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N^o 1.

Truth, whether in or out of fashion, is the measure of knowledge and the basis of the understanding; whatsoever is beside that, however authorized by consent or recommended by turpitude, is nothing but ignorance, or something worse.

LOCKE.

INTRODUCTORY.

There is but one way of coming into the world, says Dean Swift, although there are a great many ways of going out of it, and we wish there were but one way of coming before the public in a newspaper for the first time; that we might be spared the possibility of a blunder in our first appearance, by following in the line of safe precedents. But since we are left to our own discretion, and have no kind friend to take us by the hand and present us to our dear friend, the Public, we will tell our own story as shortly as possible.

It is not improbable that somebody may object to our name, and exclaim with Milton's Stall-reader,

Bless us, what a word on
A title page is this!

but we have chosen it for the sake of individuality, and because it is indigenous, and furthermore is indicative of the spirit which we intend shall characterise our paper. Broadway is confessedly the finest street in the first city of the New World. It is the great artery through which flows the best blood of our system. All the elegance of our continent permeates through it. If there is a handsome equipage set up, its first appearance is made in Broadway. The most elegant shops in the City line its sides; the finest buildings are found there, and all fashions exhibit their first gloss upon its sidewalks. Although it has a character of its own, the traveller often forgets himself in walking through it, and imagines himself in London or Paris. Wall street pours its wealth into its broad channel, and all the dealers in intellectual works are here centered; every exhibition of art is found here, and the largest caravanseries in the world border upon it. Its pavement has been trod by every distinguished man that has visited our continent; those who travel through it are refreshed by the most magnificent fountains in the world. It has a sunny side too, where we have opened our office of delivery. It terminates at one end in the finest square in the city, doubtless in the Union, and at the other in the Battery, unrivalled for its entire beauty, by any marine parade in the world. So travellers say. For ourselves, we have seen many in the old world and the new, but none that equal it. As Paris is France, and London, England; so is Broadway, New York; and New York is fast becoming, if she be not already, America, in spite of South Carolina and Boston.

We have little hope of making our paper among other journals, what Broadway is among other streets, but we shall do what we can to render it in some degree worthy of the name that we have given it. We are fully aware that "we have a reasonable quantity of giants" to encounter in our undertaking, and that we have to rely more upon good intentions than good weapons to overcome them, but it must be an unreasonably tall giant that shall overcome our perseverance in the end.

In the conduct of our paper we shall follow the advice of Isocrates to his pupils, and "study the people," but rather with a

view to profit them than ourselves. We have a prodigious respect for the people, tempered with no small amount of love, but we think with Falstaff, "that either well-bearing, or ignorant carriage, is caught, as men take diseases, one of another; therefore it is well to take heed of our company;" and we shall chuse rather to talk to the people than with them. We do not arrogate to ourselves the character of a reformer; yet we hope to reform some of the abuses which we sometimes hear spoken of as existing among us. The husbandman who never pulls up a weed in his garden can never hope to see them all removed from his enclosures.

We shall endeavor to make our paper entirely original,—and, instead of the effete vapors of English Magazines, which have heretofore been the chief filling of our weekly journals, give such homely thoughts as may be generated among us; and if our columns do not smack of home, it will be because "our spirits have been so married in conjunction with the participation of foreign society," that we cannot procure a divorce.

As we are entirely disconnected with any of the traders in literature, and have no personal friends among our literary producers,—saving an illustrious name or two, in Mr. Griswold's Pantheon—we have no inducements to indulge in the luxury of puffing; but we entertain so kindly a feeling towards the whole brood of unfortunates, called American authors, that we can never find it in our hearts to utter an ill word of them, or to treat them otherwise than with honest candor.

Although our daily and weekly press often contain admirable criticisms on literature and art, with the spirit of a quarterly review compressed into the limits of a half column, yet these are rather accidental than a general rule, and the public, in many cases, must submit to the actual cautery of buying and reading a new book before they can judge of its quality. There are too many good things to be had for time and money, to waste these precious commodities on uncertain productions. A sixpence worth of honest criticism will often save a dollar, or an hour, from being mispent.

We shall devote a good part of our columns to the interests of American Art; especially to Painting and Architecture,—and shall give specimens of American designs, in both departments, as often as they can be procured of sufficient merit to entitle them to notice.

The Lecture room, the Concert, and the Theatre, will all be dealt with; and though we hoist the signal of no political party, we shall dabble in politics when there is any thing in the wind worth heeding.

As the refinement of modern times has given birth to a ladies' literature, which, out of compliment to the sex is made as unmeaning as possible, we shall so far conform to the complexion of the times as to have a LADIES' LEAF, wherein we shall do our best to be very lady-like and innocent. We can promise all, both ladies and gentlemen, that we shall raise no blushes on the cheek of modesty, because modest people are not easily put out of countenance; but the salacious and foul-minded are always changing colour. Our pen has two ends to it, and if we sometimes fail to

make an impression with the point, we shall occasionally reverse it and tickle with the feather.

We hope to receive the aid of true hearted and good people, in our undertaking, not only as subscribers but as contributors; to the first we will give the worth of their money, and to the others the worth of their articles.

As we infringe upon no man's quarter-section, but have squatted upon unoccupied ground, we hope to be allowed the privilege of sowing our dragon's teeth in peace; but if we are attacked, the enemy may expect an army of armed sentences falling upon his flank or rear, at all manner of unseasonable periods. *But as the eye can see every thing but itself*, so an Editor is very likely to see every body's mistakes but his own, and we shall certainly quarrel with no good-natured friend who reminds us of our slips.

REVIEWS.

"An author may be considered as a merciful substitute to the legislature. He acts, not by punishing crimes, but by preventing them. If the author be, therefore, still so necessary among us, let us treat him with proper consideration, as a child of the public; and indeed a child of the public he is in all aspects; for while so well able to direct others, how incapable is he frequently found of guiding himself."

MIND AMONG THE SPINDLES. [Republished from Charles Knight's weekly volumes.] Boston, Jordan, Swift, & Wiley, 1845.

Our first review shall be of an American author, what one we will determine by lot, to save us from a partial feeling in the outset, when we have concluded our prefatory remarks. There should be no sectional feelings in literature or art. No political barriers or geographical distinctions can prevent our sympathies from embracing the whole world of mind; all the malice of ill-natured spirits that has been exerted the last half century, to make a gap between British and American minds, has been without the slightest effect. The authors of Great Britain are still our bosom friends, and such of our own authors as find their way to London, are kindly entreated, in spite of the Foreign Quarterly and Mrs. Trollope. We said a good many severe things, even malicious, about Dickens, as soon as he left us; but we seized on his Christmas Carol with as hearty a good will as old Scrooge poked his timid clerk in the ribs the morning after Christmas. It is the vainest of all efforts to fight against genius; no national prejudices are strong enough to contend with it; no laws can affect it; no earthly power control it. Mankind will gladly receive its productions, let them come whence they will. What matters it to us that Frederika Bremer is a Swede, inhabiting a country of which we hardly knew anything until we heard of it from her; she is our dear friend, and her name is often heard at our firesides, as though she were our cousin, or next door neighbour; and Mary Howitt's name is affectionately spoken by thousands in our country, who only know her by her pretty little stories; and her country people, too, are as fond of Mary Clavers, and Lydia Maria Child, as though they were the daughters of English soil. Many an Englishman, who thinks he does his country a service in speaking ill of America, entertains a feeling for Washington Irving, as for a kinsman. And we, who think it a proof of patriotism to abuse the land of our fathers, are ever on the alert to catch every ray of light that radiates from the minds of its people. We appear to feel no animosities against the better part of men, which is their mind, but only against their poor perishable bodies, which, if let alone, would soon enough come to naught of themselves.

It would ill become us, then, in the outset of our career as reviewers, to enter upon our duty with a narrow feeling of

partiality for our own authors, to the unjust exclusion of foreigners, from our sympathies. But this liberal feeling will compel us to give our first attention and widest space to the authors of our own country, because they have the greatest odds to contend with, having a forestalled opinion against them in the minds of their own countrymen, and the best paid and most fertile authors in the world for competitors, whose works are imported scot free to our markets.

An American author is one of those rare creatures, who think more seriously of the welfare of others, than of their own. He is *prima facie* a good fellow; and as a matter of course, an utterer of inspired thoughts; for having no inducements to exertion, he speaks because he must. He knows no law but the law of his own being, like the wind and the rain, the dew and the lightning. He is, because he is. There are no artificial stimulants to bring him out. No offers from booksellers; no demands from the public. His lightnings are produced by no machinery, but dart from the clouds of his imagination, because they will; they may not strike, nor dazzle always; but they flash of their own accord, without the aid of saltpetre or charcoal. They who sit in his light, think as little of his sufferings, from which they derive their enjoyments, as we do of the leviathan that was slaughtered in Coromandel, to afford us the luxury of spermaceti.

