach, and they would still have a long summer evening to make a nice party to the Wartburg. The professor involuntarily seized his waistcoat pocket and exclaimed, “Oh! if she would only come, she has got the coffee.”

But really nothing more could be done at present, and the train had just stopped at Dietendorf, when the professor called to the guard to open the door.

“Make haste, it will start again immediately,” the latter said to him, but the professor did not hear him, but ran in all haste to the telegraph office.

While the little man in nankeen was wandering about the platform, another passenger stepped in and sat down opposite to the stout gentleman. The stranger was not only very respectably, but very carefully dressed in a suit of black dress clothes, and a spotlessly white neck-tie. There was a painful order and neatness in his whole person which was scarcely fit for a railway carriage. As he came in he saluted us timidly, and took off his hat, which shone like a mirror, and laid it cautiously beside him; but he always took it up again, smoothed it with a small brush, and put it on. He seemed to have a decided design of putting on a pair of spotless white gloves, but, recollecting himself in time, he rolled them up and put them back into his pocket. He had also a blue silk umbrella which he laid on the seat beside him. At that moment the clock struck, and, with the last stroke of the hour, the little man in nankeen jumped into the carriage and sat down upon the blue umbrella, from which he immediately sprang up, apologising.

“Oh, dear! is the professor not in?” he cried, as the door was shut. “Hollo, guard, there is another person to come in yet.”

He was answered by a whistle, and away went the train. We heard some one calling, and saw a number of people laughing—nothing more.

"Well, that is divine!" exclaimed the little man: "here is a good man who wishes to take a pleasure tour with his wife, and in one short hour he himself is at one station, his wife at another, and his luggage at a third. And how they are ever to get together again is a riddle to me."

"Has any one lost the train?" asked the gentleman in the dress coat, while he took up his umbrella, half opened it, shut it, smoothed it, and finally laid it down.

"Of course," was the answer, "a professor from Weimar; but how is the journey progressing?"

"We shall arrive at Gotha at half-past two," said the orderly gentleman; "and in a quarter of an hour the train from Eisenach arrives at Gotha. If you sent the luggage back to Dietendorf the gentleman would have it in an hour."

"Well, yes, that might do; but he will certainly go to Eisenach, and if they should miss each other, or should not know that the luggage had been sent?"

"You could telegraph from Gotha," said the orderly man.

"Well, yes. Where are *you* going?"

"To Gotha."

"Would you have the goodness, then, to take the luggage and give it to one of the railway guards?"

"I am very sorry that I have no time," said the orderly man; "I am going to a — I must be very punctual, for I have an engagement at half-past two, and we have already lost about" — looking at his watch, "about seven minutes."

"Well, then, I shall do it myself," said the amiable little man; "we remain so long at Gotha that I shall not lose the train."

With that he took out his pocket-book, and wrote the telegram as well as the motion of the railway carriage would permit—not to lose any time at Gotha. The conversation was, therefore, interrupted, but in the mean time the stout gentleman greatly amused me. He had not, even by a glance, betrayed the least interest in the above dialogue, but continued to smoke, silently but vehemently. He stared at his opposite neighbour, the gentleman with the blue umbrella, who did not appear to enjoy this inspection. He pulled out a small hair-brush, with a miniature looking-glass, and sought, with the help of the glass, to obtain a view of his cravat. But as this proved quite impossible he tried to smoothe down his rather obstinate hair, which, in spite of brushes, would stand on end after the manner of a scalp-lock. Then he brushed and dusted himself from the collar of his coat to his polished leather boots. A malicious fate must have soiled his coat; for, with all his brushing, he never could remove one spot, on which the stout gentleman pertinaciously kept his eyes fixed.

The orderly man was evidently going to some meeting, or to pay a visit; at all events he became very uneasy just before arriving at the next station. Just then we heard the whistle. "Gotha," said the orderly man, as he looked out of the right window, and sighed. The frightful man opposite was still gazing at his coat collar, and he would willingly have taken a look in the glass to see if all were right, but it was too late. At that moment the train stopped. The clock struck twenty minutes to three! With a hasty "good morning" the wretched man rushed from the carriage to meet his fate.

In the mean time the little man in nankeen went to perform his labour of love. He gave up the numerous belongings of the professor and his wife to a railway porter, of whom there were many standing on the platform, and glided like a lizard to the telegraph office, to send the message to Dietendorf.

There was very little time for it, for almost immediately the bell rang for the departure of the train. The train had been eight minutes late, and, come what might, the minutes must be made up. I supposed that the little man would also lose this fatal train; but no, here he is. He sat down in the seat vacated by the orderly man. He was scarcely seated, when the guard opened the door, and said, "Tickets for Fröttstadt, gentlemen."

A young man, with a small knapsack, entered the carriage, who appeared also to be going to take a pleasure tour in the Thüringer Forest. The little man and he both gave their tickets, and the guard disappeared, while the former said, "Bless me! how quickly we are going! They could not give the change quick enough, and so I nearly lost the train. That would have been a good story, and Jemima and her father and mother at Fröttstadt."

The only answer he got from the stout gentleman, if answer it could be called, was a cloud of smoke that would have done honour to a young chimney. But the little man required to impart the intelligence of his long-wished-for happiness to some one; and, finding no other sympathising friend in the carriage, he turned to the young tourist, as he had done to the professor's wife, and told who were to meet him at Fröttstadt, and what a merry marriage they were going to make after. Dinner was to be ready at Reinhardsbrunn, also a guide, and a porter to carry the luggage; in short, every thing had been done in the best style. At that moment they heard the whistle, and the train stopped.

"Heine! another stoppage between Gotha and Fröttstadt?"

"Oh dear, no," said the tourist, "this is Fröttstadt."

"Fröttstadt," the guard cried at that moment, and opened the door; "be quick, whoever gets out here, for it will start immediately."

"Oh, dear!" groaned the little man, "my coat is shut in." The light-footed tourist sprang to the door, and tore at the nankeen coat, but it was of course firmly caught, and resisted all his efforts.

"Get out," commanded the guard.

"Guard, Mr Guard," cried the little man in agony, "do open *this* door."

"But you come out here, don't you? Be quick and come down."

"I cannot do that, for I am caught; do open the door."

"I cannot do it," said the inexorable guard, and shut the door; then he heard the ominous whistle, and the carriage gave a jerk.

"I must get out," said the little man, and searched in his pockets for his knife. It was at last found, but the train was now in motion. With trembling haste he opened the knife; scrape, scrape: he cut mercilessly through the nankeen. Better appear before his bride with a disfigured coat than not appear at all. He rushed to the door—too late! miserable word!

"Station master," he cried in despair.

The whole party was standing on the platform, in holiday clothes, looking out for the bridegroom, whom they had scarcely seen when a malicious fate whirled him from their sight.

"I must get out," cried the miserable man in nankeen. Poor man! why did you make your pleasure trip in an express train? which knows neither tarrying nor mercy—only hours and minutes. Eight minutes lost! How they would have raised up the breaking heart of the little man in nankeen. The train rushed forwards. A shrill whistle. With deafening clatter the other express from Eisenach flew past, and in a few minutes it was safe in Fröttstadt. What was that to him? *He* could not get back, but ever further away, as if borne on the wings of the wind, and now favoured by a slight slope in the ground the colossus thundered down.

The little man sank down in despair on the seat opposite to me. And I sought to comfort him by telling him that he could return by the first slow train.

"But unfortunately," said he, "it does not start before forty-five minutes past five, and the coach returns to Waltershausen early in the evening."

I could make nothing of him, and he said nothing until he reached Eisenach.

At Eisenach, where I also got out, the little man had great difficulty in getting his little piece of nankeen out of the door, indeed he had to say a good word to the porter to get him to open the door on the other side. The last time I saw him he was standing wofully on the platform, holding the malicious piece of nankeen in his hand, and looking at his watch, which pointed to a quarter past three.

N. E. L.

Bruntfield.

A BALLAD.

THE ladie sits within her bower—
 An angry heart an' sair has she;
 Sair mourns she for her dear lord, slain
 By Moubray's deed o' treacherie.

An' in her bow'r she sits alane,
 An' neither high nor low will see,
 An' for revenge o' Bruntfield's bluid
 Her widow'd heart cries greedilie.

Young Stephen owre to France has gane,
 An' there has learn'd the swordsman's art—
 That he may richt his father's wrangs,
 An' plunge his steel in Moubray's heart.

An' to the king's court has he hied;
 An', 'fore the king and nobles a',
 Has charged fause Moubray with the deed
 That caused his father dear to fa'.

An', on his bended knee, he cries,
 "A boon, a boon, my true liege lord;
 Now, grant me leave to this fause loon,
 To prove his guilt at point o' sword."

When word was to fause Moubray brought,
 A loud an' scornfu' laugh laughed he—
 Says, "His maun be a weel-skilled arm
 That in the fight wad conquer me!"

The twa are met in deidly fight,
 An' thiek an' fast the blows fly roun',
 Till ae fell thrust o' Moubray's sword
 Lays Stephen lifeless on the groun'.

The dame has heard the bluidy tale,
 Nae tear she wept, nae word spak she;
 But, now, alas! there are but twa
 To richt *his* wrangs instead o' three.

An' syne young Roger's gane to France,
 An' there has learn'd the swordsman's art—
 That he may richt his twa fowl wrangs,
 An' plunge his steel in Moubray's heart.

An' if young Stephen's heart was brave,
 A braver heart has he, I trow;
 An' if young Stephen's arm was stout,
 A stouter arm has Roger now.

An' he has ta'en a solemn aith—
 An' keep it solemnly will he—
 That he will hae fause Moubray's life,
 Or in the fight himsel' will dee.

An' he has met his deidly foe,
 An' fast, an' fierce, an' lang they fight;
 For Moubray is a buirdly man,
 An' Roger is a skilful wight.

Till, in the fiercest o' the fight,
 Young Bruntfield's footsteps backward reel,
 An' frae his neck his comely head
 Lies sever'd by fause Moubray's steel.

The ladie heard the bluidy tale—
 Nae tear she wept, nae word spak she;
 But, "Let the will o' Heav'n be done,
 There yet lives one to win or dee."

An' syne young Henry's gane to France,
 An' wi' the Frenchmen learned to fight,
 An' through the length o' that gude land,
 There wasna sic a perfect knight.

Syne he has hied him hame frae France,
 An' vowed to spill the traitor's bluid,
 An' neither peace nor rest will ken
 Till he has made his promise guid.

His mother clasped him to her heart—
 A proud an' mournfu' dame was she;
 The smile o' pride was on her lip,
 But tears o' sorrow wat her ee.

"An' thou, my last and dearest ane,
 Thou too maun risk baith limb an' life;
 Yet ferna, strong in thy guid cause,
 Gae, arm thee bravely for the strife.

"I dream'd a wondrous dream yestreen,
 That filled my heart wi' hope for thee;
 Beside me stood your father's form,
 An' in his han' were arrows three.

"An' far beyond, fause Moubray stood,
 An', at my ain dear lord's command,
 I shot them at the bluidy man,
 But twa he brake within his hand.

"But, O, the third he couldna break—
 It pierced his guilty bosom through;
 My son, *thou* art that weel-spel'd shaft,
 Thou art that arrow fair and true."

On Cramond Inch the twa are met—
 An' mony a knight an' lord are there;
 An' on the sea there lies a ship,
 Where sits a dame wi' brow o' care.

Fu' lang they strive, fu' fiercely fight—
 It were a bluidy sight to see—
 Till ae fell thrust o' Moubray's sword
 Has brought young Henry to his knee.

But he is weary noo, an' faint,
 An' canna deal the fatal blow;
 Young Henry draws his dagger forth,
 An' by him lies fause Moubray low.

Then frae the land went up a shout
 That echoed far owre earth an' air;
 An' frae the sea there rose a scream—
 'Twas heard aboon the loudest there.

An' frae the ship there gaed a boat,
 An', when the boat had touched the lan',
 The ladie stepped upon the shore,
 An' to the victor swift she ran;

An' elaped him wildly roun' the neck,
 An' lang upon his bosom lay ;
 But when he raised her frae his breast,
 'Twas but a form o' lifeless clay.

MEGAIG BHEG.

Chapter from the Chronicles of an Old House.

CENTURIES have passed since my grey walls defied the storms, in their first strength and security. I could tell of the bygone days of chivalry, of tilt and tourney ; and harpings in the hall ; of holy men, who sought my shelter, on their return from far-off shrines ; of stately dame, in ruff and farthingale, sweeping through my ancient halls, while the old portraits on the walls looked down upon their living prototypes ; of days when my old courtyard, now grey and mossed with age, was bright with the gleaming panoply of the warrior, and the deep moat, now filled up and planted with fragrant flowers, was heaped with the slain.

Old crumbling ruin that I now am, I should be unfit for the habitation of the glad and beautiful, were I not doubly set apart from the living world, as a haunted house. The simple peasant in the quiet twilight, the belated traveller, as he tracks, wearily and uncertainly, the path that leads past my gates, hears imaginary voices, sees shadowy shapes, of whose presenee I am innocent. Fain would I hear again the tones of hushed voices, the tread of parted feet ; such echoes and apparitions from the past would have no terrors for me, ghost of my olden self, as I too am, useless relic of a buried age, a cumberer of the earth. I am utterly alone and desolate ; even the old clock on the stairs hath ceased its familiar music—silent and motionless it stands in its accenstomed niche, and all cheerfulness died within me at its unwonted silenee.

Rosy blossoms twine themselves round my crumbling portals, and about my casements. The misshapen figures, the grotesque features, that are curiously carved above my doorways, and in the niches of my windows, look forth, each from a flower garland, while the solemn stars still shed on me their familiar radiance, and in their clear shining will live on undying, undecaying, when my tottering frame lies crumbled into dust, and those pages contain the only memory of an old house.

J. I. L.

Nationality.

It has been remarked that the inhabitants of hilly countries have in all ages been remarkable for the deepest attachment to their native land, and to this rule, Scotland—the “land of the mountain and the flood,” has proved no exception, seeing it has produced such heroes as Wallace and Bruce and the Covenanters of later days, whose blood was shed on the bleak hill-sides for the sake of the civil and religious liberty of their beloved country. The times are now happily past, when the Scot required to fight, often to the death, in defence of the nation’s freedom; but though patriotism is not now exhibited under such striking hues, we would be slow to believe that its ardour has, in any way, diminished; and that thousands, at the sound of danger, would not be found willing to sacrifice all, even life itself, for the sake of their country.

True patriotism, we believe, still reigns in the hearts of Scotland’s children; but yet, is it not true that many fall a little short of the love which surely we all owe to our native land? This fault is not one with which Englishmen have, in general, been much reproached, their particular failing being considered an undue exaltation of all that is English, and a consequent depreciation of all that is foreign. We have read in a recent work, by a talented dignitary of the English church, that in an inn at which he halted in his travels, he observed the not very flattering remark on the inhabitants of the country—“As far as I can see, foreigners are fools!” This uncourteous sentiment, though not expressed in so many words, is, it is to be feared, visible in the manners of not a few of our countrymen, when they perceive that abroad all things are not conducted in the same way as at home; and in the air of superiority and importance, which renders the English “milords” objects of dislike, and, consequently, often of imposition. Now, that travelling has become the privilege of the many, and a trip into France or Germany is a less serious undertaking than a journey to London was, not many years ago, it is to be hoped that Englishmen are fast losing their unenviable pre-eminence in pride and arrogance.

This disposition, which displays a singular lack of courtesy on the part of the traveller in foreign lands, is sometimes manifested in a manner totally different, and yet having its origin in the same love of elevating one thing at the expense of another. The habit to which we refer, that of exalting every thing and place that is foreign, and depreciating every thing that is to be found at home, is a fault still more inexcusable than the other; for while we smile at the foolish partiality of the mother who magnifies

all her children's molehills of good qualities into mountains, the parental love which is manifested in it makes us more ready to pardon the folly ; on the other hand, how little esteem could we have for the mother who seemed to delight in exposing the faults of her child, and exhibiting the deformities of its body or mind, as so many foils to set off the beauties of a neighbour's little one. In like manner, though we know that in a hundred ways we might take lessons from the inhabitants of other lands, that in many respects we fall lamentably short of them, yet it is painful to hear people, not always thoroughly conversant with the subject they treat of, speak in praise of everything that is foreign, merely because it is so, saying continually, "O they manage things so much better on the continent ;" "such an affair could never have happened abroad ;" and so on. Now, in those particular concerns, our friends over the sea may be our superiors, but, in giving their opinion on those matters, these cavillers, by their tone, imply that these are only specimens of how, in every respect, we come far short of foreigners. This we deny, and maintain that, though far from being unwilling to give due praise to the inhabitants of other countries, and learn all that we can find worthy of imitation in them, every one should stand up for his or her native land, and, not blindly prejudiced in its favour, but intelligently able to point out its good qualities, which, assuredly, are not few, assert that, faulty though its sons may be, they are yet deserving of admiration, both for what they have already achieved, and what it is their purpose still to do. The true patriot is not he who denounces his country, but he, who, reminding his countrymen of what their ancestors have done, incites them to become their worthy descendants, reminds them that ways of usefulness and distinction lie before them, which were not open to their forefathers, and implores them to show by their actions of what race and country they are.

There are to be found in the northern division of our island, some men and women, chiefly among the younger portion of them, who have a great leaning towards all that is English, without, we believe, considering whether the manners they favour are better or not than our own. The English may be our superiors in many things, but surely, on the whole, we can bear comparison with our southern neighbours, without losing thereby. It is shocking to our ideas of nationality to see Scotch men and women despise the customs of their country as old-fashioned, and even vulgar, sending, for instance, their children to English schools, merely because such is becoming the wont of the stylish of the land. It is not our design to advocate that what may seem preferable in the government and systems of England should not be followed, but that we should cling with some tenacity to whatever is good in the old national customs of our country, and not be over-willing to give up those long-established usages.

Before we leave this subject, it might not be out of place to allude to two practices, of unequal importance, it is true, but each, in its way, deserving of notice. We allude, in the first place, to the reprehensible conduct of many of our countrymen, who, when they have left their native land, with its strict observance of the Sabbath, throw all restraint to the winds, and do at Rome exactly as the Romans do. How can foreigners truly respect the decorum of a Scottish Sabbath, and help feeling that custom alone binds the Scot to keep the first of the week as a day of rest, when they know that on the continent the same Scots care little, if at all, for the religious services they observed at home, and virtually, by their compliance with the usages of the land of their temporary sojourn, admit that they are worthy of all imitation.

The other custom to which we refer, is the foolish fondness which many of our countrymen display for freely introducing into their conversation and writings foreign words, which, in the majority of cases, might be equally well expressed by their English synonymes. It has often been regretted that the pure Saxon language of our fathers, such as that of Bunyan, for example, whose "Pilgrim's Progress" is generally considered a model of pure Saxon, should have given place to the modern English in which the foreign element is so largely mixed; and if the mingling of Latin and Greek derivatives is to be deplored, how much more to be reprobated is the wholesale introduction of foreign words and phrases into our language!

The habit of employing foreign terms often arises, we believe, not from a conviction that they are better adapted to the meaning, but from a desire to show off; and the use of them gives a flippancy and would-be cleverness to the style of writing, and conversation, far removed from true elegance of diction. Moreover, foreigners, when they see how largely the words of their language are interspersed through our works, can hardly fail to be impressed with an idea of the poverty of the English tongue—a character which we certainly would not willingly allow to be attached to it.

There may be, it is true, a few words which have stealthily crept into the language, and become, as it were, part of it, though, we believe, even they could have been dispensed with; but while we sometimes can hardly help employing such terms, there is no excuse for making use of foreign expressions, when their English equivalents can be used with the same force. Why, for instance, should we use "par exemple," when "for example" expresses the meaning equally well? and so with many other foreign terms. Besides the air of affectation this practice gives to the style, there is another serious objection to it, namely, the awkward position in which one is placed who is ignorant of every foreign tongue, when reading, especially aloud, any book in which words of a strange language are thickly strewed. Such an one is compelled, either to pass over

such expressions altogether, to apply to one more learned, or to bungle through the difficulty and probably expose himself to the laughter of those more learned than himself.

As it is not improbable that we ourselves shall incur the risk of being charged with an undue fondness for finding out faults in the conduct of our countrymen if we go on much further, it is time to drop the subject, and conclude by hoping that we shall long preserve our nationality, and those admirable traits of character which are justly attributed to the men and women of our country, and which contribute so largely to their prosperity in every part of the many-peopled globe.

AGATHA.

Something about Everything.

IN TOWN.

"IN Town," has of course but one meaning—there is but one town in the kingdom, and a marvellous place it is. Steaming rapidly in on a summer's evening, from the rich sleepy country to "London's central roar," one thinks wonderingly of the bygone history of the place, how it has grown from year to year, till the few wattled huts among the high reeds of the slow Thames, are replaced by what has hitherto been the most important capital in the world. In the country, and in country towns, there is a terrible monotony in life, a tendency to make mountains out of molehills, destructive enough to our power of rightly comparing and balancing things.

Each village has its "bright particular star;" each country town its half-dozen planets round which revolve clusters of star-dust; milky ways in which no especial asteroid outshines the rest. And so moving in these narrow orbits and unvarying resolutions, our minds grow somewhat oblivious of the fact that the sun is shining somewhere outside our sphere, and might (did his rays touch us) even extinguish totally, our lesser light.

But in town, it is different. Every gift of intellect has its full scope, not one sun, but many, rule the day, and Pandora's box itself could not contain more evils than the varied store of delights that are poured out within the bounds of this marvellous London. We scarce know whether life in itself, crowded and hurrying in the city,

fashionably bored in the park, or the exhibitions, concert rooms, and theatres, will prove the more attractive.

The exhibitions alone would give occupation for many a quiet morning, and in spite of much mediocre and some positively bad work, would teach a sharp lesson to our younger Scottish artists. There is a vigour and thoroughness in the figure pieces on these walls to which those of the Scottish Academy are too little accustomed. In landscapes, however, we hold our own; and "Lochaber no more," by Waller Paton, touches our hearts and satisfies our eyes as much in its own way as "Habet!" and many other such subjects do in theirs.

But the Academy is not the sole attraction to artists. When we have gazed enough at those haughty women who watch the gladiators die; when we have stood transfixed before that deep-eyed "Britagne" who clasps her Roman lover so passionately, we may go elsewhere, and rest ourselves before "Green Summer," wherein Mr Jones has embodied in water-colour Dan Chaucer's sweet thought; or if we are of the happy few to whom studios are open, may enter Rossetti's dream-land, where Aphrodite smiles at us out of massed honeysuckle and roses; or once more, we may spend hours among Holman Hunt's paintings, than which we shall see nothing more glorious in colour or more delicate in feeling.

Wearied with studying rainbow hues, the hot afternoon should be lounged away over new books, that is, if we choose a kind adapted for loungers. If not—if we attempt stronger mental food than sensation novels, we shall find enough to choose from. Let us take up Stuart Mill's daring dissertations, or hunt the boar with proud Atalanta, and recognize in Charles Algernon Swinburne one of our rising poets, one who will wear the bays worthily, if he but work hard enough, and save himself, as from his tendency to classicality, we hope he may, from the over expression and too great redundancy of the Browning school; or, if we would moralize as well as read, let us take Ruskin's last and noblest piece of writing, "Sesame and Lilies," and learn therein, ere the manners and customs of the nineteenth century make us lose the reality, what should be the training, character, and power, of a right-minded, high-souled woman.

And then, when the day is over, tears or laughter await our varying mood, and the piquant irony of Sothorn, or the perfectly studied acting of the Boucicaults, will form a fitting finish to the round of pleasure that keeps our minds perpetually on the stretch "in this little village." Oh, paradox; did we not begin by scorning villages, and we come round to speak of Town itself as "little!" After all, so it is: that phrase conveys no slight meaning, if we think of it rightly, for this town of ours is but a larger repetition of the world of planets and stars we alluded to before; the

circles and grooves in which we move are more intricately crossed, and more confusedly presented to the eyes, but only the scale and number are different.

Who indeed shall say what is large or small in reality? What is a mere mote in one man's life, to another is full of fate; what seems to us a small thing, may be influencing the future of a human soul; what seems to us great, shall, in a few years, have lapsed into irrecoverable oblivion. Truly we learn in this wider existence, to appreciate more the varied powers of our race, to have more extended sympathies with

“ Men our brothers, men the workers, ever reaping something new;
That which they have done, but earnest, of the thing they yet shall do.”

But, in the midst of our admiration, our efforts for improvement, our strivings after our different ideals, we must feel yet more and more deeply, that the great and small things of the earth are alike curiously apart from our inner selves; that our natures contain depths unsounded by any line mortal hands can twine; and that the more we see of life, the more readily shall we acknowledge, that only those who are near going, or gone, “over to the majority”—who have, as it were, a bird's eye view of things, can rightly estimate the relative value of the multitudinous objects that absorb our attention and excite our interests in this our life of every day.

ELSIE STRIVELYNE.

Adieu to Seventeen.

The winds with grief have sobbed asleep,
The sky's fresh tears red Phœbus dries,
Ere, in embracing close the deep,
His radiance dies.

In dreamy thoughts and reveries,
O mem'ry, throw thy silver gleam
O'er girlhood's charms—the fantasies
Of sweet seventeen.

Glide stilly toward the hiding past,
'Mid circling shadows dimly seen,
These moments sweetly sad—the last
Of gay seventeen.

To sunny curls and laughing brow—
With seventeen a sad farewell;
Thy sober braids and brow discreet—
Eighteen, all hail!

ELSIE.

King Arthur and Chivalry.

THE good king Arthur is said to have been a prince of the Silures, a people of ancient Briton, who flourished in the sixth century. Geoffrey, of Monmouth, tells us that he was the son of Uther, the pendragon, or chief of the Britons, and Igera, a princess of Cornwall, and was born about the year 501. His public career began under his father, in the year 516; and his heroic deeds were performed among the Scots, Picts, and Saxons. He married a princess of Cornwall, called Guinevere, established the famous order of "The Knights of the Round Table," and reigned, surrounded by a magnificent court, for the space of twelve years in peace. For the rest of Arthur's history, we are almost entirely indebted to poets. They tell of his conquering Denmark, Norway, and France, slaying the giants of Spain, and going to Rome. From thence he had to hasten home, to quell domestic disorders, which he did; but paid for the victory with his life, the effects of his numerous wounds having cut him off in 542, in the very prime of his manhood. The island of Avalon, where it is pretended that, so late as the time of Henry II., his grave was to be found, is said to have been the scene of this disastrous event. A more generally received idea is, that, like many other of the heroes of his time, he was taken away to Fairyland, to return when his aid is most required by his country. That time, however, has, so far as we are informed, never come. I think now he may be allowed to remain where he is, and we shall manage without him. Were such a thing as his majesty's return possible, and he were to light on the top of St Paul's, he might not know his own kingdom any better than his kingdom would know him.

His deeds may be all forgotten, but I think that we, the citizens of this fair city, will not quite forget his supposed existence, when we look at our beautiful Arthur's Seat, smiling in all its summer beauty, as we have seen it so often of late, as it is said to have taken its name from king Arthur on one occasion having sat on its summit to view the country, and from his having defeated the Saxons somewhere near. But king Arthur's name is yet better known in connection with the celebrated Round Table. The honour of the foundation of this order has been, by some, assigned to Uther, though tradition generally yields it to his son. According to one account, Uther was a great king, guided, or rather led, by a very wise councillor, no other than our old

friend, Merlin, who advised the king to collect all the wisest, bravest, and most virtuous of his courtiers to feast round a round table. This was done at a table which could accommodate fifty. Forty-nine of the places were filled—one left to be occupied by some great person unborn, who should prove himself every way worthy of the honour thus conferred on him. This chair was filled by no less a knight than the wonderful Arthur, pupil of the no less wonderful Merlin. The other account gives Arthur as the founder, and York as the scene of the first festivities. Von Hammer believes the fiction to be of eastern origin, which founds the adventures of the knights on a very old legend, called "Sangrael," said to be a corrupted form of the Latin, *sanguis realis*, or the French *sang*, real (true blood). If any of my readers would like to read some of the romances for themselves, they may turn to such as "Lancelot du Lac," "Perceforest," "Sangrael;" but they may probably be more interested in the accounts which flowed from that gifted pen, which, in the "Bridal of Triermain," thus characterizes king Arthur's court:—

" Each knight who sought adventurous fame,
To the bold court of Briton came;
And all who suffered causeless wrong,
From tyrant proud, or faitour strong,
Sought Arthur's presence to complain,
Nor there for aid implored in vain."

A picture such as that links the name of Arthur with the true chivalry of all ages, and naturally suggests some mention of it as a fitting close to a paper of which he is the subject. The fact that poets still frequently employ chivalry for the less euphonious word cavalry, reminds us that it is derived from the French *chevalier*, a horseman, in German, *ritter*.

The age of chivalry, corresponding to the age of the Grecian heroes, has been, not inaptly, compared to the season of youth, as both individuals and nations, at this gay period, are addicted to similar virtues and vices—such as thirst for glory, enthusiasm, pride, indefinite aspirations, strong faith in virtue. Chivalry, in its full perfection, existed only among the German or Teutonic tribes, and among nations conquered by them, or with whom they had otherwise come into close contact. In Italy there is almost none of the spirit of chivalry discoverable; not much is to be found in Greece. Among the Swedes, though they were a Teutonic tribe, it had not much, if any, root, which may be readily accounted for in the circumstance of their almost isolated position among the nations. Chivalry had for its foundation the warlike spirit and

high esteem for women, for which the Teutonic tribes were so noted. According to the different characters and temperaments of the nations, the spirit took its peculiar bent in the several countries where it existed, or still exists. For instance, with the French it took the form of that refined gallantry for which that nation has always been famed. In Spain, again, it was infused with the true oriental fire of feeling, and was of a much more romantic cast. In Germany it resolved itself into true and faithful attachment to the wedded wife, and so came to its fullest perfection. The Christian religion, and especially the worship of the Virgin, is said to have had great power in developing the spirit of chivalry.

In the age of Charlemagne this spirit was not quite developed. Then the great deeds were mostly of men in bodies, and at that time also, the war-horse, a necessary accompaniment of the chevalier, was not in use. In the eleventh century, we find knighthood quite a fixed institution, and the crusades following gave a great and general impetus to chivalry, by making the heroes of the several countries known to each other. The orders of knighthood were many and various, such as those of St John, the Templars, the Teutonic. We all know where to get a good account of the Templars at least. The training of the youths of noble birth began very early, as pages to the ladies of their own or higher rank; next advanced to the honour of waiting upon the lords or knights, they were called "escuyer" (esquire or squire,) a word derived from the Latin *èscu* or *scuda* (a shield), as it was one of their principal duties to bear this part of the accoutrements in battle. How are the mighty fallen! Who does not get the title of esquire now?—from the cantab upwards, and as to the rank or possessions of those who now bear it, I know no given rule. Pardon the digression. The third and last stage, that of knighthood itself, could not be borne till the youth was twenty-one. For this last and crowning honour, there were many vows to be taken, which, if strictly kept, must certainly have greatly benefited society. Prepared by fasting for the solemn ceremony, the uninitiated promised to protect all women and orphans, never to lie, steal, or slander, and to live in harmony with his compeers. He then received the "accolade," or blow on the neck with the flat of a sword, from the king or some knight of high rank, who said, at the same time, "Arise, I dub thee knight in the name of God and St Michael," or "in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be faithful, bold, and fortunate." This dubbing was often performed just on the eve of battle, to stimulate to greater deeds of valour.

Chivalry has had some influence on many things, but its special power has been felt on poetry. The deeds of the knights have been sung in almost every land, and in each land the poets had a different name. In the south of France, they were

“Troubadours,” and in the north “Trouvères;” in Germany “Meninsinger,” and in Briton “Minstrels.” Their love songs were called chansons; duets, tençons; and pastoral songs, pastourelles. The romances in these songs are supposed to have been borrowed either from eastern fiction or from tales of the enchanter Merlin, and the deeds of the knights of the Round Table.

And, now, that I have done, let me say, that though very scant and deficient in fact or fancy I feel my paper to be, if it only serve for a key-note to other writers, I shall not have wasted time, as subject for dozens of papers may be found in things which I have scarcely noticed, or merely hinted at.

INCOGNITA.



The Victor.

HE is not crowned with laurel leaves,
 No wreath of bay surrounds his head;
 No funeral dirges, sad and sweet,
 Are chanted o'er this warrior's head.

And o'er him stands no princely tomb,
 Bearing the record of his name;
 No poets, in "immortal verse,"
 Sing the grand story of his fame.

Yet, when the laurel leaves are dead,
 And faded is the wreath of bay,
 And poets' song and marble tomb,
 And time itself have passed away—

When numbered with the distant past,
 Shall be all worldly power and pelf,
 The deathless fame shall still endure
 Of this great warrior over self.

Oh! happy ye, who, fully armed,
 Go forth to meet the darts of sin,
 Clad in the panoply of God,
 The victory ye will surely win.

And when ye reach the peaceful shore,
 Where all your warfare shall be o'er,
 Will not the resting seem more sweet,
 For the hard strife that came before?

VERONICA.

A Tale of the Last Century.

CHAPTER IX.

ON awakening the next morning from a troubled and unrefreshing sleep, Alice's first thought was how to get away from Edinburgh. She could talk of nothing and think of nothing, but the means of prosecuting her object with the utmost speed, yet could form no definite plan to guide her in the course she was to follow. Her purse was well nigh exhausted, as the expenses of her father's illness had made rapid inroads on her small capital, and the annuity he had enjoyed was now at an end, so go where she would, she felt that she must depend on her own exertions for a livelihood. Sister Agnes knew not how to advise her, but like Ruth of old claved to her saying, "Whither thou goest I will go." At last, after many plans being set aside as unattainable, Alice determined to return to the neighbourhood of her birth-place, and fixed upon a small village in Northumberlandshire (near the town where her father had been an honoured minister) as their future home, thinking that by so doing she would most readily find some way of supporting herself, and thankful she felt, when she remembered that she had never named the village to Charles, as she feared he might again insult her by offers of help if he knew her whereabouts. So weak and worn out she looked, that Agnes insisted on her resting all day; but in the evening she stole out to her old landlady's, and begged of her to try and dispose of her father's books, and a few of her own trinkets, as she had immediate need of money. The kind woman gladly undertook this mission, and promised to have everything arranged for her if she called the next night. This was the evening on which Charles had told her to expect him, and she smiled bitterly, when Mrs Young, in answer to her inquiries, told her that no one had called for her. "Oh," she thought, "I had no need to fear meeting him, he is already rejoicing in his freedom." All next day the two desolate women were busy preparing for their departure. Alice, as arranged, called at her former lodgings, received the money that the sale of the books had brought her, and bade her landlady good-bye. The worthy woman parted from her in tears, bemoaning the change that grief had made on that fair young face, and how lonely she would feel without the light step and the cheerful voice, that seemed like music in her house.

At length, all their arrangements were completed, and early the next morning the two sisters, for sisters in misfortune truly they were, turned their back on the Scottish Capital, and set off on a new and hitherto untrodden path. How grateful Alice felt that Agnes accompanied her, feeling that there was still one left on earth who cared for

her; but deep and poignant was her grief when she remembered her lover's faithlessness, for faithless she never doubted him to be, and devoutly thankful she was, that her dear father had been spared the sight of his child's misery.

Travelling as quickly as their strength and their purses would allow, it was some days before they reached their destination; and then, poor Alice, exhausted alike in body and in mind, now that need for immediate exertion was over, sank into an illness which proved a long and dangerous one. They were lodged in a small farm-house, far from any doctor, but thanks to the knowledge Agnes had gained in the convent, she knew what remedies to apply, and tenderly she nursed her adopted sister, learning in her unconscious wanderings more than she would ever otherwise have known of poor Alice's misplaced affections, and the cruel wrong inflicted by Charles Campbell. The simple people with whom they lodged were ready with offers of help and sympathy, and rejoiced with Agnes when she was able to pronounce the patient sufferer out of danger.

By slow degrees she regained some of her old strength, and as it returned, so did her desire for exertion; and on examining their small stock of money they found that there really was immediate need for their bestirring themselves. Agnes had not been altogether idle, for when Alice did not require her attention, she had occupied herself with her embroidery, and had now some beautiful work ready, for which the farmer's wife said she could find a ready sale among the ladies of the neighbourhood.

A kind providence seemed to watch over them, and bless their efforts, for one day Alice heard her landlady deploring the want of any one to instruct their children, the nearest school, she said, being in the town of H——, which was too far for them to walk. The school mistress who used to be in the village had left, and there seemed no likelihood of any one supplying her place. Alice eagerly caught at this opening, and at once offered herself as teacher, an offer which the villagers gladly accepted, for besides having their children taught by a *real lady*, as they were sure Alice was, her kind and gentle ways had won their hearts. In constant employment and care for others, Alice Howard strove to forget the past, and tried to persuade herself that she was quite content with the quiet retired life she led. If other hopes ever found a place amongst her thoughts, she blamed herself for indulging in them, and strove to banish them ere they were formed.

When Charles arrived in the town of Dunfermline, he proceeded at once to the house of the priest, to whom he delivered the letter. The old man carefully perused its contents, occasionally glancing, whilst he read, at the face of his visitor, and smiling to himself as if satisfied with the directions it contained. He pressed him to remain

for the night, to which he was obliged to consent, as he was told the desired potion could not be prepared in less time; but first with one excuse and then another (which all appeared unanswerable), his return was postponed for three days. Charles, during all this time, was never argued with upon his change of creed, so he concluded that Father Clement must have said nothing of his apostasy. He was treated with great consideration, and shewn all that was worthy of notice in the ancient burgh. Unsuspicious Charles! this kindness was but one link in the chain that was being forged with the hopes of binding you more securely than ever in your allegiance to Rome. When at last he was permitted to depart, he feared that his poor father would be beyond the reach of help before he could get home; and Alice! what of her?—the thought of her, alone and in sorrow, almost maddened him, so that it was in no very enviable state of mind, that, on the seventh day after his departure, he returned to his father's house. He was welcomed, as was arranged, in the same manner in which he had taken leave; but this he scarcely noticed, as his thoughts were elsewhere; and he longed for the time of his meeting with Alice, that he might assure himself of her safety.

He felt much relieved by hearing that his father was considerably better, and although he was not allowed to see him, Catherine told him that they had great hopes that the potion which he had procured would complete the cure which was begun. When the evening came, Charles left as usual to visit Alice, followed by the half-pitying glance of Kate and the cruel and self-satisfied look of Father Clement, for he had assured himself that Miss Howard had really left, for where he neither knew nor cared.

Charles, as was his custom, after being admitted, was proceeding at once, to Mr Howard's room, when Mrs Young detained him, saying, "Oh sir! our worthy minister is dead, and his bonny young daughter away, and left no clue by which I can find her. I would give, I can't tell you how much, to know that the sweet lassie is safe and well; for Oh! she looked ill and weak when she said good-bye. But I thought you would know all about her, sir? for, begging your pardon, I was always hoping to see my dear Miss Howard and you, husband and wife before long."

As Mrs Young concluded, Charles caught her by the arm, saying, "Dead! gone! did you say? gone where? O! Alice, Alice, is it thus I find you—you, who I thought were pure and true as an angel;" and covering his face with his hands, he sobbed aloud, leaving good Mrs Young at a loss to account for such a torrent of grief being occasioned by anything that she had said. After he was a little calmer he begged Mrs Young to tell him every particular of Alice's leave taking, and her father's death; her account of which we must reserve for another chapter.

LADYBIRD.

Double Acrostic and Answers.

V.

"IN the history of Italian art he stands alone, like Shakespeare in the history of our literature; and he takes the same kind of rank, a superiority not merely of degree, but of quality."

"But her eyes,—

How could he see to do them? Having made one,
Methinks, it should have power to steal both his,
And leave itself unfurnished."