How different is the lot of the British author, who seizes his pen as Nelson did his sword, with thoughts of Westminster Abbey or a peerage. We have not even a "corner" for our poets; they are shoved aside entirely, unless one of their number, like Mr. Griswold, erects a Pantheon for the whole that he may have a niche for himself.

Numerous as English authors are, it is a marvel, considering the hot-bed in which they are forced, that their number should be so small. With such splendid rewards as are showered upon their poets and romancers, it is a wonder that the whole nation does not give itself up to literature.

Considering the rewards of authors with us, the appearance of even one, would be proof of national superiority. In England authors are sure of something. If not a peerage, a baronetage; if not that, knighthood, a pension, a consulship, employment in a public office, or a guinea a sheet at least. If none of these, they are sure to be lionized, and reviewed, and read, and illustrated, and at last put into Westminster Abbey. We must confess that some of these honors have not a very dazzling aspect seen from our point of observation, at the distance of three thousand miles, but they appear to have a strong influence upon British minds.

We have seen the British Parliament engaged day after day, debating the subject of copyright, and grave statesmen and great orators advocating the rights of an author to the control of his own productions; and we have seen our own national Legislature receive numerous petitions on the same subject, from different parts of the Union, and treat them with silent contempt. At the first session of the present Congress there were several petitions, signed by some of the best men in the nation, presented to both houses, praying for an international copyright, received in silence, referred to a committee, and never heard of again.

In France and in Germany, the most reliable instrument to carve a fortune with, or cut a road to preferment, is the pen; with us it is a magnet in the hands of those who use it, to draw upon them contempt and poverty.

The only author upon whom our Government, or the Nation, has bestowed an office, is Mr. Irving. And among all of our foreign ambassadors, what one could be more safely trusted with the interests of the Republic? And among all of our literary men, what one could have so dishonored his

country at a foreign court, as our bullying and incompetent ambassador to Mexico?

The appointment of Mr. Irving was the "lone star" of Mr. Tyler's administration; we would that the appointment of Mr. Shannon were the sole mistake. Mr. Everett is a literary man, though not an author; but he is a politician, and he gained his appointment by his political, which with us means party services. The same was the case with Bancroft, whose history would have done but little towards giving him a collectorship without his politics.

The whole nation was in a ferment a few months since, and every paper in the country had something to say about the hostility of John Bull, at the appearance in an English Review of an article that questioned the originality of some of the Abderites in Mr. Griswold's collection. And the Thunderer of the great North American Review, with the aid of a Harvard Professor, retaliated in an article which gave a dreadful scorching to a score or two of British poets whose works had been a century or more forgotten. These were hopeful signs, as the philanthropists say, that public sentiment was coming right upon an important subject; and that the nation would at last manifest a sufficient interest in her authors to enable them to compete with Englishmen on equal terms, by modifying our copyright law, so that the present system of literary piracy should be abolished. But the nation was content to rail at John Bull, and let her own authors sink or swim, as they could.

Mr. Paulding, another of our authors who has had the rare fortune to receive an appointment from our Government, also wrote a reply to the famous Review of our poets in the Foreign Quarterly; in which he not only made himself appear exceedingly ridiculous, but exceedingly dishonest, by gravely stating as facts, idle newspaper reports, which were pure inventions. The obnoxious article in the Foreign Quarterly was written in a bad spirit, beyond question; but what then, as honest Fluellen says:

"If the enemy is an ass, and a fool, and a prating coxcomb, is it meet, think you, that we should also, look you, be an ass, and a fool, and a prating coxcomb? In your conscience, now?"

It ill became our authors to manifest an angry spirit at the appearance of a Review unfavorable to some of them, from an English pen; since, in many instances, they have been indebted to a British review for an introduction to their own countrymen; and we could name several who had to wait for a foreign endorsement before they could pass current at home.

We put our hand upon a genuine American book lying before us, which owes its publication in London, and its republication here, to the generous and hearty commendations bestowed upon it by Mr. Dickens and Harriet Martineau. It is a book of which the whole country should be proud; for if the Northern slaves—as the South Carolina statesmen call our honest laborers, who live by the sweat of their own brows—can produce a work like this, what may we not expect from our educated classes who have leisure to register their thoughts and observations. Among all the vehement abusers of the Foreign Quarterly and Mr. Dickens, we fear that there are not many who can say of this modest book as he has said of it in his Notes: "I brought away from Lowell four hundred good solid pages, which I have read from beginning to end. Of the merits of the Lowell Offering, as a literary production, I will only observe, putting entirely out of sight the fact of these articles having been written by these girls, after the arduous labors of the day, that it will compare advantageously with a great many English Annuals."

Ought not such hearty good feeling as this, expressed towards an American production which Americans themselves hardly knew the existence of, to have been enough to outweigh the ill opinions of a dozen such articles as that in the Foreign Quarterly Review?

MIND AMONG THE SPRINGLES, is a selection of thirty-eight articles, mostly prose, from the Lowell Offering. It was published by Charles Knight, in London, among his weekly volumes, with an introductory letter by Harriet Martineau, and is now republished in Boston, with the introduction of the English editor, as a recommendation to the American reader.

These papers must necessarily possess an interest for the English reader which they do not for us; part of this interest arises from wonder that the female operatives in a Cotton mill should be able, not only to write at all, but have leisure and ability to write in a manner that will compare favorably with English Annuals; and partly from the freshness of the life described, so new to an English reader, but so familiar with us. But they possess sufficient novelty in this meridian to recommend them to notice, and to many of our Broadway girls they will present scenes as new as to an English countess. Every woman in America should possess a copy of this modest little book, for the honor of her sex.

Although the articles are the productions of different minds, they are all distinguished by an earnest simplicity and an entire absence of attempt at fine writing, which we could hardly have looked for in the productions of so great a number of young women in any condition of life.

It is true that the Lowell Offering was often spoken of a year or two ago by people who looked upon a factory girl who could write, with some such feelings as they would have looked upon a learned pig, and that the papers were favorably noticed by the North American Review, and some other literary periodicals; but the present publication is owing entirely to the favorable reception which the work has received in England.

We have room but for one extract, an exceedingly simple but vivid description of a sugar-bee, which will make the visitors of Thompson and Weller's candy saloon have watery mouths as they read the account of making our forest confectionary.

THE SUGAR-MAKING EXCURSION.

It was on a beautiful morning in the month of March, (one of those mornings so exhilarating that they make even age and decrepitude long for a ramble,) that friend H. called to invite me to visit his sugar lot—as he called it—in company with the party which, in the preceding summer, visited Moose Mountain upon the whortleberry excursion. It was with the pleasure generally experienced in revisiting former scenes, in quest of novelty and to revive impressions and friendships, that our party set out for this second visit to Moose Mountain.

A pleasant sleigh-ride of four or five miles, brought us safely to the domicile of friend H., who had reached home an hour previously, and was prepared to pilot us to his sugar camp. "Before we go," said he, "you must one and all step within doors, and warm your stomachs with some gingered cider." We complied with his request, and after a little social chat with Mrs. H., who welcomed us with a cordiality not to be surpassed, and expressed many a kind wish that we might spend the day agreeably, we made for the sugar camp, preceded by friend H., who walked by the side of his sleigh, which appeared to be well loaded, and which he steered with the greatest care at every uneven place in the path.

Arrived at the camp, we found two huge iron kettles suspended on a pole, which was supported by crotched stakes, driven in the ground, and each half full of boiling syrup. This was made by boiling down the sap, which was gath-

ered from troughs that were placed under spouts which were driven into rock-maple trees, an incision being first made in the tree with an auger. Friend H. told us that it had taken more than two barrels of sap to make what syrup each kettle contained. A steady fire of oak bark was burning underneath the kettles, and the boys and girls, friend H.'s sons and daughters, were busily engaged in stirring the syrup, replenishing the fire, &c.

Abigail, the eldest daughter, went to her father's sleigh, and taking out a large ruddlet, which might contain two or three gallons, poured the contents into a couple of pails. This we perceived was milk, and as she raised one of the pails to empty the contents into the kettles, her father called out, "Ho, Abigail! hast thee strained the milk?" "Yes, father," said Abigail.

"Well," said friend W., with a chuckle, "Abigail understands what she is about, as well as her mother would; and I'll warrant Hannah to make better maple-sugar than any other woman in New England, or in the whole United States—and you will agree with me in that, after that sugar is turned off and cooled." Abigail turned to her work, emptied the milk into the kettles, and then stirred their contents well together, and put some bark on the fire.

"Come, Jemima," said Henry L., "let us try to assist Abigail a little, and perhaps we shall learn to make sugar ourselves; and who knows but what she will give us a 'gob' to carry home as a specimen to show our friends; and besides, it is possible that we may have to make sugar ourselves at some time or other; and even if we do not, it will never do us any harm to know how the thing is done." Abigail furnished us each with a large brass scummer, and instructed us to take off the scum as it arose, and put it into the pails; and Henry called two others of our party to come and hold the pails.

"But tell me, Abigail," said Henry, with a roguish leer, "was that milk really intended for whitening the sugar?"

"Yes," said Abigail with all the simplicity of a Quakeress, "for these must know that the milk will all rise in a scum, and with it every particle of dirt or dust which may have found its way into the kettles."

Abigail made a second visit to her father's sleigh, accompanied by her little brother, and brought from thence a large tin baker, and placed it before the fire. Her brother brought a peck measure two-thirds full of potatoes, which Abigail put into the baker, and leaving them to their fate, returned to the sleigh, and with her brother's assistance carried several parcels, neatly done up in white napkins, into a little log hut of some fifteen feet square, with a shed roof made of slabs. We began to fancy that we were to have an Irish lunch. Henry took a sly peep into the hut when we first arrived, and he declared there was nothing inside, save some squared logs, which were placed back against the walls, and which he supposed were intended for seats. But he was mistaken in thinking that seats were every convenience which the building contained,—as will presently be shown.

Abigail and her brother had been absent something like half an hour, and friend H. had in the meantime busied himself in gathering sap, and putting it in some barrels hard by. The kettles were clear from scum, and their contents were bubbling like soap. The fire was burning cheerfully, the company all chatting merrily, and a peep into the baker told that the potatoes were cooked.

Abigail and her brother came, and taking up the baker, carried it inside the building, but soon returned, and placed it again before the fire. Then she called to her father, who came and invited us to go and take dinner.

We obeyed the summons; but how were we surprised, when we saw how neatly arranged was every thing. The walls of the building were ceiled around with boards, and side tables fastened to them, which could be raised or let down at pleasure, being but pieces of boards fastened with leather hinges and a prop underneath. The tables were covered with napkins, white as the driven snow, and loaded with cold ham, neat's tongue, pickles, bread, apple sauce, preserves, dough-nuts, butter, cheese, and potatoes—without which a Yankee dinner is never complete. For beverage, there was chocolate, which was made over a fire in the building—there being a rock chimney in one corner. "Now, neighbors," said friend H., "if you will but seat yourselves on these squared logs, and put up with these rude accommodations, you will do me a favor. We might have had our dinner at the house, but I thought that it would be a

novelty, and afford more amusement to have it in this little hut which I built to shelter us from what stormy weather we might have in the season of making sugar."

We arranged ourselves round the room, and right merry were we, for friend H.'s lively chat did not suffer us to be otherwise. He recapitulated to us the manner of his life while a bachelor; the many bear fights which he had had; told us how many bears he had killed; how a she-bear denuded in his rock dwelling the first winter after he commenced clearing his land—he having returned home to his father's to attend school; how, when he returned in the spring, he killed her two cubs, and afterwards the old bear, and made his Hannah a present of their skins to make a muff and tip-pet; also his courtship, marriage, &c.

In the midst of dinner, Abigail came in with some hot mince-pies, which had been heating in the baker before the fire out of doors, and which said much in praise of Mrs. H.'s cookery.

We had finished eating and were chatting as merrily as might be, when one of the little boys called from without, "Father, the sugar has grained." We immediately went out, and found one of the boys stirring some sugar in a bowl to cool it. The fire was raked from beneath the kettles, and Abigail and her eldest brother were stirring their contents with all haste. Friend H. put a pole within the bail of one of the kettles, and raised it up, which enabled two of the company to take the other down, and having placed it in the snow, they assisted friend H. to take down the other; and while we went a helping hand to stir and cool the sugar, friend H.'s children eat their dinners, cleared away the tables, put what fragments were left into their father's sleigh, together with the dinner dishes, tin baker, ruddlet, and the pails of scum, which were to be carried home for the swine. A firkin was also put into the sleigh; and after the sugar was sufficiently cool, it was put into the firkin, and covered up with great care.

After this we spent a short time promenading around the rock-maple grove, if leafless trees can be called a grove. A large sap trough, which was very neatly made, struck my fancy, and friend H. said he would make me a present of it for a cradle. This afforded a subject for mirth. Friend H. said we must not ridicule the idea of having sap-troughs for cradles; for that was touching quality, as his eldest child had been rocked many an hour in a sap-trough, beneath the shade of a tree, while his wife sat beside it knitting, and he was hard by, hoeing corn.

Soon we were on our way to friend H.'s house, which we all reached in safety; and where we spent an agreeable evening, eating maple sugar, apples, beech-nuts, &c. We also had tea about eight o'clock which was accompanied by every desirable luxury—after which we started for home.

As we were about taking leave, Abigail made each of us a present of a cake of sugar, which was cooled in a tin heart.—"Heigh ho!" said Henry L., "how lucky! We have had an agreeable visit, a bountiful feast—have learned how to make sugar, and have all got sweethearts!"

We went home, blessing our stars and the hospitality of our Quaker friends.

I cannot close without telling the reader, that the sugar which was that day made was nearly as white as loaf-sugar, and tasted much better.

THE DRAMA OF EXILE, AND OTHER POEMS: By Elizabeth Barrett Barrett, Author of "The Seraphim," and other Poems. New York: Henry G. Langley

"A well-bred man," says Sir James Puckle, in his "Gray Cap for a Green Head," "will never give himself the liberty to speak ill of women." We emphasize the "man." Setting aside, for the present, certain rare commentators and compilers of the species G—, —creatures neither precisely men, women, nor Mary Wollstonecraft's—setting these aside as unclassifiable, we may observe that the race of critics are masculine—men. With the exception, perhaps, of Mrs. Anne Royal, we can call to mind no female who has occupied, even temporarily, the Zoilus throne. And this, the Salic law, is an evil; for the inherent chivalry of the critical sex renders it not only an unpleasant task to him "to speak ill of a woman," (and a woman and her

book are identical,) but an almost impossible task not to laud her *ad nauseam*. In general, therefore, it is the unhappy lot of the authoress to be subjected, time after time, to the downright degradation of mere puffery. On her own side of the Atlantic, Miss Barrett has indeed, in one instance at least, escaped the infliction of this lamentable contumely and wrong; but if she had been really solicitous of its infliction in America, she could not have adopted a more effectual plan than that of saying a few words about "the great American people," in an American edition of her work, published under the superintendence of an American author.* Of the innumerable "native" notices of "The Drama of Exile," which have come under our observation, we can call to mind not one in which there is any thing more remarkable than the critic's dogged determination to find *nothing* barren, from Beersheba to Dan. Another in the "Democratic Review" has proceeded so far, it is true, as to venture a *very* delicate insinuation to the effect that the poetess "will not fail to speak her mind *though it bring upon her a bad rhyme*;" beyond this, nobody has proceeded: and as for the elaborate paper in the new Whig Monthly, all that any body can say or think, and all that Miss Barrett can *feel* respecting it is, that it is an eulogy as well written as it is an insult well intended. Now of all the friends of the fair author, we doubt whether one exists, with more profound—with more enthusiastic reverence and admiration of her genius, than the writer of these words. And it is for this very reason, beyond all others, that he intends to speak of her *the truth*. Our chief regret is, nevertheless, that the limits of this "Journal" will preclude the possibility of our speaking this truth so fully, and so much in detail, as we could wish. By far the most valuable criticism that we, or that any one could give, of the volumes now lying before us, would be the quotation of three fourths of their contents. But we have this advantage—that the work has been long published, and almost universally read—and thus, in some measure, we may proceed, concisely, as if the text of our context, were an understood thing.

In her preface to this, the "American edition" of her late poems, Miss Barrett, speaking of the Drama of Exile, says:—"I decided on publishing it, after considerable hesitation and doubt. Its subject rather fastened on me than was chosen; and the form, approaching the model of the Greek tragedy, shaped itself under my hand rather by force of pleasure than of design. But when the compositional excitement had subsided, I felt afraid of my position. My own object was the new and strange experiment of the fallen Humanity, as it went forth from Paradise into the Wilderness, with a peculiar reference to Eve's allotted grief, which, considering that self-sacrifice belonged to her womanhood, and the consciousness of being the organ of the Fall to her offence, appeared to me imperfectly apprehended hitherto, and more expressible by a woman than by a man." In this abstract announcement of the theme, it is difficult to understand the ground of the poet's hesitation to publish; for the theme in itself seems admirably adapted to the pur-

poses of the closet drama. The poet, nevertheless, is, very properly, conscious of failure—a failure which occurs not in the general, but in the particular conception, and which must be placed to the account of "the model of the Greek tragedies." The Greek tragedies *had* and even *have* high merits; but we act wisely in now substituting for the external and typified human sympathy of the antique Chorus, a direct, internal, living and moving sympathy itself; and although *Æschylus* might have done service as "a model," to either Euripides or Sophocles, yet were Sophocles and Euripides in London to-day, they would, perhaps, while granting a certain formless and shadowy grandeur, indulge a quiet smile at the shallowness and uncouthness of that Art, which, in the old amphitheatres, had beguiled them into applause of the *Œdipus* at Colonus.