1. "Thrice upon thy finger's tip,
Thrice upon thy ——— ———."
2. "And gliding and springing she went, ever singing
In murmurs as soft as sleep;
The earth seemed to love her, and heaven smiled above her,
As she lingered toward the deep."
3. "'How happy,' exclaim'd this child of air,
'Are the holy spirits who wander there.'"
4. "A daughter of the gods, divinely tall,
And most divinely fair."
5. "Sometime for three-foot stool mistaketh me."
6. "But come thou goddess fair and free."
7. "The course of true love never did run smooth."

F. B.

IV.

Pan—Eos.

1. *Persephone.*
2. *Alecto.*
3. *Narcissus.*

ELSIE STRIVELYNE.

V.

Raphael—Painter.

1. *Rubied lip.*
2. *Arethusa.*
3. *Peri.*
4. *Helen.*
5. *Aunt.*
6. *Enphrosyne.*
7. *Lysander.*

F. B.

Thackeray.

THIS is a literary age. It has produced several great authors, and not a few good books. The young ladies of the present day look contemptuously on the works which were the delight of their grandmothers; and the old people themselves, deserting the favourites of their youth, wonder how they could ever have read, with interest and pleasure, those books which now appear so absurd and "langweilig." Excuse the German word, dear reader; if you can find me an English expression which will as well explain my meaning, I shall be delighted to insert it.

Women read more now than they did a hundred years ago; education is better attended to, and good books are more plentiful. Some of our authors have done a great deal to improve the taste of the age. The great and good man, whose name is at the head of this article, stands in the foremost rank of those who have done most to establish a high standard of literature.

William Makepeace Thackeray saw that there was a great work to be done; he felt that God had given him power to do it, and he did it. He looked around him, and saw that there was much evil everywhere. The wealthy and nobly-born were no better, or rather, much worse, than the poor and mean. Thackeray spared no man because of his rank. He exposed the meannesses, the falsehoods, the sins of the highest, as well as those of the lowest. The moral Hercules saw what an Augean stable London had become, and he set himself to the arduous task of purifying it. We can imagine the feelings of the fashionable world of London when in "Vanity Fair" its own image was held up to it. The mirror was only too faithful. Those whose vices and follies were most clearly shown in it could not say that they saw a distorted reflection. *Truth* was its distinguishing characteristic. No one can accuse Thackeray of exaggeration. Truth was the element in which he lived and breathed. He was emphatically a sincere man. His writings would not have produced the effect they did had they been less honest.

It is customary to call him a cynic. Truth is often unpalatable. Had Thackeray written to expose the faults of the lower classes this accusation might never have been made, but a polite blindness is advisable in those who approach the "upper ten thousand." In the eyes of many highly respectable people a lord is always encircled with such a halo of brightness as renders his faults imperceptible. But, in Thackeray's sight, a lord was only a man; and, often too, a very contemptible man. He knew that

a coronet may adorn a brainless head, and that a heart is not necessarily pure because it beats under a diamond necklace.

In one of his more recent books, after speaking in strong terms of that crying sin, too common, as we all know, of fair young girls selling their youth, their beauty, their fresh bright hopes, for a coronet and wealth, and misery—seventeen wedded to seventy—he concludes with these words, “This is what is called cynicism, you know. Then, I suppose my wife is a cynic, who clutches her children to her pure heart, and prays gracious heaven to guard them from selfishness, from worldliness, from heartlessness, from wicked greed.”

Many people say that Thackeray had a bad opinion of women, and did not know what a good woman is. On the contrary, it seems to me that no man could have a higher standard of female excellence. Perhaps, in attempting to paint the fair ideal of his soul, he sometimes failed; and, instead of high and holy purity and unsullied fondness, he has sometimes described weak-minded amiability and graceful silliness. Yet, how true to nature are his women! What man could desire a truer, nobler wife than Laura Pendennis? What long-orphaned youth or maiden could cherish the vision of a purer, better mother than Helen Pendennis? No scene in fiction ever affected me more than that exquisite passage in “Pendennis,” where Arthur hides his manly face on his mother’s knee, and repeats the prayer she had taught him in his infancy—“Our Father, which art in Heaven.” Having prayed, he raises his eyes to his mother’s face, and sees that she is gone—that she is already with her father in heaven, her pure pale face still wearing that smile which had shed its last light on her repentant son.

And then, Ethel Newcome! What a girl to have been reared in such a school! An inferior novelist, wishing to describe a girl brought up in a similar manner, would, in all probability, have presented us with an insipid piece of perfection—an impossibly good woman. Thackeray never falls into such an error. Ethel has the faults which are inseparable from the manner in which she has been brought up. She is proud, haughty, often overbearing. She has no respect for her parents; is it strange? Yet she is a fine woman, a noble English girl!

What a beautifully drawn character is the “Little Sister!” Does not every one who has read the “Adventures of Philip,” feel as if this generous, tender, true-hearted, good, little woman were his own particular friend? Never mind her “H’s.” We could forgive the dear “Little Sister” graver faults.

We might multiply instances, but those who are not satisfied with what we have already given must go to the fountain-head for themselves. Thackeray’s works are a

mine of wealth, and the little bits of ore, which we can show as specimens give no just idea of the treasures which are to be found within its depths.

And his heroes! Although some of them have big feet, are they not all brave, and honest, and true? Do they not hate lies, and meanness, and cowardice, and time-serving? And are they not true gentlemen? Thackeray was a thorough gentleman himself, and, consequently, knew how to draw one. Was there ever a more perfect gentleman than Harry Esmond? And who does not know and love George and Harry Warrington the two "Virginians," and that sublime old man, Colonel Newcome? Pendennis himself, with all his faults and follies and vanities, was ever a true gentleman. Could the son of Helen Pendennis be anything else? And Philip—rough, careless, independent Philip—was a gentleman. His fine, smooth, finical, soft-voiced father was not. Perhaps Thackeray never drew a more despicable character than this same Dr Firmin. How different from the other Doctor who figures in "Philip"—the generous, tender-hearted Dr Goodenough! Yet, occasionally, you cannot help feeling an emotion of pity even for him. It is very sad to read of a father who lies awake all night long thinking that his only son is estranged from him, and despises him, even when you know that his own sins have brought this sorrow on him. Although Dr Firmin cheated his son, accused him of misdeeds he never committed, yet you cannot help pitying him a little. Dr Firmin was a man, not a fiend; and however bad a man may be, he cannot be utterly vile. There must be one soft place in the most depraved heart; and Thackeray knew human nature too well to ignore this.

Even Becky Sharpe, that cleverest and most wicked of women, has an excuse made for her. She had been miserably brought up; her childhood had never known a gleam of sunshine. No tender word had ever fallen on her ear. No gentle mother had taught her to look up, in her perplexities and sorrows, to "Our Father." The Divine name was only heard by the child, coming from drunken lips, in the fierce oath. She never had any little brothers and sisters to teach her to love something in this world, which was so full of pain for her. Oh, my sisters! had you and I passed a childhood like hers, can we say that we should be better women than she was? Let us not judge harshly those whose temptations have been more, and whose knowledge has been less, than our own!

Taking some random extracts from the "Adventures of Philip," a book which some have pronounced to be especially cynical, we shall ask our readers candidly to judge if these sentences could have proceeded from the pen of a cynic: "Hush! when one sinner is saved, who are glad? Some of us know a woman or two pure as angels—know, and are thankful." "Kind readers all, may your sorrows, may mine, leave us

with hearts not embittered, and humbly acquiescent to the great Will." "Who says the world is all cold? There is the sun and the shadow. And the Heaven which ordains poverty and sickness, sends pity, and love, and succour."

Thackeray has been accused of hating the wealthy, and of satirizing every man who has a good coat upon his back. Here is a passage which disproves this: "Because people are rich, they are not of necessity ogres. Because they are born gentlemen and ladies of good degree, are in easy circumstances, and have a generous education, it does not follow that they are heartless, and will turn their back on a friend. *Moi qui vous parle*. I have been in a great strait of sickness, near to death, and the friends who came to help me with every comfort, succour, sympathy, were actually gentlemen, who lived in good houses, and had a good education. They didn't turn away from me because I was sick, or fly from me because they thought I was poor; on the contrary, hand, purse, succour, sympathy, were ready, and praise be to Heaven!"

Thackeray's loyal, truthful nature disdained a lie, therefore is he most severe upon all forms of deceit. And is society so honest and true that it requires no such reproofs? Is it honest, think ye, to fawn on the rich man in the days of his prosperity, and to turn your back on him in his time of need? Is it honest to live in a fine house, to drive in a handsome carriage, to give sumptuous entertainments—when you know that the very wine on your table is not paid for—when you shrink from the sight of your tradespeople, and tremble before a creditor? Fashionable life is full of shams. Thackeray detested shams, and treated them with well-merited scorn, as every honest man should do.

One thing, which is particularly to be admired in Thackeray's works, is his deep reverence for religion. The "week-day preacher" does not bring religious topics forward in a prominent manner. But when he touches, even slightly, upon sacred subjects, his manner and his language seem to say, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." Thackeray's religion never descends to sentimentality. It is ever manly, tender, reverent, like the man himself. No nobler heart ever beat than his. Intolerant of deceit, charitable to misdeeds repented of, generous to enemies, tender to little children, lowly and reverent in his humility towards God, fearing nothing but sin, the annals of literature present us with no man more justly deserving of love and respect than he.

We shall conclude this short essay with his own noble lines, which how few can truthfully apply to themselves:—

"Stranger, I never writ a flattery,
Nor signed the page that registered a lie!"

ENID.

The Gift of the Sabbath.

WE know that the word "Sabbath" is beginning to sound strangely in some ears, even in Scotland. We use it, not because we dislike any other name for the day, but because this carries with it a meaning and a sweetness that belongs to itself alone. The Sabbath Day, the Day of Rest, how it carries us back, and back, not chiefly to the worship of our persecuted fathers on the bleak hill-sides, not to the Jewish ritual and the splendour of temple service, but to the day when earth lay in its first unstained beauty, and the songs of praise rose from sinless lips alone. No sorely-needed cessation of the hard week's drudgery was the Sabbath then, but only a day when richer drops of peace and blessedness were poured into the already brimming cup of our first parents.

It is a wonderful as well as a cheering thought, that this day, given to the pure and the glad, should be so perfectly suited to the wants of the sinful and the weary; that there should still be left to us this bright link between us and Eden, speaking to us not only of Paradise lost, but of Paradise to be regained.

Rest of body and of mind is ever grateful to the weary; yet often, when rest is most needed, it is the most difficult of all to obtain. In lands where the business and pleasure of the world go on in a never-ceasing round, how many a poor wretch must be overpowered and crushed, for want of strength to extricate himself in time from the relentless wheel. Spurred on by conflicting cares and duties to ever-increasing restlessness and excitement, men would never have appointed for themselves what God has given them in His love—a day of rest.

But the need for rest lies deeper still. I suppose it is only those who have lived in the full tide of bustling life with anxieties to press them and difficulties to contend with, who know how hard it is to seclude themselves from the noisy, fretful throng of their own thoughts, and to give their minds to higher things. But even for those whose path is not thus perplexed and toilsome, do not daily duties and interests often, unexpectedly, grow into snares, from which it is very difficult to get free? We may say, indeed, that no occupations ought to be so engrossing, that, in the midst of them, or in their intervals, we cannot pause and raise our hearts upwards. It ought to be so. It must be so, if we would live to any purpose. But we are weaker than we know. The conception of heavenly things, like the face of a long unseen friend, often grows faint and shadowy, broken up and mingled with confused pictures of a hundred things. We need time and stillness to fill our minds with the *reality* of what is unseen. Our

souls must learn to know God, or life is vain. Yet how strangely are they caught and whirled away in a torrent of joys and vexations, expectations and disappointments; plans and pleasures, restless and ever-changing, carrying us we know not whither! How shall we make silence in our souls, and think of God? There is one haven of rest, sheltered and quiet, provided for us. Engagements and interruptions may have knocked imperiously at our door all the week, but we can now bid them be silent. We may shut them all out, and fear not to be troubled, as on other days we might, by some spectre of a duty neglected.

It is thus, not simply as a command, but as a gift of love, that we love to regard the Sabbath. And we think its hours would be sweeter, were the main-spring of our actions always, not so much fear of transgressing, but desire to use well this precious treasure, and to lose none of the blessing which it bears within it.

In many points we are entirely at one with *des Eaux*, in the views she expressed some months ago on the subject of Sunday-reading. We agree with her, that to make the day one of gloom, or of uninterested stupidity, is one of the worst possible ways of spending it, and we sympathize deeply with her, in her pleading for the children, that the Sabbath might be bright for them. Yet, if we mistake not, we differ in one thing. *Des Eaux* would lead us to the perusal of whatever elevates the mind, or soothes and refreshes the heart, whatever will not rudely disturb the peace and repose of the day. She does so, doubtless, because she believes that all such works *must* lead us to the love and knowledge of God. We cannot see that they do so, without exception, or, indeed, without many exceptions. It is impossible to be filled with holy thoughts, without at the same time being raised and purified and strengthened in every part of our being. But the converse of this is not so certain. It may be possible to linger in thought amidst what is most beautiful in nature, and what is noblest in man, and yet to be lingering far from God. And, therefore, though intellectual culture be an indispensable accompaniment of a well-spent Sabbath, we would not look on it as a principal object. If we get that only, and no more, we grasp the blossom of the day, and lose its fruit. We need something higher. In "In Memoriam," that most touching wail of human sorrow, we cannot find all we want. There is love there, and devotion, and truth, but all these are given to a *man*. One man (recognized as noblest and most tender by the sorrow he has left behind), fills every page; God is dimly, and through shadows, over all. Surely we need more distinctness and reality than is here. But though we refrain from such reading on Sunday, because we think we could show no good result from it, we agree with *des Eaux* that there are many books, not called religious, where we may glean Christian

thoughts. In that case we should be deterred by no force of old habit, still less, by the remembrance of week-day delight in the same pages, from enjoying the offered feast.

Stepping-stones to heaven, and to the fuller knowledge of Him whose presence is there—such should our Sabbaths be. We are seldom dull, when in earnest pursuit of any object whatever. But this is so bright and glorious, as to leave no room for inertness ; so expansive, as to employ and strengthen every power of our nature ; and so many-sided, as to suit every taste and capacity. As to the trains of thought, or the style of books that will help us in attaining this, it is not human judgments or rules that will direct us best. To keep one aim in view is our greatest safeguard. But we are so apt to let it get smothered and hidden from us. Then we go aimlessly about, perhaps enjoying ourselves, or perhaps dragging through the day, because we must ; either way, evening comes, and we have gained nothing. It is when the bright goal is unclouded, that it throws its line of light along our path, gladdening all the track, as well as marking it out, past mistake. Then is our Sabbath truly “The Pearl of Days.”

M. L.

Disagreeable Things.

SOME people, not otherwise ill-natured, are apt to season their conversation with disagreeable sayings, unpleasant comments, and uncomfortable insinuations. Such a person, we often hear, is a good sort of fellow, but he has a way of saying disagreeable things : Such a woman can be very charming when she pleases, but —— ! In fact, these people are never spoken of for three consecutive sentences without a qualification.

A disagreeable thing is distinguished from an impertinence, which it often closely resembles, by certain marks. In the first place, an impertinence we need not stand, but the other we often must, aware that it is the result of certain conditions of our friend's mind, which, as we cannot hope to alter, we must resign ourselves to. An impertinence may, or may not, be true—its main design, independent of truth, is, more or less, to insult. It is of the essence of a disagreeable thing that it should be true—true in itself, or true as representing the speaker's state of feeling. And yet an unpalatable truth is not technically a disagreeable thing any more than an imperti-

nence, though, of course, the being told it is an unpleasant operation. It is necessary for us now and then to hear unpalatable and unwelcome truths; but a disagreeable thing is never a moral necessity—it is spoken to relieve the speaker's mind, not to profit the hearer. The same utterance may be an impertinence, an unpalatable truth, or a disagreeable thing, according to time and circumstance. For example, in a fit of absence, we perpetrate some solecism in dress or behaviour. It is an unwelcome truth to be told it, while there is yet opportunity for remedy, or partial remedy; it is an impertinence to be informed of it by a stranger who has no right to concern himself with our affairs; it is a disagreeable thing, when, the occasion past, our friend enlightens us about it, simply as a piece of information. We, all of us, no doubt, have friends, relatives and acquaintances who think it quite a sufficient reason for saying a thing, that it is true. Probably we have ourselves known the state of mind in which we find a certain fact or opinion a burden, a load to be got rid of; and under the gross mistake that all truth must be spoken, that it is uncandid and dangerous not to deliver a testimony—convinced that truth, like murder, will out, and that our friend, sooner or later, must learn the unacceptable fact, we come to the conclusion that it is best for all parties to get the thing over at once, by being ourselves the executioner. We have, most of us, acted the "enfant terrible" at some time or other; but this crude simplicity of candour, where it is the result of mere blind intrusive assertion of truth, is a real weight, and the primary law of politeness, never to give unnecessary pain is, as soon as it is apprehended, welcomed as a deliverer. Children, and the very young, have not experience enough for any but the most limited sympathy, and can only partially compare the feelings of others with their own. Indeed the idea of comparison does not occur to them. But there are people who, in this respect, remain children all their days, and very awkward ones too, who burst with a fact like a fool with his secret, and are impelled, like the hair-dresser in the well known caricature, to tell us that our hair is thin at the top, though nothing whatever is to come of the communication. These, as Sydney Smith says, turn friendship into a system of lawful and unpunishable impertinence, from, (as far as we can see,) no worse cause than inability to retain facts and opinions, feeling it to be a sufficient and triumphant defence of every perpetration of the sort that it is true. "Why remind one that he is growing fat or old?" "Because he *is*." "Why disparage a man's particular friends?" "I cannot conscientiously dislike them as I do and be silent!" "Why tell a girl that her dress was unbecoming?" "I really thought so." Doubtless, dear Sir, or Madam, you did, but I would humbly ask, while in the abstract duly admiring and honouring your love of truth, are your opinions absolutely and invariably infallible?

or if so, would they, even in that case, be unanimously endorsed by the world at large? Until you are perfectly satisfied on both these points, a little more reticence would be wise, and probably of ultimate advantage to yourself. It is a fact worthy of remark, however, in persons of this obtrusive eandour, that they have eyes only for blemishes. They are never impelled to tell pleasant truths, (from which, no doubt, we may infer a certain acerbity of temper,) though their strictures are spoken in seeming blunt, honest, good humour. Still, they talk in this way from natural obtuseness, and inherent defect of sympathy. Of course the people most distinguished in this way are disappointed. In the examples that occur to us, we perceive that life has not satisfied them—they do not occupy the place in men's mind which they feel they deserve. But this is no explanation, for the tendency is just as likely to have caused the disappointment, as the disappointment the tendency. People who start in life with high, perhaps not wholly ungrounded notions of their own deserts, with definite claims, and elaborate self-appreciation, are certain to be in constant collision with their friends, and with society. Their sense of their own rights and merits is perpetually infringed. Their friendship or service entails an obligation which is never duly recognized.

Nobody acknowledges himself to be an habitual offender in this line—no one will own himself careless of giving pain. When we do become conscious of thoughtlessly wounding our neighbour's feelings or self-love, it may commonly be traced to the blinding sway of some conviction held in a one-sided, selfish spirit. All strong prepossessions destroy sympathy, and, like absence of mind, induce an exclusive attention to our own wishes or objects.

The young lady who replied to her friend's happy announcement of her approaching marriage, by the inquiry if she ever remembered that her future husband might die, thought she was speaking an earnest warning, a sermon in short on the instability of earthly hopes and plans. She was simply saying a disagreeable thing. The occasion called for sympathy and congratulation, and preaching was an obtrusion of self, and its speciality an unconscious expedient for bringing down her friend from a high position of interest, to a level something below her own. The habit of saying disagreeable things belongs impartially to both sexes, but the manner and the motive differ. The example illustrates the feminine form. There is commonly a touch of jealousy to be traced in a woman's trying, or irritating sayings, however remote and far-fetched. However abstract and general the remark may be, an insight into circumstances will probably furnish the eluc—will bring some personal and particular cause to light, which has held sympathy in abeyance. In a woman, this practice is not so much an

exercise of the intellect as of the heart, speaking under some souring, embittering influence. Some are habitually ungracious from the working of vulgar rivalries, or mere grim acidity of temperament. These are simply odious; but it is astonishing what things a woman, sweet as summer, will say, under certain conditions of the affections, to those most important to her, and for whom she cares best; and how seemingly unconscious she is of the tendency of her words, led on by jealous self-assertion, and fancied ill-usage. There is a process of comparison peculiar to this mood, which can express itself only by disagreeable things, by a series of parallels and contrasts, in all of which she comes out the ascendant and superior. Perhaps new friends, in all their glittering attractions, are contrasted with herself, the old, faithful, original friend, great in solid worth and refined feeling, or in long, unshaken fidelity. What chilling doubts, what cruel disparagement, what ingenuity of misapprehension attend this temper! What reflections on the constancy of her friends, what pity and contempt for their taste, what pathetic regrets, what resignation to the inevitable fate of a virtue, a spirit, a perception, which there is not steadiness, or wit, or heart to value at their true price! The worst of this strain, the reason why this tone is so disagreeable is, that it strikes home. It is the essence of disagreeable things that, in some sense or degree, they are true. This is why they irritate. For instance, our constancy is never so weak to our own consciousness, as when our friends suspect it. We never see their social drawbacks more clearly, than when we are charged with being influenced by them. New friends are never in higher favour, than when old ones upbraid us with them.

And now comes the worst fact connected with this subject, namely, that the first place for the study and practice of the science of disagreeable things is the domestic hearth. Here we do not note those distinctions of sex which strike us in society. Men and women, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, are apt to say very much the same class of disagreeable things to one another, unless good breeding, or good temper interposes, to prevent familiarity becoming contempt. It is wonderful what moral and refined writers assume to be family habits in this particular, from which we may suppose the practice to be more common than the civilization of the nineteenth century would lead us to hope. Certainly we all know, or have known, families where the strong tyrannise over the weak, and in cold blood, and apparent good nature, inflict perpetual minute wounds on the self-love of those about them. By this means, finding what it, doubtless, considers a legitimate vent, a caustic temper keeps itself civil to the outer world. A man can sustain his politeness to ladies, in general, by always calling his sister an old woman, or by constantly reminding her of events

she would willingly forget. A woman can be gracious to her acquaintances, and over-indulgent to her children, by making her husband the butt of her ill humour, installing herself the self-constituted check on his pleasures at home and abroad, while some people are agreeable to the whole world, except just those with whom they are connected by ties of blood, to whom they display a totally different phase of character.

Sensitiveness to disagreeable things implies self-mistrust. Only absolutely self-reliant people are impervious to them. We are dependant on others more than we think, for even our own good opinion—we think best of ourselves when others share our favourable impressions, and no strength of constancy can prevent our estimate of our friends suffering some faint fluctuation according to the view which others take of them. All people have an idea of their own position towards the world, though "idea" is perhaps too definite a term. At any rate, they have a dim assumption of a certain standing of which they are scarcely aware until it is infringed, and which it is the part of the sayer of disagreeable things to infringe. We are each the centre of our own world, and thus have a place in our own eyes which no one can give us. Something of this half-delusion is indispensable to carry us through our parts creditably, and the laws of politeness, on principle, support this degree of pretension. The disagreeable thing jars on this nice adjustment. The speaker has the unjustifiable aim of lowering this fancied elevation, whether moral or social; and he dispels illusions, not as he supposes in the interest of truth on any social or moral view, but really for selfish ends. He obeys an un-amiabie impulse to prove that he is knowing where we are ignorant, wise where we are foolish, strong where we are weak, that he sees into us and through us, and that it is before all things important, that this should be declared and made evident. It is cold comfort to those smarting under disagreeable things, to tell them that such sayings generally recoil on their authors in the end, but such is the indubitable fact. We must bear and forbear much in this world. These remarks are to all of us one of the minor ills of life, for which, alas, there is no cure; only the more we suffer from them in others, let us the more earnestly strive to check ourselves in any indulgence of the sort. Such a habit once formed is very hard to check—it becomes indeed second nature. Let a fellow feeling in this case make us wondrous kind.

ANON.

The Sailor's Dirge.

HE is sleeping 'neath the tide,
Far from home and loving bride,
And the wild waves are surging all unheeded o'er his head.
He is gone for evermore,
From his pleasant native shore,
He is number'd with the ocean's prey—the sea-devouréd dead.

'Neath the placid ocean wave,
He has found a wat'ry grave,
And his head is pillowed lightly on the blossoms of the deep ;
Ships unheeded o'er him glide,
E'en the swellings of the tide
Cannot break the chains that bind him in the arms of endless sleep.

No one knows his place of rest ;
On the ocean's heaving breast
He was flung, when lurid light'ning swept athwart the darkened sky,
When the ruthless tempest played,
And his sceptre Havoc swayed,
And the master tyrant Death looked on with triumph in his eye.

All too well he played his part,
Stilled the beatings of his heart,
From its fragile mortal dwelling chased the frightened soul away ;
Powerless lay the stalwart frame,
Quenched the life-sustaining flame,
And he who once had lived and loved was nought but breathless clay.

MEGAIG BHEG.



Something about Everything.

IN THE COUNTRY.

IN the country! Heaven be praised we are out of town at last, and breathing the fresh air, untainted by smoke and fog. How we have longed for this period of emancipation! When we loathed all food but ices, and abhorred our choicest haunts; when the pavement burned our feet, and our souls were wearied of wisdom; when everyone was bidding us farewell, and we felt a fear creeping over us, lest *we* should fall victims to Punch's cutting jokes on the "last man in town." Then did we, at last, while gazing at the empty row, exclaim too that we would "northwards ho!" and be at rest. So that night we stepped into the "limited," dear to all travellers, and as we lay back in the corner of the carriage, we murmured to ourselves Chomondely Pennel's verses on the "Night Mail North;" for out of town we may be poetical; and ere two days were past, we set foot upon one of the loveliest bits of land in the United Kingdoms.—An "Island valley of Aerlion," an "Atlantis," an "Island of Delight," is this same place, and by one of these names only will we know it: an island lying like a great amethyst in the setting of gold made for it by sky and water, as we approached its shores on the calm summer evening, and cried out in the fulness of our hearts, that here would be paradise again on earth. "Wait till you land," returned our sceptical travelling companion, a man obliged to leave town, because town was empty; but who disbelieved on principle in suburban bliss of any kind, and looked on Great Britain as a huge market garden, made expressly to supply London with vegetables and oxygen. "Wait till you land, the tea will be weak and the beds damp, you will have rheumatism, and will take the return boat to-morrow." We touched the landing-place as he spoke, so left time to refute his doubts, and made no answer. Up a winding shady road we walked, chatting cheerily with the grey-headed boatman who bore our goods, till turning through a low gate in a trim hedge, we came on a scene—ye gods! it *was* elysium, with good beds and strong tea withal. A rose-covered porch, with quaint chairs on each side of the door; home-like little rooms, with honeysuckle twined over looking-glasses and pictures, and even the white candlesticks garlanded with ivy; and then she—the goddess who reigned over this little bower, with her serene eyes and happy smile, welcoming us, as she stood, half in sunlight, half in shadow, at the porch. He must be *blasé* indeed, whose heart is not

the better for being within reach of her tender, thoughtful spirit. Ah, my friend, you who have gazed with the unutterable *ennui* of one who is behind the scenes, on languid London beauties, you have some chapters to read in a new book here, and sooth to say, you read them willingly, the book of a pure, noble woman's character—one that a man may read all his life, and make his text-book next to his Bible.

And so the night went down, and the day rose upon us, the first of many nights and days that rolled by in a happy quietness, a silence broken by music of winds and streams and birds, a lapse of time, in which we forgot the great city with its sins and cares, and seemed to realize the dreams of the lotos-eaters. Our delights were not altogether of a monotonous kind, for had we not the morning's plunge in the sparkling water, the long day's sketching, or the steady climb up the heatier and rocky chaos on the hills; the pulling in the bay at night, and sometimes the endless variety condensed into sailing expeditions, that lasted from daybreak till the sun dipped in the western waves; sometimes, when still later, the ocean was alive with phosphorescence, and "with wakes of fire we tore the dark." How the water flashed and danced as we beat up against the brisk wind, and threading our way between islands of marvellous beauty, dashed out into the open channel, and flew past the incoming herring shoals, where eager gulls and divers were screaming and quarrelling over their prey; and how we felt, as song and chorus rose from the boat, that it is from such pleasures as these, that young England derives strength; and while we enjoy them as heartily as ever, we may hope to equal the undaunted courage and self-reliant manliness of our ancestors.

Our Sundays, too, were veritably days of rest, not unmixed with wonder, to one of us at least. A man who only knows religion as a matter of creed and church, who feels that he is eminently respectable when he has listened to an orthodox and fashionable divine, is apt to be astonished at the earnestness and force of a country preacher, who thinks more of his subject than his oratory, and can find the key of his listeners' hearts, though his accent be faulty, and his mode of expression startling.

There was many a living poem in that little redstone chapel, round which the wintry winds would whistle so shrilly from the sea; many a poem in the faces that gazed so fixedly on their pastor, as on one that knew their ways, and could give them comfort. Strangely earnest faces most of them were, weatherbeaten, and, as with most of the poor, somewhat sorrowful, for those same wintry winds are somewhat chill, and life is "fu' o' sairiousness" to men like these; and yet, as we well knew, not one but had in him a kindness, a natural courtesy, often a shrewd humour, that would have done credit to many in a higher station. Independent, too, they were, with a sense of

their own dignity, shown keenly enough at times ; for, unfortunately, others besides ourselves, knew where the haleyon island lay ; and many came there, whose manners and tones were more suited to town tea gardens, than to our ocean-girt Eden. These met, more than once, with the rough handling they merited, from our island friends, who had, as one of them remarked, "two sides to their tempers, like the Mull of Cantirc."

There were times, when, wearied with "shearing the salt waves with rapid keel," we would anchor our little bark in some unfrequented cove, and laying aside our talk of Viking and deeds of derring-do, would find a couch in the heather that grew breast high on the hillsides, and change these themes to quieter topics. These were the hours when book after book was discussed and quoted from, and when some choice, well-worn volume would be produced, and the reader's measured tones make us almost forget that there was an external world beyond those purple bells that walled us in.

Of all authors none held his place on these occasions like the Laureate. It is under such circumstances, and with such surroundings, that one can fully appreciate the richness of his conceptions—the opalescence of his mind, as our reader felicitously expressed it. There is in his works an "inner voice"—one, which, once heard, will never be forgotten. Who can match the perfect pictures in the "Lady of Shalott," the subtle meanings of the "Palace of Art," or the intensity of pathos in "Oriana?" Let those who laugh at this last-named poem read it, as we did, leaving out, if they will, the first and third repetitions of the name, and they can scarcely fail to realize its weird power. None of these poems, however, come up to the "Lotos-eaters" in beauty or finish. There is in this one piece a dreaminess and enchantment equalled by no other, approached but seldom. Only twice have we experienced the same feeling—once, in reading a passage in "Westward Ho!" where an English sailor, having partaken of the Indian betel nut, speaks, like the Greek mariners themselves, of toil and rest ; and once again, in perusing those stanzas of Shelley's, which contain the four following lines :—

"The cloudy shadows of midnight possess their own repose,
For the weary winds are silent, or the moon is in the deep ;
Some respite to its turbulence, unresting ocean knows :
Whatever moves, or toils, or grieves, hath its appointed sleep."

Beautiful as this is, it has not the measured rhythm of Tennyson's great, we had almost said greatest, poem ; to quote from it is impossible—it is but tearing a single petal from the rose, where all are lovely ; we can but re-read, for the hundredth time, this most exquisite bit of word music. It is noticeable that in earlier editions, the

line that now reads "tir'd eyelids upon tir'd eyes," was written "tiréd," and some admirers of the poet doubt whether the elimination of the vowel be an improvement.

But life will not always stand still, and our holiday must end : we must wake up again, and don our town clothes once more. Even so—

"Time changes a' thing, the ill-natured loon,
Were they ever so richtly, he'll no let them be."

And yet, who would care to lead a monotonous existence—contrast is the salt of life even in Elysium ; the very gods themselves were obliged to come down, and fight before Troy sometimes, and, no doubt, Mars enjoyed his nectar all the more, for that sharp wound he got when meddling with earthly concerns. Sound "boot and saddle" then, that is to say read Bradshaw, and let us away ; order a *deoch an doruis*, a stirrup cup, and bid our friends share it, and let us turn our backs on Capua and so to work once more. But first, let us have one more pull on the bay, for the weather is propitious, and our last night promises to surpass all that has gone before. We would think over our deeds and talks of the last fortnight, ere the past absorb them, and they become part of the pale dreams of memory ; so pull out till we reach our favourite spot, and then rest on your oars, and look round. There are the granite peaks clad in purple and rose, above you, the sky blazing in gold and crimson beyond. In the far distance is range upon range of delicate tinted hills, and from the horizon to our boat, the scarce-heaving sea has a sheen as of satin upon it, in which every rainbow hue is reflected. The granite peaks cast a deep shadow across one side of the bay, and out of the mellow gloom come, mingling with the faint splash of oars, tender ballads and passionate outbursts of song, that make the very heart of the darkness palpitate. It is beautiful and heart-rending, as all beautiful things are, more or less ; we feel as though we had not sufficiently prized all we have been seeing, now that it is slipping from our gaze ; and yet we know that we *have* prized it, that we have been more humble, more reverent, more at peace, during this brief period, than for months before, and we thank God for it, and prepare to face the world, with stores of pleasant recollections in our hearts.

Farewell, then, sweet isle, never more sweet than now, when we leave thee with thy sunset robe yet upon thee, and a wild voice singing imploringly from thy shores—

"Non ti scordar di me,
Non ti scordar di me !"

ELSIE STRIVELYNE.

Tableaux Vivants in the Country.

A LARGE and merry party lately assembled in a pleasant country house in Scotland, had already spent some time there, when the approaching birth-day of our host was the excuse for a considerable accession of visitors—all young, light-hearted, and thoroughly alive to the delights of rural life. The surrounding scenery was beautiful, with the sea in the foreground, and the mountains and shores of the opposite coast clearly visible. The house was more remarkable for the comfort inside its walls, than for any particular beauty in itself, whilst the park in front, plentifully studded with trees, and affording good pasture for sheep, was more valuable in our eyes as being an admirable cricket and croquet ground. We had determined to pay our host all the honour we could, and for days before the important one we met to celebrate, were hard at work with our preparations. He was fortunately from home, and only arrived the evening before his birth-day. Many a consultation we had as to the disposal of so many guests, and much amusement was caused by our expedients for expanding the house, which really seemed made of India-rubber. We are of opinion that some unlucky wight slept in the bath; but, as all seemed bright and cheerful in the morning, perhaps it was best not to inquire too closely into the secrets of their accommodation. However, it was arranged somehow, and, including the inhabitants of the lower regions, we numbered twenty-nine—a small city of ourselves. In order to bring in the day worthily, we remained till past twelve o'clock in the drawing-room, and then all gathered round the piano, and sang a song, perhaps known to our readers—"Many happy returns of the day," of course laying particular stress on these words. Our host was quite taken by surprise, and was much gratified with our outburst of enthusiasm. We then all retired to rest, determining to rise early, to decorate doors, halls, and pillars with festive garlands. Long before the king of the day came down stairs, we had finished our work, and he must have fancied himself in some fairy bower, which attendant sprites had raised up in a single night. We intended the evening's amusements to begin with "Tableaux Vivants," the preparations for which had given us plenty to do for days before, so we had a rehearsal in the morning, and, amid much laughter and fun, went through our parts as well as we could. One young lady was afraid she could not make her face duly express the agony required in one particular scene, whilst a young gentleman was disturbed about the classic arrangement of his curls, and was divided between a shirt sleeve and a bare arm, as best adapted to true poetic feeling. At last all was settled to every one's satisfaction, and

parents, children, and guests in general, sat down to an early dinner, and drank the health of the host with cheers and hearty good wishes. Being cautioned in a mysterious manner to keep where he was, he wisely took the hint, leaving us to fasten up curtains, stretch gauze, arrange lights, and commence the business of the evening. This took some time, but by eight o'clock we were ready to begin. Our stage, or frame, as it might more correctly be called, was on an elevation above the lower hall, facing the door. One young lady personated a fairy, dressed in white, holding a silver wand, armed with which she stood before the curtain, and recited some verses appropriate to each piece, after which the screen was drawn back, and the group appeared. We shall now set before our readers these lines and their subjects, hoping for a lenient judgment on a performance got up in a hurry, and without many of the appliances, so easily found in town, so difficult to procure in the country. Our rhymes may sometimes sound rather lame, but judicious accentuation will, in most cases, put them right, and be an exercise of ingenuity on the part of the readers. Bell tinkles, fairy appears, waves the magic wand, and begins as follows—

“ From this day will burn bright and free,
 And steadily burn to the ground,
 In health and vigour, straight and sound,
 The lamp of life that lives in thee.
 ’Twill be a guiding star to many,
 ’Twill light the path of those in darkness,
 ’Twill warm the hearts of those in heaviness,
 And make the house cheerful and sunny.
 And when, like ashes to the urn,
 You to your native soil return,
 Which be deferred, still many a year,
 Leave no dark trace behind, but cheer !

“ Now turn from *future* times away
 Your eye, let it on *present* stay—
 My magic wand will change blank air
 To cheerful visions bright and fair.
 There crowd on my reflecting mind,
 And rise in front, and from behind,
 A group of figures, eager all
 To do you homage in this hall.
 From these, I do select a few,
 Which you will take, as they are meant,
 These, at a moment's notice sent
 Before you, I explain to you.”

The fairy then recites the lines introducing the first tableau, Amor, the God of Love :

“ Of Amor, all assembled now
 Have doubtless heard, and very narrow
 Escape is from his deadly arrow,
 Few of those here escape, I trow.
 Beware your hearts, then, lookers on,
 The infant Amor is approaching,
 His scented weapon he is sharpening,
 For easy victory, on yon stone.”

The curtain opens, disclosing Amor kneeling on a stone, with rose-coloured wings, armed with bow and arrows. This was represented by a little boy, whose fair curls and lovely features were worthy of the character he acted. Lighted up in the rosy blaze of a Bengal light, he looked like a poet's dream. The curtain fell, and the next picture was arranged—“The Danaïdes.” The fairy again waved her wand and recited—

“ What next you will see when the curtain is drawn,
 Is in curious contrast with what was just shown,
 Of Love, pure and simple, you saw the sweet smile,
 You now gaze on eternal and unfruitful toil,
 We may learn by the thought of the Danaïdes' fate,
 To master our passions before 'tis too late,
 For eool retribution, stern, swift, and sure,
 Will follow our crimes till life's journey be o'er.

The despair of these mythological ladies was depicted by three girls, dressed in white, with trailing plants falling about them, a fern-covered bath in the centre, from which one was emptying the water, another, with her long dark locks covering her face, was bowed to the very ground in agony, whilst a third, with her head bent far back, and hair streaming down, clutched it wildly with both hands, with frenzy gleaming in her eyes.

Third Scene.—The Offering.—

“ We now behold a peasant band,
 Their offerings to the Virgin bring—
 A simple garland in each hand,
 Emblem of love unwavering.
 And so to him we reverence pay,
 To honour whom we come this day.”

A figure of the Virgin, with hands meekly folded on her breast, arrayed in white and blue, standing on an altar. Before her kneel some Italian peasants with

flowers in their hands. The woman wears a scarlet petticoat, white boddiee, with black bands, Italian head dress, and gold pins. Her husband has a sombrero, dark jacket, with scarf round his waist; two children in similar dresses. All were dark, and suited the character of the picture admirably, the attitude of devotion being well sustained.

*Fourth Scene.—Love.—*Faust, Marguerite, and Mephistopheles.

“Of love and sweet courtship the image I show
Confirmed by the glorious tale you all know;
From world-wide schemes, by Margaret’s smile,
Faust is attracted to love her awhile.
The hero, who heaven and hell doth defy,
If met by such glances becomes meek and shy,
As she, to whom nature such power has given,
As is scarce ever found, save in angels in heaven.”