It would have been better for Miss Barrett if, throwing herself independently upon her own very extraordinary resources, and forgetting that a Greek had ever lived, she had involved her Eve in a series of adventures merely natural, or if not this, of adventures preternatural within the limits of at least a conceivable relation—a relation of matter to spirit and spirit to matter, that should have left room for something like palpable action and comprehensible emotion—that should not have utterly precluded the development of that womanly character which is admitted as the principal object of the poem. As the case actually stands, it is only in a few snatches of verbal intercommunication with Adam and Lucifer, that we behold her as a woman at all. For the rest, she is a mystical something or nothing, enwrapped in a fog of rhapsody about Transfiguration, and the Seed, and the Bruising of the Heel, and other talk of a nature that no man ever pretended to understand in plain prose, and which, when solar-microscoped into poetry "upon the model of the Greek drama," is about as convincing as the Egyptian Lectures of Mr. Silk Buckingham—about as much to any purpose under the sun as the *hi presto!* conjurations of Signor Blitz. What are we to make, for example, of dramatic colloquy such as this?—the words are those of a Chorus of Invisible Angels addressing Adam:

Live, work on, O Earthy!
By the Actual's tension
Speed the arrow worthy
Of a pure ascension,
From the low earth round you
Reach the heights above you;
From the stripes that wound you
Seek the loves that love you!
God's divined burneth plain
Through the crystal diaphane
Of our loves that love you.

Now we do not mean to assert that, by excessive "tension" of the intellect, a reader accustomed to the cant of the transcendentalists (or of those who degrade an ennobling philosophy by styling themselves such) may not succeed in ferreting from the passage quoted, and indeed from each of the thousand similar ones throughout the book, something that shall bear the aspect of an absolute idea—but we do mean to say first, that, in nine cases out of ten, the thought when dug out will be found very poorly to repay the labor of the digging;—for it is the nature of thought in general, as it is the nature of some ores in particular, to be richest when most superficial. And we do mean to say, secondly, that, in nineteen cases out of twenty, the reader will suffer the most valuable ore to remain unmined to all eternity, before he will be put to the trouble of digging for it one inch. And we do mean to assert, thirdly, that no reader is to be condemned for not putting himself to the trouble of digging even the one inch; for no writer has the right to impose any such necessity upon him. What is worth thinking is distinctly thought: what is distinctly thought, can and should

* We are sorry to notice, in the American edition, a multitude of typographical errors, many of which affect the sense, and should therefore be corrected in a second impression, if called for. How far they are chargeable to the London copy, we are not prepared to say. "Froze," for instance, is printed "froze." "Foregone," throughout, is printed "fargone." "Wordless" is printed "wordless"—"wordly," "wordly"—"ajdt," "ajdt," etc., etc.—while transpositions, false accents, and mis-punctuations abound. We indicate a few pages on which such inadvertences are to be discovered. Vol. 1—22, 26, 27, 44, 53, 56, 60, 166, 174, 180, 188, 261. Vol. 2—106, 114, 240, 247, 252, 272.

be distinctly expressed, or should not be expressed at all. Nevertheless, there is no more appropriate opportunity than the present for admitting and maintaining, at once, what has never before been either maintained or admitted—that there is a justifiable exception to the rule for which we contend. It is where the design is to convey the fantastic—not the obscure. To give the idea of the latter we need, as in general, the most precise and definitive terms, and those who employ other terms but confound obscurity of expression with the expression of obscurity. The fantastic in itself, however,—phantasm—may be materially furthered in its development by the *quaint* in phraseology:—a proposition which any moralist may examine at his leisure for himself.

The "Drama of Exile" opens with a very palpable *bull*:—"Scene, the outer side of the gate of Eden, shut fast with clouds"—[a scene out of sight!]"—"from the depth of which revolves the sword of fire, self-moved. A watch of innumerable angels rank above rank, slopes up from around it to the zenith; and the glare cast from their brightness and from the sword, extends many miles into the wilderness. Adam and Eve are seen in the distance, flying along the glare. The angel Gabriel and Lucifer are beside the gate."—These are the "stage directions" which greet us on the threshold of the book. We complain first of the *bull*: secondly, of the blue-fire melo-dramatic aspect of the revolving sword; thirdly, of the duplicate nature of the sword, which, if steel, and sufficiently enflamed to do service in burning, would, perhaps, have been in no temper to cut; and on the other hand, if sufficiently cool to have an edge, would have accomplished little in the way of scorching a personage so well accustomed to fire and brimstone and all that, as we have very good reason to believe Lucifer was. We cannot help objecting, too, to the "innumerable angels," as a force altogether disproportioned to the one enemy to be kept out:—either the self-moving sword itself, we think, or the angel Gabriel alone, or five or six of the "innumerable" angels, would have sufficed to keep the devil (or is it Adam?) outside of the gate—which, after all, he might not have been able to discover, on account of the clouds.

Far be it from us, however, to dwell irreverently on matters which have venerability in the faith or in the fancy of Miss Barrett. We allude to these *miseries* at all—found here in the very first paragraph of her poem,—simply by way of putting in the clearest light the mass of inconsistency and antagonism in which her *subject* has inextricably involved her. She has made allusion to Milton, and no doubt felt secure in her theme (as a theme merely) when she considered his "Paradise Lost." But even in Milton's own day, when men had the habit of believing all things, the more nonsensical the more readily, and of worshipping, in blind acquiescence, the most preposterous of impossibilities—even *then*, there were not wanting individuals who would have read the great epic with more zest, could it have been explained to their satisfaction, how and why it was, not only that a snake quoted Aristotle's ethics, and behaved otherwise pretty much as he pleased, but that bloody battles were continually being fought between bloodless "innumerable angels," that found no inconvenience in losing a wing one minute and a head the next, and if pounded up into puff-paste late in the afternoon, were as good "innumerable angels" as new the next morning, in time to be at *recessit* roll-call: And now—at the present epoch—there are few people who do not occasionally *think*. This is emphatically the thinking age;—indeed it may very well be questioned whether mankind ever substantially thought before. The fact is, if the "Paradise Lost" were written to-day (assuming that it had never been written

when it was), not even its eminent, although over-estimated merits, would counterbalance, either in the public view, or in the opinion of any critic at once intelligent and honest, the multitudinous incongruities which are part and parcel of its plot.

But in the plot of the drama of Miss Barrett it is something even worse than incongruity which affronts:—a continuous mystical strain of ill-fitting and exaggerated allegory—if, indeed, allegory is not much too respectable a term for it. We are called upon, for example, to sympathise in the whimsical woes of two Spirits, who, upspringing from the bowels of the earth, set immediately to bewailing their miseries in jargon such as this:

I am the spirit of the harmless earth;
God spake me softly out among the stars,
As softly as a blessing of much worth—
And then his smile did follow unawares,
That all things, fashioned, so, for use and duty,
Might shine anointed with his chosen of beauty—
Yet I wail!
I drove on with the worlds exultingly,
Obliquely down the Godlike's gradual fall—
Individual aspect and complexity
Of gytatory orb and interval,
Lost in the fluent motion of delight
Toward the high ends of Being, beyond Sight—
Yet I wail!

Innumerable other spirits discourse successively after the same fashion, each ending every stanza of his lamentation with the "yet I wail!" When at length they have fairly made an end, Eve touches Adam upon the elbow, and hazards, also, the profound and pathetic observation—"Lo, Adam, they wail!"—which is nothing more than the simple truth—for they *do*—and God deliver us from any such wailing again!

It is not our purpose, however, to demonstrate what every reader of these volumes will have readily seen self-demonstrated—the utter indefensibility of "The Drama of Exile," considered uniquely, as a work of art. We have none of us to be told that a medley of metaphysical recitatives sung out of tune, at Adam and Eve, by all manner of inconceivable abstractions, is not exactly the best material for a poem. Still it may very well happen that among this material there shall be individual passages of great beauty. But should any one doubt the possibility, let him be satisfied by a single extract such as follows:

On a mountain peak
Half sheathed in primal woods and glittering
In spaces of awful solitudes, at that hour
A lion crouched,—part raised upon his paws,
With his calm massive face turned full on them,
And his mane listening. When the ended came
Left silence in the world, right suddenly
He sprang up rampant, and stood straight and stiff,
As if the new reality of death
Were dashed against his eyes,—and roared so fierce,
(Such thick carnivorous passion in his throat
Tearing a passage through the wrath and fear)—
And roared so wild, and smote from all the hills
Such fast keen echoes crumbling down the veins
To distant silence,—that the forest beasts,
One after one, did mutter a response
In savage and in sorrowful complaint
Which trailed along the gorges.

There is an Homeric force here—a vivid picturesqueness which all men will appreciate and admire. It is, however, the longest quotable passage in the drama, not disfigured with blemishes of importance;—although there are many—very many passages of a far loftier order of excellence, so disfigured, and which, therefore, it would not suit our immediate purpose to extract. The truth is,—and it may be as well mentioned at this point as elsewhere—that we are not to look in Miss Barrett's works for any examples of what has been occasionally termed "sustained effort;" for neither are there, in any of her poems, any long commendable paragraphs, nor are there any individual compositions which will bear the slightest examination as consistent Art-products. Her wild and magnificent genius seems to have con-

tented itself with points—to have exhausted itself in flashes;—but it is the profusion—the unparalleled number and close propinquity of these points and flashes which render her book *one flame*, and justify us in calling her, unhesitatingly, the greatest—the most glorious of her sex.