Faust, with one arm round Marguerite, offers her some flowers with the other hand, whilst Mephistopheles, in scarlet cloak, peaked hat, and red feather, taps Faust on the shoulder, with a smile of evil meaning on his face. Marguerite’s fair hair hangs over her shoulders, simply bound with blue ribbon; blue silk shirt, white chemisette trimmed with black velvet and blue ribbon, bag and keys. Faust, in a dark cloak, with hat and waving feather. A better Mephistopheles could not have been found than ours, with his dark eyes and cynical smile, and one could scarcely recognize the handsome peasants of the previous scene.

*Fifth Scene.—*Paris presenting the golden apple to Venus, in the presence of Juno and Minerva.

“Now to Mount Ida’s heights we rise,
A glorious sight bursts on our eyes,
Three goddesses of fame, we’re told,
Strove for the apple formed of gold.
The prize of beauty Paris gave
To Venus, of whom poets rave,
While Juno, queen of heaven’s race,
With Pallas, took the second place.”

Paris, tall and fair, draped in white, with a blue toga, holds the apple to the smiling Venus, arrayed in white, her fair hair surmounted by a silver star, her waist encircled by a silver zone. Juno, her dark locks crowned with a coronet of green, looks down contemptuously on her rival, holding the sceptre in her hand, imperial purple falling from her shoulders, and her white drapery confined at the waist by a

golden girdle. Minerva, on the other side, gazes, apparently unmoved, at the scene, armed with her shield and helmet, perfectly indifferent to the verdict of a child of earth.

Sixth Scene.—Home.—The soldier's return.

“I now draw to the end, tears of joy and of grief
Must be shed o'er this scene as I turn the leaf,
Through toil and through labour, thro' peace and thro' war,
Thro' what distant we cherish, what near we abhor.
Man, for bliss and contentment, his best years does roam,
While bliss and contentment are near him at home,
Here man, maimed for his honour, his country, his life,
Now returns to sweet Home, child, mother, and wife.”

The celebrated picture of “The Soldier's Return” requires no explanation, as it is widely known and admired. It is enough to say that the wounded hero, his devoted wife, the old mother, and all the accessories were depicted to the life, and made us realize more vividly than before the pathos of one of Noel Paton's finest works.

The final group represented the head of the family, personated by a nephew of our host, seated in his uncle's particular chair, with all the little characteristics of dress and attitude that reminded us of him; his wife leaning over him, as his guardian spirit, holding a garland above his head, whilst his children were grouped around him—an emblem of a happy family, where the ties of affection were strongly knit together. This concluding scene was introduced with the following lines—

“What now will appear hardly needs a comment,
I before you Amor and Danaïdes have sent,
Of offering, of Love, I gave you a sight,
And showed Paris appearing to goddesses bright.
I ended in Home, my mission is done,
My fairies are vanished, my spirits are gone;
An angel, with power more than *I* here can boast,
Shall crown the work worthily, crowning our host.”

On the final fall of the curtain, the fairy, with her wand, vanished, and the actors reappeared, to take part in the other amusements of the evening. These commenced with dancing, which was continued till a sudden blaze from without, drew all the company out on the portico—Bengal lights were being let off, lighting up house, trees, and figures in red and green hues, both beautiful and ghastly. The effect of these fire-works is extraordinary—their brilliant hues give an unearthly character to the scene, and bring Christmas and the Pantomime before our minds. When these were

exhausted, some of the company lit torches, and the servants and their friends began to dance reels and country dances by their light, to the music of a violin, or fiddle. A prettier or more romantic sight could hardly be imagined than this. The glare of the torches threw a lurid light on the gaily dressed assemblage standing on the steps in front of the house, and on the busy forms of the dancers, whilst the dark trees looked like huge statues against the clear sky.

Before the torches were extinguished, every one joined hands, and one of the gentlemen raised the tune of the fine old song, "Auld Lang Syne," and finally, with enthusiasm, we all sang "God save the Queen," with which loyal expression of our feelings, and much cheering, we separated, and, no doubt, soon saw in dreamland some of the visions of the past.

We could recall many incidents of our happy visit—how we played croquet for hours together; how we watched the cricketers, and admired their good play; how we got photographed in a group in front of the house, and afterwards on the croquet ground; how we wandered on the shore, and over the fields and hills. Also, we could recall happy recollections of the evenings—the social dinners, the fun and repartee that passed round, the sitting in the portico till summoned to tea, singing songs and duets, both grave and gay, and then going in to more music, with the inevitable dancing. Upon all this we could dilate, but space and our readers' patience must have come to an end; and we close with the earnest wish, that all who have followed us through this account of our country pleasures, may live to experience hospitality as cordial and sincere as we did, from a host and hostess, as worthy, loving, and beloved.

INCHA.

A Tale of the Last Century.

CHAPTER X.

MRS YOUNG told Charles all that we already know of poor Alice, intermingling her narrative with ejaculations of sympathy and pity for the orphaned girl. When she came to tell of her strange guest, Charles roused himself from the desponding position in which he had been seated, and listened eagerly, with pale features, and calm

determined expression. He questioned Mrs Young minutely as to the appearance of the man ; but the good woman could give him little satisfaction, he had been so closely muffled, that she could only describe him as a tall handsome gentleman, with piercing black eyes. When she concluded, Charles rose, and, thanking her for her information, left the house, leaving his purse on the table, as remuneration for the information he had received. He looked so cold and stern, as he bade Mrs Young good-bye, that the worthy woman felt actual relief when he was fairly gone ; but had she known the misery he was enduring, she would have felt only pity, and in her rude way have tried to offer him some comfort, by assuring him, that she had such trust in Alice, that she would stake her life on her fidelity.

Charles Campbell had left his father's house that evening, full of joyful anticipation, but when he returned to it, he looked years older, and as stern and forbidding in expression as even his father did, in his haughtiest moments. When he got home, the household had retired to rest, and although he heard Kate's room-door gently open, and saw an eager face look after him, he passed on without once regarding her, and reached the sanctity of his own chamber, his grief being such, that he could bear no sympathy ; least of all, from one, who he knew would heap reproaches on the cause of it. His greatest relief seemed to be in constant action, so he proceeded at once to put together a few things necessary for a journey ; then he sat down, and wrote a few lines of farewell to his sister, telling her that he was leaving home for long, it might be for ever, but giving no reason for his sudden resolve. He asked her to remember him with affection, assuring her that her image could never be effaced from his heart. He charged her to be to their father all that he had once hoped to be, implored her to seek his forgiveness for him ; and, breathing the deepest regard for herself, he said farewell ! He threw himself on his bed to rest, but not to sleep, and long before any of the inhabitants of the house were astir, he was far on his journey, determined to leave his native land, to which, disowned by his father, and forsaken by one whom he had held dearer than life, no tie now bound him. Like a ship-wrecked mariner, he knew not how to direct his way. At last he thought of Italy, and set sail for that land of poetry and romance, resolved to prosecute his favourite study, painting ; and forsaking all other love, make Art his mistress ; in courting her favour, try to forget Alice Howard, or think of her only as a happy dream, that was gone for ever, although its pleasing influence remained, for he held firmly to the truths she had first taught ; nothing now would induce him to return to the Church of Rome. He had painted a great deal for his own amusement, but now he sought to win fame, and he pursued his object most unweariedly ; mixed with no society, and was soon known as an

eccentric young English artist, who lived like a hermit, shunning even the abodes of men. His pictures, however, were greatly admired, and he was compelled to suffer visitors in his studio. He changed his name to Gray—a common enough one in Scotland, and by that means hoped to avoid being recognized.

Thus two years passed. He neither heard from his home nor of Aliee, and was beginning to get contented and happy with his solitary life, although fears, as to whether he had acted wisely, in so quickly doubting his Aliee's truth, would sometimes force themselves upon him. His forte lay in figure painting; and being at that time engaged on a large piece representing "Mary Stuart's last look of France," he, unconsciously to himself, till he saw the figure completed, had given to the unfortunate Queen of Scotland, every feature and expression of his lost Aliee. He felt half inclined to efface it, and paint it over again, but, somehow, looking at the likeness soothed and pleased him, and he resolved to retain it, and paint another for exhibition. One day, some time after, as he was busily engaged on the new picture, the old woman who prepared his meals, and was indeed his *factotum*, opened his studio door, and announced Sir Edward and Lady Howard. Charles, as usual, was scarcely civil, but the open-hearted young Englishman seemed not to notice his host's sturliness, and his fair young bride asked so many questions, and seemed so pleased with any information he condescended to give, that by degrees his reserve disappeared, and he found himself laughing and talking as he had not done since he left Scotland. They examined and praised all his paintings, and were just leaving the studio, when her ladyship's eye caught sight of a picture with its face to the wall, which, before Charles could prevent her, she had turned, and was gazing on with delight. Her husband joined her, and at once exclaimed, "Why Emily, that is as like our village school-mistress as if she had sat for it; but I forgot" (with a fond look at his young wife), "you have not yet seen your new home and all its beauties." They were on their wedding tour, and Sir Edward's estate was situated in the north of England. He turned to question the artist, but forbore, when he saw the deadly paleness of his face, and the haughty coldness of his manner. His wife was not so observant, for she turned laughingly from the picture, saying, "Ah, Mr Gray, I feel sure there is a story connected with that face, and you must tell it me, to make me look pleasant, when I am sitting for that tiresome picture Sir Edward has set his heart upon; so adieu till to-morrow, and then for the tale."

LADYBIRD.

Chaucer.

CHAUCER, the "Father of English Poetry," was born in London, about the year 1328. He was probably educated for the law; but, in his thirty-first year, he served in the war against France, and was taken prisoner. After his liberation, he filled several offices under government, and went as ambassador, to the courts of France and Italy. He was connected with the Royal Family, by the marriage of his wife's sister, Catherine Swynford, and John of Gaunt.

His earliest composition of any length, was a translation from the original French, of the "Roman de la Rose," by Guillaume de Sorris. Chaucer also writes "Troilus and Cressida," the "Legend of good Women," and the "House of Fame." The latter poem is better known in the present day through Pope's paraphrase, entitled, "The Temple of Fame." But Chaucer's great work, the "Canterbury Tales" can never be considered out of date by students of English literature, and on it the author's fame most securely rests.

The plan of the "Canterbury Tales" is very ingenious. A party of pilgrims, on their way to Thomas à Becket's shrine, meet in Southwark, at the Tabard Inn. The host, one of Chaucer's most admirably drawn characters, proposes that the pilgrims should enliven their journey, by telling tales. Each person was to tell two tales, one in going, and the other in returning. The host agreed to accompany them, as president of the party.

The "Knight's Tale," the longest of all, is a chivalrous romance of the highest order. It contains some passages which are unsurpassed in English poetry. The description of Emelie, the heroine of the tale, when the imprisoned Palamon first beheld her through

" A window, thick of many a bar,
Of iren grete, and square as any spar,"

is very fine. The "Noble Theatre," in which Palamon and Arceite were to combat for the hand of the fair Emelie, is powerfully and beautifully described. Emelie, like a true woman, mourns greatly for the dead Arceite, whom she had slighted during his life; but, at length, she becomes the wife of Palamon, and all ends happily.

The "Man of Lawes Tale," which relates the fortunes of "Dame Custanee," the Roman Emperor's daughter, is known to, and admired by all lovers of poetry. It would be difficult to find a more beautiful description of a fair and good woman, than the following of Custanee—

“ In hir is high bewte withoutin pride,
 And youth, withoutin grenehode or folie ;
 To all hir werkis vertue is hir gyde ;
 Humbless in hir hath slaine all tyrannie.
 She is a mirroure of all curtesy.
 Hir hert is very chambre of holinesse,
 Hir hand minister of fredom and almes.”

None of the “ Canterbury Tales ” is better known than the “ Clerke’s Talc,” which treats of the trials and submisson of the “ patient Griselda.” This most long-suffering of her sex, endured all manner of bad treatment from her husband, without even *looking* distressed. Patience is, no doubt, a very good thing ; but, like all other good things, it is possible to carry it too far. Griselda might surely have interceded for her children’s life, when they were taken from her, as she believed, to be put to death. Her speech to her husband, when he desired her to deliver up her little daughter to be murdered, shows very deep love for her husband, but surely very little for her child :

“ Lord, all lyeth in your pleasauce,
 My childe and I, with hertie obeisaunce.
 Ben your own alle, and ye may save or spille
 With your owne thing workith after your wille.
 Ther may be nothing, so God my soule save,
 Likin to you, that may displesin me ;
 Ne, I desirin nothing for to have,
 Ne dredin for to lese, but only ye :
 This wille is in my herte, and ay shall be—
 No length of time, or dethe may this deface,
 Ne turne my corage to none other place.”

But, notwithstanding this ready sacrifice of her child, we know that Griselda had a mother’s heart. We cannot resist quoting part of the scene, where her children are restored to her :

“ Whan this she herde aswoune doun she fallith,
 For pitous joye, and after hir swouning,
 She bothe hir yonge childerne to hir callith,
 And in hir armis, pitously weping,
 Embraceth them both tendirly kissing,
 Full like a mother, with hir salte teres,
 She bathid bothe ther visage and ther heres.”

“ O, what a pitous thing it was to se,
 Hir swouning, and her humble voice to here !

Graunt mercy ! Lord God, thank I you (quod she),
 That ye have savid me my children dere :
 Now reke I nevir, to be dede right here,
 Sith I stonde in your love, and in your grace,
 No force of dethe, ne whan my spirit pace."

" O tendir, O dere, O yonge childerene mine,
 Your woful mother wenid stedfastly,
 That cruel houndis, or some foul vermine
 Had etin you ; but God of His mercie,
 And your benigne father so tendirlic
 Hath done you kepe : and in that same stounde,
 Alle sodainly she swapte doune to the grounde."

This tale is exquisitely told, and the character of Griselda is drawn with a delicacy of touch and purity of imagination rarely to be met with in early writers. We cannot help loving the patient, all-enduring wife, even while we blame her unreasoning and unreasonable obedience to her imperious husband. But as there is no danger of the ladies of the nineteenth century erring in this respect, they may read and enjoy the story of Griselda in perfect security, knowing that they run no risk of imitating her in her one fault.

The manner in which Griselda bears her sudden transition from poverty to wealth, is admirably narrated by Chaucer, and reminds us forcibly of the "Lord of Burleigh's" gentle bride :

" So she strove against her weakuess,
 Tho' at times her spirit sank :
 Shaped her heart with woman's meekness
 To all duties of her rank :
 And a gentle consort made he,
 And her gentle mind was such
 That she grew a noble lady,
 And the people loved her much."

Space forbids us to dwell longer on the "Canterbury Tales." They are indeed a vast treasury of beautiful and lofty thoughts, clothed in befitting language. Very few old poets—Shakespeare, Spenser, Dante, and Milton excepted—repay so well the trouble of studying them. Chaucer was the first author who drew his language from the "well of English undefiled." Those who wrote prior to him, composed, for the most part, in French or Latin. A great many French words are employed by Chaucer ;

but, notwithstanding, he can be read without difficulty, by those who do not grudge bestowing a little trouble and attention, in exchange for a great deal of pleasure.

Chaucer's writings are distinguished by a wonderful insight into men's motives and characters; indeed, his knowledge of human nature can only be compared to that of Shakespeare. His love of Nature, and the close and intimate communion which he enjoyed with her, remind us of Wordsworth. His humour is genial, although somewhat satirical; and here he reminds us of Thackeray—that keen-eyed moralist, but tender-hearted man. Chaucer was a true knight also, and honours women as few authors have done. He resembles Shakespeare in many respects, besides his knowledge of human nature. Chaucer might, perhaps, have written the "Merry Wives of Windsor," the "Taming of the Shrew," "Much ado about Nothing," or even "Romeo and Juliet;" but he could not have attained to "Hamlet," or the "Merchant of Venice," or the "Midsummer Night's Dream." He might have succeeded in drawing the gentle "Desdemona," the witty and charming "Beatrice," the tender-hearted "Ophelia," or the innocent "Miranda;" but he could not have described the glorious "Portia," the scarce human "Lady Macbeth," with her fearful passions and unrestrained ambition. Such an unwomanly woman could not have been created by Chaucer's muse. It seems to us that he would also have been unable to portray our favourite "Rosalind."

Shakespeare's muse takes higher flights than Chaucer's. The latter writes out of the fulness of a merry heart; the former draws his wonderful conceptions from the depths of a mind unrivalled for sublime philosophy and exquisite grace. Chaucer's poetry is like a silvery stream, which flows through a fair, smiling valley, and ever and anon bursts into ripples, and dashes merrily over rough rocks, forming itself into tiny waterfalls, in very gladness: while water-lilies grow on its shores, and all manner of lovely flowers spring beside it. Shakespeare's writings, on the other hand, remind us of a great forest, whose lofty, majestic trees seem to reach the heavens; yet, whose mossy sward is gay with flowers of varied hue and form, and where also the clear brook winds its way, and the happy birds warble their sweet notes among the lofty branches.

ENID.

Parting Thoughts.

O BARQUE! waft swiftly o'er the restless foam,
 To far-off isles, girdled by silver seas,
 Those whose old place is empty in our home,
 While their white sail unfurls before the breeze,
 Whose tones still seem to fall upon the ear,
 In words Earth's fearful children sigh to hear.

And bear them safely o'er thy floods, O Life!
 Whom thy deep waves have parted from our side,
 Through sunny weather, and dark tempest's strife,
 Bear them unwrecked, upon thy changeful tide,
 Unto their haven on that quiet shore,
 Whence, anchored fast in rest, they part no more:

In rest—O failing eyes, O weary feet,
 O dewy pastures, green, and fresh, and fair;
 After the long day's burden and its heat,
 While golden harpings tremble through the air,
 And angel voices breathe the welcome blest,
 Enter, O faithful servants, into rest!

J. I. L.

Something about Everything.

FRIENDSHIP.

FRIENDSHIP is a theme on which men may speak and essayists may write, and, when all is said and written, listeners and readers must alike confess, that the subject is not exhausted. Indeed, it is in some ways inexhaustible, being but another form of the all-powerful, all-pervading mystery, which we call Love. So calling it, we are as far as ever from explaining it, and are fain in the end to say, that, being in its

essence divine, our wordy disquisitions do but wind around it and hide its splendour, and cannot, being at best of the nature of veils, in any way touch the core of the mystery.

To give, with historians or biographers, instances of deeds done for friendship's sake, is to give the effect for the cause ; to say, with lexicographers, that friendship is a "mutual attachment founded on kind offices," is to give the lowest definition ; and perhaps there is no better expression can be given to our feeling regarding it, than that used by one of the friends, whose names are known to history—"Thy love to me was wonderful ; passing the love of women."

There are those, however, who take the lexicographer's view as being the only one possible ; who hold that disinterested friendship is a thing so rare, that it can scarcely be said to exist ; who believe that the foundation of what is usually called friendship, must be either self-interest, the pleasure of patronage, or some other equally ignoble motive. To these,

"Like a man in wrath, the heart
Stands up and answers, I have felt."

Or, perhaps, we lay aside the wrath, and substitute pity, thinking that those who entertain no higher views than these, must either have been debarred by circumstances from all power of judging, or, far sadder reason, must, like the gambler, have rashly risked all their wealth of trust on one hope, and having found that misplaced, shrink back in utter poverty and bitterness of heart upon the cynic's creed, which places faith in no man.

For that there is such a thing on earth as pure, noble, and unselfish friendship, there are many, very many, who can gladly bear witness : friendships in which there is no question of merely material advantage, but in which each soul is conscious that the welfare of the other is dearer than its own, and that no sacrifice is too great to be made unhesitatingly for that other's sake. "Passionate friendships," St Augustine called such, and rightly ; rising to the region of passion in their abnegation of self, their passionate earnestness, shall we add, their passionate prayerfulness.

Naturally, these are of rare occurrence ; they are as the brightest jewels, the clear, unchanging diamonds in a crown, which contains many a less dazzling gem ; for there are comparatively few natures either capable of such feeling, or conscious of the need which it supplies. Between women such friendships must be especially rare, both from the lesser strength of their natures, and from the greater wear and tear to which their weaknesses necessarily subject even those dearest to them : between man and man they are possible, and noble ; between man and woman they are still possible, and most beautiful of all.

While exalting those which make the chief treasure of a life-time, we are far from wishing to under-rate lesser friendships ; to them we owe the helpfulness, the many pleasures, the endless little sympathies and kindnesses which make up much of the sum of our daily existence ; and though, as has been said, " we can have but one *dearest* friend, it would argue small power of appreciating or loving, to have only *one* friend."

Another element which gives a charm to friendship, is that of choice. Near relations share frequently the same general type of character ; if the same virtues, the same failings, and therefore it is we turn so readily to some other nature, which shall fill up the wants and weaknesses of our own, and be taken by us, of our own free will, into the inmost recesses of our lives.

And when this has been done, how seldom the consciousness comes to any of us, that, with a fresh happiness, we have added to our lives a fresh duty ; that to those whom we call friends, in this truest sense, we ourselves must be to the utmost power, nay, if it were possible, beyond the utmost power of humanity, entirely and unswervingly true : true, not in mere outward constancy, not even in trustful confidence only, but in most passing thought, in most hidden intention. Nor can this be without some personal pain, perhaps even risk, for truth of this kind watches over the interests and actions of its object, not failing at any cost, to speak their meed faithfully, and of these friends we may surely say, that we strive for their praise, because they have won from us " such reverence for their blame."

Another law we should remember ; that friendship is a thing undying. One who has written on this subject, as only those can who have *proved* their theories, says of this, that " we may lose the friend, the friendship we never can or ought to lose. Actively, it may exist no more ; but passively, it is just as binding as at the first moment, when we pledged it, as we believed, for ever."

There are circumstances when a friendship must be given up, when the liberty of speech and action, necessary to its very existence, is gone, and when, through no fault of ours, we must surrender what has been most dear to us. Let it be done then quietly, as such things ought to be done : let us break off, if need be, with a steady hand, the little endearments and gentlenesses which were as the leaves and flowers of a beautiful plant ; but let us remember, that after all this, the root is still in its old place, ready to spring and blossom again, should the sunshine reach it ; if otherwise, retaining its hidden life, till it becomes a part of its mother earth.

After which, as no thing that has once had true, pure life, can become void, or cease utterly to exist, it may bloom again, in who shall say, what rich strange form ; in who knows, what eternity of beauty.

ELSIE STRIVELYNE.

On Epigrams.

It is on the principle of brevity being the soul of wit, that good Epigrams are constructed, for their excellence depends on their conciseness and point :

“ What is an Epigram ?
A dwarfish whole ;
Its body brevity,
And wit its soul.”

The Epigram first received its tone of sharpness and piquaney from the Latins, amongst whom, Martial and Catullus, are the most celebrated epigrammatists. It has been remarked that in our own country, and also in France, no one has ever achieved fame merely as a writer of epigrams ; and that in England, the most distinguished epigrammatists have generally been lyrical poets. Pope is an example of this, for it is to his pen that we are indebted for many of our best epigrams. The poet was once in a company where the amusement was verse-making. Asking Lord Chesterfield for the loan of his peneil, he wrote—

“ Accept a miracle ; instead of wit,
See two dull lines by Stanhope’s pencil writ.”

The following was engraved on the collar of a dog, given by Pope to his Royal Highness—

“ I am his Highness’ dog at Kew ;
Pray, tell me, sir, whose dog are you ?”

The next is on a person who wrote long epitaphs—

“ Friend, for your epitaphs I’m grieved ;
Where still so much is said,
One half will never be believed,
The other never read.”

“ The Voyage of Columbus,” a poem by Samuel Rogers, so well known for his ready and caustic wit, had been criticised in the Quarterly Review, by Mr Ward, afterwards Lord Dudley, in a tone of studied, yet veiled, depreciation. The poet retaliated by the following epigram—

“ Ward has no heart, they say ; but I deny it,
He has a heart, and gets his speeches by it.”

The following describes a suit in Chancery—

“ Mr Leach made a speech,
 Angry, neat, and wrong ;
 Mr Hart, on the other part,
 Was prosing, dull, and long.
 Mr Parker made the case darker,
 Which was dark enough without ;
 Mr Cook cited a book,
 And the Chancellor said I doubt.”

Here is a description of a good epigram—

“ The qualities all in a bee that we meet,
 In an epigram never should fail ;
 The body should always be little and sweet,
 And a sting should be felt in the tail.”

Garrick was once accused by a Dr Hill of mispronouncing some words, including the letter *I*, as *furm* for *firm*, *vurtue* for *virtue*. He retorted in the following epigram—

“ If 'tis true, as you say, that I've injured a letter,
 I'll change my notes soon, and I hope for the better ;
 May the just right of letters, as well as of men,
 Hereafter be fixed by the tongue and the pen !
 Most devoutly I wish that they both have their due,
 And that *I* may be never mistaken for *U*.”

We shall conclude this little paper with Sir William Jones' translation of the Persian epigram on “ a newly-born child ”—

“ On parent knees a naked, new-born child,
 Weeping thou sat'st, while all around thee smiled ;
 So live, that, sinking in thy last long sleep,
 Calm, thou may'st smile, while all around thee weep.”

VERONICA.



Tide-pools and their Beauty.

THERE is a special charm for me in the belt of tangle and rock that is redeemed, twice a-day, from ocean's domain, and won back to it when the great water rises again upon our shores. This tract looks waste and forbidding enough to you who are quietly seated on a grassy knoll, where the sea-pinks grow. Slippery and treacherous it certainly is, but only venture down upon it and you will learn to love it as I do. There, are salt rivers hurrying down to catch the retreating tide; here, are glancing cascades and hollow gulfs, clear lakes and branching forests. They are truly not so large as those of our wider world, but they are not less beautiful and varied.

There, is a water-filled cranny between two steep rocks where crimson anemones blossom under the green weed; here, is a great, deep, solemn pool, edged round the brim with thick, short brown thongs. In a twinkling, a startled fish has plashed across, and is hidden again, and we wonder how it dared to stir that still, transparent water, or cast its quick-passing shadow on the stones that lie green in the far depths, as though no sound nor motion had ever approached them.

I spent half-an-hour yesterday in looking into a pool of a very different sort. It was a basin, so small that you could barely have washed your hands in it. A pale orange anemone, a streamer of common green weed, flowing from a tuft of glossy mussel shells, attracted me to it at first. And then I saw that each mussel had left its door ajar, and was moving its frilled lips to and fro, to drink in the warmth of the sun-lighted water. There were limpets, too, in plenty, those determined little clingers that I had often tried in vain to wrest from their moorings. But now they had weighed anchor of their own accord; barely touching the rock, and leaving between that and the drooping eaves of their dwellings, a narrow space, where I could rather guess than see, that happy motion was going on. Those hard, white cones that crust over all the rocks around us, huddled together on the backs of limpets and mussels, as if they could not find standing room—they too, had wakened up. On the crest of each, a tiny valve opened and shut; tiny fingers, each fine as an eyelash, and as perfectly finished, were thrust out, and clutched, and folded in, and thrown out again perpetually. A whelk, only the size of a crumb, was balancing itself most gracefully; floating, sinking, buoying itself up again, with the most perfect ease and grace. There were no forms but familiar ones, such as I had often seen shown among the pebbles on the beach. Yet I could have stayed for hours, watching the free motions of those happy

living creatures. It seemed very wonderful that He, on whom the Universe hangs, should have cared for that little rock-pool, and made it teem so richly with delighted life.

But come now with me to this many-tinted garden. You can measure its length with two steps. It cannot be deep, yet those soft moss-like weeds cloud the bottom with a gentle mystery. How graceful they are—each leaf a double frill of clear green tissue, folding and unfolding, brightening and shading, with every ripple. But the gay corallines are the glory of the garden. Bright rosy clusters cling to the face of precipices, or deepen into crimson in shady nooks. Sometimes blanched to silver frost-work, where the sun has looked full upon them; sometimes dimpled by the shadow of a waving tress above—they are the very type of tenderness, combined with fearless self-reliance. Look at this wild hill-side, covered with its forest of birches, interwoven as finely, waving as freely, as you and I have seen birch-trees waving in the woods at home, when their yet unclothed branches were traced against the brightening sky, and winter was almost done. And, shooting from among their reddish-brown twigs, there are the tall fir-tops in their early green. A little down the steep, there lies an unexplored grotto. What enchantment may lie under its shady fringe of pink and green, we know not, but out from its recess there waves a tuft of glossy brown, touched faintly with green, as I have seen a copper-beech in spring. Not that this slight, tremulous thing can bear comparison with the stately tree. It is more like a drooping willow branch mirrored in a river. A tiny fish darts from the shade, looks about it with bright suspicious eyes, then glances like lightening under the leaves. Was it green, or gold, or silver, or transparent crystal, glittering with all colours? How did it come? How did it go? It is hid, perhaps, under this tuft of stiff, forked, dark, brown weed. Dark brown, did I say? It was meant to be grave and dark, no doubt, but how can it, with the summer sun dancing on it, and that lovely, living flower nestling by its side, with full-blown petals, and blue-bead necklace. And here is the pink coralline once more, clinging round an irregular knoll of mussels. And, streaming out, there is a lock of sunny golden-brown, that might have graced a mermaid's neck, waving and swinging with a quiet motion, as the breeze dimples the pool.

What a bewitching beauty water gives to all those leaves, even the commonest. Pluck them, and most of them will shrink into a wisp of ugly slime. Take them home and press them, still they will have lost their graceful freedom, and their sparkling brightness. Better leave them to glisten, and wave and float, as the sunshine smiles or the ripple passes by.

But we must escape over the slippery weed, while there is yet time, for soon the tiny cup and the deep pool will have lost themselves in the one great ocean. M. L.

Good Fairies.

A GOOD many years ago, one of those useful individuals called pedlars, or packmen, came one day with his goods to a manse in the south of Scotland. The minister's wife inspected his collection, and probably made some purchases; but for one of the articles the pedlar displayed, the price he demanded was so exorbitant, that the good lady asked in astonishment, if the fellow took her for a fool. "Na, na, mem," the man gravely replied, "the fools is a' deed lang syne."

As, according to the worthy man's account, the race of fools has long since died out, may the same not be said of those good old people, the fairies and brownies who, we are told, in the days of our ancestors, haunted country houses, by kindly deeds helped busy housewives in their toils, and by little mischievous pranks, annoyed the idle and thriftless. It is not unlikely that had the "good people," as they used rather superstitiously to be called, continued till the present time to favour this earth with their presence, they would have found themselves rather out of place in this busy practical age, and even we might have found their old-fashioned ways of assisting us rather hindering than helpful; so perhaps it is better for both parties that they have taken their departure from this country, at least, where their services would not now be duly appreciated.

But is it not true that there are yet fairies, far more kindly and trust-worthy than all the fickle beings who were regarded in by-gone days with a mixture of fear and respect; all the more valuable, because, unlike the graceful but fanciful creations of a half-enlightened age, their feelings and affections are human, and they ever live among us, doing their magic works before our eyes, and not in the darkness of the night; carrying their wonderful power into the regions of the mind and heart, which no unearthly fairies could ever do.

Every one has observed and admired the magic power which a tender mother exercises over her child; how the little one, when any infantine trouble vexes its heart, or trifling accident pains its little body, runs to its mother, certain of finding her sympathy and her consolation; and with what fairy-like skill the loving parent soothes her child, making it soon forget its griefs, and sending it away with a half-formed sob breaking into a merry laugh. And not only in childhood, but throughout life, are we surrounded by good fairies—loving parents and friends, who are ever

ready with their wise advice, or still more welcome sympathy, to help us ; to whom we can apply in all our difficulties, knowing that we shall find ready and cheerful aid.

These are the true fairies of the world—a race which we hope and believe will never become extinct, for the qualities which distinguish them, are those which have distinguished the noblest men and women of every age, and will continue to do so till the end of time.

Besides those magic beings, to whom we instinctively turn in every trouble and difficulty, there are other earthly fairies who, in a more indirect way, exercise almost equal power. Such are those gay, happy creatures, who bring sunshine into the most shady places ; by their own unruffled spirits restore the equanimity of temper, which those less happily constituted than themselves so often lose, and help such to shake off the despondency that is so apt to sink into morbid discontent. Of such good fairies there are several gradations ; some, actuated by high Christian principles, by soft answers turning away wrath, and patiently and cheerfully labouring to restore peace into homes where discord and jangling prevail ; and others, quite unconsciously, by the influence of never-failing cheerfulness, diffusing happiness and lightness of heart in the circle in which they move ; for all of whom it surely becomes us to be grateful, and whose example it becomes us to follow as far as it is possible for us.

All do not possess in an equal degree equanimity of temper, and cheerfulness of disposition, but surely each may strive to be a good fairy in his or her home—one whose presence makes light in the dwelling, and whose absence would cause sincere and lasting regret.

The great fault which lies in the way of many becoming good fairies in their homes, is selfishness—that sin which is the root of every evil, and which, when fostered, flourishes in the heart with such a rank growth, that all good qualities are choked for want of room in which to develope. No thoroughly selfish man or woman can ever become a good fairy ; and, therefore, let it be the aim of every one of us to labour to eradicate the vile weed of selfishness, and so live, that the world—that is, the part of it in which we have, or might have, any influence—may be the better for our having lived in it.

AGATHA.

On Quiet.

As we sit on this grassy slope, grown over with such simple flowers as bluebells and ladies'-bed-straw, with the warm summer breeze whispering amongst the branches of the trees around us, let us think a little of the pleasures of quiet. Everything around us is beautifully calm. In the park in front of us the horses are not scampering about, but are lying or standing lazily in groups, as though they too were glad to be quiet. The hot July sun has failed to melt completely the snow from the tops of the mountains, nor can it penetrate the shades of the dark forest at their base, but it is shedding its light on the foliage, casting shadowy clouds on the mountains, and making the broad blue river behind us to sparkle as it goes.

But even as we write of the quiet of the scene, sounds break upon our ears which remind us that George Stephenson has provided us with that which finds its way alike through the quietest valley or mountain pass, as through the most populated district. However, this need not mar our pleasure in the scene around us, rather let us be glad that others have so easy a means provided them of exchanging the noise of the heated town for the quiet of the country.

To experience the true pleasure of quiet, we should first know something of disquiet, either mental or physical. The man who has worked, or rather overworked, himself for eight or ten months, finds a positive enjoyment in the mere sense of being quiet; but to one who never has worked, who has led an idle, pleasure-seeking life, the idea of being quiet brings no satisfaction with it—quiet, in his mind, is but a synonyme for dullness. Tell such an one that you are going to enjoy a few months in some retired place, and he will pour upon you all sorts of needless condolences—"You will be bored to death with it," or "you will go melancholy mad," says the frivolous, empty-headed unfortunate. The mind is a precious talent committed to the charge of each one of us, and if we feed it only by excitement, and suffer its best powers to be wasted on trifles, we shall find that it will become so dissipated, that it cannot fix itself on worthy objects, and, least of all, can it find pleasurable employment in a quiet country life. It would be torture to the man possessed of such a mind, to find himself alone in the country.

Then there are others of such a stolid nature, that, though happy (if such people can be said to be happy) in a quiet life, they do not really enter into the pleasures of quietude. Their nerves seem to be deadened—they have never known the tension of

mind, the restless anxiety of more impulsive natures. Such are not to be envied ; it is true, that they may experience less of sorrow in the world, for as their interests are few, so will their disappointments be few ; but they will also know less of real happiness—they will never be elated by joy, as they will never be sunk in the depths of sorrow. But we know that their's is merely, what has been well called, a “ want begotten rest,” the contentment of

“ The linnet born within the cage,
That never knew the summer woods.”

No, quiet can only be appreciated after toil—action must precede rest.

There are four prime necessities for the proper existence of man, and but two things to be avoided. The four necessities are—air, warmth, aliment, and, lastly, rest after action ; the two noxious agents, as they are called, being violence and poisons. If the four first be attended to, and the two latter avoided by man, he will be able to live, so as to have, as Dr Arnott remarks, in his “ Survey of Human Progress,” “ uninterrupted health for as long as the human constitution is formed to last ; and that therefore, only by some want or misuse of the few requisites, or by the direct agency of the noxious agents, can his health be impaired, or his life shortened.” This shows us that rest, or quiet, is not only pleasant, but, that taken in proper time, it is as necessary for man as the air which he breathes, or the food which he eats.

The love of quiet is, in general, a taste which grows upon us, it is not a love which many children possess. Who would wish to see a child sitting for any length of time thinking ? The little thing has not much more to think of than his marbles or his ball, and to think of these things, is to run off and play with them. German mothers are said to train their little ones at a very early age to be quiet at times ; when rocking them in their arms, they whisper to them the soothing “ *Stille doch,*” letting them lie in perfect quiet for a few moments, anxious that a calm, peaceful temperament should be theirs. How distressing must it be to such mothers, to see children allowed to ery and fret their little selves into a feverish passion ; how they must fear for their after lives, if their tempers and nerves are permitted to wear themselves out in childhood. A happy childhood is surely a boon which all christian parents will try to secure to their children ; whatever clouds may come later in life, they can never be dark enough to blot out from the memory the first sunny days. But look at an old man or woman, who has had even an ordinarily happy life, how they sit, apparently doing nothing ; to them it is a pleasure merely to sit quiet, and think over the events of their past lives. They may never put on paper their thoughts ; no one may ever know them, but, depend upon it, could you read the past life of the most ordinary

man, you would find there enough of inward trial and struggle to afford him abundance of food for thoughtful contemplation, and you would not wonder at his desire for quiet. To some they may come early, to others late in life, but to most of us there do come seasons, when we long to cease from all labour, to calm our anxieties, to put a check, as it were, on our whole being, and, for a time, to "study to be quiet."

But regrets will not be stifled, thought will not be drowned, nor the mind effectually calmed, by any bodily rest. We know that there is but one peace which can soothe the sorrowing thought and the weary heart, it is that "peace which passeth all understanding." Let us seek to obtain this, and then we shall indeed know the blessings of quiet.

DES EAUX.

A Tale of the Last Century.

CHAPTER XI.

THE next day, according to appointment, Lady Emily came, and Charles began her likeness. Before long she reverted to the picture, and begged him to tell her all about it, but when she saw him start and colour, as if the subject distressed him, she apologized so gently for having vexed him, and looked so kind and sympathizing, that before he knew how it was, he had told her his whole story, of course, concealing his own name and Alice's. Emily, like a true woman, stood up in the defence of her sex, blaming him for distrusting his betrothed, and ended by building up such a romance, that, for the time, he was almost inclined to be as hopeful as she was. She felt sure, she said, that their school-mistress was indeed his Alice, and longed to return to England, that she might find the forsaken girl, and hear from her own lips, that she really had been faithful and true, and then she would pour into her listening ear the history of her lover's jealousy, his hasty judgment, and his longing for forgiveness. At each new sitting the conversation turned upon Alice, so that Sir Edward and his Lady were soon deeply interested in the young artist's romantic love-tale. When the likeness was completed, they turned their footsteps homeward, carrying with them hopes and wishes from Charles, that he once thought had been blasted for ever.

Time passed on, and he was fain to content himself, by carrying on his old routine, but he missed the manly young Englishman, and his lovely bride so much,

that he could bear the suspense no longer, but set off for England, determined to reach that quiet village, and see for himself, if this simple maiden was his poor forsaken Alice.

He knew Sir Edward's address, and in due time arrived at Clifford Hall, but found that Lady Emily had been so ill since her return, that his sorrows had been well nigh forgotten. Now convalescent, however, she was eager to further all Charles' wishes, and it was arranged that, when Lady Emily should go to visit the school, as she was in the habit of doing, he should accompany her, as an ordinary visitor, staying at the Hall. He was so changed, he said, that Alice, if it were she, could not recognize him. The next day, the plan was carried into execution; and when he entered the humble school-room, and saw rows of little children seated at lessons, and a quiet, demure figure, dressed in black, with dark hair and eyes, superintending them, he turned to his conductress, and whispered reproachfully, "how could you so deceive me; is that plain-looking, middle-aged woman, like my picture?" Lady Emily did not answer, but pointed to the door, where he saw entering a form, that made his heart for a moment cease to beat, and his hand convulsively clasp his chair, as if to prevent him from falling! It was in very truth Alice Howard—changed, it is true, but, if possible, more truly lovely than she had ever been. Grief seemed to have given to her beauty a softer and more touching expression; and as he gazed, it seemed to him as if an angel were present, hallowing, with its presence, that humble room. Alice simply acknowledged the presence of her guests, and went on, as usual, with the lessons of the day. No sign of recognition passed across her face, as she saw Charles, and he felt almost angry, that he was not at once known and claimed. Agnes, for it was she who had been presiding till Alice appeared, withdrew to another part of the room, and proceeded to instruct a number of the taller girls in the art of embroidery. Charles could scarcely be hindered from making himself known to his recovered treasure, but Lady Emily would not allow her to be agitated and overcome in the presence of her pupils, and insisted that he should retire, and leave the wished-for meeting till another time. At last it came. That evening—(strange coincidence) exactly three years since her father's death, as Alice was seated alone, thinking of the past, her solitude was again intruded upon, and again, by a man who was, to her apparently a stranger. Over their meeting we must draw a veil; it is too sacred to be intruded upon, suffice it, that explanations were given and received, so that it was not long before it became very evident to Charles who his Alice's strange guest had been. Feeling assured that his father and sister knew of the plot, he registered a vow that he would not make known to them his whereabouts; but,

if distress came to them, he would return, and offer them his help and sympathy, although he had doubts if he would be accepted. It pained him much to have to think of Kate, as in the conspiracy against him, but he knew that she was completely under the control of Father Clement, that she had scarcely liberty of thought—how then could she have of action? I need not dwell on the happiness of a wedding that was soon afterwards celebrated in the pretty rural church—Sir Edward giving the bride away. Many were the blessings given by old and young, rich and poor, on their well-beloved, and now deservedly happy village school-mistress. Charles bore away his lovely wife to Italy, and there, in the pursuit of his art, now no longer his only love, he was unspeakably happy. Alice was desirous that Agnes should come with them, and share their new home, but she refused. Her benefactress being happy, and restored to the rank she was fitted to adorn, she resolved to stay, and further the good that Alice had begun during her voluntary seclusion.

And now I must return to my heroine, and tell what eventually became of her. As years passed on, her father became feebler and more exacting, so that Father Clement wearied of his patron's strange humours and left for another sphere of usefulness, more suited to his tastes, whilst Catherine devoted herself to her father, with a constancy worthy of imitation. At length death—that mighty tyrant—released her from her arduous, though loved duties; for Mr Campbell was gathered to his fathers. Father Clement heard of his illness, and hurried to attend his dying moments; but the end was sudden, and he arrived too late; so poor Kate had to close his eyelids, with no friendly arm to lean upon. Charles heard of his father's death, and, true to his resolution, set off for home, to offer his sympathy and protection to his sister. On arriving in Edinburgh, he was amazed to find that he was heir to all his father's immense property, with the exception of a small portion that had been secured to Catherine. Father Clement, as may be expected, was indignant that his late patron should have so entirely overlooked the good of the church, as to leave all his wealth to a heretic; and he could not understand it, for before he left, he had seen a will, made and signed, which gave over the greater part of Mr Campbell's money to the convent, where his daughter had been educated, and where she had, long ago, resolved to end her days, when her duty to her father should be performed. The truth was this, however, Mr Campbell destroyed the old will, and had intended to make a new, with some difference in the distribution of his effects, but death had come before his designs were carried into execution, and thus having died intestate, his son, as heir-at-law, inherited all. Charles felt that if his father's wishes had been carried out, he would have had nothing, and offered to divide his fortune with Kate, which she sternly refused, much to her

confessor's annoyance. She retired at once to her convent; no persuasions would induce her to see Alice, and only at rare intervals did she allow her brother to visit her. She was strictly conscientious in the performance of all her religious duties, and so much respected and revered, that before many years elapsed, she was made Abbess—an office that she filled with becoming dignity. Thus these two, who had, for many years, not even a difference in thought, were as effectually divided, as if oceans rolled between them.

Mr and Mrs Charles Campbell did not return to Italy, but spent the rest of their lives in Scotland, doing good, and gaining the blessings of many for their numerous unostentatious, and substantial deeds of charity. You may rest assured, worthy Mrs Young was not forgotten; and her unaffected delight, when Alice called for her, and presented her husband to her, was beautiful to witness. Agnes was persuaded to come and live with them; and as she cannot be idle, Alice has installed her as the presiding genius of the nursery, where she is invaluable. There a second Charles is said to be almost as handsome as the first, and a little baby, Alice, is the delight of her father's heart.

And now, dear readers, my "Tale" is done, and if to any it has beguiled an idle hour, I am more than rewarded.

LADYBIRD.



Sir Henry de Bohun.

THE tents are pitch'd, an' the camps are set	Ye scaree could see the grass sae green,
By the bonny Bannoek side;	That grew by Bannoek's bank;
An' the sounds that tell o' busy war	For tents owre a' the plain arrayed,
Are ringing far and wide.	In mony a goodly rank.

O mony a gallant knight an' squire	Ye scaree could hear the ripplin' burn,
Has bound him for the fight,	For trumpets' awfu' elang,
An' to see the lordly battle train,	For neigh o' horse, an' shout o' men,
It were a noble sight.	An' merry battle sang.

The brave de Bruce rode up an' down
 Before his marshalled men ;
 And when he saw their guid array,
 A glad man was he then.

The fierce Bohun look'd owre the plain,
 An' wrathfu' saw the sight ;
 " Now, by my halidome," quo' he,
 " I'll end the war this night."

He rode frae out the English ranks,
 An' spurred him owre the plain ;
 An' to confront the Scottish king,
 In fiery haste he's gane.

King Robert looked out owre the plain,
 An' saw the horseman ride ;
 " Now, wha comes here, wi' warlike cheer,
 To meet us in his pride ?"

An' aye mair near the knight cam' on,
 Wi' fierce an' cager speed ;
 Now, fight thy bravest, gallant Bruce,
 For ne'er had king mair need.

Bohun, wi' lance, an' sword, an' shield,
 A noble steed bestrides ;
 The king, wi' but a battle-axe,
 Upon a pony rides.

An' aye mair near the knight cam' on,
 An' loudly shouted he,
 " Now, fight thy best, de Bruce the bold,
 For you or I maun dee."

Wi' lance in rest Bohun cam' on,
 As fast as man could ride ;
 An' hurled his weapon at his foe—
 King Robert turned aside,

An' raised his battle-axe sae true,
 An' swang it quickly round—
 The steel has cleft de Bohun's skull,
 An' stretched him on the ground.

Then up rode mony a gallant knight,
 An' chid the king fu' sair,
 That he, to risk his precious life,
 In sic a strife could dare.

The king has turned him to the knights ;
 Few were the words he spoke ;
 " I trow I've paid my folly weel—
 My trusty axe I've broke."

MEGAIG BHEG.



Procrastination.

IT is as one who has learned of experience, that sad, but most effectual teacher of the foolish, that I speak of the evils of procrastination. In thus making confession, my *amour-propre* is silenced by the wish to warn others of a rock, against which I long beat, and injured myself. All I would advise seriously to consider this subject, for to many, of whom procrastination is not an innate fault, the deferring of distasteful duties may, by thoughtlessness, become a habit, and thus is acquired a clog which, unless we shake it off, will hinder all our life our progress in the world.

There may be those who think this procrastination a defect of no very great magnitude; let them regard its consequences, and then call trivial a fault which, prominent in one person, can mar the happiness of a home. If the mischief done by the indulgence of a disposition to delay, be only the loss of time that it entails on the unfortunate person, the evil must be immense; for whole years will pass without any good being done, through yielding to this propensity to dally. And this waste of the precious moments granted us here for preparation for eternity, begins in putting off some little duty to a "more convenient season;" but, the habit growing upon us, the execution of serious matters is deferred until too late; and days, and weeks, and years, glide by, yet the work our Master set us to do rests almost untouched.

When conscience, in quiet hours, repeats the tale of our life—wasted talents, wasted time—we silence it with loud resolves of doing otherwise for the future: a new fair leaf shall be turned over, and the record on it shall be of well-spent time—the right thing done at the right moment—no wrong deed shall leave an unsightly blot, no neglected duty a sad blank. But good intentions of this vague nature are like seed cast on a rock—there is no depth to receive them, no care nor energy is used to nourish them, and the lightest wind can dissipate them. For self-communion and good intentions, to yield any lasting benefit, to resolve and to do must be one thing. If you would be of service in the world, perform each duty as it arises, put it not off for to-morrow—

"To-morrow never yet,
On any human being rose or set."

And in regarding your duty to your neighbour, forget not the greater one to your God. Enter at once into the Lord's vineyard, and serve him with your whole heart, and soul, and strength, and mind. Make no delay; go at once, lest while ye tarry, "the bridegroom cometh," and the door is shut, and ye, pleading for admittance, with much sorrowing and repentant tears, be told—"Too late, too late." J. M. W.

Voices.

THERE are voices we shall never hear again,
 As we heard them long ago,
 Save in the mournful mid-night rain,
 And the waters' murmuring flow.
 Some, through the boundless blue have soared,
 Up to the land of light,
 To the forms we have loved they are never restored,
 And their mystic music is only poured
 On silence and on night.
 Some, that in happy years of yore,
 We heard with a passionate thrill,
 Have lost the magic to charm us more ;
 But though their spell is for ever o'er,
 Their memory liveth still.
 And now, if we catch a transient gleam,
 Of the love and the hope gone by,
 We hear, like music heard in a dream,
 Voices remembered and charmed, that seem
 A marvel of melody.
 Some have departed, and some have grown strange,
 These voices of long ago,
 And we sigh while we yearn for the wider range,
 Ah ! death is better far better than change,
 Alas that we loved them so !

WHAT a fascinating thing is a really sweet and musical voice, and rare as it is bewitching !

" It comes o'er the ear like the sweet south,
 That breathes upon a bank of violets,
 Stealing and giving odours."

Every varying emphasis, every smallest intonation of such a voice seems to haunt the memory. Of the music, and musical sounds I ever enjoyed none equals it in charm, a charm alas ! but very seldom found. Gentle and low, yet so clear, so round, so

silvery, like the delicate tones of musical-glasses, or the soft wild note of an Æolian harp. It were well perhaps, if all, and women especially, shared the writer's enthusiastic admiration, or infatuation as many may think it, at least in some measure. I know not how the charm of a fine voice may affect the sterner sex or its opposite disgust them, but I do know how often when admiring a pretty face its owner has utterly disenchanted me, the moment she opened a lovely mouth, by the sound of her voice—sometimes it has been a low insipid drawl, that made me take refuge in instant flight in all practicable cases; sometimes a high-pitched plaintive whine that gave me the idea of some great grief or cruel disappointment, or habitual ill usage from the world in general. From some lips comes a twanging squeak, in the style of a Jew's harp, or more like a whistle, which makes me long to stop my ears even before the speaker's face; sometimes (and this is perhaps the worst shock of all) it is a deep gruff tone, making me fancy myself conversing with a cross old man, instead of a young and pretty girl. I have been hundreds of times annoyed by the sound of a voice, and, if it chanced to have none of these painful peculiarities, how rarely have I heard one that was truly attractive and musical! These odious faults are common of course to men and women, and in both alike often cruelly disappointing; but as from the latter much more delicacy and refinement of voice and tone is naturally expected, it has always seemed to me that the slightest failure in either, is in them doubly apparent and more thoroughly to be censured. Half the charm of a woman consists in the tone of her voice, and the manner in which she lets her words fall from her lips—and as to that manner—some women (generally the deep-voiced ones) hurry out their words while you tremble lest the effort should choke them. Others draw out their syllables as one would drop laudanum, so slowly and carefully, that I have been beside myself with impatience for the end of a sentence, the whole meaning of which I had seized at once from the first three or four words; a sentence too, not worth waiting for in the end! Then there is the brusque cracker-like way of letting off a phrase, which seems actually to hurt the ear. And in contra-distinction to that again, the picked and chosen words, every syllable so clearly and nicely pronounced, as if the young lady were reading with her governess; the pompous mouthing of words which have to force themselves through rows of pebbles as it were; the astonished key reminding you irresistibly of an exclamation point; and the hard grating tone, which sets one's teeth on edge like a file. But indeed there is an endless variety of shades and gradations in disagreeable voices and ways of speaking, and I grow censorious, perhaps severe, as I recall them. The sweet memory of one perfect voice, shall charm me into silence for the sake of its perfection. Still, I think many of my strictures are fully deserved,

when we reflect how much depends on the speakers themselves, for these faults I deprecate do not arise (at least in most instances) from any natural defect, but only from carelessness, over-care, or bad habit, any and all of which may be avoided or easily overcome, did the speakers only sufficiently appreciate the charm of a "voice gentle and low—that most excellent thing in woman," to make a determined effort to improve their own. Even in the graver difficulty of a natural defect, they need not despair; care, with a strong will and perseverance, can do much. And the return will amply repay the outlay of trouble. A sweet voice, is a charm for life. It remains when beauty and youth must fade and fail. I know no charm so potent, we listen entranced by its spell, and long after the exquisite tones have died into silence, their echoes linger on as those of that lovely voice I heard do yet with me—"A pleasure gone, but present still."

ANON.

Double Acrostic.

"Ere twice the horses of the sun shall bring
Their fiery torcher his diurnal ring."

1. "My own Enone,
Beautiful brow'd Enone, my own soul,
Behold this fruit, whose gleaming rind, engrav'n
'For the most fair,' would seem to award it thine.
2. "A little more than kin, and less than kind."
3. "I am the daughter of a river-god,
Hear me, for I will speak, and build up all
My sorrow with my song."
4. "I have a good eye, uncle; I can see a church by day-light."
5. "Hast du, das Schloss gesehen,
Das hohe Schloss am Meer?
Golden und rosig wehen,
Die Wolken drüber her."
6. "Three years I lived upon a pillar, high
Six cubits, and three years on one of twelve;
And twice three years I crouch'd on one that rose
Twenty by measure."

F. B.

Recollections of some of the Early Poets.

MAN is possessed of two natures, which may be called his corporeal and his spiritual nature. We mention his corporeal nature first, as it will be seen that in this world the wants of the body must be, to a certain degree, supplied before those of a higher nature can even make themselves felt. It belongs to the uneducated savage alone to eat and drink and then lie down and sleep without a thought of higher things. But, given to mere corporeal enjoyments as this man may seem, there is still another nature in him, wanting but a very little to raise it above the things which formerly satisfied him. We believe that there was a time when all men lay in a state of ignorance, but that the taste which first seems to have successfully struggled through the overwhelming mass of corporeal enjoyments, seems to have been an innate love of poetry; a love which has been implanted in the heart of man from the beginning, and which only for a time lies dormant. It makes its way through the smallest opening, and once above ground, it flourishes in a nation, inciting its people to purer lives and more valiant deeds. It is difficult indeed to imagine a life without written poetry, surrounded, as we now are, by the works of the living and the dead poets, of not only our own country, but of every civilized land. Yet it sometimes strikes us that we deprive ourselves of a considerable amount of pleasure by not seeking for the beauties which we may easily find in the works of old poets, now almost forsaken for those of a later date. This being the case with some of us, we think that we may recall a few of those bygone poets, whose works were doubtless the delight of their contemporaries. Even the poet-king, James I., though somewhat of an affected writer, felt and expressed in verse his conviction that poetry had ever held a high place in the world, saying—

“ We find by proof, that *into* every age
 In Phœbus' art some glistening star did shine,
 Who, worthy scholars to the muses sage,
 Fulfilled their countries with their works divine.”

The first poet whom we shall mention is Sir Thomas Wyatt, about whose writings there is a pretty quaint conceit, reminding us somewhat of that sweet poet, Herbert. He was in the service of Henry VIII., from whose presence he was banished for some time by a false suspicion of his character, but which he was able to prove to have been ever as pure and honest, as the readers of his verses would imagine. Judging from the following lines, he must have been a fine spirited man, scorning all the empty flattery by which men of his age were making their way with the great of the land. He says of them—

“ I cannot crouch nor kneel to such a wrong,
To worship them, like God on earth alone,
That are as wolves these silly lambs among.”

We are apt to grow weary of the continual theme of love which all poets sing, but there is a pleasant freshness and earnestness in the following lines, in which Wyatt pleads not to be cast aside—

“ *Disdain* me not, that am your own ;
Refuse me not, that am so trueo ;
Mistrust me not, till all be known ;
Forsake me not now for no new.”

A contemporary of Sir Thomas Wyatt was Howard, Earl of Surrey, a general favourite in his time, as all characters such as his ought, and are sure to be. A fine bold soldier, yet talented and with a mixture of romance through it all, victorious alike in tournaments and battles, he carried everything before him. His verses are spirited and yet gentle, as in the lines written upon the death of his friend, the above-mentioned poet, where his manly sorrow shows itself clearly. After speaking of the “diverse” feelings excited in the breasts of others by the death of his friend, he breaks off with—

“ But I—that know what harboured in that head,
What virtues rare and tempered in that breast—
Honour the place that such a jewel bred,
And kiss the ground whereas thy corse doth rest.”

In reading over the works of such poets, it is interesting to observe how many of the expressions and even lines of our more modern poets, are taken from, or have been suggested by their predecessors. For example, in the well-known lines—

“ My only books,
Are women’s looks,”

is much the same turn of expression as that which we find in one of the uncertain authors of the reign of Henry VIII., where the poet, singing highly the praises of a lady, asserts that—

“ The virtue of her lively looks
Excels the precious stone ;
I wish to have none other books
To read or look upon.”

The reign of Edward III. produced few poets of note, but the literature of the reign is remarkable for making a strong effort to turn into purer currents. Many men occupied themselves in versifying parts of the Scriptures, more particularly the Psalms ; and numerous were the metrical translations which appeared during the

reign. Not only were the Psalms versified, but the Acts of the Apostles were translated and set to music by a certain Dr Christopher Tye, who was musical professor to Prince Edward. The only verse which we shall quote of the poets of this reign is from a ditty by John Hall, intended to be sung by the musicians at the door of their masters' sleeping apartments in the early morning, rousing them from their sleep to begin the work of the day—

“ Let us in no wise time abuse,
Which is God's creature excellent ;
All slothful sleep let us refuse,
To virtuous works let us be bent.”

Of all feelings, the one which seems to be most common to all poets, is their love for the month of May. Most poets sing of it with never-ending freshness, as though it brought a new spring to the poet's heart as well as to surrounding nature. Thus Edward urges upon us the delights of May, telling us how then—

“ The lively sap creeps up
Into the blooming thorn ;
The flowers, which cold in prison kept,
Now laugh the frost to scorn.”

He tells us to rejoice in the month, for—

“ When May is gone, of all the year,
The pleasant time is past.”

The poets of the reign of Queen Elizabeth are so numerous and so great, as to have made the literature of that age live in the remembrance and affection of the world for upwards of three hundred years, which it will continue to do as long as time endures. But even in that great reign there are many poets who, living in the same age as Shakespeare and Spenser, have had their little candles extinguished by the light of those brilliant suns. Very little is known of the lines of those minor poets, even the date of their birth and their death is often obscure. One, Robert Southwell, is known to have been executed at Tyburn, in 1595, at the early age of thirty-five years. Indeed it is curious to observe how many poets have been cut off by death, just at an age when much might have been expected of them. Southwell was apparently of a sober contemplative cast of mind—a man, whose thoughts ran in different channels from the mass of contemporary poets. He seems to have felt that in nature, in animal life, and in the affairs of men, there is indeed a Providence taking note of the least, as well as of the greatest events or objects. He shows us how things, because they are small, should not excite our scorn, for, as he well expresses it—

“ He that high growth on cedars did bestow,
Gave also lowly mushrooms leave to grow.”

In the same poem from which the above quotation is taken, he warns us not to admire things only for their bright beauty, which passes quickly away, saying—

“ We trample grass, and prize the flowers of May,
Yet grass is green, when flowers do fade away.”

There has been a considerable controversy as to the true authorship of the pretty pastoral poem, entitled, “The Passionate Shepherd to his Love.” At one time it was thought to have been written by Shakespeare himself, and indeed many people still assert that it was. In looking through a new edition of Shakespeare’s works the other day, we observed that this poem still retains its place among his poems and sonnets. It appears that the first time it is to be found in print, is in “The Passionate Pilgrim, and other Sonnets, by Mr William Shakespeare,” printed by Jaggart in 1599. When printed among Shakespeare’s works, only one verse of the nymph’s reply is given, and as to the authorship of this reply there has also been much dispute. Many people assert that the invitation is from the pen of Marlowe, and the reply from that of Sir Walter Raleigh. Izaak Walton is very clear in what he says of the two poems in his “Complete Angler.” In the chapter where he asks the milkmaid and her mother to sing to him in turns the address and the reply, he says, speaking of the milkmaid—“Her voice was good and the ditty fitted for it; it was that smooth song which was made by Kit Marlowe, now, at least, fifty years ago; and the milkmaid’s mother sang the answer to it, which was made by Sir Walter Raleigh in his younger days.” However, Izaak Walton, though living near the time of the disputed authors, is not considered as decisive authority by some commentators, who still claim both poems for Shakespeare. We can only say, that whether they were written by Shakespeare, Marlowe, or Raleigh, they are pretty specimens of pastoral poetry, and should be read and admired by us all.

The poet Green, in his “Farewell to Folly,” as though worn out and weary with the troubles and pleasures of the world, sighs, like many poets before and after him, for some quiet nook to rest in. He pictures to us—

“ The homely house that harbours quiet rest,
The cottage that affords no pride nor care;
The mean, that ’grees with country music best,
The sweet consort of mirth and music’s fare.
Obscured life sits down a type of bliss,
A mind content both crown and kingdom is.”

Those readers of “The Attempt,” who remember a pretty poem, called “The Legend of St Christopher,” which appeared in its pages some months ago, may be in-

terested in hearing that there is an old poem on the same legend by Warner, who lived in the reign of which we are speaking. It is in different verse, and takes up the legend at an earlier date than the writer in this Magazine does ; but, on the other hand, it does not give its beautiful termination—that of carrying the child Christ across the “angry tide.” Warner, after telling us how there was a “man of stature big,” who was determined to have for his master one in whom there was no sort of fear, tells of his first serving a great emperor, till, on discovering that his master feared the devil, he quitted his service for that of the latter ; lastly, on finding that even this master trembled on beholding a cross, he bids the devil serve himself, determining to seek that Christ before whom even the devil trembles ; and then he hastens to a hermit to learn from him how this great master may be served ; and here it is that the writer in this Magazine so well narrates the legend, but Warner tells us merely that the hermit “gave directions sound,” as to how Christ was to be served by “faith and works of alms”—

“ Then he, that scorned his service late,
To greatest potentates,
E'en at a common ferry, now,
To carry all awaits.”

One of the most beautiful odes which has ever been ascribed to Shakespeare, is claimed by many for a poet, named Richard Barnfield, of whom little is known ; but, if he be indeed the writer of the following lines, he deserves to be had in remembrance, if only for this one ode. It is the well-known and beautiful poem, beginning—

“ As it fell upon a day,
In the merry month of May,
Sitting in a pleasant shade,
Which a grove of myrtles made.”

We feel inclined to run on with the quotation, which is truly musical and poetical, but our readers are probably well acquainted with it already. It will be observed that we have not attempted to add our feeble praise to the memory of Shakespeare, or Spenser ; no one requires to be reminded of them—they will live with us for ever—a glorious possession for every Briton. There are beauties to be found in many other writers of this reign, such as Sir Philip Sidney, Wotton, and Ben Jonson ; but we must draw to a close our mention of them, and hope, in a future number, to say something of their successors.

DES EAUX.

November.

“THE melancholy days are come,
The saddest of the year.”

As the American poet plaintively sings : days when the pulse of age grows yet more feeble, and the life of the sick man seems ready to ebb with the dying season, the fall of the leaf, the fading glory and greenness of the earth. Gone are the waving boughs, the breath of the blue wood violet, the odorous scents and gorgeous blooms of the vanished summer : gone, too, are its sheeny skies, its amber sunsets, from whose depths, as we gazed, there seemed to fall upon us the far-off light of the Golden City—a gleam from the unfolding of its pearly gates.

We can wander no longer in paths where the hedgerows are thick with delicate blossoms of the dog rose, the white stars of the wild raspberry, and clusters of snowy privet. For the ripple of tiny springs in the long grass, we have now the dull plash of rain down the busy street ; instead of the note of the thrush from the fruity orchards, only the chirp of the sparrow—little brown denizen of the housetops.

And the pleasant Autumn—“Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness”—where are its golden harvests, its dreamy twilights, its dropping leaves ?

“ Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store ?
Sometimes, whoever seeks abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft lifted by the winnowing wind ;
Or on a half-reaped furrow sound asleep,
Droused with the fume of poppies, while thy hook
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers ;
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep
Steady thy laden head across a brook ;
Or by a cider press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings, hours by hours.

* * * * *

Full grown lambs loud bleat from hilly beurn ;
Hedge crickets sing ; and now with treble soft
The redbreast whistles from a garden croft,
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.”

Grey mists wreathe the mountain peaks and glens, no longer clad in golden and purple blooms of gorse and heather, with their ghostly vapours. Overflowing streams

waken mysterious echoes in their dim recesses, white frosts glitter on the shorn fields and brown forsaken woodlands, and Autumn

“ Like a faint old man, sits down
By the wayside aweary.”

J. I. L.

Vanitas.

ALL men are like to schoolboys flying kites
(Full pleasant toys as long as they are new) ;
Adown the world's broad path each player fights,
And strives to keep his venture well in view.

Quite disregarding all his neighbours' shins,
With chin in air, he pushes on his way ;
Sometimes, 'tis true, fit payment for his sins,
He gets a stumble, and is forced to stay.

And each upon his toy inscribes some word,
And by its meaning tries his face to rule ;
Then shouting, hauls the string, and hopes 'tis heard
Above the clamour, how *he* serves *his* school.

And some men have their kites which cannot fly,
Because they're made of substance far too frail :
And some might rise ; their owners will not try,
But sit and weep a blot upon the tail.

So on they go, for wealth, and place, and name,
And Heaven only knows how many rights
And still more wrongs ; halloo ! keep up the game !
For do not even wise men fly their kites ?

ELSIE STRIVELYNE.

On Needles.

WHAT thanks do all households not owe to Elias Howe, the New York mechanic, who, in the year 1846, working for his daily bread, took out a patent for the first successful sewing machine and thus invented an iron hand which never grows tired, and is capable of doing every thing the needle can do, except make button holes, and sew on buttons. What pleasure has he thus brought to every family that possesses the wondrous machine? What would have taken a whole day to do, is now done in ten minutes; and the spirits are rather raised than depressed, when your progress is marked by yard after yard, instead of inch after inch.

In America every household possesses one—not a great black workshop machine, but a neat little silver plated instrument, both useful and ornamental. In this country the sewing machine is still in its infancy, but it is daily becoming more and more in use, and we hope that soon the agonizing cry of the poor sempstress described by Hood in his “*Song of the Shirt*,” will be one of the things that were; and we will not only have time and capital saved, but improved health in that class of the community which the fatal little needle has so long impaired.

But while we sing the praises of the sewing machine, we must not forget the subject of our essay—The Needle, which is in danger of becoming a curiosity in these days of machines; but interest ourselves for a little with the birth-place and mode of fashioning this small commodity.

The little village of Redditch, in Worcestershire, long famous for its manufacture of needles and fish-hooks, is as pretty a little place as you will see, and the presence of a large red chimney, and the hiss of the grindstone tell you that its inhabitants are not idle.

The needle makes its first appearance in a room where there is a fierce furnace, and the walls hung round with coils of wire of all weights and sizes. Sixty small wires, of three inches long are cut off a coil, and then represent the needle in its first state of existence. To straighten these wires they are put within two iron rings, which, when nearly full, are placed in the furnace, and heated to a dull red heat: thus the needle receives what is called its first instruction. The workman then works the wires within the rings upon one another, by which process they are straitened, and handed over to the grinder to receive their points. Now accomplished by water power, this process of needle grinding was once a very fatal occupation to the poor workmen,

through its being done on a dry stone, as the dust caused by the rubbing and the needle points were received into their lungs, so as to cause death. Now, that the wheels are covered over, and the dust driven away with a fan, all danger is removed. The needle wires having been pointed at both ends, they enter the stamping shop, where a girl with a die stamps two eyes and two gutters or channels exactly in the middle. Other girls then punch out the eyes on the place marked by the stamping die, and a number of little boys put fine wires between the two rows of eyes, after which the wire is divided, and the rough form of the needle complete. Having been shaped, the needles are again heated to a dull red, and suddenly quenched in oil to harden their temper. They are next placed on a hot plate, and turned about with a small tool like a hatchet to destroy the brittle tendency which they have acquired during the last process. The deep blue is now changed to a faint straw colour, and the needles next pass into the hands of women who, with wonderful delicacy of touch, feel for their faulty parts, and restore them to their proper shape by a hammer on a small anvil.

The needle may now be said to be complete, but it wants that polish requisite to make it useful in the world, but which it now receives in a very peculiar and harsh manner. Many thousands of needles are placed side by side in a hempen cloth, with some soft soap, sweet oil, and emery powder; and the whole is rolled up together, and put into a machine somewhat like a mangle, worked by a water-wheel. There they remain tossing backwards and forwards for eight days, at the lapse of which they are thoroughly washed in soap suds to take off the oil, and dried in saw-dust. Nothing remains now to be done but to arrange them according to their sizes, and manœuvre them together: that is, the heads of each parcel are heated, in order to give an ornamental blue to the gutters and sink the eyes so that they may not catch the cotton. So then, after receiving another polish and grind, we have, in its perfect beauty, the little needle which we could not have wanted before the sewing machines came to chase it into oblivion.

But surely we shall not forget our little friend, which, though small, is so useful, while we heartily thank Elias Howe for his skilful invention, and the joy he has thereby brought to the poor sempstress who, "in poverty, hunger, and dirt," laboured for her daily bread; but now sits with lightened heart, and accompanies with a joyous song the merry elick elick of her machine, as she sees the work done so quickly, over which she used to bend with aching heart and weary hand till the night was far spent.

EUTERPE.

Something about Everything.

ON CHANGE.

“THERE is nothing stable, but the gods break it.” This was what one of the old Greeks found to say as the strongest conviction that his life had impressed upon him. With all his fine Hellenic appreciation of the beautiful, with all the vigorous delight in mere existence that seemed natural to the early dwellers in Areadia, with all the fresh wisdom and glowing teaching, the then unexhausted resources of the Greek prime around him, he yet could say this, and this chiefly, as the ultimatum of his learning ; “there is nothing stable, but the gods break it.” Most pathetic climax, most sad recognition of the indefinable power that is greater than the princes of the children of men. The Egean might flash its diamond light and sapphire shade below the sun ; Olympus might rear its sacred head into the cloudless sky ; Naiad and Satyr might make every grove and stream a region of happy mystery ; but there was no rest for the beholder, since the good advice of Delphi itself could not turn aside the wrath of the gods ; and what is “wine-dark sea,” or Bacchic revel, to the heart that knoweth its own bitterness ?

We could almost fancy Pan himself let a minor chord slip into his tremulous music, as he thought how his hope too, god as he was, had broken down before him. Apart, however, from dreams of Mænad or Faun, we cannot but feel how deeply the belief in inevitable fate, in uncontrollable destiny, underlaid all the joyousness, the Titanic revelling of the Greek writers ; and we cannot but recognize therein the eternal craving of the human soul for rest, the eternal fear of loss, that treads, like a veiled shadow, beside the sunny forms of human love and hope. To the sensitive Greek this fear came more appallingly than to the sterner Roman ; it seemed to chill his expansive nature like a frost. The Roman had more of the endurance, the accepting of the inevitable, that belongs to a massive, practical, unimaginative character. Too active for the “kismet,” which screens an Eastern so conveniently in his indolence, he yet, with few exceptions, and these of late date, had a simple faith in his own qualification to rule the world, and if death were to overcome him while he fought against and overcame his neighbours, it was but enduring the usual “*væ vietis*.”

Let the augurs look to it then ; the gods must mean good fortune to follow the mystic “S. P. Q. R.” which adorns our banner ; let us unfurl it and trust to “the virtue perplexing virtue of might ;” and when in peace, let us build viaducts, and

make roads, and do all other patriotic works with all our souls, since Rome is more to us than any private interest, and we play for higher stakes in her name than ever we do in our own. This being the frame of mind of the ancients, let us see what a thinker of modern times can find to tell us, as the result of his outlook over humanity. His sight is keen, be it said, and he gazes from an intellectual watchtower which gives him the pre-eminence over most minds of his time.—“All that is without us will change while we think not of it; much even that is within us.....To-day is not yesterday, for man or for thing. Yesterday, there was the oath of Love; to-day, has come the curse of Hate. Not willingly: ah, no; but it could not help coming. The golden radiance of youth, would it willingly have tarnished itself into the dimness of age? Fearful: how we stand enveloped, deep sunk, in that mystery of Time; and are Sons of Time; fashioned and woven out of Time; and on us, and on all that we have, or see, or do, is written—Rest not, Continue not, Forward to thy doom!”

So he: graceful, beautiful Greece, has faded out of her place among the nations with the pathetic fading of a lovely flower; intrepid, strong-handed Rome has fallen from her pinnacle with the miserable fall of one who exchanges the patriot's rough truth and the soldier's steady shield, for the emperor's rose-crown and the courtier's smooth lie: years have gone by since these succumbed; other nations have risen and become forces in the universe of things; newer civilization and life-giving religion have added their quota to the new influences that govern humanity; and yet, after all, our nineteenth century thinker speaks much as did the earlier Greek, only with wider experience and more comprehension of his subject, and therefore with a more fixed melancholy, a deeper conviction of the truth of his own words.

And is there one of us who does not feel the weight of them from his very soul? Is there one of us who reaches, in his life-journey, the goal he vowed to strive for when he set forth; nay, is there one to whom the goal itself does not vary ere it is attained?

Our lives are passed on the great ocean of change; no two hours or moments are alike, and God only knows how passionately we long at times to arrest some of these, and press them, as it were, into the living mould of our hearts, with all their colours fresh, instead of which, we must be contented with the pale cast taken of them after death, by the sculptor Memory. It can never be otherwise; the great ocean must be traversed once in a life-time, and there is no stopping or turning back between the two shores of Birth and Death. Kind hands set the sails and launch the boat from the one, and the little helmsman thinks the voyage an easy one, but the salt spray and the biting winds will have hardened his cheek and roughened his grey hair, ere he reaches

that other landing place, where the scattered bones lie bleaching of those who have made shipwreck on that doleful beach.

Is there no hope of rest then for us, no escape from this demon of change, which leaves nothing stable in the earth ; not our purposes or determinations, for circumstance rules them all ; not our bodies, for they pass away like the grass ; not even the earth itself, for there

“ The giant ages heave the hill,
And break the shore, and evermore
Make and break, and work their will.”

Must we fill our goblets with wine which has been spiced by death, and empty them to the bitter toast, “ Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die ? ” Not so ; we can look at the matter with other eyes than these. We have sought the opinion of a philosopher, let us seek now that of a poet, whose words have in them the clang of a pæan, the fervour of a prophecy :—

“ I rather hold it better, men should perish one by one,
Than that earth should stand at gaze like Joshua’s moon in Ajalon !
Not in vain the distance beacons. Forward, forward let us range ;
Let the great world spin for ever down the ringing grooves of change.”

Change is but another name for Progress and is the safeguard of the world against stagnation : without it, there would be monotony worse than death, satiety more bitter than parting. Progress—that is, progression towards perfection is one of the great laws of the universe. Nature and man have alike a destiny to work out, and must, through storm and toil, develop their highest capabilities ere they can attain repose. There are worlds of science and learning for us to conquer still, untold volumes of wisdom for us to peruse ; and whether we speak of the race collectively, or of the individual members of it, we feel that there is work lying ready to our hands which will tax our energies to the utmost. The distance then shall truly not beacon to us in vain, but shall show a steady light to guide us on that ocean of which we spoke before. We may drive on cheerily, reflecting that each boat receives a welcome to the haven, for she brings home another mariner from the great fleet, whose sails dot the waters so thickly from horizon to horizon. The haven, too, we steer for, is a safe and sheltered one. There, and there only, is no more change of a painful kind, only the change from one happiness to another yet greater. The voyage will be over then, and the voyagers at rest ; the storm will have darkened the sky for the last time, and the white breakers shall raise their angry crests nevermore, for “ there shall be no more sea.”

Drive on, then mariners, with the great Pilot beside you, for He can steer you through the sunken reefs and floating wrecks ; and when the sun begins to go down, and you miss, perhaps, upon the shifting waters, the crew that have so long held on the same course with yourselves, still let this chaunt of quiet hopefulness rise up into the pure evening sky—

“ Change and decay in all around I see,
Oh, Thou, who changest not, abide with me.”

ELSIE STRIVELYNE.

The Dream of Home.

ON the damp ground he lies, with his saddle for pillow,
His cloak loosely thrown o'er his tall stately form ;
Calmly he sleeps, while the mad dashing billow,
At the foot of the cliff howls in fury's wild storm.

The owlet is calling, the dead leaves are falling,
And the strong autumn wind bears them swiftly away,
And scatters them far o'er the dark ocean brawling,
And whirls them wide o'er its white gleaming spray.

The war of the elements rages around him,
Yet fails it to waken him out of his rest ;
Softly he sleeps, for sweet slumber hath bound him
Fast in the chains that she round him hath pressed.

See ! he is dreaming—a soft smile is playing
Over his features, all toil-worn and thin ;
Softly ! he's speaking—what is he saying ?
“ Mother, open the door—let your soldier-boy in.”

Yes ! 'tis to home, in the darkness of midnight
That, wand'ring in dreamland, the soldier's thoughts go ;
Far from the sentries, the camp, the watch-firelight,
Far from the black seething ocean below.

Once more he's nearing the home of his childhood,
Ancient and grey with its ivy-grown walls ;
Once more he's treading the dearly-loved wild wood,
List'ning once more to the blackbird's soft calls.

In that bright vision of England's old oaken glades,
Are the leaves yellow, and shrivelled, and dead ?
And the sweet flowers that bloom in the dingle shades,
Are they all faded, their perfumes all fled ?

No ! in that greenwood the glad golden sunlight
Streams o'er the foliage unwithered and gay ;
Fresh in their beauty are smiling those blossoms bright,
Op'ning their buds to the soft eye of day.

All is as summer-like—lovely and smiling,
As when, young in hope, he left his loved home,
Dazzled by visions of glory beguiling,
That lured him afar o'er the wide world to roam.

Soldier, sleep on ! for the morn will awake thee,
The call of the bugle will rouse thee from sleep ;
Then that sweet vision of home will forsake thee,
So, while thou can'st, in that fairyland keep.

But, though the dream may have faded and vanished,
Still in thy heart thou as treasure wilt hold
Mem'ries of pleasures which stern war has banished—
Treasures to thee far more precious than gold.

Sleep then—and dream of thy childhood's loved bowers,
Dream of the mountain, the forest, the glen ;
And hope's radiant star, in thy sorrowful hours,
Shall brighten thy path till thou see'st them again.

Autumn Thoughts under the Beech Trees.

STANDING now on the very confines of winter—the “death-sleep” of nature, I look back lovingly on the summer and autumn gone. With “what a glory comes and goes the year,” and truly this autumn has been an exquisite and prolonged one. I am loth to leave the country in its loveliness (never so great to me as at this season), for the dreary town with its weary round of duties and pleasures. What beauty reigns still! The rich ripe fruits, the lovely pale flowers still mingling with the sombre russet tints. What can exceed the glorious lustre of the beech trees? broad brown shade touched into golden hues by the last rays of the setting sun; and the sunsets are never so beautiful and varied as now. How calm and quiet it is around; the busy hum of summer insects is greatly hushed, the warbling of birds is past; if any sound breaks the stillness, it is the soft drop of a beech-nut, or the rustle of a falling leaf. Surely such a lovely scene—this solemn silence of the autumn woods—is eloquent to every heart of the glory of “Our Father,” who hath given us all seasons and their beauty to enjoy.