The "Drama of Exile" calls for little more, in the way of comment, than what we have generally said. Its finest particular feature is, perhaps, the rapture of Eve—rapture bursting through despair—upon discovering that she still possesses, in the unwavering love of Adam, an undreamed-of and priceless treasure. The poem ends, as it commences, with a bull. The last sentence gives us to understand that "there is a sound through the silence, as of the falling tears of an angel." How there can be sound during silence, and how an audience are to distinguish, by such sound, angel tears from any other species of tears, it may be as well, perhaps, not too particularly to inquire.

Next, in length, to the Drama, is "The Vision of Poets." We object to the didacticism of its design, which the poetess thus states: "I have attempted to express here my view of the mission of the veritable poet—of the self-abnegation implied in it, of the uses of sorrow suffered in it, of the great work accomplished in it through suffering, and of the duty and glory of what Balzac has beautifully and truly called '*la patience angelique du genie*.'" This "view" may be correct, but neither its correctness nor its falsity has anything to do with a poem. If a thesis is to be demonstrated, we need *prose* for its demonstration. In this instance, so far as the allegorical instruction and argumentation are lost sight of, in the upper current—so far as the main admitted intention of the work is kept out of view—so far only is the work a poem, and so far only is the poem worth notice, or worthy of its author. Apart from its poetical character, the composition is thoughtful, vivid, epigrammatic, and abundant in just observation—although the critical opinions introduced are not always our own. A reviewer in "Blackwood's Magazine," quoting many of these critical portraits, takes occasion to find fault with the grammar of this trislich:

Here Æschylus—the women swooned
To see so awful when he frowned
As the Gods did—he standeth crowned.

"What, on earth," says the critic, "are we to make of the words 'the women swooned to see so awful'....The syntax will punish future commentators as much as some of his own corrupt choruses." In general, we are happy to agree with this reviewer, whose decisions respecting the book are, upon the whole, so nearly coincident with ours, that we hesitated, through fear of repetition, to undertake a *critique* at all, until we considered that we might say a very great deal in simply supplying his omissions; but he frequently errs through mere hurry, and never did he err more singularly than at the point now in question. He evidently supposes that "awful" has been misused as an adverb and made referrible to "women." But not so; and although the construction of the passage is unjustifiably involute, its grammar is intact. Disentangling the construction, we make this evident at once: "Here Æschylus (he) standeth crowned, (whom) the women swooned to see so awful, when he frowned as the Gods did." The "he" is excessive, and the "whom" is understood. Respecting the lines,

Euripides, with close and mild
Scholastic lips, that could be wild,
And laugh or sob out like a child
Right in the classes,

the critic observes:—"Right in the classes" throws our intellect completely upon its beam-ends." But, if so, the fault

possibly lies in the crankness of the intellect; for the words themselves mean merely that Sophocles laughed or cried like a school-boy—like a child right (or just) in his classes—one who had not yet left school. The phrase is affected, we grant, but quite intelligible. A still more remarkable misapprehension occurs in regard to the triplet,

And Goethe, with that reaching eye
His soul reached out from, far and high,
And fell from inner entity.

The reviewer's remarks upon this are too preposterous not to be quoted in full:—we doubt if any commentator of equal dignity ever so egregiously committed himself before. "Goethe," he says, "is a perfect enigma, what does the word 'fell' mean? *deser*; we suppose—that is, 'not to be trifled with.' But surely it sounds very strange, although it may be true enough, to say that his 'fellingness' is occasioned by inner entity." But perhaps the line has some deeper meaning which we are unable to fathom." Perhaps it has: and this is the criticism—the British criticism—the Blackwood criticism—to which we have so long implicitly bowed down! As before, Miss Barrett's verses are needlessly involved, but their meaning requires no *Edipus*. Their construction is thus intended:—"And Goethe, with that reaching eye from which his soul reached out, far and high, and (in so reaching) fell from inner entity." The plain prose is this:—Goethe, (the poet would say), in involving himself too far and too profoundly in external speculations—speculations concerning the world without him—neglected, or made miscalculations concerning his inner entity, or being,—concerning the world within. This idea is involved in the metaphor of a person leaning from a window so far that finally he falls from it—the person being the soul, the window the eye.

Of the twenty-eight "Sonnets," which immediately succeed the "Drama of Exile," and which receive the especial commendation of Blackwood, we have no very enthusiastic opinion. The best sonnet is objectionable from its extreme artificiality; and, to be effective, this species of composition, requires a minute management—a well-controlled dexterity of touch—compatible neither with Miss Barrett's deficient constructiveness, nor with the fervid rush and whirl of her genius. Of the particular instances here given, we prefer "the Prisoner," of which the conclusion is particularly beautiful. In general, the themes are obtrusively metaphysical, or didactic.

"The Romant of the Page," an imitation of the old English ballad, is neither very original in subject, nor very skilfully put together. We speak comparatively, of course:—It is not very good—for Miss Barrett:—and what we have said of this poem will apply equally to a very similar production, "The Rhyme of the Dutchess May." The "Poet and the Bird"—"A Child Asleep"—"Crowned and Wedded"—"Crowned and Buried"—"To Flush my Dog"—"The Four-fold Aspect"—"A Flower in a Letter"—"A Lay of the early Rose"—"That Day"—"L. E. L.'s Last Questio"—"Catarina to Camoens"—"Wine of Cyprus"—"The Dead Pan"—"Sleeping and Watching"—"A Portrait"—"The Mournful Mother"—and "A Valediction"—although all burning with divine fire, manifested only in scintillations, have nothing in them idiosyncratic. "The House of Clouds" and "The Last Bower" are superlatively lovely, and show the vast powers of the poet in the field best adapted to their legitimate display:—the *themes*, here, could not be improved. The former poem is purely imaginative; the latter is unobjectionably because unobtrusively suggestive of a moral, and is, perhaps, upon the whole, the most admirable composition

in the two volumes:—or, if it is not, then "The Lay of the Brown Rosarie" is. In this last the ballad-character is elevated—etherealized—and thus made to afford scope for an ideality at once the richest and most vigorous in the world. The peculiar foibles of the author are here too, dropped bodily, as a mantle, in the tumultuous movement and excitement of the narrative.

To be Continued.

FASHION.

Mr. Willis in his Lecture on Fashion, talks of the absurdities of fashion, as though fashion itself were anything but an absurdity. He makes a note of the puzzling fact, that only the least enlightened part of mankind adopts a fashion suited to its wants and keeps it unchanged. But he makes no guess at the cause of this singular truth, for which we are sorry, since we have no time to look into the depths of the matter, and no good reason floats upon the surface of it that we can discern. Perhaps fashion is only the changing form of Progress towards perfection, and if we glance over the fashion plates of the last five centuries, we can hardly

arrive at any other conclusion; and yet the fashions of ladies' dresses at the present day are very nearly as outrageous as they were fifty years ago, when George the Third was compelled to issue a command to restrain their growing redundancies, to save him the expense of enlarging his Palace; since, to such extreme breadth did the Court ladies carry their gowns, that not more than half a dozen could inhabit the same room with comfort. We have an example of a fashionable lady of that period before us, taken from the "Gallery of Fashion," published in 1796.

This is sufficiently monstrous; and yet only 50 years ago, women were habited in such attire, which seems like an attempt to burlesque dress, this was the fashion at the most refined and modest court in Europe. Contrasted with the fashion of the present day, it is not very grotesque, nor very absurd. The worst part of it still remains, the pinched waist of the wearer and the monstrous waste of the dress. We give an instance of the present taste, which every body will see has not been exaggerated, as the fashions usually are in the fashion plate, of ladies' magazines. Indeed, this has been taken from the life, but the lady not wanting to be recognized by her friends, has turned her back upon the public.



Ben Johnson has given the most correct definition of fashion in his *Discoveries* that we have ever seen.

"Nothing is fashionable until it be deformed."

This leaves nothing more to be said. But if any body should

doubt that fashion is, essentially, deformity; let it be thought on for a moment why fashion endures for so short a time, if not because of its hideousness. Any fashion that were beautiful would endure forever. We never grow weary of anything that is pure, or beautiful or good. But gentleness,

charity, high mindedness, youth and loveliness, have never been in the fashion. Early rising, industry, forbearance, simple diet, comfortable apparel, have never been in fashion among the fashionable. But the opposite of these. Duelling always has been, and is now, the very extreme point of fashion. So is wine drinking; so are late hours, unhealthy food, and killing dresses.

OLE BUL'S NIAGARA.

BY L. MARIA CHILD.

[From the tone of criticism, on Ole Bul's great performance, which has pervaded the press, and the reported stillness of his auditors, it would seem that people went to hear Niagara in Indian-rubbers, expecting to see rainbows reflected from the gas-lights about the performer's fingers, and came away disappointed, because they were not thoroughly soaked in the spray of his instrument. It would doubtless give entire satisfaction if he were to play it with an accompaniment from a Croton hydrant. Let him take the hint at the next performance. But we have never heard of anybody, save Mrs. Butler, who did not feel disappointment at the first sight of the great Cataract; it could hardly be expected that its idea, presented in the tones of a violin, should be more successful in a first impression, than the tremendous reality, itself. But there was one thousand hearer, if no more, at the first representation of Niagara, as the following letter will show.—Ed.]

You ask me for my impressions of Ole Bul's Niagara. It is like asking an Æolian harp to tell what the great organ of Freyburg does. But since you are pleased to say that you value my impressions, because they are always my own, and not another person's; because they are spontaneous, disinterested, and genuine; I will give you the tones as they breathed through my soul, without anxiety to have them pass for more than they are worth.

I did not know what the composer intended to express. I would have avoided knowing, if the information had been offered; for I wished to hear what the music itself would say to me. And thus it spoke: The serenely beautiful opening told of a soul going forth peacefully into the calm bright atmosphere. It passes along, listening to the half-audible, many-voiced murmurings of the summer woods. Gradually, tremulous vibrations fill the air, as of a huge cauldron seething in the distance. The echoing sounds rise and swell, and finally roar and thunder. In the midst of this, stands the soul, striving to utter its feelings.

"Like to a mighty heart the music seems,
That yearns with melodies it cannot speak."

It wanders away from the cataract, and again and again returns within sound of its mighty echoes. Then calmly, reverentially, it passes away, listening to the receding chorus of Nature's tremendous drums and trombones; musing solemnly as it goes, on that vast sheet of waters, rolling now as it has rolled, "long, long time ago."

Grand as I thought Niagara when I first heard it, it opened upon me with increasing beauty when I heard it repeated. I then observed many exquisite and graceful touches, which were lost in the magnitude of the first impression. The multitudinous sounds are bewildering in their rich variety.

"The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep."

"The whispering air
Sends inspiration from the rocky heights,
And dark recesses of the covered rocks;
The little rills, and waters numberless,
Blend their notes with the loud streams."

There is the pattering of water-drops, gurglings, twitterings, and little gushes of song.

"The leaves in myriads jump and spring,
As if with pipes and music rare,
Some Hoopoes Gooselow were there,
And all the leaves in festive glee,
Were dancing to the minstrelsy."

The sublime waterfall is ever present, with its echoes; but present in a calm contemplative soul. One of the most poetic minds I know, after listening to this music, said to me, "The first time I saw Niagara, I came upon it through the woods, in the clear sunlight of a summer's morning; and these tones are a perfect transcript of my emotions." In truth, it seems to me a most wonderful production; a perfect disembodied poem; a most beautiful mingling of natural sounds with the reflex of their impressions on a refined and poetic mind. This serene grandeur, this pervading beauty, which softens all the greatness, is probably the principal reason why it does not captivate the ears of the public, as much as they had anticipated.

It is a great disadvantage to any work of art to be much talked of before it appears. People had formed all sorts of expectations, and were disappointed not to hear their own conceptions uttered in sound. Some expected to hear all Niagara, with its powerful bass notes, on the violin alone; and apparently forgot that they owed to Ole Bul's genius the grandly-expressive orchestral accompaniment. Some, it is said, even complained that they did not hear the cataract. Their ears might have been better satisfied, perhaps, if there had been a great hydrant running, or a huge water-wheel revolving, behind the scenes.

I supposed that Niagara was not received with loud applause, because the souls of the audience were, like my own, too much stilled by its solemn and majestic beauty. When I heard that many were disappointed in it, I felt as if my spirit would be suffocated to remain in a city, that had not souls to appreciate a production like that. But one never need distrust the human soul. It always responds to what comes from the soul. During the following days, people who were strangers to Ole Bul, were continually saying to me, "I was indignant at the want of enthusiasm." "Really, I have never before been so much impressed with Ole Bul's genius." Then came tidings that foreign critics, and musical amateurs, who were present, thought it a composition full of majesty and beauty, and were surprised that it was not received with warmer applause. Like all refined and skilfully elaborated productions, it will take time to grow upon the popular ear. If I were to hear it a hundred times, I should discover some new beauty every time, though I should never be able thoroughly to appreciate it. The artist has thrown into it the earnest strength of his soul, and prepared it with great care, because he wished to offer a fitting tribute to this country. Perhaps America will not discover the magnificence of the compliment, till applauding Europe teaches her its value.

At the second concert, a *Roxo Giocoso*, of Ole Bul's composing, greeted my ears for the first time. It is the lightest, airiest thing imaginable; like the hum of bees among the flowers. It is the very *SPRIT OF JOY*, throwing smiles and roses as she dances by.

Then, too, I heard *THE SOLITUDE OF THE PRAIRIE* for the first time; and never did music so move the inmost depths of my soul. Its spiritual expression breathes through heavenly melodies. With a voice earnest and plaintive as the nightingale, it spoke to me of inward conflict; of the soul going forth into solitude, alone and sad. The infinite stretches itself out, in darkness and storm. Through the fierce tempestuous struggle, it passes alone, alone, as the soul must ever go through all its sternest conflicts. Then comes self-renunciation, humility and peace. And thus does the exquisitely beautiful music of this *PRAIRIE SOLITUDE* lay the soul lovingly into its rest.

Many, who have hitherto been moderate in their enthusiasm about Ole Bul, recognize in these new compositions

more genius than they supposed him to possess. Tastefully intertwined Fantasias, or those graceful musical garlands, Rondos, might be supposed to indicate merely a pleasing degree of talent and skill. But those individuals must be hard to convince, who do not recognize the presence of genuine inspiration, in the deep tenderness of the Mother's Prayer, that sounds as if it were composed at midnight, alone with the moon; in the fiery, spirit-stirring eloquence of the Polacca Guerriera, composed at Naples, in view of flaming Vesuvius; in the deep spiritual melody of the Prairie Solitude; and in the bold yet serene grandeur of Niagara. The individuality of Ole Bul's compositions, their unrepeating variety, and certain passages which occur in them all, have frequently suggested to my mind the existence of a latent slumbering power, which has not room to exert its full strength in music composed for the violin.

I speak as a novice, but my speech has the merit of being unaffected. In the presence of mere skill, I know not what to say. It may please me somewhat; but whether it is more or less excellent than some other thing, I cannot tell. But bring me into the presence of genius, and I know it, by rapid intuition, as quick as I know a sunbeam. I cannot tell how I know it. I simply say, This is genius; as I say, This is a sunbeam.

It is an old dispute, that between genius and criticism, and probably will never be settled; for it is one of the manifold forms of conservatism and innovation. In all departments of life, genius is on the side of progress, and learning on the side of established order. Genius comes a Prophet from the future, to guide the age onward. Learning, the Lawgiver, strives to hold it back upon the past. But the prophet always revolutionizes the laws; for thereunto was he sent.—Under his powerful hand, the limitations gradually yield and flow, as metals melt into new forms at the touch of fire.

This is as true of music, as of everything else. Its rules have been constantly changing. What is established law now was unknown, or shocking, a hundred years ago. Every great genius that has appeared in the art, has been accused of violating the rules. The biographer of Haydn says: "The charming little thoughts of the young musician, the warmth of his style, the liberties which he sometimes allowed himself, called forth against him all the invective of the musical monastery. They reproached him with errors of counterpoint, heretical modulations, and movements too daring. His introduction of *prestissimo* made all the critics of Vienna shudder." An English nobleman once begged him to explain the reason of certain modulations and arrangements in one of his quartets. "I did so because it has a good effect," replied the composer. "But I can prove to you that it is altogether contrary to the rules," said the nobleman. "Very well," replied Haydn, "arrange it in your own way, hear both played, and tell me which you like the best." "But how can your way be the best, since it is contrary to the rules?" urged the nobleman. "Because it is the most agreeable," replied Haydn; and the critic went away unconvinced.

Beethoven was constantly accused of violating the rules.—In one of his compositions, various things were pointed out to him as deviations from the laws, expressly forbidden by masters of the art. "They forbid them, do they?" said Beethoven. "Very well. I allow them."

Do not understand me as speaking scornfully of knowledge and critical skill. Only presumptuous, self-conceited ignorance does this. On the contrary, I labor with earnest industry, to acquire more and more knowledge of rules, in all the forms of art. But, in all the higher and more spir-

itual manifestations, I recognize laws only as temporary and fluxional records of the progressive advancement of the soul. I do not deny the usefulness of criticism; but genius forever remains the master, and criticism the servant.

Whether critics will consider Niagara as abounding with faults, when they examine into its construction, I cannot conjecture. It is their business to analyze genius, and the mischief is, they are generally prone to dissect in the shadow of their own hands. To speak playfully, it is my own belief that cataract-thunderings, sea-moanings, tree-breathings, wind-whistlings, and bird-warblings, are none of them composed according to the rules. They ought all to be sent to Paris or Rome, to finish their education, and go silent meanwhile, unless they can stop their wild everlasting variations.