Fain would I linger on and watch this beauty fade, as it so soon must, and give place to what, at first sight, seems truly desolation and sadness. Look at the change a month has brought—where there was waving corn, or busy reapers and loaded wains, there are now rough stubble-fields, or brown earth, where the plough has been already at work. Another past,—and the sere leaves will fall thick and fast, the bare hedge-rows will show the deserted birds’ nests, so eagerly sought in vain in summer, and the now beautiful plantations will be a mere naked network. But the transition is too gradual to startle: leaf after leaf drops softly, tint after tint creeps over the forests, the year wanes from autumn to winter with many a pleasing beautiful change, peculiarly characteristic of the “season of the slowly fading year.”

Autumn suggests many ideas to the thoughtful mind as it progresses onward from the close of summer’s heat to the late chill and frosts, which warn us that winter is at hand. It is a period of ripeness and perfection; but there is also associated with it reflections which its very mature beauty suggests—the sadder and more solemn thoughts connected with completion and decay. We entertain towards it a subdued sense of quiet enjoyment in which the consciousness of realization supersedes the pleasurable anticipations of hope; but also, we feel unavoidably forced to the conclusions connected with a period of decline.—The work of the year seems at an end,

its spring and summer are all past, its beauty is altogether that of old age when the business of life is nearly done, and the hopes that properly belong to it have no longer relation to the things of time. The spring is past, the summer ended, and that only can now be reaped, which the provident were careful to sow and tend in their early days.

“Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair,
Rise in the heart and gather in the eyes,
In looking on the happy autumn fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more :
Fresh as the first beam glittering on a sail,
That brings our friends up from the under world,
Sad as the last which reddens over one
That sinks, with all we love, below the verge—
So sad, so fresh, the days that are no more.”

As Tennyson so quaintly and beautifully says, sweetly touching the thrilling chord with which memory links autumn's solemn gold and sombre hues with remembrances of life's spring and summer-time for ever past.

It is, perhaps, hardly possible to detach from autumn scenes a sad and chastened sense of the last change which precedes the long sleep of nature. We must all fade as a leaf! We admire the beauties of autumn with feelings quite different from those with which we watch the progress of spring. On the one we look with a sense of lively pleasure and joyous sympathy, as when we gaze on a beautiful lively child, while we regard the other with much the same feeling with which we look on the silvery hairs and enfeebled step of a hale old man, still noble in decay.—His grey hairs are a crown of glory, and claim a reverence right willingly yielded.

It seems to me that we are, however, too apt to look on the familiar and wondrous changes which autumn effects in the vegetable kingdom, only in the light of a commencement of withering and decay, preparatory to the winter stage of nature's repose. But this is by no means the case, we must look farther. It is more, it is the last change, by means of which the object of creation is accomplished, and like the diminished energies and inclination for repose which accompany the declining years of man, it is a preparatory stage for the coming winter time, in which all vitality must cease,—for a while, but not for ever. The brightest, most cheering thought the autumn brings, is, that it precedes and prepares for an annual resurrection. It is not death, but a healthful sleep, from which the genial voice of spring will wake it again to renewed life and vigour.

Having had each season in turn—the spring with its hope and promise, the summer with its hey-day of maturity and enjoyment, and the autumn with its full realization of hope, its splendid reward of labour past, “hunger displaced by fulness,” apprehension and uncertainty, by the joys of harvest—need we dread the winter? The winter of the year, and the winter of our life! It is indeed the dark night succeeding a bright day, but the dawn in turn shall chase away its darkness. Winter is at once the close and the commencement of the year.

“The winters all
Of the past ages, rolling on, appear
To swallow up, and cover with a pall
Our living summer tides, and o'er their bier
Strew ashes; an untimely funeral,
For which no drooping flower their dew-cups rear,
Nor e'en funereal yew, the banquet hall
Of death to deck, and give the grave its cheer.
Is it not so? It is not—O'er its high walls
Steals the grey dawn-light; see! the morn is near,
Dig deep, and fear not; 'tis death's funeral!”

But the last sunbeam has left the beech-trees, and I too must go, with that last bright gleam to cheer me. The leaf that dropped on my hand and brought these thoughts has not fallen in vain; it reminds me of a greener country where the leaves shall never fall, and the eternal day is summer-time.

BETA.

Song of Praise.

Lord of the blue arched heavens,
Lord of the moss-elad sod!
We praise Thee for the mercies
Thou showerest abroad.

For all that lends such beauty
To this sin-tainted earth,
We praise, O Lord, Thy bounty,
And own Thy matchless worth.

For this bright, flower-strewn mantle,
With which the earth is spread;
For that sweet balm of fragrance,
Which over all is shed;

The time-defying mountain,
That sky-ward rears its head;
The stream, that with loud thunder,
Cleaves deep its hollow bed:

These, with a voice all-powerful,
 Thy majesty proclaim,
 And bid us bow before Thee,
 And praise Thine awful name.

Who make our gladness purer
 By their joy's kindred flow ;
 Who lighten all our sorrows,
 By sharing in our woe.

The insect train that idly
 Wear out their life's short day,
 That bathe their wings in glory,
 Then languish and decay :

And, more than all, we praise Thee,
 O God, the sinners' Friend !
 For Christ, Thy Son beloved,
 Whom Thou to earth did'st send,

The flowers, those radiant jewels,
 Which Earth's bright crown adorn ;
 The birds that with sweet music,
 Awake the slumbering morn :

To break, with arm almighty,
 The captive's galling chain ;
 To cheer the broken-hearted,
 And ease the sufferer's pain ;

These all, unconscious, bid us
 Extol Thy wondrous love,
 That looks on e'en the humblest,
 From its bright home above.

And on Mount Calvary's summit,
 By traitor hands to die,
 That sinners might inherit
 Bright mansion-homes on high.

For loving friends we thank Thee,
 Who, sympathising, hear
 The tale of joy or sorrow,
 We pour into their ear ;

We praise Thee for the Gospel,
 That flies with eager wing,
 The tidings of salvation
 To each dark land to bring.

For Thine unnumbered mercies,
 Our feeble praises rise,
 And, like a balmy incense,
 Float gently to the skies.

MEGAIG BHEG.



Hallowe' en.

THERE are few seasons more distinguished by the rural population of the British Isles than Hallow Tide ; so named by the Romish church to commemorate "All-Saints," who had not particular days set apart in their honour. The name of the season however has very little to do with the many superstitious customs peculiar to it, these being derived from a more remote date than the introduction of Christianity. Bearing, as they do, the undoubted likeness of pagan rites, we may trace them back, at least, to the time of the ancient Druids, when the first of November was one of the four sacred days of our forefathers ; the other three being the first of February, the first of May, or Beltane, and the first of August, or Lammas—all of which were solemnized by the burning of huge bonfires. *The Candlemas Blaze* is probably, with a slight change of day, a relic of the old February festival, and till very lately, fires were kindled throughout Wales, the Scotch Highlands, Ireland, and even England, on the first of November. In North Wales the bonfire called *Coel Coeth*, being kindled near the house, each member of the family selected and marked a white stone, which he threw into the ashes when nearly extinguished, walked round the fire saying his prayers, and went to bed. If any stones were missing next morning, their disappearance was understood to foretell the death of their owners before another All-hallow-Eve. A History of Moray, written so lately as the end of last century, mentions the bonfire custom as then extant in Buchan, and about the same time it was burned in the parish of Calendar, in Perthshire with ceremonies bearing a curious resemblance to those we have mentioned as being in practice in North Wales, the stones being carefully put in among the ashes at night, and the persons represented by the missing stones being called *fey*—*i. e.*, devoted to certain dissolution before the end of the year.

The bonfire was at one time burnt in Ireland, though it has now given place to a candle illumination ; and we learn from the "Gentleman's Magazine," of the end of last century, that it was then observed in various parts of England by the carrying about of burning fuel, called *tindle*, or *tinley*. In this custom probably originated the favourite boyish practice in Scotland of carrying about turnips as lanterns, which are hollowed out for that purpose so as to contain a candle.

These originally pagan ceremonies were mingled with others of a Roman Catholic nature, such as the ringing of bells to do good to the souls of departed saints, which Queen Elizabeth suppressed with her well-known enmity to all such institutions.

It was also a Catholic custom for families to bake oat-meal seeded cakes, which were used by the members of the family, and distributed among the poor who went *a-souling* from parish to parish on Hallow-Eve, chanting their request in the following rhyme "A soul-cake, a soul-cake," have mercy on all Christian souls for a soul-cake!

The first of November was regarded in Ireland and Scotland as the proper time of thanksgiving for the gathered fruits of the earth. Hence originated its Irish name of *La Mas Ubhal*, and festal accompaniment of lambs' wool or drink of roasted apples in ale or milk; and the well-known Scotch custom of "ducking for apples" which requires no description to make it known to all my readers, who will at least have practised it, in its modified and more comfortable form of dropping a fork from some elevation into the tub in the hope of securing a floating prize. Another favourite practice peculiar to Hallowe'en is nut-burning, which requires no better explanation than that given by Burns, when he says—

" Jean slips in twa wi' tentie e'e,
Wha 'twas she wadna tell;
But this is Jock, an' this is me,
She says in to hersel':
He bleezed owre her, an' she owre him,
As they wad never mair part;
Till fuff! he started up the lum,
An' Jean had e'en a sair heart
To see't that night."

The celebration of Hallowe'en by eating and burning nuts, is not peculiar to Scotland alone. Of the sports of *Nut-crack Night*, as it is often called in England, the poet Gay thus writes—

" Two hazel-nuts I threw into the flame,
And to each nut I gave a sweetheart's name:
This with the loudest bounce me sore amazed,
That in a flame of brightest colours blazed;
As blazed the nut, so may thy passion grow,
For 'twas thy nut that did so brightly glow."

and the Irish poet Graydon, in a passage too long for quotation, speaks of the same custom as a national one.

Many other means of fortune-telling have been devised and practised by the Scotch peasantry, such as, to eat an apple alone at a looking-glass, in a room only lighted by a candle, in the expectation of seeing a vision of the future husband peering over the shoulder; to pull an old cabbage-stock and draw from its straightness or

crookedness the appearance of the future spouse, from the earth about its roots her fortune, and from its taste her temper; and with eyes blind-folded, by dipping the hands into one of three saucers containing clean water, dirty water, and no water at all, to determine whether the person is to be married to an unmarried woman, a widow, or to remain unmarried.

These customs form a curious commentary on the disposition which seems to possess the common people to know something of what is to be hereafter, in endeavouring on a night when, according to tradition, all the witches are to be seen, to invoke supernatural aid to uplift the dark curtain that veils the future. If, however, the nature of these observances evince a superstitious tendency in the common mind, the innocent and mirthful manner in which they are held, would commend them to any one who can sympathize with Goldsmith's lines—

“ Yes ! let the rich deride, the proud disdain,
The simple pleasures of the lowly train,
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm than all the gloss of art.”

ELFIE.

The Story of a Purse.

Two purses, a leather portmonnaie of modern form, and another of the long shape, formerly in vogue, were lying side by side in a neatly arranged drawer. The last mentioned purse, which had been knitted by the mistress of the drawer for one of her older acquaintances, who still used one of those somewhat antique articles, had not yet begun its career of usefulness, for it was only that day that it had left the busy fingers of the worker. As it lay quietly beside its older companion, it suddenly found a voice, and, addressing the other purse, said—“ I wonder what my fate is to be ; what kind of a mistress I shall have, and on what errands I shall be employed ? You have seen a good deal of life, I doubt not ? pray, tell me some of your experiences ; they will be interesting to me, who am but just beginning life, and will, besides, relieve the monotony of our present existence, for it is rather tiresome to lie here doing and seeing nothing.”

The older purse, which was, perhaps, not unlike persons of advanced years in liking to talk of what it had seen, replied that it would willingly give an account of

some of the scenes through which it had passed, so that its young friend might learn what to expect through life.

“My memory,” it began, “does not go very far back, for the first thing I remember is lying under a glass-case on the counter of a handsome shop in this city. One day, an old gentleman with hair silvered by time, but still with a singularly bright and gentle blue eye, which, with a mouth of marvellous sweetness, gave an inexpressible charm to his fine manly countenance, entered the shop, and requested that some purses might be shown to him. I, among others, was produced, and, in a short time, transferred from my former position to the pocket of my purchaser, who, after passing through several streets, stopped before the door of one of the largest houses in the city, where, after ringing and being admitted, he was shown into a handsomely furnished apartment, in which a young lady was engaged in some feminine employment. She rose at the entrance of the visitor, and greeted him with much affection.

“After a few remarks had passed between them, the old gentleman observed to his companion, ‘This is your birthday, I think, Harriet; I have brought you a small remembrance to show that I have not forgotten you.’

“So saying, he drew me from his pocket and presented me to his young friend, who exclaimed in a tone of unfeigned pleasure—‘Many thanks, my dear sir, what a handsome purse; how kind of you to think of me. But it is always the same; you are ever far too good to thoughtless, selfish me,’ she added with a sigh that was half serious, half comic.

“‘I hope you are neither selfish nor thoughtless, my dear,’ returned the gentleman gravely; ‘but, if you will not take it amiss, I shall administer a little admonition concerning the use to which I should wish you to put my little gift. I know that, thanks to your kind father’s liberality, you are always amply provided with money, which is a valuable talent entrusted to your care; I have only to beg, my dear Harriet, that what this purse will contain in future, may not be all expended in indulging a foolish fondness for finery and display, which is but a poor way of employing the great gift of wealth; but that the deserving poor may have reason to say that, in your prosperity, you have not forgotten them in their adversity.’

“Harriet listened with patience and attention to this short lecture from her friend, to whom she was much attached, and whose admonition was, moreover, delivered with a gentle earnestness very different from the lofty tone of censure which persons in advanced life often employ when addressing the young and which, it is to be feared, sometimes conceals a secret envy of the capacity of youth for enjoyment of every kind.

“ ‘My dear Mr Montgomery,’ she replied, ‘I shall not promise much, as in that case I should, in all likelihood, break my word, which would be a pity ; but, I do promise you, that a few at least of the glittering coins which find their way into this handsome purse, shall serve a better purpose than furnishing another ball dress or a gay wreath to deck “my bonny brown hair.”’

“ The entrance at this moment of a gentleman whom, from the strong likeness he bore to my young mistress, I at once guessed to be her father, here gave a totally different turn to the conversation, and a discussion ensued between the friends in which I was not the least interested.

“ Before I had been many days in the possession of my new owner, I felt that the warning addressed to her by her kind friend had not been needless ; for Harriet Archer, the only and much-indulged child of very wealthy parents, accustomed to have every wish gratified, was, not from a selfish disposition—for she was naturally kind-hearted and affectionate—but from a thoughtlessness fostered by her bringing-up, little in the habit of spending her liberal allowance of pocket-money otherwise than in purchasing the many articles that took her fancy, or giving presents to her friends, who were not few—for her engaging manners endeared her to all who met her. When any case of misery was brought under her notice, no one could be more generous than she, or more keenly interested in the particulars of the tale of woe ; but, in the happiness of her own life, she too often forgot that all was not sunshine around her, and her thoughts seldom wandered far beyond the little circle in which she moved. Often did I accompany my kind-hearted, but thoughtless mistress into the gayest shops of the city ; and often were the stores I contained poured forth to minister to her real or fancied wants : but though the poor were not wholly forgotten, I frequently felt that the wish of her good old friend had only been indifferently respected.

“ But there came a time when my fair young mistress no longer stirred abroad, for she lay stretched on a bed of sickness and of pain. The sad and troubled looks of her fond parents ; the ominous words of the family physician ; the stealthy footsteps of those who tended the sick girl, told but too plainly how serious were the apprehensions entertained ; and soon it was whispered, for every one seemed afraid to speak out the sad truth, that all hope was over, and that the sands of the sufferer’s life were well-nigh run out. My young mistress was cheerful, and apparently more truly happy than she had ever been when, in the highest health and spirits, she was the gayest of the gay ; but the distress of her broken-hearted parents, who had lived but for their child, baffles all attempts at description. Friends came with kindly, but in the case of some, with too often obtrusive sympathy. In striking contrast to those whose visits brought

no comfort in their train was one who was always welcome, for her tender, loving words to the afflicted parents, were like balm to their troubled spirits, and at her entrance the invalid's eye brightened, for the tones of her voice were like music to the sick girl's ear, and the light she brought with her, lingered long after she herself had departed. At one glance, it was easy to perceive that this friend was one far above the ordinary type, for in every line of her highly intellectual countenance, you could read the impress of all the best and noblest emotions of the human heart.

"One beautiful day, when the soft and balmy air of early summer, though it came from no fresh green fields, but from the streets of the city, was wafted with its refreshing breath in at the slightly opened window of the sick-room, this kind friend, whom I already knew by the name of Mrs Bertram, entered the chamber of the invalid, and after affectionately greeting the mourning parents, who were watching beside their child, silently seated herself at the bedside of the dying girl.

"She appeared to be sleeping, but soon opened her eyes, and turned to the lady with a smile of welcome on her face, and when her friend drew nearer, in a low and faint, but distinct tone, she bade her a loving farewell. She told her that she had not long to live, but that now she could 'leave the world without a tear, save for the friends she held so dear,' for Heaven, to which she was fast hastening, was no longer to her an empty name, but a home to which she longed to go. She begged her to comfort her beloved parents after she was gone, for well she knew how sorely they would stand in need of consolation; and then taking me from a table beside her couch, on which I had been placed by her direction, she placed me in her friend's hands, and said in a faltering tone, 'Take this little purse, it has been much used, but I know you will prize it, when I tell you that it was the last gift I received from our departed friend Mr Montgomery. He bade me employ what it should contain in other ways than merely fostering my vanity; but I have not obeyed his wish, for it has been seldom opened to relieve the wants of the poor; in your hands I know it will be the bearer of happiness to many a home, and my dear friend's gift will not have been bestowed in vain.'

"Here she paused, for so much speaking had exhausted her; and her parents, who had been seated at a little distance, approached her couch. In a few minutes she had so far recovered, as to be able to address a few words to those around her, bidding them all a touching farewell; and then a smile of heavenly joy lighted up her wan but still lovely features: then the smile slowly faded, and her spirit fled.

"And this is how I came into the possession of my present respected mistress."

AGATHA.

Recollections of some of the Early Poets.

IN last number we quoted a few lines from the sonnet of James I. which is considered as the "most favourable sample of his Majesty's poetic skill:" Had they not been naturally suggested by the subject then treated of, they would have found a place in this article as being the production of the King himself, upon whose reign we are now entering.

It has been remarked that towards the latter years of the reign of Queen Elizabeth poetry lost much of its grace and beauty—its place being taken by science and learning. Poetry was for a time crushed by the weight of learning, as a vase of delicate china would be ground to powder by the weight of a heavy lexicon. But human nature cannot live without poetry—every life has its poetry either expressed or unexpressed, therefore poetry soon freed itself again from the trammels with which pedantry would have bound it. Nevertheless, the poets with whom we meet in the reign of James I. are not remarkable for the brilliancy of their imagination, though here and there we come upon pretty little songs and sonnets, testifying to the existence of some poetry in the hearts of the people of this as of every age.

With the names of some of the poets of this period we are all acquainted, though we might be at some loss to name their works, while, on the other hand, many of the songs of this time are among the favourites of the concert-room and the drawing-room, though the auditors and often the singers themselves are ignorant of the names of the authors.

Towards the beginning of this reign lived Thomas Heywood, about whom little is known, but he is the author of the well-known song, beginning—

"Pack clouds away, and welcome day,
With night we banish sorrow;
Sweet air blow soft, mount larks aloft,
To give my love good-morrow."

Warton has observed a resemblance in Milton's poems of *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* to a poem written by Burton; indeed, no reader of Burton's "*Abstract of Melancholy*" can fail to observe a certain likeness between them. But there is, perhaps, a more striking resemblance to *Il Penseroso* in a song of Beaumont and Fletcher's, beginning—

"Hence all you vain delights,
As short as are the nights,
Wherein you spend your folly!

There's nought in this life sweet,
 If men were wise to see't,
 But only melancholy ;
 Oh, sweetest melancholy !”

The next verse reminds us again of *Il Penseroso*, where melancholy is so beautifully personified as the “pensive nun, devout and pure”—it speaks of it as with

“ Folded arms, and fixed eyes ;
 A sigh that, piercing, mortifies ;
 A look that's fasten'd to the ground ;
 A tongue chained up without a sound.”

Scotland supplied this reign with one of its sweetest writers of sonnets, namely, Drummond of Hawthornden. He was a very accomplished man, but naturally preferring the retirement of his beautifully situated home, to a life spent in more stirring scenes. When a young man he met with a heavy loss which seems to have given a touch of sadness to some of his writings, as when addressing spring, and thinking of all the pleasure which that sweet season brings, he breaks off with—

“ But she, whose breath embalm'd thy wholesome air,
 Is gone ! nor gold, nor gems can her restore.”

There is something irresistibly poetical about the very name of the nightingale, and most good poets have immortalized her in some beautiful lines. Drummond is no exception to the rule, and has left us a pretty sonnet concerning her. Oppressed, no doubt, by his own grief, he wonders to hear “such sad lamenting strains” from the nightingale when surrounding nature is so bright and happy ; and questions her, saying—

“ Tell me (so may thou fortune milder try,
 And long, long sigh !) for what thou thus complains,
 Since winter's gone, and sun in dappled sky
 Enamour'd smiles on woods and flowery plains ?
 The bird, as if my questions did her move,
 With trembling wings sigh'd forth—“ I love, I love !”

One, at least, of George Wither's sonnets is well known to us all whether inclined to poetical studies or not ; it is that pretty sonnet set to music by Phillips, in which a lover very sensibly asks—

“ Shall I, wasting in despair,
 Die because a woman's fair ?
 Or make pale my cheeks with care,
 'Cause another's rosy are ?

Be she fairer than the day,
 Or the flowery meads in May ;
 If she be not so to me,
 What care I how fair she be ?”

We cannot avoid feeling a certain sameness in many of the poems written by the early poets—a sort of conventional style of writing in the praise of beauty and grace, so that it is most refreshing here and there in the writings of Wither to find an acknowledgment of there being something even better than these. When speaking of the beauty and attraction of some women, he draws a comparison between them and the woman whom he truly loves—

“ She whom I have prized so,
 Yields delights for reason too.
 Who could doat on things so common,
 As mere outward handsome women ?

There is a lay written by William Browne, in which he describes the woman who, in his mind, is perfect.—She is good, sensible, and lovely in all excellence, and

“ Wit she hath, without desire
 To make known how much she hath.”

The poet had probably been somewhat persecuted by that class of people who never rest till they have explained to every one how much they know ; who give out all that they have to say in as learned a tone as possible, and whose conversation is thickly interspersed with learned allusions. This reminds us of what Lord Jeffrey said when spoken to about some lady who was designated “blue”—“I don’t so much object,” said he, “to blue stockings, if the petticoats be long enough to hide them.”

We cannot for a moment think of George Herbert as one of the little known, or as one of the minor poets, nevertheless we must adorn our paper with one quotation from that purest and sweetest of clerical writers—“the saintly George Herbert,” as he has been well called. But we shall limit ourselves to one, and that one shall be taken from “The Church”—

Chorus. “ Let all the world in every corner sing
 My God and King.

Verse. “ The heavens are not too high,
 His praise may thither fly :
 The earth is not too low,
 His praises there may grow.

Chorus. “ Let all the world in every corner sing
 My God and King.

Verse. “ The Church with psalms must shout,
 No door can keep them out :
 But, above all, the heart
 Must bear the longest part.

Chorus. “ Let all the world in every corner sing
 My God and King.”

It has been observed that the reign of Charles I., though full of difficulty and danger to the monarch himself, was most favourable to the growth of all the fine arts ; and that the “ general characteristics of the poetry composed during this period are such as indicate a very high degree of refinement.” We might have expected to see in the writers of this period a reflection of the disturbed life of the king ; but this was counteracted by the attention which he himself bestowed, and the encouragement which he extended to all high art which he held in great estimation. During this reign lived Edmund Waller, the writer of the little song in which the rose is made a messenger of love, being sent forth with the words—

“ Go, lovely Rose !
 Tell her that wastes her time and me,
 That now she knows,
 When I resemble her to thee,
 How sweet and fair she seems to be.”

Henry Delanne seems to be one of the few poets of this age who has striven to leave for his children moral precepts in his verses ; indeed the only volume of his works known to be published, bears the title of “ A Legacy to his Sons.” He warns them of the steepness and eragginess of the life before them ; he tells them of the grace which has been promised to sinners if they repent ; and with a father’s anxiety he points out for their footsteps the path of faith, which lies between despair and presumption, saying—

“ Cheat not yourselves, as most ; who then prepare
 For death, when life is almost turned to fume.
 One thief was saved, that no man might despair ;
 And *but one* thief, that no man might presume.”

The next poet we shall mention is one from whom we frequently quote, though he has not left behind him any very voluminous writings to keep the name of Richard Lovelace in our remembrance. Although on entering life his many amiable qualities and his “ courtly deportment ” gained for him many admirers, and doubtless much attention, yet we read that “ after having frequently risked his life, and consumed his

whole patrimony in useless efforts to serve his sovereign," he died in a poverty-stricken lodging without even the ordinary comforts of life. It is from his pen that we have the sentiments expressed of the truly honourable warrior, as in taking leave of his beloved "Lucasta," he exclaims—

" I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honour more."

Another familiar quotation is taken from his song in prison, where his free spirit declares that—

" Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage ;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an hermitage."

Abraham Cowley can scarcely be said to be a little known poet, having found his last resting-place in Westminster Abbey, near to the burial places of Chaucer and Spenser, but it is certain that his works are not read by the generation of to-day, as they were by his contemporaries or his immediate successors. In "The Wish" he gives vent to a desire felt by many studious men, and presenting a life attractive to those minds either quiet by nature, or craving for rest after a life of struggle and change—

" Ah yet, ere I descend to th' grave,
May I a small house and large garden have !
And a few friends, and many books, both true,
Both wise, and both delightful too !"

We shall finish this reign, and also this paper with one quotation from Herrick's beautiful little address "To Blossoms"—

" Fair pledges of a fruitful tree,
Why do you fall so fast ?
Your date is not so past,
But you may stay yet here awhile,
To blush and gently smile,
And go at last."

After all, making quotations is an unsatisfactory work : we long to lengthen them, we regret to cut them short in their beauty ; and our paper would run on page after page till the most patient reader would cast it aside unfinished. It is like walking through a garden well filled with lovely flowers, and trying to keep the bouquet we are gathering to a moderate size ; a few steps on we see another flower apparently more beautiful than the last, and ever regretting to cast any aside, we gather another and

another, till at last we look rather sadly at our bouquet, and almost wish that we had left a few on their native bushes, where they smelt so sweetly and grew so gracefully. Yet we have gathered them, so let us make the best of them, knowing that we may return at will to their birth-place, and there find new delights in our old favourites.

DES EAUX.

A Christmas Carol.

HAIL, Christmas! welcome to our homes,
 Crown of the ripe old year!
 In every home a time of joy,
 To every bosom dear.

All hail! old monarch of the snows,
 Thou king of festive mirth,
 That spread'st with joy the festive board,
 And cheer'st the wintry hearth.

No jewelled diadem of state
 Enclasps thy ruddy brow;
 But round thine aged temples wreaths
 The blushing holly bough.

Like coral in a snow-drift set
 The glossy berries shine,
 And seem to kiss thy hoary locks
 Where lovingly they twine.

No scented blossoms lend their charms
 To greet thy reigning day,
 But through deep snows, o'er ice-bound seas
 Thou wend'st thy plodding way.

The wild winds howl with angry voice,
 And o'er thee pour their rage;
 While with cold pearls of icy rain
 They deck thy garment's edge.

But thou, unheeding, onward goest,
 And with an eager hand,
 Knock'st loudly at our closed doors,
 An entrance to demand.

Fling wide your doors, and let him in,
 Your hearts with joy aglow;
 Let kindness reign supreme o'er all,
 And love unfettered flow.

Fling wide your doors! and think the while
 Amid your shouts of mirth,
 Of Him, whose entrance to this sphere,
 Gave Christmas time its birth.

And in the name of that dear Lord,
 Fling wide in love your door!
 That of your joy there may be found
 A portion for the poor.

MEGAIG BHEG.

Nobel Reading.

It has been often said that the character of a people in any age determines the character of their literature, and no doubt this is, to a great extent, true. At the present day there is a very great craving for excitement, people want to be amused, and in too many lives the love of pleasure usurps the place which should be filled by admiration of moral beauty and earnest striving after nobleness of character. It is demand for amusement which produces the immense number of the works of fiction with which modern literature swarms.

And first, let us distinguish between two classes of novels—those which aim at drawing human nature as it is—in which the characters are real people, with little joys and little sorrows, temptations to struggle with, and faults to overcome, and not heroes and heroines lifted far above ordinary life by the force of some great passion, be it love, hatred, jealousy, or revenge—and those which from beginning to end are filled with exciting, and generally very improbable incidents like the much read works of Miss Braddon and Wilkie Collins. Now, a really well-written novel of the former class is most enjoyable, and refreshes and invigorates the mind without exciting it to such a pitch as to make ordinary, every-day life seem tame and insipid. It produces much the same effect as lively, pleasant society; and as agreeable society is not always to be had in reality, there can be no harm in enjoying it occasionally in a novel. One of the nicest works of this class which we ever read is "Wives and Daughters; a story of every-day life," at present coming out in the "Cornhill." No one could help being interested in little Molly's trials and troubles, and her honest, straightforward way of meeting them: she is thoroughly real, not a bit transcendental, and never thinks about herself at all. Mrs Gibson is a very well-drawn character, though she represents an odious class of people; and the society of the little country town, composed chiefly of old ladies, is depicted with wonderful cleverness and variety. It would be well if such works were more common; but it is much easier to write a sensation novel which will be sufficiently interesting to be read, than one in which the characters will be natural, and yet not hum-drum. There are unfortunately a great many stupid people in the world, and they interest us no more in a novel than in real life. It is very delightful to meet clever, unaffected men and women who think for themselves, and whose conduct is actuated by steady principle, and not by mere love of pleasure; but such characters are rare in real life, and much rarer in fiction, as they require very great talent and much persevering study on the part of the novelist.

No one can deny that sensation novels are interesting and exciting. It is not pleasant to stop before you get to the end of the third volume, but when you do reach that point and lay down the book, you feel that you have been carried away and interested and excited by characters which, generally speaking, are not worthy of admiration. They are commonly distinguished by great force of will; a man determines that he will be revenged on some enemy, and works steadily and perseveringly towards his end; or a woman falls in love, and forthwith ordinary duties, joys, and sorrows sink into insignificance, and are absorbed in a passion which is often the most selfish that human beings feel. In a perfect character no one passion or feeling should predominate to the stunting and dwarfing of all the others, as is usually the case in the heroes and heroines of modern sensation novels. The effect of reading many such books is most injurious. Our notions of right and wrong get unsettled, and we are apt to admire what is not really true and good. The books we read have just as much influence on our characters as the companions with whom we associate, and it is therefore our duty to choose those which will foster every right and noble feeling.

M. E. M.

The Home of the Moss.

O'er Erin's wild harp the green shamrock is flung,
 Round Albyn's blue bonnet the thistle is hung,
 Round England's royal scutcheon her proud roses bloom,
 But the home of the moss is the vault and the tomb.

The towering foxglove its gay tiger bells
 Rears regally up in the dark woodland dells;
 The old gnarled hawthorn the ivy sustains,
 The lowly green moss on the head-stone remains.

The moor and the hill-side with heather are bright;
 The brow of the bride bears the orange-flower white;
 The feathery ferns o'er the forest grass wave—
 The bonny moss mantles the sod of the grave.

The warrior's helm with the laurel is crowned ;
 The locks of the poet with bay-leaves are bound ;
 The belle of the ball-room the myrtle wreath wears—
 The quiet of the churchyard the humble moss shares.

The bulrush lifts proudly its tall tasselled head
 Where the brook rushes by in its rough pebbly bed ;
 The white water-lily is rocked on its tide—
 But the moss 'neath the grass of the grave loves to hide.

Oh, clinging, and creeping, and velvety thing,
 How is it so few in thy praise ever sing ?
 What plant loves, like thee, the last home of the dead,
 Where rests the cold corpse in its lone narrow bed ?

Then, oh, lovely moss, may'st thou ever be seen
 Adorning the sod with thy delicate green ;
 Still be thy soft texture more brilliant the while,
 In the light of the sunshine that's Heaven's own smile.

MAS ALTA.

The Story of a Purse.

WHEN the purse had finished the narration of the sad episode in its life related in last number, its companion inquired if it had ever accompanied its mistress to the home of its former owner.

“O yes, frequently,” returned the other, “for in the house of mourning my mistress is never a stranger ; and the afflicted parents have had reason to bless her for the comfort she imparted to them. Many are the scenes of distress which I have witnessed in the course of my short life and the broken hearts which my mistress has sought to heal, and seldom have her endeavours been in vain. I could tell you a touching tale of sorrow”—

“But I would not listen to it,” interrupted the silken purse, “for I shall be afraid to begin my public duties, if life is all painted in such gloomy colours. Tell me (if

you can) how your mistress has effectually removed the curtain of sorrow, not merely lightened the load of grief that weighed on the heart; and never had narrator such a listener as you will have in me."

"Well," returned the other, "all my experiences, it is true, have not been equally sad, though you will find, when you have seen a little of this world, that life is not all sunshine."

"Nor all clouds either, I hope, or I shall be content to end my days in this quiet corner, where, if we have no great enjoyment, we are at least free from misery. But come, you must have seen much happiness in the service of your kind mistress, so pluck a bright leaf out of your mind's journal, and show it to me, that I may look forward with pleasure to the work that lies before me."

The elder purse was silent for a brief space, as if turning over in its mind the scene of its past life; then in a faint but clear voice it resumed its story:—

"The incident which I am about to relate," it began, "is one of the most interesting which it has ever been my privilege to witness, and also serves to show how much uprightness of conduct and true nobility of nature often adorn the poor of the land:—I was returning in my mistress's pocket from some shops, and lying nearer the opening than was at all consistent with my safety, was pulled out with her handkerchief, and in an instant lay on the hard pavement. In the bustle of the crowded thoroughfare my fall was unheeded, and the busy foot passengers seemed too eager in their own business to cast their eyes on the ground, where I lay in imminent danger of being crushed by hasty footsteps into an unshapely mass. I was not doomed however to lie long there, for a boy of ten or eleven years of age, whose eyes were bent somewhat sadly on the ground, perceiving me, eagerly stooped down and rescued me from my dangerous position. The face of the boy, who was poorly but not miserably clothed, brightened up as he felt my weight in his hand. 'It can't be empty,' he said, or it wouldn't be so heavy: I'll be able to get something nice for mother to-night, and she has much need of it I am sure.' So saying, he quickened his pace, and soon leaving the gay street in which he had found me, passed through some of the poorer parts of the city, and at last turned into a narrow 'wynd,' where he paused before a high tenement, evidently the abode of many families of the poorest class. He ascended a long dirty stair, and I could hear, as we passed the dilapidated doors of the various rooms, each of which was occupied by one or more families, the sad sounds of husbands and wives quarrelling, parents scolding and even striking their children, and the piteous cries of the ill-used little ones. The room which we entered however had a more respectable appearance than could have been expected from the character of the

house, for it was large and tolerably airy, and though not very clean, there was visible in it a degree of tidiness not often found in the dwellings of the very poor. The furniture, though very scanty, was good, and a hardy cabbage-rose plant which stood in a flower-pot at the window, filled the apartment with a faint but very sweet fragrance. As the boy entered the room a little girl of some three or four years, with the curliest of locks and the brightest of eyes, who had been sitting on a low stool nursing a dilapidated doll, sprang up and attacked her brother in a way which was evidently not displeasing to him. The other inmate of the room, an invalid woman, sat, or rather reclined in an arm-chair, working very slowly, though as quickly as her feeble strength permitted, for weakness was written on every line of her face. Her features, though by no means plain, were far from being handsome, and yet I thought, as I gazed on her, that I had never seen a more beautiful countenance. The prevailing expressions on her face were those of the most child-like trust and faith, and of sanctified sorrow, which had apparently pressed heavily on the sufferer, and left her soul as 'gold seven times purified.' You could not look on that calm placid brow, into the depths of those mild and yet piercing eyes, without feeling that you had met with one of 'the excellent of the earth,' whose bodily wants you might relieve, but who would render far greater service to your mind and heart than would repay all that you had done for her.

"When my young finder had received the caresses of his little sister, he approached his mother's side and exclaiming, 'Here, mother, is something to make you well,' he flung me with an air of triumph into her lap.

"'What is it, Charlie?' said the woman in a tone of wonder, 'and where did you get it?'

"'It is a purse, mother, can't you see?' said the boy laughing. 'I found it in the street, but I have not opened it yet, as I was afraid some one might see it and try to get possession of it.' So saying, he took me from his mother, who had been turning me over in her hands, and, opening me, laid my contents—a sovereign, a pound-note, and a little silver, on the table. 'This is a prize indeed,' he said; 'it will get you all sorts of things that you require.'

"Here Charlie was beginning an enumeration of delicacies which, he thought, would suit an invalid's taste, when his mother interrupted him with—'But, Charlie, it is not ours; it must be returned to its proper owner.'

"'Not ours!' said the boy wonderingly; 'I did not see any one let it fall, and it would be impossible for us to find its owner in this large town.'

"'Let us see if there is no name inside that could enable us to discover whose

property it is,' said the mother, taking me up and examining each of my many recesses. After a little search, she discovered in an obscure corner, a piece of card, with the name and address of my mistress. 'Here,' she said, reading aloud what was written on the paper, 'is something which will be of use to us. This is likely the name of the lady to whom the purse belongs.'

"'O, mother,' said poor Charles, in a tone of the greatest disappointment, do you really think that we ought to take it back? The lady must be rich, and would likely never miss it; and we are *so poor*,' laying a strong emphasis on the two last words.

"'So poor that we cannot afford to be honest?' said his mother, with a grave smile: 'I hope not; or poverty would indeed be hard to bear. Oh! my boy,' she exclaimed earnestly: 'I am in want of many things, it is true; but do you think that I could enjoy them, or that they would do me any good, if they were bought with the price of our honesty? Come Charlie,' she added encouragingly, 'put on your cap and go at once to the lady's house; for the sooner the purse is returned the better. Rich people as well as poor, are often much put about by the loss of a few pounds, or even shillings.' The boy, though not without a suppressed sigh of reluctance, silently obeyed his mother; and after leaving the room, ran quickly down stairs, and along the street, as if he feared his honesty would take flight, before he reached his destination. Soon out of breath with the speed at which he was going, he walked more slowly, and after treading his way through many streets, he stopped at length before the door of my mistress's house. Charlie rang the bell, and the door was opened by a servant-girl, who, on her mistress being inquired for, replied that it was quite impossible for any one to see her. 'But my business is very important,' returned the boy, determined that he should gain admittance. 'Tell me what it is then,' said the girl sharply, 'don't keep me waiting here.' 'Do you know if your mistress has lost anything?' inquired Charlie, unwilling to let out more than he could help. 'O, have you found my mistress's purse that she was so vexed at losing?' exclaimed the girl, now as eager as she was before indifferent. 'I'll tell the lady herself when I see her,' replied the boy, who had not a little of the 'canny Scot' about him; and the girl half laughing and half provoked at his obstinacy, ran quickly upstairs, and soon returned with a request from her mistress that Charlie should come into her presence. The poor boy's boldness forsook him at the thought of confronting the lady in her drawing-room; for very slowly did he ascend the carpeted stairs, and his nimble-footed conductor had reached the landing before he was half-way up. The girl threw open the drawing-room door and ushered in Charlie, who made a bow, which had at least, the merit of

being very respectful, if it was not such a one as a professor of dancing would have wished his pupils to make.

“If the boy, however, expected a proud and dignified reception, he must have been most agreeably disappointed; for my mistress, with the winning courtesy which invariably characterizes her, rose on his entrance, and perceiving his embarrassment, took him kindly by the hand, and led him to a chair near that on which she had been seated. Put quite at his ease by the lady’s gentle unassuming manner, Charlie, convinced that he had discovered the proper owner, told where and when he had found me, and taking me from his pocket, placed me in the hands of my mistress. After thanking him many times, and expressing her great joy at my recovery, Mrs. Bertram said to the boy, ‘Will you be offended if I count the money to see if it is all right?’

“‘Offended! no ma’am, why should I?’ returned Charlie, looking up with a wondering smile.

“‘It is as if I doubted your honesty,’ replied my mistress, opening me as she spoke. ‘Ah!’ she exclaimed, as her eyes fell upon the little piece of paper which had been the means of my recovery; ‘I did not think when my little niece insisted on putting this card into the purse, in case, as she said, I should be lost, that it would be the means of restoring my precious property to me; for without this paper it would have been impossible for you to find me out. I wonder I did not think of asking you before, how you so readily found out the proper owner.’

“‘You are an honest boy,’ she added, as having examined my contents, she discovered that nothing was amissing. ‘It was principally on account of the purse itself that I was so glad at its recovery; but I am also well pleased, for more than one reason, that the money has been restored. The purse’ she continued, ‘was the last gift of a very dear friend, and I should have been much grieved to have lost it.’

“‘Oh, ma’am,’ stammered Charlie, colouring highly, from a variety of emotions, ‘I am not at all honest, but my mother’—here he stopped, not knowing how to proceed.

“‘What about your mother my dear?’ said my mistress kindly; ‘but first tell me your name, that I may know how to address you.’

“‘My name is Charlie Davidson, ma’am.’

“‘Well Charlie,’ she continued, ‘what is this about your mother? Do not be afraid, but tell me all.’

“Then Charlie, with considerable hesitation, told how he had been tempted to keep the purse and its contents, and how his mother had shown him the dishonesty of such an act: and then almost unconsciously, the boy was led to tell of all their trials and difficulties—how after many years of ill health, the husband and father had

died ; and how the widow had striven to bring up her little family in comfort ; but how two or three months before this, she had been attacked by fever, from which she had never wholly recovered ; and how every day the little store of money became less and less, until at last, they were on the brink of starvation ; but yet, how in the midst of all her troubles the mother had not lost heart, but still preserved her trust in Him, who is 'the widow's Husband,' and 'the Father of the fatherless.'

"When Charlie had finished his short narration, my mistress exclaimed, while something like a tear glittered in her eye, 'you are a happy boy, to have such a mother.'

"'Yes, ma'am, indeed I am,' replied the lad, while his face was lighted up with an expression of the greatest gratification ; 'I am afraid I do not deserve to have such a mother.'

"'Oh I do not think you look much of a seape-grace,' said my mistress, smiling as she looked into the boy's open ingenuous countenance ; 'I must go and make your mother's acquaintance : do you think she would receive a call from me ?'

"'O ma'am, she would be delighted,' returned the boy, adding, however, as he glanced at the clock on the mantle-piece, 'If you please ma'am, I think it is time for me to go, for mother and Bertie will be wearying for me.'

"'Who is Bertie ?' enquired the lady.

"'My little sister ma'am ; my father died before she was baptized, so she was named Roberta after him, but mother and I always call her Bertie.'

"'Well Charlie, I do not wish to keep you too long, but before you go I must give you this little remembrance,' said my mistress, putting as she spoke, a pound-note into his hands. 'Do not be afraid to take it,' she continued as she saw the boy hesitate ; 'It is not the reward of honesty, for honesty seeks no reward : but I am so rejoiced at the restoration of my property, that I think it but right, that since you were the means of its recovery, you should be partakers in my joy.'

"Charlie tried in vain to express his thanks to the lady, and left the house with a much lighter heart than when he entered it.

"The next day I accompanied my kind mistress to the home of the poor woman, and in a few minutes the lady and the invalid were conversing together like old friends. As her time was limited, Mrs Bertram did not then stay long, but on leaving promised to return the day after with her own doctor, who should inquire into the nature of the sick woman's ailments, and prescribe for her accordingly.

"My mistress was not one to break her promise, so on the following day, accompanied by the physician, she paid her second visit to the invalid.

"The doctor's opinion was decidedly favourable: he said that there was nothing radically wrong with the patient, but that country air and nourishing food were all she required. Mrs Bertram, who had taken as great a fancy to the mother as she had formerly done to the son, interested herself in procuring a quiet lodging in the country, to which in a few days Mrs Davidson removed with her children.

"For nearly two months the widow and her family tasted all the sweets of country life, and at the end of that time returned to the city with the mother's health completely re-established. On her return Mrs Davidson was offered the situation of female superintendent in a school under the real and not merely nominal patronage of Mrs Bertram. This offer the widow accepted with expressions of the most heartfelt gratitude, and poured many blessings on the head of her kind benefactress. Charles was received into the boys' department of the same school, and Bertie was placed along with other little children of her own age in the infants' class, where she was under the special superintendance of her mother. Not once or twice, but many times have I accompanied my mistress to the new dwelling of her protégés, where not one rose-plant, but flowers of various kinds, brought from their country home, give the city room a refreshing rural look."

A long silence here ensued, which the knitted purse at length broke by asking if that was all that its companion had to relate.

"Yes, in the meantime," returned the other, "Mrs Davidson is still in her situation, where, I believe, she gives great satisfaction; Charles' master frequently assures my mistress that he is one of his most promising pupils; and little Bertie is receiving the kind of instruction usually imparted in infant schools. Mrs Bertram, much as she has done in the course of her useful life, has never performed a deed of benevolence of which she has seen more precious fruits; and the widow has had reason to say that, without taking into account those higher principles which should ever prompt to uprightness of conduct, on almost every occasion, 'Honesty is the best policy.'"

All further conversation on the part of the two friends was here prevented by the opening of the drawer by their mistress, who took out the silken purse, and carried it away to the lady for whom it had been wrought. It was not without a pang of regret that it saw itself separated from its companion, but the pleasant thought that it was about to bid good-bye to idleness, and enter on a career of usefulness speedily consoled it.

It is not impossible that the two friends may meet again and relate some of their several experiences, but till that time we must bid them farewell.

AGATHA.

The Old Year.

Oh! dying year,
 How many hopes, once rosy as the flowers
 That crowned with fragrant wreaths thy spring's young hours,
 Lie withered on thy bier.

Still those, who fain
 Had followed vanished footsteps, gone before,
 Stand lorn and stranded, on time's barren shore,
 Calling their lost in vain.

Oh! human mirth,
 And love, and hope, how were your sweetness fraught
 With a despairing sadness, could we not
 Look up above our earth.

So fades our life,
 Even as a blossom sheds its tender grace;
 Oh Thou! our only sure abiding place
 Through earthly change and strife,

The Strength and Stay
 Of our mortality! upon the eyes
 Weary with weeping, let Thy light arise,—
 Ere long life's dreary day

Fades and is o'er,
 And earth's poor pilgrims, through the open gate
 Pass with glad feet, no longer desolate,
 Where time shall be no more.

J. I. L.

December.

THE year, with its many changes, has flown over our heads, and in another month we shall greet the advent of 1866. The end of a year must always be a solemn time ; the twelve months like twelve figures, stand in array before us, each wearing a different aspect, and each as it were, demanding a record of their passage on earth. We must all feel convicted of having lost many precious hours, neglected many golden opportunities, but let us hope the year has not passed without some green spots for memory to rest on, some good accomplished, something done to lessen the load of care and trouble that comes to so many of our fellow creatures. The poor seem nearer to us in winter than in summer, their sufferings are more visible, and such appeals knock loudly at the doors of our hearts, demanding some portion of the gifts showered on us for the relief of others.

Abroad, disease and death have been busy : the fearful plague of cholera has visited many lands, levying its victims in vast numbers, and carrying panic everywhere. To its insidious approach there seems no barrier, bolts and bars are useless against the enemy, for it lives in the air, and having done its deadly work in one district, flies onwards in spite of every effort. As yet, it has only appeared amongst us in isolated cases, and we trust the pestilence may yet be averted from our shores. Much has no doubt been done in the way of sanitary regulations, but much remains to be accomplished, and we may be quite sure of this, that we woo the very plague we fear so deeply when we neglect the precautions that have been suggested, or indeed that suggest themselves. The old proverb that "cleanliness is next to godliness" is a very true one, or indeed we imagine cleanliness must come first, or godliness will never thrive. There must be self-respect before the mind is capable of higher impressions.

But if we have hitherto escaped one scourge, we have suffered terribly from another, the dreadful epidemic called *Rinderpest*, which has carried off our cattle by hundreds. Heartrending accounts of the mortality amongst these poor animals have appeared daily in the papers, and as yet, the exertions of veterinary surgeons and medical men have failed to find an effectual cure. In committees on the subject, one person describes a singularly efficacious mode of treatment which the next speaker contradicts, as having been a total failure in the cases that have come under his eye. The matter is

still a problem, but surely it is not taking the bull by the horns to end the difficulty by killing them off, without first spending care, time, and every available resource upon them. Distress of this kind tells of course upon everything else, and the year we shall so soon commence will probably prove a hard one ; prices are rapidly rising, and meat will be an impossibility to thousands, even excluding the lowest class of the population. Benevolence has ample opportunity for shining brightly, and we trust many will follow the noble examples that have been set in the institution of soup kitchens, dinners for the invalid and convalescent poor, for children, etc. A severe winter is predicted, coming after so exceedingly fine and warm a summer. It is many years since we had as beautiful a season, so warm up to October and even later, that we might have followed the continental plan, and taken our coffee and ices out of doors. Imagine our grave Scotchmen throwing off their cares, and lounging in front of our restaurants, puffing their cigars, and airily discussing the topics of the day, careless of the fleeting hours, intent only on enjoyment. It would take two or three more similar seasons to reconcile them to such proceedings, if indeed the imputed natural gravity of the Scotch ever could permit such latitude. We have all no doubt rejoiced in the brilliancy of our summer, and now we turn to our old friend winter with a kindly gaze, for his icy hand brings us many pleasures ; our social gatherings, bright hearths, gifts of love, and that best time of all, Christmas, when our hearts are softened by the memory of the "sweet story of old," when the sternest brows unbend, and the laughter of children is the most melodious music, and all is "peace on earth, good will to men." Peace on earth !—could we imagine such a Paradise as that would create ? The sound of war to be heard no more and the hand of fellowship extended to all our brethren on earth !

America seems willing to cleanse her blood-red hands, and to turn her swords into ploughshares, after as fierce and implacable a struggle as ever marred the annals of the world's history. But if in one quarter matters look fairer, in another they are more gloomy than heretofore ; our colonists in New Zealand have cause to fear for their future, for the new war cry of the natives, *Pai Marire*, or new religion as they fancy it, puts an end to any bright visions cherished by our missionaries there of a permanent conversion. The meaning of the words is "it is good to be quiet," but as an army chaplain in "Good Words" says, "wait," or "bide your time" better conveys the Maori's feeling. Having been long working in their minds, it has now burst forth, and will completely subvert all the changes that have been going on for so long, cannibalism will regain its horrid power, and all the savage will break out again. Superstition and its attendant evils will resume their sway, and the pall of mental and

moral darkness will close again over as fair a country as the world contains, and a race whose outward appearance belies the rapacity and cruelty that is a part of their real nature.

To return to our own country. The nation has had cause to mourn the loss of one of her greatest and best. So much has been written and said of Lord Palmerston, that any long commentary on a life so useful and a death so honoured is unnecessary, only as this is a ladies' magazine, we may be permitted to say that all the true-hearted women of Great Britain and Ireland admired his tact, chivalry, courtesy, and unfailing good humour, and feel that they have lost a champion and friend, as well as one who guarded his country's interests as his own, and has left a noble example to posterity. In our own fair city we deplore the loss of the Professor of Rhetoric, Professor Aytoun, whose poetical talents and energy in the cause of literature have made a name that will not soon be forgotten in the annals of Scotland. We believe he has found a worthy successor in Professor Masson. The death of Professor Donaldson has left vacant the chair of music, which has been filled up by the appointment of Mr Oakley, a gentleman of first rate musical talents; and the public confidently hope that the funds bequeathed by General Reid for the benefit of this science will be applied in the manner best fitted to secure the ends intended by the generous donor.

The close of the year induces us to say a few words regarding "The Attempt," which has now run its course for twelve months. Within the last two or three years many new magazines have been added to the store of general reading, and have become as household words to us. We look forward to the beginning of the month as the harbinger of much pleasure and profit contained in these periodicals. The idea of a young ladies' magazine had been started in the preceding year, and indeed had a beginning, but from different causes was given up at the time, only to be entered upon with fresh vigour in the commencement of the present year. No very high flights have been attempted, we have written on familiar topics, and eschewed anything that might be supposed to be out of a woman's province. Essays, poetry, stories, history, and records of passing events have formed the main portion of the contents, and we have to express our gratitude for the favourable manner in which our efforts to please have been received. Such support will incite us to fresh exertions, that we may hold our place in the little niche of literary fame which we have acquired.

This paper, though headed "December," does not certainly appear to have dwelt much on the subject, but the close of the year suggested the propriety of some slight review of its events, and we abstain from any detailed account of Edinburgh at this season, as we hope at another time to return to the subject as connected with its

amusements, occupations, and society. It only remains for us to wish our readers a happy Christmas ; and we trust they will all unite with us in desiring success to "The Attempt," and a prosperous New Year to those who strive with heart and brain to give a little pleasure and profit to their good friend, "The Public."

INCHA.



Answer to Acrostic.

Phœbus—Steeds

Paris.

Hamlet.

Ænone.

Beatrice.

Uhland.

Stylites.

F. B.

THE ATTEMPT

SELECT WRITINGS

FROM A

MANUSCRIPT MAGAZINE

"AUSPICIUM MELIORIS ÆVI."

The Editors have much pleasure in offering to Subscribers
THE ATTEMPT, Select Writings from a Manuscript Magazine,
which has been circulating during the past Season.

JULY, 1864.

1320

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THE ATTEMPT.

History.

THE word History is derived from the Greek *historia*, an investigation or account, and has been said to be "philosophy teaching by example."

It naturally divides itself into three periods—the fabulous, obscure, and authentic.

The first of these periods belongs more properly to Poetry than to History. Finding it merely a mass of shapeless fiction, the poets of every age and country have eagerly seized on it as admirably suited for their purpose, and in vain have antiquarians endeavoured to bring it under the province of authentic History. Nor is this much to be regretted, for who would wish to see Homer's *Iliad* replaced by a true and authentic account of the siege of Troy; or the Round Table overturned, and the bold and daring feats of its noble knights transformed into the cruel and relentless barbarity of an uncivilized people?

From this it follows, that in the very early ages the poets were historians, and the historians poets. Whenever any great event occurred which was worthy of remembrance, it was customary to delegate the task of celebrating it to the bards, to whom, of course, that of singing or reciting it in verse presented itself as the most easy and natural way, and in consequence of his vocation a poet in those times was a person of such importance as to be patronized by the chief or monarch whose praises he sang. Being thus rewarded, it was quite consistent and natural that the bard would ascribe

more praise and honour to his prince than what he really merited, and without paying much attention to historical facts. In poet's language,—

“ He would frame his strains
To raise the hand that paid his pains.”

Although the bards sang to please their respective patrons in the first place, yet they generally succeeded in pleasing his subjects or followers as well, a striking example of which occurs in the history of Wales, when Edward the First, after conquering that country, caused all the poets to be murdered, that their songs might not remind that warlike people of their ancient freedom.

In speaking of remote events, the ancient poet found himself under still less restraint than when singing the immediate praises of his patron, esteeming himself quite at liberty to alter and modify the works of preceding bards at pleasure; and as his successors took the same liberty with his compositions, whatever truth there might be in the traditionary events of early ages, in a short time it was so obscured and overlaid by a mass of hopeless fiction, that it was quite impossible to discover it even by the most laborious researches. In course of time there might arise a talented bard, who being gifted with high and original genius, would dispose the materials of his predecessors into a regular and continuous poem, a fact of which Homer, the father of heroic poetry, forms the most prominent example, as ably shown by Professor Blackie in his late lecture on the subject in our city. This is the true history of Epic Poetry.

Under the second, or obscure period, the materials to which the historian has access are of the most meagre kind, and consist chiefly of contemporary chronicles, such as those kept by the pontifical annalists of Ancient Rome, and the works of the middle ages, but the information which these records convey to the mind of the historian is almost valueless. A very extraordinary instance of the strange mixture of truth and fiction is to be found in the early history of Scotland, Buchanan giving us a continuous line of monarchs, the first of whom began his reign 330 B.C.

During the authentic period the historian treads on firmer ground, supported by original documents and contemporary annals. Of course, it is impossible to fix the boundary between the obscure and authentic periods, there being no marked limit, for portions of time formerly belonging to the obscure are gradually being brought within the limits of the authentic period. This has happened in a very remarkable manner with regard to Egyptian history, on which a vast flood of light has been poured by a partial discovery of the meaning of some of the hieroglyphic characters in the following manner:—While the French occupied Rosetta, a stone was dug up exhibiting an inscription in three different sorts of characters, the Greek one of which was

found to contain a decree in favour of Ptolemy Epiphany, which ended in these words,—“This decree shall be engraved on a hard stone, in sacred, common, and Greek characters.” The stone falling into the hands of the English, was lodged in the British Museum, and copies of the inscription were distributed among the learned in Europe and America. The Greek was translated by Porson and Heyne, and the common text by Dr Young; while Champollion, in deciphering the hieroglyphics, found them to be not (as was formerly supposed) representations of things, but of sounds. Since the translation of these characters, more inscriptions have been read, and a great deal of light shed upon a portion of History hitherto involved in the deepest obscurity.

It is impossible to write a contemporary History with any degree of accuracy without impartiality. In such cases events cannot be traced to their consequences, and circumstances, in themselves apparently so unimportant as not to be deemed by the historian worthy of notice, may be the origin of great events. Contemporary events are therefore not historical facts, but political changes. The Reform Bill is as much a matter of history as the signing of the Magna Charta; whereas the legislative union of Great Britain and Ireland is regarded by many of the Irish more as a political experiment than a historical fact. Thus the poet, the antiquarian, the historian, and politician have each their prescribed province, although they are so closely connected that it is impossible to distinguish them by any distinct and defined boundary. In studying History, an attention to dates and a knowledge of geography are both highly requisite.

It is well said by a talented and able writer, that “the course of History is like that of a great river, wandering through different countries; now, in the infancy of its current, collecting its waters from obscure, small springs in splashy meadows and from unconsidered rivulets, of which neighbouring rustics know not the name; now, in its boisterous youth, forcing its way straight through mountains; now, in middle life, going with equable current busily by great towns, its waters sullied, yet enriched with commerce; and now, in its burdened old age, making its slow and difficult way with great broad surface, over which the declining sun looms grandly, to the sea. The uninstructed or careless traveller generally finds but one form of beauty or meaning in the river; the romantic gorge or wild cascade is perhaps the only kind of scenery which delights him. And so it has often been in our estimate of History. Well-fought battles, or the doings of gay courts, or bloody revolutions, have been the chief sources of attraction; while less well-dressed events, but not of less real interest or import, have often escaped all notice.”

Biography has been aptly termed on historical account of the lives of particular

persons; and being considered as the truest and most attractive species of historical reading, should be classed under the authentic period. Its object being not merely to describe the incidents in the life of a particular individual, but to show the personal character, motives, and principles by which his conduct was guided, the lives of eminent persons should be read especially by the young, for the formation of their own principles and character, the gaining of information, and the improvement of their minds, in the same way that the poet, to improve himself in his divine art, makes himself acquainted with the works of genius, not for mere servile imitation, but for the formation of his own style, the improvement and refinement of his tastes, and the further attainment of useful knowledge. To the same end, biography ought to be studied by the female portion of the community, as upon them mainly depends the training of the rising generation.

The writings of Moses and the other Books of the Old Testament are the oldest historical writings we possess. Without including the inestimable value of these writings as a divine revelation, the historical information which they contain is in the highest degree important. They contain the accounts of the creation, the antediluvian age, the flood, the confusion of tongues, and the dispersion of the human family throughout the world, besides accounts in other parts of Scripture of the customs and laws of the Jews, their wars and quarrels with other nations, their captivity, and the characters of their kings, the holiness of the writings making the narrative of these facts doubly valuable from its sure authenticity and the utter want of any information from other sources.

Classical History partly belongs to the fabulous, partly to the obscure, and partly to the authentic periods. The fabulosity of Classical History may be well shown by referring to the supposed existences of the Chimera and Sphinx; while its obscurity may be as well illustrated in the difficulty of finding out the real architects and builders of those wonders of the world, the Pyramids, some assigning their construction to the agency of Cheops and Cephrenes, as two Egyptian monarchs who could well afford to build them with a vast display of grandeur and magnificence, while others ascribe their structure to the laborious undertakings of the Children of Israel while in bondage. In many parts of authentic History do we owe much to the classical writers, but nowhere so greatly can their usefulness be appreciated as in the early histories of Greece and Rome, of which we would know little but for their invaluable assistance.

Thus, it will be seen, that the fabulous, obscure, and authentic periods, though quite distinct portions of History, are so closely allied and run so much into each other, that it is quite impracticable to fix a boundary between them.

The pleasure, mingled with interest, which is derived from perusing the narration of heroic deeds and valiant though bloody battles, or perhaps the sufferings of those who bravely died for their country and religion, is very great. Who can read of the gallant rescues of the Knights errant, the bloody and brave excitements and battles relating to the Crusades, the patriotic sufferings of William Wallace dying for his country, or the martyr John Brown with his last breath blessing his murderers, without such emotions? Yet, along with this pleasure and interest, there is mixed up a shrinking horror at the cruel deeds and relentless crimes perpetrated in the dark ages, and there is also a thankfulness that we now live both in an age and country in which such things are abhorred for their barbarity, and utterly detested for their cruelty.

PRO VIRTUTE.

The Child's Prayer.

SOFTLY shone the summer moonbeams
 On a scene so calmly fair,
 You would think an angel's finger
 Had bestowed the picture there.

For the rays with solemn splendour
 Lit a chamber draped in white,
 Pointed with an icy finger
 To a sad, yet beautiful, sight.

To a couch where, calmly sleeping
 In the rigid arms of Death,
 Lay a form that but that morning
 Had sighed forth its latest breath.

And the form was of a maiden,
 Who, in life's first blush of spring,
 Had too soon been overshadowed
 By the angel's waxen wing.

But not rudely came the shadow,
 Inch by inch it still crept on,
 As the shades of night advancing
 Creep athwart a sun-lit lawn.

Nor unwelcome came the summons
 By the solemn trumpet given,
 For another spirit's presence
 In the amplitude of heaven.

For the virgin heart had wedded
 Its young fervour to the Lord,
 And had taken all its pleasure
 From the heavenly Bridegroom's word.

And the ransom'd spirit's gladness
 In the clay had left some trace,
 In the calm repose of figure,
 In the sweetly sleeping face.

Long she lay, alone, unheeded
 Save by those pale summer beams,
 That, like hope and fear alternate,
 Went and came in fitful gleams.

Till a gentle touch and noiseless
 Opened wide the yielding door,
 And a little form in silence
 Softly trod the muffled floor.

'Twas a figure fair and girlish,
 Clad in sable garb of woe,
 And with tears, affection's tribute,
 Did the pale cheeks overflow,

As with fairy footstep gliding,
 She approached the white-robed bed,
 And beside its drapery kneeling,
 Hid in grief her golden head.

For the little frame was aching
 With a grief beyond her years,
 Till her spirit's pent-up anguish
 Found relief in gushing tears.

Then a timid glance she lifted
 To that form in death so fair,
 To the features' moon-lit radiance,
 To the streaming veil of hair.

And the little heart drew comfort
 From that face so pale and calm,
 That had oft its childish anguish
 Soothed with fond affection's balm.

And from little lips, that trembled
 With the earnestness of love,
 Rose a fervent prayer half-utter'd,
 To the great white Throne above.

Earnest sped the cry for patience,
 This first, sorest grief to bear,
 And for grace her heart to open,
 That the Lord might enter there.

And that prayer God deign'd to answer,
 For the child-heart grew so fair,
 That all knew, who felt its beauty,
 That her God was dwelling there.

MENA.

Leaf from the Diary of a Physician.

After many months of hard and constant work in a large city, now becoming unusually oppressive with the heat of summer, it was with no small degree of pleasure that my sister and I exchanged its noisy streets for the luxury of a few weeks in the country.

Our residence was beautifully situated amongst the hills. Its elevation was considerable, and the view from it very fine.

Behind the house was a long, narrow, winding valley, on both sides of which the hills rose so abruptly as barely to allow of a path beside the pretty chattering burn

which flowed through it. Some of the hills were covered with long, wavy, yellow grass, which, tossed about by the changeful wind, gave the appearance of passing shadows. Many were high, barren, pointed elevations, whose dark brown coat was here and there broken by large scars of grey and whitish stone; while others presented the fine contrast of purple heather and bright streaks of emerald green, which so plainly mark the course of the mountain rills.

From the front of the house we looked down upon a broad well-wooded plain, which stretched out for many miles, and was bounded in the distance by another range of hills.

How pleasant it was, after days of toil, to saunter up and down among these hills—enjoying nature, and inhaling the cool, fresh air—the true mountain breeze, so invigorating, making one feel as if with every breath he drew in a new supply of health!

The house which we had taken had at one time been a farm house, but its proprietor having also the adjoining farm, had established his head-quarters there, finding the house upon it much more substantial and comfortable than ours. He had still, however, allowed his labourers to inhabit the cottages surrounding it, so that although very retired, we ran no risk of feeling lonely.

Of the small dwellings around us we were particularly attracted by the tidiness of one. Standing apart from the others, it had its own little vegetable garden separately fenced in; and though its owners were but poor people, they had spared a small strip, where their children tended with great care a few monthly roses, some balm and thyme, and other sweet-scented plants. Its windows were tastefully hung with pure white curtains, and the healthy fuschias above which they drooped gave the cottage a pretty and interesting appearance.

Its inhabitants consisted of a hard-working farm-servant, his wife, and their three children. The two eldest were girls, of the ages of six and eight years; while the third was a mere infant, only a few days old. This youngest child, a son, was specially dear to its parents, for they had lost successively two boys in infancy. It was, indeed, a lovely infant, but very fragile and delicate—too fair (I thought, when first I saw it) for this world. We had not been long in the place until we were quite interested in these people. I frequently exchanged a few words with the father, who was a fine, honest, intelligent fellow—quite a superior man for his station, and paid some little attention to his children.

The infant had never been strong, and when about a fortnight old had begun to droop and sicken. Its anxious parents watched and tended it with fondest care, doing everything they could to keep up its small amount of strength, until one evening, when

it grew much worse, they sent to inquire if I would come down and see it. I went immediately, and found the mother seated with her infant in her arms, gazing down upon it with that intensely anxious, loving look, seldom to be seen but on a mother's face. She rose as I entered, came forward, held up the child, and steadily fixed her eyes upon me, as if to read in my face, and hear from my lips, its fate. What could I say to her? How answer that beseeching look on her pale face? A single glance at the child showed that Death had marked it for his own. It seemed to suffer no pain, but was so weak that I did not think it could live many hours.

Oh! surely 'tis the hardest part of a doctor's work to answer those pleading looks, those fixed and tearless expressions, by saying, "No hope!"—to crush its last spark from the hearts of anxious friends, as they watch with quivering lip every change upon your countenance.

I plainly told the mother that her child was very ill, and gave her a few simple directions as to its treatment; but it was not much that we could do for the little creature, for there was no strong disease to check—it was dying purely from want of strength to support life. Seeing that the mother required more to be nursed herself than to tend others, I recommended her to take a few hours' rest, and try to get a little sleep, while my sister (who had frequently visited her) should take her place in watching the child. Anxious as she was to do everything for it, the poor woman felt herself quite unable to sit up, and gratefully accepted my offer. Promising to come down early next morning, I left the cottage.

My sister, heartily approving of my plan, went at once to take her station as night-watcher. She gently persuaded the mother to lie down, while she seated herself on a low chair before the fire with the infant on her knee. All around was now hushed; no sound broke the stillness, save the ticking of the clock. On the table stood a cup of wine, to moisten the child's lips, and beside it the candle, now burning low and dim; while still and motionless the little infant lay, his gentle breathing scarcely audible. The hours passed slowly away, as such hours of watching always do, when the dawn of day began to make its appearance.

I rose, and made my way slowly round to the cottage. It was still pretty dark, being about three o'clock, but in the east were seen a few faint streaks of colour, and the clouds there were also tinged with red and yellow. As I stood admiring the scene—a new day just beginning its course—I thought of the little infant's day of life so near its close.

I softly lifted the latch of the door and entered. My sister was still sitting alone at the fire with the baby. I sat down beside her, and we watched it in silence. A

few minutes after, its features seemed to take a more fixed expression, and raising it in her arms, my sister said, "Surely it is gone!" I took it from her, saw at once that it was dead, and said so. There had been no pain, no convulsion or swoon, but the strange, mysterious thing we call life had slipped so gently away that we scarcely knew when it did so.

Our words seemed to have reached the ear of the mother, who had been in a sort of unconscious state. She started up and ran towards us, scarcely able to utter the words, "Dead! do ye say? Oh Doctor, he canna be dead, my bonnie wee bairn!" and the poor woman snatched up the child to her arms, and, while her tears fell thick and fast, kept wailing most piteously, "He canna be dead! no, no; he canna be dead!"

We did what we could to soothe her excited feelings. She seemed soon to control that excessive grief which had at first overwhelmed her. She laid down the child, and went to her chest of drawers, brought out her best linen, coarse but beautifully white, spread it on the table, then laid the little infant form upon it, folded its tiny hands, and closed its eyes.

Three days after, a polite message was sent to us, to the effect, that as we had been kind in attending the dying child, we might wish to see it once more. At the appointed time we went down. On the side table still lay the infant, and by its side a small black box; while near it stood a respectable man, evidently the district wright. The entire family was present; the mother near the dead child; the two little girls, half-frightened at the scene, cowering together at the far end of the sofa; while their father sat near them, perfectly broken down, the tears coursing unchecked over his brown cheeks. 'Twas touching to see that strong rough man so moved by the sight of his little dead child.

The mother requested me to place it in its coffin. I lifted its small light form and laid it in; and she then—O how tenderly!—arranged around it the sweet-scented wild roses her children had gathered. This done, each took a last look, when the wright placed the lid on the box and fastened it down. The workman, who was a pious man, then offered up a short and simple prayer; and after speaking a few words of comfort to the parents, we left them. But we did not leave behind us, or soon forget that scene, so simple but so touching. It showed us impressively that as much true feeling, as warm and loving hearts, are to be found in the bosoms of poor rough people, as in those who are better educated and in a higher station.

CRANSTON.

My Pussy.

I once possessed a pretty Kit,
Who often on my knee would sit,
Her eyes with playful mischief lit—
My Pussy!

Her mother was a sober cat,
A famous one to catch a rat,
Aud almost look'd as if she'd chat
To Pussy!

Of silky black my Pussy was,
With velvet paw, and sharp thin claws,
Good points, which admiration cause,
Had Pussy!

Where'er I went my Pussy came,
She knew my voice and knew her name,
For oh! she was so very tame,
My Pussy!

And she was such a loving cat,
Who while I work'd beside me sat,
And purr'd till I would give a pat
To Pussy!

But though a cat much lov'd and dear,
Yet did she cost me many a tear,
And made me feel sometimes austere
To Pussy!

For she would often go astray,
And stay away for many a day,
That she might have more room to play
Bold Pussy!

And all that I could do or say,
She'd make poor little birds her prey,
Nor heeded their melodious lay,
Crnel Pussy!

But though some faults my Pussy had,
She had far more of good than bad,
And oh! the end was very sad
Of Pussy!

One night, when I retired to rest,
I missed my fav'rite from her nest,
And careless cried, "That little pest,
Bad Pussy!

"Has gone again once more to roam,
Far from her mistress and her home;
She's sure to meet an early doom,
Wild Pussy!"

But never shall I cease to grieve
Such cruel words my lips did leave,
And many deep sighs still I heave
For Pussy!

For when next morn I rais'd my head,
With hasty steps my way I sped,
To see if Puss was yet in bed,
Lost Pussy!

But the first sight my eyes did meet
Was her lov'd form before my feet,
Her warm, kind heart had ceased to beat,
Dead Pussy!

Her lovely neck was torn and soil'd,
Her velvet coat all stau'd and spoil'd,
A sight from which my heart recoil'd,
Poor Pussy!

Ah! soou I saw what caused her death,
What took away that loving breath,
And as I write my heart still saith,
Dear Pussy!

Full often I had told my pet
Of cunning traps that bad men set,
But she my warning did forget,
Oh, Pussy!

With many a tear her tomb I made,
And softly her in it I laid,
As the last mark of love I paid
To Pussy!

And now the dreaded fate had come,
My darling's short career was run,
Gone were her days of joy and fun,
Poor Pussy!

With flowers I deck'd her lowly grave,
All honour due to her I gave,
And rais'd a cross with nothing save,—
"To Pussy!"

No more her peaceful form I'll see
Frisking about in sportive glee,
Or watch her sleeping on my knee,
My Pussy!

Moral.
Now little Kits, take warning all,
Ever obey your mistress' call
Lest you into the trap do fall,
Like Pussy!

HEBE.

On Croquet.

IN writing on the subject of Croquet, it is not my wish to treat it as a subject of mere amusement, but to show up, or as it were to refute the many attacks which have been made on it. It is not to the attacks made by the open haters of Croquet that I would reply, but it is with those passing remarks, that slighting tone, those sneering looks, that I have to do. First, then, let us look at Croquet as regards the respect it deserves on the plea of its antiquity. I have seen a book, bearing the date of 1626, in which is a print of the very game in question; it represents a little girl and boy busy with the mallets and balls. Those of my readers who are Croquet players may ask what sort of mallets were used in those days? They resembled ours to a great degree, with the exception that the part of the heel intended for striking the ball was scooped out, not unlike a spoon. This proves that Croquet has a much older origin than is commonly supposed. I may now mention a few of those opprobrious remarks which have been made on Croquet. I have heard, and indignantly heard it said, that ladies like Croquet as a good opportunity for displaying a neatly-turned ankle and a small foot. To refute this, it is only needful to say, that many of us with very clumsy feet are among the best and the most assiduous players of the time. But a much more grave attack has been made on it, by saying that ladies and gentlemen only meet to laugh and talk over Croquet, which in itself has no attractions for them. Now, were I

to say that this is never the case, my hearty wish that it never were so would be leading me wrong, but I do say that it is the exception. Those ladies and gentlemen who so meet are the thoughtless enemies of Croquêt. They throw the pristine virtue of Croquêt into the shade, and show only the most idle view which can be taken of it. Nevertheless, for the few who consider talk first and Croquêt second, there are hundreds who play it for its own sake, whose whole thoughts are concentrated on the game, and whose great wish is to be a thoroughly good Croquêt player. "A good Croquet player!" how much that term comprises! Intelligence, skill, foresight, good-temper, correctness of eye, and some physical strength, to say nothing of years of practice, all go to make up a good Croquêt player. It is this combination of necessary qualifications which enables Croquêt to hold the high place it does among British occupations. Croquêt is worthy, in a great measure, to rank with chess and other intellectual employments; for is there not need of deep thought and calculation in the pursuit? In such cases, as when two balls are placed side by side, and we wish, by one masterly stroke, to send one ball in a northern and another in a south-western direction, would not a mathematician be the person to strike the blow? Then, in bringing the game to a conclusion, is not much head work and good generalship required? If you have ever observed a game in which one side seems on the verge of victory, you must have seen that, unless they are good decided players and possessed of steady heads, that the opposite side may recover ground, and by dint of tactics skilfully carried out, may come in at the last and win. Now the side which just seemed prospering, merely lost the game by want of intellect; they wasted time in useless croquêtting, instead of at once collecting their forces and carefully putting themselves out. As regards the losing side, it is needless to remind my Croquêt-playing readers, how much may be done by it towards at least gaining an honourable defeat, by sending their best player down to the winning pole to disperse the enemy, he returning as soon as possible to his own hoop. If this be done boldly, and yet not in a fool-hardy spirit, there is no saying what may be the result. If my lady friends will take a hint as to the best Croquêt attire, from one who has made Croquêt an earnest study, I would suggest that hats not bonnets be worn, that jackets should quite supplant cloaks or shawls, that the dresses be not worn too long, and that the feet be dressed in good firm kid or leather, and not in those thin, ornamented, betassled boots sold for the purpose. If the weather be not too cold, I advise no gloves to be worn, and certainly no veils. Of course, those remarks upon the most suitable Croquêt costume are only of use to beginners. Those veteran players, who have followed the pursuit under scorching suns and in drenching rains, know well the value of such a dress. I must not omit to mention an insulting custom that there exists among

some people, of exempting ladies' balls from distant Croquêts, or if they are sent to the further end of the ground they are returned half-way,—as if ladies were not worthy to be treated as equals in Croquêt playing!—as if many of our best Croquêt players were not ladies!

There now remains but one objection to make to the manner in which some treat Croquêt, by which it is lowered to the level of common eard-playing or lounging. I need scarcely say that I refer to the habit of smoking while playing. I dare say some of my readers may be astonished to hear that this despicable practice has to a certain degree gained ground, but I assure them that I have not only seen smoke curling over the Croquêt ground, but have seen ladies sharing in the game countenancing the custom. It is with shame that I record it, but I am here speaking not only of the pleasures of Croquêt, but also of its abuses. I point out the low depth to which in unworthy hands it may fall, but oh! I would also show how invigorating, pure, and intellectual it may become in good hands. And now, my fellow Croquêt players, let us by one common consent determine that the year of 1864 may be one of great improvement in the art. Let it be said that this year, and this town, have produced some good Croquêt players.

S. E. S. M.

Fading Away.

Day by day—fading away,
Through the summer prime and the autumn time,
Fading away!

Day by day—fading away,
Till the sweet eyes gleam'd with a strange wild light,
And the flush on the cheek grew unearthly bright,
And the waving masses of golden hair
Shaded a brow, than the snow more fair.

Day by day—fading away,
As the bright clouds die in the sunset sky,
As the violets fade in the leafy glade,
Daily growing more fair, more holy,
But calmly and sweetly, and surely and slowly,
Fading away!

Till in the dawning, in the chill grey morning,
While the sweet spring showers to the list'ning flowers
Sobbed out their griefs,
And the dew still slept on the ivy leaves,
In the quiet dawning of the April morning,
She faded away!

R. C. W.

A Short Tour on the Continent.

PART I.

AT seven o'clock P.M. on the 28th of September 186-, the steam-packet *Osborne* set sail from Leith for Rotterdam, carrying with her, amongst her other passengers, Dr Blackburn, his wife, and sister Mary.

They had a very pleasant sail for an hour or two, but soon the wind increased, and most of the passengers were reluctantly obliged to retire from the deck. Next day the sea was again calm, and continued so during the rest of their short voyage of four days. When they arrived at the Gorce or Bar, at the mouth of the canal, they had to lie a few hours, as the water was too low for them to pass. It was night before they entered the canal; and next day there was another stoppage, as the man who had charge of a sluice would not permit them to pass till it suited him. This leisurely mode of travelling afforded them ample opportunity to view the surrounding country. Far as the eye could reach was seen a vast plain, bounded only by the horizon, on which many fine black and white cattle were grazing. Reeds grew abundantly along the edges of the canal, and were allowed to remain undisturbed, in order to prevent the banks being washed away. When they had passed the Helvoetsluys, they entered and sailed up the Rhine towards Rotterdam, which they reached at one o'clock P.M. As they sailed up the river, they passed several towns, the best known of which was Schiedam, noted for its gin.