I have not yet learned to become reconciled to the sudden crash of the orchestra, which, in almost all complicated music, comes in to snap beautiful melodies.

"As if a lark should suddenly drop dead,
While the blue air yet trembled with its song."

I suppose it is right, because all composers will have it so. Moreover, I know it is so in nature, and it is so in the experience of the soul. But, after all, those clashing instruments always seem like the devil in the universe, of whom it never becomes quite clear to me what need there is of his being there.

I have less affinity for fun, than for earnest impassioned utterance; but really there is no withstanding the admirable comic power of tone and gesture, in Signor Queerico,—(Sanquirico.) In this dull heavy atmosphere, which has for weeks hung over us like a pall, he is positively a benefactor; as agreeable as a glimpse of sunshine. L. M. C.

"IS GENIUS CONSCIOUS OF ITS POWERS?"

Not the shadow of a peradventure rests upon the question. By cock and pye, the best oath that I am acquainted with, yea! But if any darkness encompassed the matter, that essay of Hazlitt's in which he attempts to prove the contrary dispels it. "No really great man ever thought himself so," begins the essayist, and before he drops his pen, makes these depreciating remarks upon himself:—

"If the reader is not already apprised of it, he will please to take notice that I write this at Winterslow. My style there is apt to be redundant and excursive. At other times it may be cramped, dry, abrupt; but there it flows like a river, and overspreads its banks. I have not to seek for thoughts or hunt for images: they come of themselves, I inhale them with the breeze, and the silent groves are vocal with a thousand recollections—

"And violets as poetic eyes arow,
Hang on each leaf, and cling to every bough."

"Here I cause fifteen years ago, a willing exile; and as I trod the green sward by the low wood-side, repeated the old line,

"My mind to me a kingdom is."

I found it so then, before, and since; and shall I faint, now that I have poured out the spirit of that mind to the world, and treated many subjects with truth, with freedom and power, because I have been followed with one cry of abuse ever since for not being a government tool? Here I sketched my account of that old honest Signior Orlando Friscobaldo—which, with its fine, racy, acrid tone, that old crab-apple, G*ff*d, would have relished or pretended to relish, had I been a governmental tool! Here, too, I have written *Table Talks* without number, and as yet without a falling off, till

now that they are nearly done, or I should not make this boast. I could swear (were they not mine) the thoughts in many of them are founded as the rock, free as air, the tone like an Italian picture."

This rather sounds like attaching a just estimate to one's own performance, and I do not remember among all the commendations of the *Genius of the Essayist*, of seeing any thing more commendatory than these lines by his own hand.

But Hazlitt's false conclusion that greatness is blind to its own dimensions, arises from his confounding a consciousness of superiority with an unconsciousness of its cause. A man who has given ten years to the study of Greek, is perfectly well aware of the source of his acquirements, as well as of their extent. But the learned Blacksmith who gets a knowledge of Greek in ten days, is not the less aware of his gettings, because he knows not how he got the power to get. The writings of all great minds are full of instances of self-consciousness. Shakspeare and Milton, are fuller, perhaps, than any others. With what an oracular certainty they both promise immortality to the names mentioned in their verse! To quote instances, would seem to imply a doubt of ignorance on the part of the reader that I do not entertain. Every body knows that Milton promised his great epic many, many years, before a line of it was penned; the interval between the promise and the performance was the period of gestation. It required the audacity of Genius to make a prediction that only a Genius could fulfil. Cool, unblushing egotism is almost a sure indication of greatness. There can be no greatness without it. The vauntings of impudence are a very different matter.

In naming Burke, Hazlitt says: "Because his rank in letters is become a settled point with us, we conclude that it must have been quite as self-evident to him, and that he must have been perfectly conscious of his vast superiority to the rest of the world. Alas! not so. No man is truly himself, but in the idea which others entertain of him." Regarding his rank in letters Burke could not have been over-confident, because he knew that rank depends almost as much upon accident as merit, but his superiority to the rest of the world was a fact which there are abundant reasons for believing he trusted in as firmly as any of his admirers do now. The very powers which make a man great, also make him the best perceiver of his own greatness. Who has ever read Burns without being startled at the judgments he pronounces upon himself? and the gentle Sir Walter swore the most terrible oaths at Blackwood, the publisher, for presuming to suggest that an improvement might be made in one of the *Tales of my Landlord*; and the kind of omnipotent contempt which he expressed for Jeffrey, when the critic reviewed one of his poems with a slight qualification of dispraise, scarcely perceptible to the common eye, is to me stronger evidence of his Genius than the poem itself.

That "no man is truly himself but in the idea which others entertain of him," is a vile pernicious untruth, which, if believed in, would destroy all greatness. All confidence and boldness would be at an end, and men would go tottering about, afraid to speak or act, because they could not know in advance, what opinions would be entertained of them. No man ever was great, whose opinion of himself was not independent of the opinions of others. Self-confidence is the only foundation upon which any great work was ever erected. It is the fuel which gets up the steam, without which the engine is useless matter. To undertake a task for which I had not a conscious fitness, would be the reverse of modesty; and modesty is as natural an accompaniment to genius, as self-confidence.

"What a pity," said one, "that Milton had not the pleasure of reading *Paradise Lost*." What a pity, say I, that a man of genius, like Hazlitt, who had often been steeped in the delights of composition, should have echoed such a misleading pity. Can it be believed that any body has ever taken half the pleasure in studying *Paradise Lost*, that the author did in composing it? What recompense would the poet have, if he gained none in his work? Can any poet look upon the reward which his labours have brought him, and declare that they afforded him as much pleasure as the labours themselves? I verily believe, that great as the delight has been which Jack Falstaff has afforded the world, that his author received more pleasure in creating him, than all the rest of the world has received from reading him. He heard all the jokes of the fat knight, uttered in the rich oily voice, and saw the accompanying grins and shaking of the fat heavy sides, and mock solemnities, that we can never hear or see; and moreover, he saw and heard a thousand characteristic traits that could not be put upon paper. The portrait of Jack appears plump and real enough to us, but compared with the original that was present to the poet, he is a mere shadowy outline. And it is for this reason that authors have such a disgust for their own productions. To the reader the attempted descriptions of what the author saw, call up some faint resemblance of the original objects, and even these resemblances, faint as they are, give a degree of pleasure; but to the author himself, his lines only impart a sickening sense of the feebleness with which he has depicted the glories which inflamed his imagination. "I sometimes try to read an article which I have written in some magazine or review, but stop short after a sentence or two, and never recur to the task," says Hazlitt. Yet another person can read this article or review two or three times with renewed pleasure. Mr. Dickens has furnished a confirmation of the truth of my argument in the preface to *Martin Chuzzlewit*. He says, "If my readers have derived but half the pleasure and interest from its perusal, which its composition has afforded me, I have ample reason to be satisfied; and if they part from any of my visionary friends with the least tinge of that reluctance and regret which I feel in dismissing them, my success has been complete indeed."

This is the most candid confession that any author has yet made. So then, great as our delight has been in the society of Sairey Gamp, Mr. Dickens has been twice as much delighted as any of us. And yet he will never seek her society again, as the rest of us will, in his own pages. His Sairey and our Sairey are different personages. Ours is only a shadow, but he has enjoyed the reality. But, *reluctance* is not the right word to express the sensation which we experienced in taking leave of Sairey Gamp and the Junior Bailey; a much stronger term might be used without exaggeration.

Hazlitt did not himself believe in his own theory. Like all dealers in paradox, either intentionally or by accident he continually upsets his own arguments. All the instances that he names, especially those of the painters, directly contradict his assertions. He could hardly have named a great man who seems to have possessed himself in such perfect confidence of genius as Michael Angelo. I doubt whether an instance of a great man wanting in a just appreciation of his own powers, can be named. The timidity of Cowper, even, was not owing to mistrust of what he had the ability to do; he was bold enough to undertake the task that he felt himself equal to performing. Whoever has enjoyed the privilege of personal intercourse with men of genius must have noticed many accidental bursts of conscious might

which would have appeared in lesser men the very sublime of conceit. I know an artist who said very deliberately one day, that he could paint as well as Titian, and draw much better. Such an expression as this would have made Hazlitt's hair bristle, but if he had seen the artist work, he would not have said of him as he did of Annibal Caracci for making the same boast, that "he was wrong." But the same artist would have inscribed "*faciebat*," upon his work notwithstanding. Doctor Johnson said that he could write a better cookery book than any body had ever produced. I am inclined to believe that he could have done it, but he was too busy with his dictionary.

"The greatest pleasure in life is that of reading," says Hazlitt, but any book that gives pleasure in reading must have given twice as much pleasure in composing. Let no author ever flatter himself that what has given him pain to produce will ever give any body else pleasure to read. Critics would be spared all their cruel fun of damning a poor book, if authors would only test their writings before publishing, by the sensations which their production cost. If there be truth in this, and I appeal to all book-makers for testimony, what an ocean of delight must those happy dogs Cervantes and Fielding, Rabelais, and Sterne have floundered in, while composing their immortal fun. C.