Now that they had reached the port, Dr Blackburn assisted his charges on shore, and conducted them to a hotel. As they passed through the town they were quite surprised at the strange appearance every thing presented. In every direction there

were canals, and ships, and funny yet clean-looking houses, and peculiarly dressed women, who wore tunics and white caps (some of them having frills fastened at each side with large brass pins, while others have these ornaments made of gold). When they reached the hotel, and had dined, they went to see the Zoological Gardens, where there was a large collection of strange-looking animals and birds. They also went to see the Park, a beautiful place, intersected by canals. These pleasure grounds present quite a different appearance from those we are accustomed to see in our own island home. On one side, you might see a fine statue of the Dutch poet Tollens standing prominently out from the rich green of the verdure that surrounds it; whilst, on the other, the waters of the numerous canals gleam between the trees that grow on the banks. Here too, even in a place set apart for pleasure, the proverbial industry of the Dutch shows itself. About a dozen large vessels are being loaded for the Indies, and their tall masts tower amongst the branches of the living trees, as if they were calling to remembrance the fact that they had once been denizens of the stately forests of the far north.

At nine o'clock next morning they started for the Hague, the residence of the King of Holland, and reached it about an hour afterwards. The travellers then took a cab, and drove to the Queen's residence, or the "House in the Wood," as it is sometimes called. The entrance-hall and staircase were of white marble, and some very nice paintings lined the walls. They were now at the door of a room called "The Chinese Ante-Room," so named from all the furniture and ornaments being after the fashion of the Celestial Empire. The chairs were beautiful, being covered with white satin, embroidered with flowers in coloured silks. Two splendid Japanese folding doors were then opened, and another gorgeous apartment was displayed. This was the "Japanese Ambassador's Reception-Room." The walls were hung with white figured silk, and the chairs were similar to those in the ante-room. On the table there were some curious jars, a large punch-bowl, and part of a dinner set, all of Chinese workmanship.

The ball-room was then visited. This room, which is said to have been two hundred years in painting, is adorned with numerous works of Rubens and other masters, conspicuous amongst which is "The Triumph of Prince Henri."

As it would be rather tedious if I were to describe all the splendid apartments through which they passed, I must transport you once more to the Hague, whence our party started for the far-famed "London of Holland"—Amsterdam.

PART II.

In last Number we left our travellers on their way to Amsterdam, reaching that city, so appropriately termed the "London of Holland," after a ride of about two hours.

Here a stranger is very much astonished at the peculiar dress worn by orphan children, one half being red, and the other black; while their little white caps and aprons form a great contrast with the red and black dress.

Next morning they went to see the Palace, which was built in 1648, of stone outside, and marble within. They there saw the bed-room of the father of the present Emperor of the French. The walls of the dining room (which was two hundred years old) were of white marble, some parts being beautifully sculptured. There were three paintings, too, that attracted our travellers' attention. One represented Moses and the Seventy Elders in the Wilderness; another, Moses and Jethro; and a third, Solomon Praying for Wisdom. In the Queen's Reception-Room, which was hung with blue silk, there was a painting of Justice, by one of Rubens' pupils; whilst in the King's were displayed the flags taken by the Dutch in the Spanish war, in a sadly tattered condition. There is also in this Palace a very beautiful ball-room, the walls being of white sculptured marble, and the roof adorned with beautifully-painted flowers and figures. They then went up a flight of two hundred steps to the top of the Palace, where they had a splendid view of the surrounding country, which is thickly studded with wind-mills. Having seen the principal rooms of the Palace, they left it, and proceeded to the Museum or Picture Gallery, where they saw a great many paintings by the old masters. After going to a few more interesting places they returned to the hotel, where they partook of a excellent dinner at the table d'hôte. Next day at noon they left the capital of Holland for Cologne, or Cöln, as it is called on the Continent, where they arrived at nine o'clock at night. It is here that the celebrated eau-de-Cologne is made. The day after the Doctor and his party arrived, they went to see the far famed Dorn Cathedral. "Words," said Dr Blackburn, afterwards when giving an account of it to his friends, "cannot convey an adequate idea of this stupendous and magnificent pile. It must be seen to be appreciated. But whilst its great size and beautiful architecture impress a feeling of awe on the mind of the beholder, you cannot help the thought intruding, After all, what is man? Here is the splendid edifice. It excites the admiration and wonder of the whole world, and yet the name of the man who designed it is lost in the obscurity of past ages." And how true this is of all man's

works! What now remains of the beautiful Palmyra, the "City of the Desert," but a heap of ruins, still magnificent, it is true, even in their fall? The beautiful palaces and buildings of Nineveh, where are they? Nothing was known of them for ages, until Layard and others found them buried beneath mounds that dim tradition pointed to as covering all that remained of the once famous city. As it has been said of other buildings, so may it be said of the Cathedral of Cologne—

"Behold man proudly view some pompous pile,
Whose high dome swells to emulate the skies,
And smile, and say, 'My name shall live with this,
Till time shall be no more;' while at his feet,
Yea, at his very feet, the crumbling dust,
Of fallen fabrics of the other day,
Preaches him solemn lessons."

Doubtless its architect intended that with it his fame should last throughout all time, and yet his very name is wrapt in oblivion. But we have almost forgotten our travellers. They were told that the Cathedral was founded by the Archbishop Conrad, of Hoehsteden, on the 14th of August 1248. But the work proceeded very slowly, until at last it stopped altogether in the beginning of the sixteenth century. Year by year, time and the weather hastened its downfall, until the year 1796, when its ruin was completed by the French, who tore the lead off the roof, and converted the interior into a hay-magazine. Decay was advancing with steady steps, when the late King of Prussia, Frederic William IV., undertook its restoration. The magnificent southern and northern portals were designed by the celebrated architect Zwirner, and the body of the church and the transept were consecrated on the 14th of August 1848, exactly six hundred years after the laying of the foundation stone. It was originally intended that the height of the principal dome should be five hundred feet, but apparently the ambition of the executors has not been so great as that of the designers, as it has only reached the height of one hundred and fifty feet. The steeple, and the railing that surrounds the roof, are made of iron, richly gilded. This enhances the beauty of the building very much, especially when the sun shines on it. Then the stained glass windows commanded their attention and admiration, as they do that of every one who beholds them, especially those in the northern aisle, which are reckoned among the finest existing specimens, not only on account of their great age (having been placed there in the years 1508-9), but also for the richness of their colours, and their great beauty in all points. Indeed, the art of staining glass appears to have been much better understood then than now. They were next called on to notice a crane, that

had been employed five hundred years ago in hoisting up the stones to build the portion called "the Old Tower," on the top of which, two hundred and twelve feet from the ground, grass and wild roses now grow.

Another building which attracted Dr Blackburn's attention was the Church of St Ursula, to which he had his ladies proceeded.

This church is said to have been founded in the twelfth century, by the Emperor Henry II. As they entered the church, what a strange sight met their gaze! All around, staring at them, were hideous-looking human skulls; whilst in a room adjoining the church were bones of other parts of the body, formed into various patterns. Of course, the history of these strange relics must be related, and this I shall do, as nearly as possible, in the words of the guide.

St Ursula, an English Princess, had long wished to make a pilgrimage to the holy city of Rome, and at last she set out, accompanied by eleven thousand virgins as her attendants on the long journey. After undergoing many privations and hardships, they reached the object of their travels, whence, after lingering a while, they retraced their steps towards home. Home! how dear it is to every human heart!—what magic, we might almost say, in the word! We can fancy how they would long to see the old places, and the old familiar faces that were expecting their return. But they were destined never to see them more, for they were cruelly murdered as they were passing through the country of the barbarous Huns. Such is the legend of St Ursula. And truly in this case "the blood of the martyrs" may be said to be "the seed of the Church," for the priests have reaped an abundant harvest from the novel way in which they have chosen to preserve their bones and memory. Now, to describe the interior of the building. In the above mentioned room there are rows of shelves, on which are placed the urns containing the skulls of the most celebrated of the maidens. Their guide, who was a priest, led them from one part of this curious sepulchre to another, always pointing out something more remarkable than anything that had been shown before. He showed them the betrothal ring, and the skull of St Ursula, and also that of St Margaret (who was the youngest of the pilgrims), whose pure white teeth were yet beautiful and undecayed. As he replaced the latter skull in its niche, he kissed it with solemnity and reverence, and called it by some strange name that the visitors could not understand. They now bent their steps in the direction of their hotel, and in order to employ the short time they had to spend in the ancient city as well as possible, they crossed the river by the celebrated Iron Bridge, which it took five years to erect. After admiring this beautiful structure sufficiently, they turned, walked for a short distance along the banks of the river, and recrossed it by the pontoon, or bridge

of boats. Next morning at an early hour they left Cologne the Holy, as it was once called, on their way to Bonn, at which place you may expect to find them in next Number.

PART III.

WE now see the tourists at the pleasant and ancient city of Bonn, for which place, you may remember, they started from Cologne. Not long after arriving, they walked a short distance to the Kreuzberg, a moderately high hill, where a Roman Catholic church stands, which, from its elevated position and white appearance, commands the attention of all strangers. In it, made of Italian marble, are the holy steps, which none are allowed to ascend unless they do so on their knees, so our British travellers, not being very anxious either to ascend in such a lowly manner, or to perform penance, were obliged to go up a side stair. They noticed that two of the steps were broken, and their guide informed them that this impious deed was done in the time of the French war by one of Bonaparte's officers, who, in spite of repeated remonstrances, attempted to ascend them on horseback, but as a punishment for his temerity, the horse fell with his rider, who was killed on the spot. Having seen all that was interesting in the church, they went to the railway station, in order to get the train going to Rolandseck, or Roland's Corner, the scene of the touching legend of Sir Roland and his betrothed.

Sir Roland (from whom the rock derives its name) one of Charlemagne's paladins, was traversing the banks of the Rhine in search of adventures, when he found himself the guest of the Lord of the Seven Mountains, at his castle of Drachenburg. Here he was most cordially welcomed by his host's lovely daughter Hildegunde, who, according to the custom of the times, presented him with bread, fish, and wine. He was captivated by the beauty of the maiden, who, in her turn, could not help admiring the handsome knight. But the time came when they must part, for Roland was summoned by his master Charlemagne to the wars. Anxiously did the sad Hildegunde await the return of her lover, earnestly hoping that Death, who ever attends the warrior on the battle-field, would spare him; but no tidings could be heard of him, until one day some one, to put an end to her vain wishes, said he had been slain by the Infidels. This was more than she could bear, and as earth had no longer charms for her, she retired to the Kloster, a convent in the isle of Nonnenwerth. After several years had passed away, the knight, who had been badly wounded, returned to the old castle halls to claim her for his bride; but she was not there—she had taken the veil, and was

lost to him for ever! In despair, the wretched man built a tower on the rock that bears his name, from which he could look down upon the Kloster that sheltered all he cared for on earth. There he would often see a slender figure passing in and out to prayers, but she saw not him. One morning, however, he missed her from her accustomed walk, and something whispered to his heart that she had passed away. Soon his worst fears were confirmed, for the gentle breeze bore the sad sounds of the passing bell to his ear, and he saw the mournful procession of the nuns following the body of their departed sister to the grave. His heart was now broken, and he did not linger long behind her, for one morning he was found cold and lifeless by his valet, with (as the legend says) his glassy eye still turned towards the convent chapel.

When their guide had finished relating this touching story to them, the boat that was to carry them to the Drachenfels was ready to start, so they got in at once and took their seats, anticipating a pleasant sail. The view of the opposite bank of the river was most magnificent, the mountain peaks rising higher and higher, as if striving to outstrip each other. Conspicuous amongst these are the Drachenfels, crowned with the ruins of the castle; as Byron beautifully and shortly describes it—

“The castled crag of Drachenfels
Frowns o'er the wide and winding Rhine,
Whose breast of waters broadly swells
Between the banks that bear the vine.”

They returned to Bonn that evening, quite satisfied with their excursion; and next morning they left for Coblenz, the Confluentes of the Romans. On the opposite side of the Rhine rises the splendid fortress of Ehrenbreitstein, which has been well named the Gibraltar of the Rhine. This they proposed visiting, and accordingly they crossed the Rhine by a bridge of boats, and ascended to the top of the rocky eminence on which the fort stands, whence they had a beautiful view of the surrounding country from the very spot where our beloved Queen Victoria breakfasted with the King of Prussia. As they descended, they saw a large company of people, curiously dressed, going along the road. At first they did not know who they were, but they shortly perceived that they were a band of pilgrims on their way to the top of the Oelberg, one of the Seven Mountains. They were trying to make the way more cheerful by singing and chanting, and their music was really beautiful, sounding quite as rich, as it ascended the hill side, as any convent chant could be. The pilgrims continued on their way in a very orderly manner, each bare-headed and carrying in his hand his long staff with a purse at the end. A priest bearing a cross, a staff, and a banner, preceded the procession. The Sisters of Merey followed the holy father, and the rear was

brought up by the poor people, with another priest in the midst of them, who wore a black dress and a white surplice. Thus the deluded pilgrims passed on to attain their object, leaving behind them a strange mixture of wonder and compassion in the hearts of the English spectators. The tourists then recrossed the bridge of boats, and as they were walking quietly along, looking here and there for curiosities, Dr Blackburn drew the ladies' attention to a friar who was passing by. As soon as they saw him, they found it impossible to resist indulging in a hearty laugh. He was a very fat plain-looking man, not at all as if he fasted often, but rather as if he feasted every day. His head was bare; he wore a coarse brown serge gown tied at the waist with a rope, to which was attached a rosary; and his sandalled feet completed his grotesque attire. Next day they presented themselves at the gate of the pretty Castle of Stolzenfels, and requested admission; but as that could not be immediately granted, they procured a guide, and proceeded to inspect the gardens. Among the many rare plants they saw, was one of sour clover, of which their guide was so kind as to give them—a leaf!

On returning to the castle gates they were allowed to enter; but before they could proceed further Dr Blackburn had to change his walking shoes for soft slippers, as the man said they would scratch the polished oaken floors of the rooms. There were a great many pieces of old furniture in the castle, such as an ebony cabinet, an arm chair, and a bed, all said to be five hundred years old. The bed was hung with cinnamon-coloured silk, and the coverlet of another one was a most elaborate piece of patchwork, with the motto, "Für Gott und Vaterland," worked round it, while the Prussian and Bavarian arms on a shield occupied the centre. Among the curiosities, there was a model in sugar of the dome of the Cöln Cathedral as it will be when finished. They also saw the swords of Napoleon and Blucher, which were kept among the relics of armour and war belonging to other great generals. They had now spent about three hours in the castle; and just as they were preparing to leave it, a beautiful model of Stolzenfels in cork was offered them, which they purchased, and departed for the lovely village of "Bingen on the Rhine."

PART IV.

THE beautiful sail up the Rhine to the village of Bingen was greatly enjoyed by the tourists. About an hour before they reached their destination, they passed the celebrated rock called Lurlei, famous for its echo, and its legend of the siren who dwelt at the top of the precipice, and enticed sailors and fishermen to the dangerous rapids

at the foot of it, where they were certain to be drowned. A little farther on, seven large rocks attracted their attention, and curiosity induced them to make inquiries respecting them. They were told that these were the Seven Sisters, seven beautiful maidens whom the river god transformed into the dangerous rocks they now saw, in order to punish them for their inconstancy. After they had passed the bend of the river where these rocks are situated, they saw several flour-mills in the water, such as are never seen in Britain, consisting of houses above, for the millers to live in, whilst beneath is the mill machinery, which is turned by the force of the current. They were now nearing Bingen, where they soon landed, and wending their way among the pretty white-washed houses to an hotel, they took up their abode there for the night. This village is not very remarkable for anything except the numerous vineyards that surround it. Indeed, there is almost nothing but vines to be seen; so next morning after taking a walk up the hill on which the old baronial castle of Villa Laudy stands, they crossed to the opposite town of Kudesheimer, in a small boat. This town is noted for the superior quality of its grapes, and, like most other German towns, for its castle also.

They next proceeded to Wiesbaden, and amongst the celebrities of that ancient watering place, they visited the Cursaal, a large and beautiful public garden, to which every one resorts who visits the capital of Nassau. The garden is very tastefully laid out, and is adorned with several large fish ponds, in one of which a *jet d'eau* throws up the water to the height of a hundred feet. Having explored the grounds, they entered a large saloon occasionally used as a ball-room, and there they beheld four liveried footmen approaching. At first they were inclined to think they had made a mistake in entering; but as no one spoke to them, nor hindered them from passing through, they walked on, and made their exit at the opposite door. In another room a number of the *élite* of Wiesbaden appeared to be assembled, some sipping coffee or wine, while others walked about the grounds and enjoyed the fine music played by the military band. In the Cursaal they also visited the gambling-rooms, which are splendidly furnished, as if to entice all into their captivating circle of certain ruin. Here were many of both sexes, old and young, rich and poor, wasting their time in idle gambling, trying their luck at the wheel of fortune, as the saying is, instead of gaining their money by a more honest calling. Such chance work must often be attended by fraud, and cannot but exercise a demoralizing effect on its victims. Our British travellers then quitted the gardens by the Colonnade, a long building with columns on each side, the spaces between the pillars being fitted up as stalls for selling various articles.

Early next morning they set out for a walk to the Neroberg, on which a Russian Greek Chapel has been erected by the Duke of Nassau, as a mausoleum for his first wife, who was a Russian Princess. The mausoleum was adorned with statuettes of Faith, Hope, Charity, and Immortality, and on the top were three domes surmounted by gilded spires. At the door of the chapel Prussian soldiers were stationed to keep constant guard over the sacred place, and in the interior worship was being held after the Russian form, so that strangers were not allowed to enter until the congregation had dispersed. They found, however, that it would be too long to wait till after the service, so they contented themselves with admiring the outside, which alone repaid them amply for the trouble they had in ascending the hill; and after strolling through the cemetery, where nearly all the crosses on the graves were adorned with wreaths of flowers, they returned to the hotel, and prepared to start for Castel, Maintz or Mayence, and Heidelberg. The latter town is justly celebrated for its Schloss or Castle, its stupendous ruins being reckoned the most magnificent in Germany. The castle has withstood many sieges, and defied many a warlike host. At one time the French attempted to blow up the old Roman Tower (the walls of it are twenty feet thick), but the solidity of the masonry was proof against them, as only a portion was detached, and it now lies in one compact mass in the moat beneath the walls. In the castle they were shown the great Heidelberg tun, which is said to have contained three hundred thousand bottles of wine; and also several smaller ones, one of them remarkable for having been made without hoops. As they passed to other parts of the castle, the guide pointed to a small clock, with a string attached to it, which he told Dr Blackburn to pull. He very innocently did so, when a bell struck a little door, which suddenly flew open, and down came a fox's brush in the Doctor's face, much to his consternation and the ladies' amusement. They then returned to the town, whence they started for Frankfort, a free city, where there is a splendid statue erected to Goethe, and another to Gutenberg.

They had now turned their footsteps in the direction of old Scotia; but as it would be tedious to mention all the towns through which they passed, we shall at once transport them to the shores of their dearly-loved native land, of which they could now say from experience, that "there was no place like *home*."

J. M. B.

The Forest Stream.

AWAY through the forest! away! away!
 The long year through I flow,
 With bound and leap down the headlong steep,
 To the level plain below.

Away through the forest! away! away!
 When Winter strips each tree;
 Could he hope to bind the scornful wind,
 He might hope to fetter me.

Away through the forest! away! away!
 When Spring all eager flies,
 With smile and tear, to dress the bier
 Where the shattered Winter lies.

Away through the forest! away! away!
 All the long bright Summer days!
 On—on—I run 'neath the smiling sun,
 And glitter beneath his rays.

Away through the forest! away! away!
 When the Autumn winds blow loud;
 And my bosom heaves with dry, sere leaves,
 The bye-gone Summer's shroud.

Away through the forest! away! away!
 From the shaggy mountain side,
 Where, noiseless and slow, the rushes below,
 Unheard, unseen I glide.

On—on—from the mountain! away! away!
 O'er the ragged cliff I dash,
 Till the woods resound with the liquid sound,
 And the rocks re-echo the crash.

Then on through the forest! away! away!
 I flow in my joy and pride,
 Till, my journey o'er for evermore,
 I merge in the ocean's tide.

MENA.

The Value of Little Things.

THERE are few things which impress us more, or with which we are more apt to associate admiration and power, than the quality of greatness. The great globe, the mighty ocean, the stately forest, the long roll of past ages, and even great wealth, have all a charm and a power which few can resist. But, amidst the general admiration of the grand, we are ever liable to forget the minute parts of which the great whole is composed. We do not always remember that the earth is made up of atoms, the ocean of drops, the forest of acorns, time of the fleeting moments, and the greatest heaps of gold of "despised mites."

It is ever instructive to look into the origin of things, and trace them from their small beginnings. In this way alone can we truly learn and appreciate the power of littles. How many elements of power have been found by scientific men in the very

dust of the earth! What gigantic forces have been evoked from the waters of the ocean! What lessons are taught us by the energy of the minute mustard-seed springing up into the stately tree! What incalculable advantages would we derive by duly considering and improving the passing moments of time as they flit away from us! And, how many lessons of thrift and frugality might we learn if we constantly remembered that the pence make up the pounds, and that if the smaller are husbanded the larger will not be wanting!

Many instances, in illustration of all this, might be quoted from past and present history. Every passing day affords new proof of the value of attending to what we call small things, and the danger arising from their neglect. How often are the first whispers of the "still small voice" of conscience within us testifying for God disregarded, until His vice-regent is so blunted, that the deeds at which we shudder, and exclaim, with Hazaël, "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?" are ere long perpetrated without scruple! Thus it is with what are called small sins; for "the letting out of sin is like the letting out of water; it gradually increases till no bounds can contain it." The influence of littles is also powerfully felt in all the arrangements and occupations of life; none of which can be efficiently carried on without a regard to method or order, a point which is too often overlooked by the many. The value of arrangement and punctuality, for rightly discharging the duties which devolve upon us, can scarcely be over estimated. The proper allotment of time, and the occupation of its smallest fragments, will alone bring a rich harvest of reward. How much of greatness and renown are attainable by a systematic improvement of the moments spent in hurtful over-sleep, or vacant idleness, let the lives of a Franklin, a Wellington, Hutton, the humble Franklin of Birmingham, and a crowd of others tell! Let us listen to the first of these, who, amid other golden counsels, says, "Do not squander time, for that is the stuff that life is made up of;" let us ponder the remark of the great Duke, that "through his long military career, he had often found that everything depended on a quarter of an hour;" and let us profit by the boast of the great Chancellor of France, D'Aguesseau, that "his works," consisting of thirteen large volumes, "were principally written during the snatches of time he had to wait while his lady was finishing her toilet."

Of all the hours of the day, those of the morning are most favourable to continuous occupation. Hence, early rising has been generally inculcated and practised by all who have themselves risen to distinction. As one of the more recent instances of this, we may mention Sir Walter Scott, who used to rise at six in winter, light his own fire, and proceed with his writing, so that, by nine, the breakfast hour, "he had," to use his

own words, "broken the back of a good day's work;" and to this habit of early rising he attributed both the amount of literary labour he got through, and the leisure always at his command throughout the day for the entertainment of his numerous visitors.

Nor are little matters in connection with dress beneath our notice. In our homes, the intervals between other duties should be usefully employed in sewing and keeping in repair our clothing, remembering that "a stitch in time saves nine." In the choice of dress, we should also have regard to that which is most suitable to our rank, never seeking to dress above our station, but having a regard to the caution of Franklin,—

"Fond pride of dress is sure a very curse;
Ere fashion you consult, consult your purse."

Even petty expenses require to be constantly watched. We are ever disposed to think "'Tis but a few pence," and that therefore, since the cost is so small, any article we fancy, however useless, may safely be purchased,—forgetting all the while that it is these very "'tis buts," and not the large sums, which have ruined many families. The American moralist says, "Beware of little expenses; a small leak will sink a great ship;" and most people have been startled, and all should be instructed, by finding that the twenty-four horse-shoe nails at but one penny for the first, twopence for the second, fourpence for the third, and so on, amount to the enormous and almost incredible sum of £69,905, 1s 3d!

In our own time, we know of no one who has more eloquently and practically demonstrated the power of littles in money matters than the great Dr Chalmers; and his scheme for the support of the ministry by the pence of the many, more than by the pounds of the few, may be regarded as at once a standing monument of his sagacity, and a confirmation both of his principle and the general power of littles.

Stimulated by these and similar counsels and examples, instead of "despising the day of small things," let us seize every opportunity of improving it; and while careful about the many littles which contribute to our happiness in time, let us be still more careful about those which fit us for the happiness which is eternal,—ever looking up for guidance to Him who alone can give both the increase and the capacity for enjoying it.

E. N. D.

To the Crocus.

LITTLE golden flow'ret !
 Hung with sparkling dew,
 All thy pretty tiny buds
 Opening to the view.

Peeping, little flow'ret !
 Scarce above the ground,
 Other flowers beneath the soil,
 Safe and snug and sound.

Darling little flow'ret !
 Like the snowflake driven,
 To cheer unhappy mortals here
 With messages from heaven.

Lovely little flow'ret !
 Decked in purple gay ;
 Like a little king of flowers,
 Hold thy petty sway.

URANIA.

A Legend of Norway.

PART I.

LONG ages ago, when the whole of Northern Europe was sunk in barbarism and dark idolatry, a young and beautiful maiden was found at sunrise upon the rugged coast of Norway. There she stood, looking wistfully over the retiring waves which had left their fringes of silvery surf at her small naked feet. The night had been stormy, and a vessel lay wrecked among the rocks. All the crew had perished but that gentle lady. The savage people gathered about her, wondering much at the rare fashion and the richness of her flowing garments, and at her fresh and delicate beauty, but most of all at the sweetness and dignity of her demeanour.

It was this maiden who became the wife of Regnar, the young Prince of Norway. She was his equal in birth, being a king's daughter, but obliged to flee from the usurper of her father's throne.

The Princess Geraldine was not an idolater, yet, for nearly a year after her marriage, few persons but her husband knew the name of her religion. They soon learned, however, that in her it was pure and peaceable, and so she was loved by all, and might have been happy, had not Queen Temora, the widow of the King's eldest son, visited the Court of Norway. Now Temora was very beautiful, but proud and revengeful, and so skilled in magic, that by many she was named "The Sorceress." Temora was Queen in her own right of the far Orkney Isles, and, notwithstanding her husband's sudden death, she had cherished the hope to reign in Norway also; for

Regnar, then the younger brother, though now the heir, had wooed her, when, from ambition, she preferred the elder Prince.

When Temora came to the Court, hiding her fiery passions with a smiling face, and saw the beauty of the innocent Geraldine, and the influence she had won in the hearts of those around her, she devoted her to ruin. One night she went out into the woods, where there was an altar, sprinkled some of her blood upon it, and vowed to accomplish a deep and horrible revenge. At first she sought, under the mask of friendship, to introduce into the heart of Geraldine some dark suspicions of her husband's faith, but the young Princess was above suspicion. Thus Temora was confounded and perplexed. Still, notwithstanding all these deep devices, the guileless Lady Geraldine grew in favour and tender love with all who knew her, and the Sorceress inwardly cursed herself.

When Geraldine came forth into the banquet-hall, the people met her with a reverence only next to adoration. For instance, after a battle, when the wounded were brought home, a band of warriors came forward to the terrace on which Geraldine and Temora sat, surrounded by their ladies. They had brought the richest spoil, and laid it at the feet of the two Princesses. Temora snatched at once a coronet of gems, and placed it with a haughty smile upon her head. They that stood by shuddered as they saw her bright eyes flashing and a rich flush of pleasure on her cheek, for a few dark drops elung in the threads of yellow hair upon her brow, and then trickled down her face. There was *human blood* upon that coronet.

Geraldine had scarcely looked upon the glittering baubles set before her. She had seen a wounded soldier fall exhausted at the gate, and she flew to raise him. They that stood by smiled with tender and admiring love as they beheld her hands and garments stained with blood; for she had torn her long, white veil, to stanch the blood, dressing the wounds of the dying man with her own soft hands; and then, as other wounded soldiers were brought from the field, she had forgot her rank and the feebleness of her sex to administer also to their relief.

It was in such instances as these that the character of Geraldine was discovered. Was it strange that she should seem almost a being of a higher order to the untutored savages! But soon Temora began to fear that Geraldine was herself an enchantress, for every withering spell of witchcraft had been tried in vain against her. She had met at midnight with the weird women in their murky caverns, where they sung their charmed hymns, and held their horrid incantations.

Geraldine was still unharmed, still lovely, still happy in the love of her husband, and of all the people.

PART II.

By a mere chance, the Soreeress at length discovered what she felt convinced to be the secret of Geraldine's hidden strength. There was a chamber in a small lonely tower that joined the palae, to which the young Princess retired, not only at stated periods every day, but often, very often, at other times. There she would remain for hours, and no one dared to break upon her privacy; even her husband humoured her wishes, and had never since his marriage visited that chamber. If sometimes she entered it mournful, dispirited, and with downcast looks, she never failed to come forth from her retirement with a new spirit, calm and smiling, and all the fair beauty of her face restored. This, then, was the chamber where those spells were woven which had baffled all the skill of the Soreeress.

Not long after the Queen had made the discovery of the chamber, the aged King, her father-in-law, while visiting the Princess Geraldine, was struck with blindness. Temora began to rejoice, for an opportunity well suited to her own dark purposes had at last occurred.

There was a solemn festival held in honour of the Goddess Freya. In the midst of the rejoicing, the Soreeress (her yellow hair streaming upon her shoulders, and her rich robes all rent) rushed into the hall. With frantic cries, she bade the feasting cease, and seizing from an aged seald the harp that he was striking, she tore away the strings, and then in sullen silence she sat her down before the idol's image. Again she rose, and with a dagger's point scratched a few rough characters upon the altar. The priests had gathered round her, and when they saw those letters, they also shrieked aloud with horror: they fell before the idol, and bowed their faces to the ground, howling and heaping dust upon their heads. Upon this, with a fixed and dreamy stare, Temora arose, and beating upon a sort of shapeless drum, commenced a low and melancholy chant. She told them that the nation had cause to mourn—that heavy calamities had fallen upon them—that the gods had sent a curse among them. A monster had been cast up by the treacherous waves, and none had known their danger. Their King, their Prince, nay, she herself, had been deceived, for that fearful monster had come among them in a human form, even as a beautiful maiden. They had cherished her, and now the judgment had fallen upon them; it had begun with the King—he was struck with blindness—where would it fall next? With prophetic glance she could foresee,—But here the drum dropt from her hands; at once her frantic violence was stilled; she sunk upon the ground, and her long hair fell like a veil over her stern features.

She had said enough. As she began, a smothered sound of cursing rose on all sides; now the whirlwind of furious passion burst forth, and knew no bounds. The tumult spread far and wide among the people. Led by the wizard priests, they rushed to the palace, and demanded that their King should come forth to them. Now the poor old King, being in his dotage, and almost governed by the priests, had been persuaded and tutored to think and to answer just as they suggested. Led by the Sorceress, he came forth, sightless and trembling, and his few faltering words confirmed all that the artful Temora had declared.

PART III.

ALL this time Prince Regnar had been absent. He came in from hunting, just when Temora had brought his father forth. Horror-struck, he soon perceived the purpose of the fiend-like woman, but in vain he sought to quell the furious tumult. His father was totally under the dominion of the priests, and when a cry was raised, demanding as their victim the young and innocent Geraldine, the King's assent was given. As for the Princess, she was not to be seen. Two persons, however, who at once had guessed the place of her retreat, met at the door of her mysterious chamber.

For once that door was scarcely closed. It opened at the gentle touch of Regnar, but there something arrested him.

"Stop! stop!" he whispered, holding the door firmly with one hand, while he thrust forth the other to prevent Temora from advancing. "Stop but a little while; let us not disturb her yet."

Temora obeyed. Curiosity for a time mastered her desire for vengeance. She wished to hear distinctly the words which were pronounced in that chamber; but what were the words that fell upon her ear?

The low, sweet voice of Geraldine, breathing forth prayers to the God she worshipped; pleading for her worst enemy; praying that He, whose favour is life, would give a new spirit and sweet peace of mind, and every blessing, to her sister Temora!

The voice of Geraldine ceased, and Regnar entered softly. Temora had sunk upon the step where she had stood; she did not enter, though at last that chamber stood open before her; but with still greater astonishment than that with which she had listened, she gazed upon its inmate.

Geraldine had not heard the light step of her husband. She was kneeling with

both her hands covering her face. The tears that trickled through her fingers too well betrayed the anguish that had stopped her voice in prayer.

And this, then, was the secret of the mysterious chamber. Geraldine had trusted to no spell but that of innocence. Her strength had been in the confession of her utter weakness to Him with whom she held her high and spiritual communion, to Him whose strength is made perfect in the weakness of his children. To Him who hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, whose gracious invitation is to the weary and heavy-laden, she had gone in every time of trial; and from the foot of His Cross, where she ever laid the burden of her griefs, she had brought forth into the world that sweet and holy cheerfulness which passed even the understanding of the wretched Temora.

Struck to the heart, the Sorceress slunk silently away. Some feelings of remorse had seized upon her, and now she would have gladly stopped the tumult. Alas! she had no power to calm the storm which she had raised. The frantic multitude had burst the palace gates; Regnar was overpowered, and they were dragging their meek and innocent victim to the altar of the horrid idol, when suddenly a Higher Power interposed and stopped their blind fury.

The aged monarch fell dead into the arms of his attendants; the excitement of the last few hours had proved too much for his feeble frame. Instantly, and almost at a venture, a single voice cried out, "Long live King Regnar!" There was a breathless pause, and then the cry was echoed by the shouts of all the people.

Geraldine, the *Christian* Geraldine, was saved!

LUCY C. STIVEN.

The Battle of Bannockburn.

I.

THE sun had set o'er Bannock's stream,
 And Stirling's castle grey,
 And in the plain, prepared for war,
 Two hostile armies lay.
 The Scottish chief, great Robert Bruce,
 His small brave army told
 To seek that God, who often led
 The Israelites of old.
 And there they knelt at Bannock's side,
 And offered up a prayer,
 That God would teach their hands to fight,
 And keep them by His care.

But diff'rent that dire night was spent
 By Bruce's vaunting foes,
 Who with the wassail song and cup
 That awful night did close.
 But little did the English think
 That night would be their last,
 Which they with mocking jeer and song
 Most heedlessly had past.
 But oh! how changed next morn the scene,
 When the great sun appear'd!
 Where was the joyful revelry?
 Alas! no mirth was heard.

II.

On—on—to battle was the cry ;
 The lances gleam'd, the bowmen came,
 And all resolved to do or die ;
 For coward was not, but a name.
 When Edward saw his archers beat,
 He boldly bade his horse appear ;
 But soon the steel pikes cut their feet,
 And low, dull groans now met the ear.
 These spikes the prudent Bruce had placed
 In pits which studded all the plain,
 And with light turf and brushwood laced,
 That they might Edward's horses maim.
 But still the English hope was strong,
 And Edward rush'd still on to fight ;
 But while engaged amongst the throng,
 His eyes soon met a strange, wild sight.

III.

He heard, from off the Gillies' Hill,
 A shout which all the air did fill,
 And saw those who had lain conceal'd,
 But now their thirst for fame conceal'd,
 Come rushing down, a motley band,

With club and battle-axe in hand,
 To have their share in fame and spoil,
 And for their country's cause to toil.
 But, lo ! before their swords are drawn,
 See Edward fleeing o'er the plain,
 His haughty head now bow'd with shame,
 And all his vain and boastful band
 Now widely scatter'd o'er the land.
 What diff'rent thoughts their hearts would fill
 When next they heard that rippling rill,
 As silently in chains they lay,
 Watching the rising sun's first ray !

IV.

Ne'er English lost so dire a field,
 Nor soldier sword more bravely wield ;
 For knights and esquires bleeding lay
 On Bannock's plain that fatal day.
 While legends last, and warrior's song,
 The English shall the wail prolong,
 And father to his son shall tell
 Of the brave strife, and those who fell
 On Bannockburn's plain.

HEBE.

 On Gossip.

If there is a fault which at first sight seems small, but which is in reality immense, it is Gossip. It is a noxious weed, which has for its root the love of talk. If we could only estimate aright the number of people it has injured, the ill-will and misunderstanding which it has created among neighbours, and altogether the harm that it has done, we would surely every one of us cease to gossip. We sometimes hear the expression of "a little innocent gossip," but in making use of it are we not treading on dangerous ground? If what is termed "innocent gossip" be allowed, where is the line to be drawn, and who is to be the drawer of it, which must separate "innocent gossip" from mischievous tattle? Will not the habit of indulging in any gossip at all, gradually and almost imperceptibly deepen into a love of slander?

It may be asked, "If all gossip is to cease, what is to become of conversation? what are old ladies round their tea tables, and gentlemen in their clubs, to talk about?" Let them find other topics of conversation. Surely, in this wide universe, so full of wonderful objects, so replete in all that is beautiful and mystifying, there must remain matter enough on which to converse, even after extracting all gossip?

A sister fault of Gossip is exaggeration, from which it is almost inseparable, and it is so from the very obvious reason, that if people kept to facts, there would be very little gossip. When you hear an ill-natured story of any one of your acquaintance, there are only two courses open to you,—either thoroughly to discredit it, or else to investigate it, in which case you will probably find that gossip and exaggeration have done their work in making "Much ado about nothing." We sometimes hear gossip without in any way seeking it; in such a case, if we cannot refute it, at least we need not retail it, thus closing one channel of publication.

That Gossip is not only a disagreeable foible, but a great fault, is proved by the frequent warnings which are given in the Bible to avoid it. Thus Paul says of those that lead a wandering life, that they become "not only idle, but tattlers also, and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not." The Apostle Peter ranks this habit of gossiping with the greatest crimes of which man is capable. Thus he says, "Let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as thief, or as an evil-doer, or as a busybody in other men's matters."

Gossip appears under different phases, according to the places and persons amongst whom it spreads. Thus, in a country village, though it is very rife, it seldom exceeds that silly gossip which treats of such subjects as what one's neighbours are having for dinner, or how many servants they keep; whereas, in a town, we have not time to speak of such small subjects, and so we gossip of much more serious affairs, and repeat many very ill-natured things. It is difficult to say what class of people deserve the odium of being the most gossipy, but I think that we may safely say that it is pretty equally shared by men and women.

There is a very disagreeable practice closely allied to Gossip, which is that of repeating what one hears said in a disagreeable manner. Something is said of one's self by some ill-natured person, and that something is repeated and repeated until some *kind* friend thinks fit to tell one of it, at the same time adding, that she would not on any account have her name mentioned in the matter, making one believe that the whole world is maligning one. And thus it is that we live in an atmosphere of misunderstandings and petty quarrels, scarcely able to distinguish our true friends from our shallow acquaintances. There is but one way by which we can avoid being tormented

by gossip and gossips. Let us never indulge in the former, and let us have nothing to do with the latter.

S. E. S. M.

Lines on a Child Smiling in his Sleep.

Lo! what a beauteous sight is here!
 What sight to parent's heart more dear,
 'Mong childhood's winning wiles?
 'Neath curtains white, with fringes deep,
 A lovely baby-boy doth sleep,
 And while he sleeps, he smiles.

Sweet babe, as harmless as the dove,
 To see thee now doth kindle love
 In warmest, brightest rays;
 The more we gaze thy smiles increase,
 Surely such innocenee and peace
 Must be watched o'er by fays.

The drooping eyelid, hiding light
 From thy two orbs so blue and bright,
 The brow untouched by care,
 The ruby lips that kissing seek,
 The dimples in thy velvet cheek,
 Would tell that sylphs dwell there.

But what doth cause the witching smile,
 That doth thy father's cares beguile—
 Thy mother's toil repay?

Dream'st thou thy watching sylphides wait,
 That thou may'st see their revels late,
 In woodlands light as day?

Or, hear'st thou now sweet tinkling bells,
 To waft thee to the fairy dells
 Of mirth and gaiety?
 No! holier far thy gentle joy,
 Sweet visions do thy thoughts employ,
 For angels whisper thee.

While messengers of grace and love,
 Descend to bless thee from above,
 In copious plenteousness,
 Sweet sounds do also meet thine ears,
 Like to the music of the spheres—
 Angelic symphonies.

Dear boy, in infancy and youth,
 And age, oh! follow close the truth,
 That so, kept free from guile,
 When angels thee to heaven will bear,
 Thy new and glorious face may wear
 A sweet perpetual smile!

PRO VIRTUTE.

Sea-Side Life.

Who does not look forward with longing and anticipations of pleasure to a sea-side visit? I know we always did, and found the delights as many as we expected. Usually it is to a place on a flat sandy coast we have gone to find change and renewed health,

but last year we fixed upon Aberporth, a small village situated on a rocky coast, for our summer residence.

Here, towards the end of June, we took a house, because our own was to be put into the hands of masons and painters, many alterations in it being purposed. How delighted we were with the place! The village is composed of some few dozen scattered cottages, boasting one street—more noticeable for ruggedness than regularity or width—and two shops. Quarter of a mile distant is the simple old church, in the midst of its green yard dotted with mossy grey tombstones; and near it the parsonage, the only house of any pretension in the place. We had about ten minutes' walk over the pleasant downs to get to the beach. There was a winding path leading down the cliffs to the sands, but the quickest and most direct way was to descend a flight of steep steps, hewn roughly in the rock: these we usually chose. The sea, and sands, and shells were familiar objects; but the rocks had the additional charm of novelty, and how we younger ones did scramble over them! hunting for sea-anemones—fishing out strange-looking creatures from holes and pools—ever slipping, ever hurting hands and tearing dresses, in our ardour after the coveted treasures—now a piece of bright seaweed our reward, then a trophy in the shape of a rare shell. There was the grand business of sea-side life too—the bathing; this was the crowning enjoyment, to splash into the cool waves, we girls trying who could float longest, and swim farthest; but I do not think we achieved any very great exploits in this line, although our ambition was unbounded.

It was during this delightful time that I read most of the books of fiction with which I am acquainted. There was to be no study while here, so I collected every novel I could lay my hands on for amusement; had we been going to a desert island for twelve years, I could not have been more provident for all in this particular; but what happy hours I spent poring over them, under the shade of some rock. I soon found a charming nook for reading, sheltered from too much sun or wind, yet light and bright, where I could watch the dancing waves, and see the sunlight play over the worn jagged rocks. Here I used to repair, and in the quiet—not loneliness—enter into all the joys and sorrows of my favourite (fictitious) characters. I read of those last sweet mournful days (told so exquisitely) of little Paul Dombey, when the gentle boy and loving sister were together on the sands, wondering there, with the murmur of them ever sounding in my ears, with little Paul, "What are the wild waves saying?" weeping at the last scene, when the river had run on and on, until it was about to become lost in the fathomless Sea of Eternity.

There, too, I wondered over that book so full of vividly brought out character,

“Vanity Fair,” tracing out the character of “Becky Sharpe,” pitying and condemning, while admiring her manœuvring cleverness; angry at her treatment of her poor, rough, blunt, honest “Monstre;” almost angry with Dobbin for his excessive love of Amelia; and with her, for her too great devotion to the two Georges. Many other books I read by our first novelists, always admiring those most which had the truest delineation of character: at one time overcome by some sad pathetic story, then laughing at a happily described scene. Thus I enjoyed myself, with sometimes the pleasant interruption of a shout of exultation from the children, or wee darling baby (she is still “Baby,” although five years old) coming to stay beside me, to rest the little active feet; then ever and anon I would stop, and gazing on the waters, while lazily sifting the dry sand through my fingers, I would let my imagination revel in that rapid and, alas! unstable species of architecture which every one so loves to rear and gild.

In the evenings, when it was cool and pleasant to walk, we would all wander forth to view the scenery, and it was very lovely, especially when the tide was coming in. To see the waves leap upon that iron-bound coast was grand; when all the western sky was dyed with the bright colours which the setting sun bestows, reflected in undulating, changing beauty in the waters.

Thus the days passed until days had merged into weeks, and we counted the length of our stay by months. We had become well-known; and when we went through the village, many a pleasant “good-day” greeted us from the humble cottagers. With one we were very well acquainted. We had often noticed a small house, just on the outskirts, as being prettier than the others, by reason of its gay little garden and white-curtained windows. Its occupant we knew well by sight; and one morning, about three weeks after our arrival, she came up to us, and, with a courtesy, asked if we had lost a cloak, holding out one of mine, which I had carelessly the day before dropped or left on the cliffs; she had found it while walking, and believed it to be ours. This little incident was the beginning of an acquaintance. The present of a flower, or an apple to the younger children, soon gained her their hearts; and we sometimes stopped for a few moments’ chat. We found her superior to her station, not by education, for that had been very limited, but by an innate refinement. She was one of nature’s gentlewomen. Bit by bit we learned her history,—how her husband, a fisherman, had been drowned at sea; how she had been the mother of six dear bairns, but God had taken them one by one to himself, until only her boy Robert was left. She told us he was a sailor, and was then on his way home from the north. In speaking of him, she so naively betrayed the pride she felt in him. The following Sabbath, when we were in church, we saw him enter with his mother. How proud she looked as she

walked up the aisle, leaning on the arm of her bronzed sailor son! Five days after, his vessel (the *Morna*) sailed again, and poor Mrs. Mansell had to bid adieu to her son once more. Ah! mother, did no shadow of the coming event darken the sunshine of that morning?—no warning of what was to be, intensify that parting?—no whisper of the wind tell of the cruel deed it would do? It would seem not. Time went on, and the evenings began to grow chilly, and we were anxious to go home. It had been hoped that our house would have been ready by the end of September, but it was now October, and all was not finished; it was, however, fixed that we should leave the first week of the next month.

One day we noticed in the morning the sky look lowering, and the tide went out with an angry fretting that boded bad weather, which the screaming of the sea-birds as they flew inland confirmed. We hastened to the beach, to have a walk before it should rain, but the discomfort of the wind and drifting sand soon drove us home again. As we expected, with the turning of the tide rain began to fall. This, however, soon ceased, but a terrific wind reigned in its stead. We stayed in until evening, when a few of us ventured forth to view the storm which was raging wildly. With brave battling, we reached the edge of the cliffs; there we stood sheltered a little by a projecting rock, watching it in its awful grandeur; and a storm on that iron-bound coast is magnificent—it is past description—I can find no words adequate. The billows dashing up on the cliffs, as if to engulf and crush them, but thrown back foiled, shivered into a cloud of foam thrown high above our heads, and carried by the wind far on to the grass, falling in a white shower. “Heaven pity the poor unfortunates who should be at sea near these coasts,” was our prayerful thought. We returned meditative, after regarding His power thus awfully displayed.

Next day the wind had subsided, but nature had not recovered the late convulsion. The sun shone once more only fitfully, and the sea yet heaved and groaned. At mid-day we heard the news we anticipated. There had been a wreck the previous night. The *Morna* had struck on a rock about three miles away, and foundered. To all appearance, every person on board had perished. Almost every one in the village hastened to the scene of the disaster; but fancy Mrs. Mansell’s feelings on hearing it; her dread while clinging to the hope that her son must be saved. Vain hope! The tide, when it went out, left the beach strewn with spars and barrels, dead sheep and cattle, and *débris* of all sorts; while here and there the terrible spectacle of a corpse met the villagers’ eyes. Very soon the body of poor Robert Mansell was discovered and recognised. His mother was their first thought, mingled with pity for the fate of the hapless youth. They lifted him tenderly, those rude villagers, and spread a cloak over

the stiffened limbs, and gently removed the wet, matted hair from the cold up-turned forehead, then forming a rough bier of planks, they laid him on to bear him home.

Before they came in sight of the house, they sent one old man on before to prepare his mother; she divined it instantly, and was waiting, white and trembling, at the door when they came up. She neither fainted nor spoke, nor wept at the sight of her dead son, but watched them lay him on the bed. Then she sat down, gazing intently on his face. "Take heart, take heart, my woman," said one man, and with true feeling and delicacy they withdrew, leaving her alone with the loved dead. Who knows what passed?

One of the men sent his wife to stay in the cottage, to watch over her, and do all that was necessary. In two days the funeral took place, all the villagers attending. Mrs Mansell followed in it herself, clothed in the plain saddening mourning, the hands, roughened with toil to bring him up honestly and well, covered with black gloves. A short, sharp cry, they said, burst from her lips at the sound of the first clod striking the coffin; then she wept very bitterly, but soon calmed herself, and walked quietly home. The next morning she was not able to rise;—she was ill. We often visited her, and we were able to procure many things she could not have got. Mamma gave her fresh grapes, and made her cooling drinks; also, when she was a little better, sat beside the bed trying to comfort her. She was very sick, but not "unto death;" not yet was she to be freed—a little longer she was to tread wearily her lonely way. In less than a fortnight she was again about and at work, but her face was thinner and more faded, the lines about the mouth had deepened, and there was a sadness in the grey eyes, which told of the great sorrow she had suffered.

The last day of our stay was come, and on the morrow we were to leave. It was warmer than usual, and we determined to have a long walk, take one more view of the cliffs, and bid farewell to our favourite haunts; so we walked three miles to a celebrated wishing-well. I forget just now to what saint it is dedicated: St David probably. We each went down to the clear little spring, and muttered our desire: I believe most were like mine—good fortune to the village and villagers, where and amongst whom we had been so happy—all happiness and brightness, except for the one sad event. This ceremony over, we started homewards. On our return, the tide was coming in not quite so smoothly as the first June evening that we watched it. We had another place yet to visit, one of the sights, the "Witches' Cauldron." It is not a chasm in the rocks, for it is close at the top, and grass is all around, but more like a deep pit; at the bottom is a passage leading straight to the open sea, through which the water, especially at the spring tides, rushes in fast and fuming, and from the opposition it

has met, boils and foams furiously up the sides;—hence its name. In stormy weather this raging is much increased, the spray being thrown up like a pillar; the shells and splinters which may be gathered after are evidence of it.

That evening, as part of the packing was to be done, we had a general consultation which proved a talkative, rather unruly debate, every one having some plan to propose regarding the safe disposal of our shells and sea-anemones, of which we had many very lovely specimens. Notwithstanding much grave deliberation, none was found feasible for a long time; but when at length they were settled, the trial of our plans proved to be more than satisfactory.

As I had taken on myself to collect the books, the work of putting them up to go home was delegated to me. Fortunately I had had the forethought to make out a list, of which I found only one missing, a number of the "Cornhill Magazine," which was nowhere to be found.

It rained heavily on the day of our departure, for which I was very sorry, as on looking back on the village to have a farewell view, it leaves such a dreary remembrance to see everything soaked, the whole place wet, uncomfortable, and dirty.

MAUD.

Hymn on Autumn.

LORD! could our feeble powers unite
To praise Thy majesty aright,
Earth could not hold our lays;
Touch but that chord, all nature rings,
And vibrates through the sounding strings,
In echoes of Thy praise.

The seasons, various though they seem,
Sing but this one unvaried theme,
And with unfailing voice
Their Ruler's power they bid us mark,
To His loud tones in nature hark,
And in His love rejoice.

Lord, at thy word, when all the plains
Are bound in Summer's flow'ry chains,
Brown Autumn waves her wand;
Dull Nature from her torpor wakes,
And soon her glowing fetters breaks,
Touched by th' enchanter's hand.

The stream that late in languor crept,
Or slow in tortuous current swept,
'Neath reedy canopy,
Bounds gurgling o'er its pebbled bed,
Its pearly waters freshly fed
With treasures from the sky.

The forests which in slumber lay,
Smote by the sun's untempered ray,
Arouse to sudden life;
The winds, let loose to work their will,
Through branching network whistle shrill,
In elemental strife.

The trees, erst wreathed in verdant crown,
Now glow in crimson, orange, brown,
By Autumn's hand portrayed;
Here tawny oaks their arms outspread,
There beeches wave their plumes of red,
Their beauties all displayed.

Each one thy fiat, Lord, obeys;
 Each rainbow-tinted leaf Thy praise
 Rejoices to uphold;
 The stream would all unheeded flow,
 Did not Thine image in it glow,
 And all its charms unfold.

These speak Thy power, but most Thy love,
 The gentle dropping from above
 Of Thy forgiving grace,
 In silent eloquence is told
 By fields that bow their waves of gold,
 To feed a sinful race.

Each ear that rustling smites the wind
 Seems, to a deeply thoughtful mind,
 To bid it waft abroad
 The all-surpassing debt we owe
 To Him from whom all blessings flow,
 Our Friend, our King, our God.

God of the Autumn! God of love,
 List from Thy sapphire throne above,
 With kind, accepting ear;
 The words of praise our lips would sing,
 And those poor thanks our hearts would bring,
 Do Thou consent to hear!

MENA.

Tea Parties.

“On fasten-e’en we had a rockin’,
 To ea’ the craek and weave our stockin’;
 And there was muckle fun and jokin’,
 Ye need na doubt:
 At length we had a hearty yokin’
 At sang about.”

ALAS! poor Burns, what would be thy remark if thou knewest that such a scene of innocent and delightful amusement as is here described, where industry and pleasure are so beautifully interwoven, merely lives in the imagination of thy degenerate countrymen as worthy of remembrance through the touch of thy “hameely muse?” But it is only too true that rockings are now among the things that were, and with them has perished another of those characteristics which so strikingly marked out the separate individualities of Scotland among the nations. The ruin of such institutions may be regarded with regret by those with whom the idea of antiquity is that of perfection; but in the present day, when the gigantic strides made in every department of literature, art, philosophy, and science, render the nineteenth century an era in the history of the world, it is hardly to be expected that society would remain in that primitive state of feeling which dictated such meetings as rockings. Indeed, such a happy combination of industry with pleasure is deemed an extremely old-fashioned notion by the greater portion of the votaries of the modern world.

True it is that the quiltings and apple-parings mentioned in *Queechy* and the *Wide, Wide World*, as occurring in America at the present day, appear to be gatherings of a very similar nature; but they not only differ from our old Scotch rockings in the amount and quality of their industry and feasting, but are also stamped with the distinctness of a separate national character, so that they cannot be included in the same category.

Following the examples of rocks or distaffs and spinning wheels, rockings have died a natural death, though we may find them living anew, with all their old genial social spirit revived, and conformed to the character of the time, in a class of agreeable réunions of which we proceed to ask the name.

They are certainly not those ceremonious dinner-parties, where course after course of sumptuous fare, following in slow succession, spins out the time till the evening's dull enjoyment is over, and

“The rattling wheels stop short before the gates,”

to convey the full-dressed guests home.

Nor are they those parties, where the worshippers of Terpsichore assemble to whirl in the giddy mazes of the dance; for however much improvement the modern valse and galop may have caused in the character of these réunions since the days of Goldsmith, (who bitterly complained that the only privileges of Edinburgh society were, that the ladies might ogle, and the gentlemen sigh from each end of the dancing-room, except when permitted to walk through the steps of a stately minuet or pavia,) it is nevertheless true that the usual quantum of *conversational* happiness rarely exceeds such common-place tattle as “Have you seen the Exhibition?” or “Do you like skating?”

Nor are they, yet, those pleasant summer parties where ladies and gentlemen meet to play Croquet, a praiseworthy physical and mental exercise, but one for which the charms of agreeable conversation must be relinquished, or the interest of the game spoiled.

The only institutions in use at the present time, in which the genuine heartiness of rockings is combined with an improved and cultivated modern taste, in which industry may be united with pleasure, music with conversation, and singing with dancing, are modern TEA PARTIES.

How much we owe to the person who brought such a delightful beverage as tea into this country we cannot tell, but certainly he has not his praises sung in the same manner as “the generous Frenchman, whose noble perseverance bore the (coffee) tree from Martinico's shore,” and perhaps for a very good reason, viz., that his name is un-

known. Further than being aware that tea does not appear to have been known in Britain before the year 1650, and that in 1664 the East India Company's agent was commissioned to purchase the astonishing quantity of two lbs. two oz. for the use of His most sacred Majesty, Charles the Second of happy memory, we have not much authentic information on the subject, nor are we sufficiently eager antiquarians as to search for it. But in reading such a Diary as that of the well-known Mr Pepys, we cannot help feeling interested in the following memorandum, which he must surely have had great delight in writing—"September 25, 1665.—I sent for a cup of tea (a China drink), of which I had never drunk before."

In mentioning these incidents, we are, however, dipping too deep into English history for the purpose of the present article, as it would have been here more appropriate to have made antiquarian researches as to the exact period when tea was first introduced to the notice of the Scotch nation. This, however, we shall not do, but confine ourselves to deploring the lamentable want of judgment and taste displayed by the old widow, who (according to tradition), on receiving a parcel of tea from her son, with an assurance of its wonderful valuability, beat the leaves in several cups along with butter, and inviting her neighbours to partake such a delightful repast, gave it as her opinion that "her son might hae thoet mair o' his mother nor send her sie a like present."

A part of this old tradition, which is worthy of observance, is that the widow, true to her Scotch character, called in her neighbours to taste the tea along with her. This is rather a curious antecedent for the universal custom of one country woman stepping into her neighbour's house, stocking in hand, to enjoy "a dish o' tea," as well as a little tittle tattle. Why tea was chosen in preference to coffee as the favourite beverage of the parties hence named after it, it would be hard to tell, unless it be the idea of charming comfort with which we are accustomed to regard such a scene as Cowper has painted, when he says,

" Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast,
 Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,
 And while the bubbling and loud hissing urn
 Throws up a steamy column, and the cups
 That cheer but not inebriate wait on each,
 So let us welcome peaceful evening in."

Generally speaking, however, the mere business of tea-drinking at parties is gone through rather as part of duty than as a thing in which people took much pleasure, the more modest demoiselles, especially at country tea-parties, declining second cups, whereat

the young gentlemen, as a standard joke, throw out dark hints of their having enjoyed previous cups at home. The sole persons who form exceptions to this rule are old ladies "in maiden meditation fancy-free," and comfortable bachelors, a class who, endowed as they are with strong nerves, are troubled with no qualms of conscience in drinking four cups, and so many as six on extraordinary occasions.

Notwithstanding the feats of the old maids and bachelors, the conversation often languishes till the tea-things are taken away, when the most approved and successful town mode of raising the spirits of the party is through the medium of a dance, after which the cheeks of the younger portion of the party, glowing "celestial rosy red, love's proper hue," from the exercise, and smiles and conversation going the round of the elder circle, "Perche non ho del vento" is warbled by a nice young lady, and the company thrown into laughing hysterics by the comic humour and irresistible singing of "I'm a young man from the country" of the bachelor singer, of which an encore is rapturously demanded.

A table surrounded by players at "Vingt-une," or "Snip, snap, snorum," is often a sight that may be seen in the background both of our town tea parties and those in the country, the company of which is included in the sons and daughters of the minister, doctor, and dominie; but in a certain class of provincial society, cards are utterly ignored, on the principle that

"They were superfluous here, with all the tricks
That idleness has ever yet contrived
To fill the void of an unfurnished brain,
To palliate dulness, and give time a shove,"

when so much more real enjoyment can be derived from the intellectual pleasures of good conversation.

The slumbering spirit of a tea party once aroused, it is impossible to enumerate the manifold amusements which are entered into with all the warmth of youth, not only by the younger but the elder portion of the company. It were useless to try to enumerate the number of songs that are sung, the quadrilles that are danced, the charades that are acted, and the conundrums that are propounded, and still more useless to endeavour to describe the hilarity that prevails at a tea party. How can I tell of the numbers of young misses who apprentice dozens of sons to all kinds of trades, of the awful punishments that befall ladies for not attending to their "toilet," or the dreadful "consequences" that ensue from a lady and gentleman meeting in a coal-scuttle? Such astonishing incidents as little misses biting an inch off the poker, fops proclaiming to the assembled company that they bear the character of an ass, old ladies

going through the key-hole, and stout gentlemen hopping round the room, exclaiming "Oh, mother, mother, I'm a great goose," are circumstances of such common occurrence, that they neither excite remark on the way home, nor appear particularly predominant in dreams of the Tea Party.

PRO VIRTUTE.

A Ballad.

DARK gloom'd the night; a tempest fierce
O'er the broad ocean swept,
While high in air the raging winds
Their midnight revels kept.

Nought could be seen on either side
But the white crested foam,
Nought heard for many miles around
But angry billows' boom.

At length a moonbeam struggling pierced
The murky cloud of night;
And, flinging wide its chilling beams,
Revealed a mournful sight.

Full on a cliff its radiance fell,
Whose brow the sea o'erhung,
And on a woman standing there
A weirdly gleam it flung.

Like beacon-fires her dark eyes glared,
Lit by unearthly light;
Twin-stars they seem'd, designed to pierce
The deep'ning gloom of night.

Firm on that lofty ledge of rock
She stood amid the storm,
Though fiercely raged the wanton wind
Around her slender form.

And on her bosom cradled lay
A little weeping child,
Whose cries unheeded struggled forth,
Drowned in the tempest wild.

But nought could still the mother's plaint,
For high above the wind
It rose, the overflow of grief
From that distracted mind.

And wildly, madly rose her voice,
As racked by grief or pain,
And on the midnight air pour'd forth
This sad impassioned strain:—

"Husband, return! long from thy home
Hast thou a stranger been;
Ten weary months have passed since I
Thy welcome smile have seen.

Husband, return! my heart is dead
To all that's bright and glad;
And in thine absence, e'en our home
Seems desolate and sad.

Thy little infant weeps for thee,
And I in anguish mourn;
O! to my fond and yearning heart,
Husband, return! return!

A bleeding batter'd corpse one night
They brought before my door;
They said 'twas thy poor mangled clay
They'd found upon the shore.

'Twas but an idle tale they told,
I knew it could not be,
For that was not the well-loved face
I've sighed so long to see.

Still, still within my ardent breast,
 A flaming torch is lit,
 And bright-winged Hope, with cheering smile,
 Seems 'neath mine eyes to flit.

And day and night, on this high rock,
 I watch the frowning main,
 That I may see thy face the first,
 When thou return'st again."

The wild song ceased, and with an eye
 That gleam'd with lurid fire,
 With cheek that blanched, and lip that quailed
 With hope and fond desire,

Upon the wrathful, boiling main
 The singer gazed awhile,
 And the fierce light of those dark eyes
 Changed to a transient smile.

For where the high foam-crested waves
 Held their imperious sway,
 A gallant ship, with white sails spread,
 Kept on her struggling way.

"It is my husband's bark!" she cried,
 "See its breeze-wooing wings

Flutter with joy, as though it knew
 The precious freight it brings.

Now, farewell! dark and moping grief,
 Take thou thy gloomy rest;
 Welcome, young joy, and make thy home
 In my triumphant breast.

I come, thou idol of my soul,
 Thy willing bark to greet;
 See! how the moonlit wavelets part,
 My eager steps to meet."

She said, and while her latest word
 Still on the welkin rang,
 From that high rock where she had stood,
 With trembling haste she sprang,

And plunged into the depths that toss'd
 Impatient at her feet,
 Yawning with fiercely raging breast,
 A victim new to greet.

One plunge, one shriek, that echoed wild
 From the affrighted shore;
 The cold, dark waters round her curled,
 Then closed—and all was o'er.

MENA.

On the Exhibition.

AN Exhibition is one of the best means that could be devised to bring the works of a number of celebrated artists together, so that they may compete with each other, and be judged by the public. Some works are hung where they can be seen to the best advantage, whilst others are so badly placed that they cannot be properly appreciated even by the most impartial. This is one of the things which has raised such a cry against Academics and Exhibitions of Paintings. Of course, it is but fair that the best artists should have the best places, and that inferior ones should only be attended

to after them. Those Exhibitions stimulate superior artists to greater exertion, and inferior ones to struggle for a higher position. It is by these annual Exhibitions of the works of living artists that art is maintained in full force in this country, and they lead to the best results—originality, variety, and adaptation to all the different requirements of such an age as ours. What is more pleasing to the eye than a beautiful picture, one at which you could sit and gaze for hours, and each time that you look at it some new beauty appears? It cannot be said, however, that in the Exhibition at present open in Edinburgh there are any such, but there is certainly a fair proportion of fine ones. Of every different style of painting you have here a specimen, so that the tastes of every one may be suited. I shall now describe a few of the principal and most attractive of these pictures.

“The Keeper’s Daughter,” by William Crawford, is certainly one of the finest. The scene is laid on a Highland lake, surrounded by hills. It represents a young woman standing in a boat. With one hand she guides the boat, while with the other she holds a chain to which is attached a large dog, which lies at her feet protecting her. This is a very fine painting, and one which all admire.

One of the largest is “The Volunteer,” by H. O’Neil. The scene of this is laid at sea. A storm is raging, and the angry waves are dashing and foaming against the rocks. A vessel has become a total wreck, and is all broken up. On a small piece of it is crowded a number of men, women, and children, who expect every moment to be washed into a watery grave. One man is willing to risk his life, and try to swim to shore with a rope which is attached to the wreck. He is standing on the end of the wreck, while they fasten the other end of the rope round him. The mothers are casting imploring looks at him, as if beseeching him to save them; while the children, unconscious of their danger, are seated on their knees, or playing at their feet. The outline of this picture is very bold, but beautiful. The faces of each one are so well defined, that they would almost make a complete picture of themselves.

“Sundown—Loch Aehray,” by Horatio Macculloch, is a beautiful picture. This well-known lake in the Highlands forms a fit study for a painter. In the middle of the lake is a small verdant island, and by its side a little cottage, from whose chimney the smoke is curling up among the hills, behind which the sun has just sunk.

“The Penny Bank.” The subject of this picture was suggested to the painter, George Harvey, by the “Vinegar Close Penny Bank,” which was formed in Leith some years ago, for the purpose of receiving the small earnings of the poorest people, which, if left to themselves, might be uselessly squandered. Behind a table is seated the banker, who is in the act of receiving a few pennies from a poor woman. By her side

stands a man, biting off the corners of his bank book, as he waits his turn; a fisher-woman is standing at the door, counting her money to see if it is all safe; and a little boy is triumphantly holding up his penny to his companion, who is not so rich as himself. On another table is the box where the money is put, and over which a dog is keeping guard. The different faces in this picture are all very natural and life like, especially that of the man chewing his bank-book.

"Sketching from Nature," by A. S. Maceallister, is a very pretty picture. The scene is in the kitchen of a working man's house. By the side of the fire sits a young woman, with a child on her knee. She is feeding it out of a bowl, which is placed on a stool before her. She is just putting the spoon to the child's mouth, but the child's eye is too intently fixed on the bright colours of the dress of the artist who is taking its likeness, to pay much attention to it. A little dog is begging for the food which the child refuses. This picture is not so fine as those I have before mentioned, but the subject is a pretty one, and does great credit to the painter.

The picture of "Edinburgh from Arthur's Seat" is, no doubt, a fine painting, but I cannot say that I saw much or any resemblance to the subject from which it is taken.

"The Morning of Departure," by W. W. Nicol, is a beautiful picture. Lying asleep in bed is a young officer. By the side of his bed is his trunk, which has the initials N. I. (native infantry) painted on the end of it. His uniform has the night before been thrown down on the top of his trunk, in readiness for his departure. His widowed mother stands by the side of his bed, as if unwilling to awaken him, knowing what must so soon follow. He is doubtless her eldest, and perhaps her only son. This is a very touching picture, and a very true one.

"The Arrest of a Rebel after Culloden," by J. B. Maedonald, is the last I shall mention. Three officers have entered the rebel's house, and are not long in finding him. He is standing in the middle of the room, the officer keeping a firm hold of him. The baby which was sleeping in the cradle has wakened up at the noise; and the old grandmother, looking very indignant at the intrusion, has lifted it, and is trying to quiet it. The dog knows something is amiss, and is seowling at the officers, seeming half inclined to fly upon them, but is repelled by the stern face and upraised sword of the foremost of them, while the young man's wife is clinging to him. This is a fine painting, and a very attractive one.

There are about seven hundred pictures in this Exhibition, besides a number of pieces of sculpture.

To the Daisies.

O LITTLE flowers, that with the sun
 Open your radiant golden eyes,
 Which ever through the livelong day,
 Ye raise unwearied to the skies.

Unwearied through the longest day,
 Whether the sky be dark or fair,
 In sunny or in shady place,
 Ye can be happy anywhere.

And when the twilight shadows fall,
 Your petals wet with silver dew,
 Ye close your patient eyes in rest,
 Then with the morn ye wake anew.

Sweet flowers, may we not learn of you
 A holy faith, a trusting grace—
 Contentment where our lot is cast,
 Even though it be the loneliest place.

R. C. W.

On Poetry.

THERE are two great pleasures given to mankind. The first is that of writing Poetry—the second is that of appreciating Poetry. But these two powers are far from being equally distributed throughout human beings. Let us look first at the poet himself. His very birth differs from that of common mortals, for

“The poet in a golden elime was born,
 With golden stars above—
 Dowered with the hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,
 The love of love.”

His childhood is spent in a world of his own,—he cannot be tied down by common rules,—Imagination is his playmate, and Nature his guide. This is more particularly the case with poets of the objective class. To them nature is full of poetry. The rustling of the wind in the trees, the singing of the birds, the murmuring of the brooks, all speak to them of poetry. We may all, however prosaic we may be, enjoy those sounds, but we cannot express our feelings in poetry, and so we fall into the second class of mortals, namely, the appreciators of poetry. And from our station in the second class, we look with eyes of something like envy on those in the first class, who can give “a local habitation and a name” to what we can only dimly feel. But then, again, we look with eyes of pity on those of the third class, namely, those who can neither write nor feel poetry—to whom life is all prose, and who care not to have it cheered by the bright light of poetry.

There are few subjects which appear under so many forms as Poetry does. Nevertheless, we may divide it into a few broad classes, such as the Dramatic, the Epic, and the Minor. In all these Britain holds a conspicuous place. What nation can produce a poet fit to be mentioned in the same breath as our Shakespeare? But we cannot here enter into the works of such a poet—it is beyond us—we leave it to those who are more worthy of undertaking such a task. As regards the Epic, we have Spenser and Milton, and their works surely supply us with matter for years of study and delight. We wander with pleasure through the woodland scenes of Spenser in company with Una; we are proud of Prince Arthur; and we listen with awe and rapt attention to the prophecies of the sage Merlin. But it is with a more sustained attention that most of us follow our great First Parents in all their pleasures and sorrows. We like to have such vivid pictures of the every-day life of Adam and Eve as Milton paints, and to be able for a little while to imagine what the world might have been, had the serpent not been “the most subtle” of all animals. Here we shall make use of the Minor as a useful term for any poets who are not Shakespeare, Milton, or Spenser. Among the poets who have not made Nature in general so much their theme as Human Nature, Pope stands preeminent. He keeps to his own declaration, that “The proper study for mankind is man.” In his works we have sharp criticisms and satires on what was passing in the busy world in his own days. But although we admire his works, it is generally with a distant, deferential admiration; they do not often awake so much poetic feeling in the hearts of the nineteenth century as is aroused by those of the poets of the Lake School. The Lake School is composed of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, and Wilson. And what a school they form! In their works we find Nature under every phase—grave, gay, stormy, or calm; in every form they loved her. There are some sternly classic tastes, which will not allow that they admire the works of these poets. We can only say to them,

“Dark-brow’d sophist, come not near—
 All the place is holy ground;
 Hollow smile and frozen sneer
 Come not here.”

Let us at least be thankful that we can love the works of those true poets. In admiring the Poetry of past generations, let us not become discontented with the age in which we live, and think that because so much has been done that there is nothing doing. It is in our age that *In Memoriam* and *Hiawatha* have appeared. Surely if those two poems alone greeted the world in a period of years, those years

could not be called barren. They are two works as different the one from the other as are the two countries from whence they spring. There is in the first "a calm despair," broken here and there by the sweet faith of a Christian heart; while in the latter, there is a wild music rising and falling with the poem. Nor are we quite dependant on Tennyson and Longfellow, when we name as of our time Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Adelaide Proctor, Joanna Baillic, Aytoun, and Macdonald.

It is sometimes thought that literature will fall into cycles, and that another cycle may see another Shakespeare arise. We may at least hope it, and we have every reason to believe that the love of poetry will never die; that it will be ever present in the world, humanizing and elevating the character of man as only that which is in itself high and pure can.

In the mere fact of loving Poetry we are doing something—we are accustoming ourselves to what is beautiful. Let us be content in admiring the works of others. The talent of the poet is denied to us, but the pleasure of Poetry is ours to be indulged and cultivated.

S. E. S. M.

St Valentine's Day.

HAIL, sainted morn !
 The day with joy we haste to greet,
 On which was born
 The name that gives our annual treat,
 Of Valentines and missives sweet.

Thy day of eld,
 In feasts ruled by the Luperci,
 The Romans held,
 When goats were dipped in crimson dye,
 To Pan, their mighty deity.

In modern times
 Thy postman priest toils on his way,
 Laden with rhymes,
 Emblazoned all with Cupid's bays,
 Arrows, forget-me-nots, and fays.

And when we draw
 Each other's names writ on a line,
 It is the law,
 If I draw thee, then thou art mine,
 And for the year my Valentine.

PRO VIRTUTE.

A Spring Morning on the Pentlands.

WHEN will winter go away? It seems to me that it never passed so slowly; and I wonder when I shall spend such a pleasant day as I did last Spring; but, at any rate, if I cannot have the reality, I shall try to be content with the shadow, and spend the day again in imagination. As far as I can remember, it was in the end of April or beginning of May, and the weather was just my *beau ideal* of Spring. I was staying at the time with some farmer friends near Braid, and one fine morning set out for a walk to the Pentland Hills, in company with two of those said friends. We took the road leading to the village where the scene of "The Gentle Shepherd" is laid, and crossed the self-same brook referred to by Peggy, when she says,

"Come further up the burn to Habbie's Howe,
Where a' the sweets o' Spring an' Simmer grow."

Turning along a bye road, we came to the foot of the village called Swanstone, and unromantic as I am, I really felt inclined to be poetical when I saw it. The hedges were of that beautiful bright green colour which they only are when they first come out; and great quantities of rain having fallen that morning, the trees and bushes looked delightfully fresh and cool. The road being remarkably steep, steps had been placed at the side, over which the rain now fell in such copious quantities as to form a series of miniature cascades. At the top of the hill stood a white house, inhabited by "the laird," overshadowed by immense trees, among whose budding branches the birds were chirping gratefully; and towering above all, were the Pentland Hills, like some great giant encircling village, trees, and laird's house in his huge misty arms.

And now we came to the village, a group of detached cottages, seemingly built without any plan, so that when you thought you had come to the end of the row you discovered some more habitations round the corner, bearing resemblance to one another in this point only, that none of them had more than "a but and a ben." They were all thatched, and the roofs of some were in a very dilapidated condition (although all the more picturesque on that account); but there was one which I thought particularly neat and well-kept looking, a white-washed cottage, with plants growing over the porch. This, as I was informed, was a model cottage—in fact, the lion of the district, inhabited by the Lizzies, mother and daughter. As my friends were well acquainted with them, they suggested that I should go in, and judge for myself whether their reputation for cleanliness were deserved, a proposal which I eagerly accepted.

The elder Lizzie (a regular old country woman of the previous generation) was seated in her arm-chair at the window, and, as we accosted her, said, "Aye, aye, come in owre; ye're heartily welcome." While she plied my companions with questions about the crops, I had time to glance round the apartment, which served the triple purpose of kitchen, bed-room, and parlour, and was papered with a cheery green-patterned paper, bordered with roses. The windows (two in number) consisted of a single pane of glass each, and were draped with white curtains of Lilliputian dimensions, which enshrined luxuriant geraniums and fuehsias.

And here I must confess that I have often laughed at Dickens' descriptions of "snowy table-cloths, juicy ham, coarse brown bread, and foaming home-brewed ale," but I shall always respect them after this, and fancy that he is describing Lizzie's cottage.

The dresser, table, and chairs were of plain fir-deal wood, but a perfect marvel of whiteness, and the plate-rack or aunrie (the pride of all country housewives) was adorned with gorgeous plates of all sizes and colours, some of them with a profusion of coppery looking gilt upon them, while others of the anciently established willow-pattern were ranged beneath for use.

At one end of the room was the corner cupboard, containing family china that had been transmitted from mother to daughter for generations back, and which will probably go through the same routine for many years to come, unless it fall into the hands of some town relation, who does not sufficiently respect country (or rather family) institutions, but uses every day the cups that have been an heirloom for generations. There, too, was the family punch-bowl, interspersed with numberless brass rivets, to show its value and authenticity; and the gold-lacquered jugs, which were the dower of every young country woman.

On the low wooden mantle-shelf were coloured earthenware figures (called pig in humble life); as for example, Lord Byron, with red cheeks, scarlet neck tie, blue coat, yellow vest, and green trousers, and the name wisely placed beneath, lest you should be so blind as not to see the likeness to the great poet.

But what took my fancy most was the kettle, for had I not seen it with my own eyes, I could not have believed that a kitchen utensil could have been scoured so bright. It was not black, like all the other kettles that I have seen, but bright as steel; and the idea more than once occurred to me that this was the show kettle, and that there was another kept for use; but I was afterwards undeceived, by hearing that it was cleaned every time it came off the fire.

Country people are exceedingly hospitable; and true to the character of her sect,

Lizzie insisted (in spite of our protestations that we were not in the least hungry) that we should partake of scones and cheese, with a choice between whisky and water, and ginger cordial, which potatoes I politely refused. But it was now time to return home, so we took our leave, after declining a warm invitation "to sit into the fire, and stay to tea," as it was their custom to take that meal at three o'clock.

On our way home I was entertained with a few particulars of Lizzie's history. Her husband was a shepherd, who, by dint of great industry and a little careful speculation, was enabled at his death to leave his wife a little money, with which she educated her four children, and set them (to use her own expression) "on their own coat-tails." She had two very eccentric old bachelor brothers, who spent the whole of their lives in the little room behind their shop, and got their sister to come in once a week to clean up, and brush fourteen pairs of boots, a pair for each of them every day of the week. Although Lizzie came into all their savings at their death, she never changed her way of life, but was content to work away as she had always done. "And yet," added my friend, "Lizzie can come out very fine on state occasions; for once, when she was invited out to tea, she appeared arrayed in a black satin gown, gold chain, and such other grandeur as completely astonished the neighbours, who had always been accustomed to see her in a short gown and petticoat."

Now (in my opinion), Lizzie went over the score in cleanliness; for although "cleanliness is next to godliness," yet it is "too much of a good thing" when it becomes the one great aim in life; for if it is true, "that enough is as good as a feast," it is also true "that over cleanliness makes some people like dirt."

VISTA.

A Farewell Ode to the Readers of "The Attempt."

SOON the streets will lose their crowds,
The world go out of town,
Nothing be seen but moss-grown squares,
And windows lined with brow.

Dear friends, our duty surely is,
To do as others do—
To town with all its dust and heat,
To bid a glad adieu.

For if we should stay here to write,
When there are none to read,
We think, and so do you no doubt,
We should be fools indeed,

So then, farewell! but let us hope,
This Magazine of ours
Has pleased you well, and helped to fill
With pleasure leisure hours.

That you have wept o'er "Mena's" strains,
And "Cranston's" cottage tales,
Or watched with "Maud" the white foam dash
On the grim coast of Wales.

That you have read with beating hearts
Of "Halls" where ghosts were seen;
Of proud "Temora's" deadly hate
Of guileless "Geraldine."

That you have felt your Muse inspired
By "Pro Virtute's" lays;
Your hearts been moved by eloquence,
Displayed in "Croquêt's" praise.

Once more, farewell! but ere we go,
Let us this hope express,
That our "ATTEMPT," in other hands,
May prove a great "SUCCESS."

R. C. W.