THE FINE ARTS.

There is a painting on exhibition, and for sale, at Mr. Colman's in Broadway, of the "Bride of Abydos," by Thomas H. Smith, a young Artist of this City, which deserves the attention of the friends of American Art. The painting is by no means a faultless production, but considering the youth and opportunities of the painter, it is a remarkable picture in respect of color and drawing. It has infinitely more merit than some of the paintings which have received the praise of *chef d'œuvres*, by artists who put N. A. at the end of their names; and we trust that a young man of so little pretension, and so much promise, as Mr. Smith, will not be allowed to remain long without employment, which, we understand, he needs at present.

THE ART UNION PICTURES.

The last distribution of works of Art, by this association, which took place at the Society Library, the 20th of last month, was an important era in the history of the Fine Arts in this country.

The income of the association, the last year, was something more than ten thousand dollars—nearly eight thousand of which have been bestowed upon the artists of our country, principally of our city. But no respect appears to have been had for the residence of the artist, in their purchases, by the Committee of Management.

The purchases generally, evinced a discriminating taste, and an impartiality of feeling, such as might have been expected from the character of the gentlemen composing the committee of management. Some of the pictures were indifferent performances, but we doubt not that they were richly worth the prices paid for them. Indeed, it could hardly be expected that ninety-two good pictures could be purchased for five thousand dollars, which, according to the report, was the total cost of the whole. We have no doubt that they would have sold for a handsome advance, if they had been offered at auction.

A great part of the pictures were by our young artists;

but it is hoped that the increased income of the Art Union will induce our older artists to compete for the prizes of the association with the younger members of the profession. It is greatly to the credit of Mr. Durand that he has seconded the wishes of the committee with zeal and good feeling, putting his pictures at less prices than he would to a private purchaser.

His large landscape, *The Passing Shower*, was the favorite of the last distribution, and we regard it as the best of all his pictures. It was better finished—although it had not half the marks of elaborate care—than his "*Lake Scene*," which the association distributed last year. At the first glance it reminds you of Gainsborough's market waggon, from the position of the waggon that has just crossed the brook; but there all resemblance ends. The trees in this picture are marked with a fine individuality of character, which is a sure merit in a landscape. One of the cedars, in particular, struck us as a fine portrait.

The bank of mist, driven on by the squall, is managed with an exceedingly fine effect,—and the glimpse of sunlight, darting between the opening which the road makes through the wood, has the same cheerful influence upon the feelings of the spectator, which such realities have in the open air, and makes us sympathize with the farmer, who is hastening home before the rising storm. The cattle are finely put upon the canvass, and show that the painter is a lover and close observer of rural scenery and its accompaniments.

Scenes like these are Mr. Durand's forte; he is at home here, and a genius; but in the solemn solitudes, which Cole loves so well, he is out of his element, and only a man of fine talent. There is no such thing as universality of genius. No man of genius ever could play upon more than one string.

Mr. Durand is a gentle spirit; he loves quiet sunny places, rippling brooks, fleecy clouds, and willows that grow by water courses. The name of the street which he has chosen for his dwelling is an indication of his nature—Amity Street. It is a pity that he should ever employ his pencil in depicting any other nature than that which seems so well to harmonize with his own. We have seen two of his landscapes recently, which have been purchased by two gentlemen of this city, that are in his very happiest manner; both alike in feeling but unlike in composition. They have such cool shadows, such soft skies, and sparkling brooks, that you could hardly long for the country while they were hanging before you, they satisfy the sentiment so fully. The cattle standing in the water, cooling their hoofs, make you long to pull off your boots and splash in the clear stream.

In the picture of "*The Passing Shower*," he has obscured the distant village by a cloud of black mist, which is fast enshrouding the fair landscape in its heavy folds; but he loves not these dismal aspects of nature, and he has thrown across it a bow of promise, which imparts to us his own cheerfulness of feeling. It is in such traits as these that artists reflect themselves, and awaken sympathy in others.

Cole loves the solemn stillness of our forests and prairies, and he has selected the foot of the Catskill mountains for his studio. There was only one of his pictures in the distribution, and though small and unpretending, it possessed much of his character. A still lake, a clear sky without a cloud, the ruins of a majestic tree stretching out its scathed but giant branches; and hoary old rocks; it is the very poetry of solitude, and you hold your breath lest the echo of your voice should frighten you. There's nothing living in sight—indeed, nothing could live there, for there's not a

particle of atmosphere. It looks like the earth, before God breathed upon it.

The landscapes of Mr. Cole have generally been complained of as wanting atmosphere. But they have no need of it. He loves to represent Nature as she looked before living beings began to bustle about upon her surface. Before the serpent had begun to hiss, or the wolf to howl. His rocks, his trees, his water, live apart in the depths of stillness. Atmosphere would only soften their severe outlines, and their peculiar character would be gone; they would be like the rocks and trees of another artist, if seen in an atmosphere, and the charm which they now have would be lost.

Mr. Cole's tame pictures are tame in the extreme. His forte is in the vast and solitary. One of his first paintings was the representation of a howling snow storm, on the Catskill mountains, with a wolf in the foreground, growling louder than the winter wind. It is many a year since we saw it, but it appalled us to that degree that we never think of it but with a shudder. Indeed, it is a pelting storm that beats against our window while we write, that has brought it freshly to mind.

Mount *Etna* seems to have greatly possessed Mr. Cole's imagination. He never gave a stronger instance of his ruling passion than in his ascent to the crater of the hoary monarch. He has painted scores of pictures since, with the snow-capped volcano in the distance; and it is to be regretted that he should ever have employed his pencil about such romantic trifles as his "Past and Present," and "The Departure and Return;" and scores of other inanities in which he seems like a Sampson in the toils of some bewitching Delilah. He is the most imaginative of our painters—or perhaps it were better to say that his imagination is of a more epic cast. Nothing is easier with him than to produce an effect of grandeur and wildness; nothing harder than to be soft and fanciful.

It is to be regretted, that among all the pictures there was but one historical composition—De Soto discovering the Mississippi, by Rothermel, of Philadelphia. There was a small sketch, by the same artist, in oil, made for the Art Union, which gave us a high opinion of his abilities. It was the embodiment of a well known revolutionary anecdote, "The Man who fought on his own hook;" but the subject is too meagre for a large picture.

The two great favorites with the public, after Durand's landscape, judging from the sensation among the audience when the numbers were drawn, were "The Composer," by Charles E. Weir, and "Long Jake," by Lieut. Deas. They are both admirable pictures. "The Composer" had gained hosts of admirers, when in the exhibition last summer, but "Long Jake" had never been seen, excepting a day or two in Mr. Colman's—but at the rooms of the Art Union. We have no hesitation in pronouncing Mr. Weir a better painter than his brother; and we think that "The Composer" will fully justify our opinion. Doubtless there are many who will differ from us, and perhaps it were better not to institute comparisons between them.

"Long Jake" comes to us from the outer verge of our civilization; he is a *Sante Fe* trader, and with his rifle in hand, his blazing red shirt, his slouched hat, long beard and coal black steed, looks as wild and romantic as any of the characters in Froissart's pages, or Salvator Rosa's pictures. But "Long Jake" was not always a *Sante Fe* trader—there are traits of former gentleness and refinement in his countenance, and he sits upon his horse as though he were fully conscious of his picturesque appearance. The purple hills

and the brown furze harmonize finely in the picture, and give it a very romantic aspect. Altogether, "Long Jake" is not a picture to be forgotten. His red shirt and his honest face will live in many a mind's eye, during the next generation. We hope that Lieut. Deas will send us some companions to keep him company from the far West.

The "View in Orange County," by Cropsy, is well known to the picture-loving public; it gained many admirers in the exhibition of the National Academy, and while hanging in the gallery of the Art Union. It is unquestionably an exceedingly fine picture,—a representation of quiet, every day nature, without a particle of romance or imagination. The straggling rail fence that stretches though it so prominently, is not in the least degree offensive, but on the contrary, harmonizes with the scene as finely as the blue hills in the distance. But such an object, in one of Cole's pictures, would be very disgusting, because so out of character with his poetic manner. There was another landscape, by Mr. Cropsy—a scene in early autumn—as far as color is concerned, something in Cole's manner, but pervaded with a different sentiment. Mr. Cropsy is a young artist of great promise, and his pictures show rapid improvement. We have been told that he is painting a picture to send to England; but he should be content with the approbation of his own countrymen. Englishmen cannot appreciate the merits of a purely American landscape, and the artist who sends his pictures across the water, for the sake of an English reputation, will be sure to meet with a mortifying reception. The whole tone and aspect of Nature in America is so entirely unlike Nature in England, that it could not be otherwise. English critics laugh at our descriptions of Autumn scenery, as extravagant hyperbole; and even Mrs. Butler's glowing account of our woods in Autumn, was attributed by them to her theatrical habits of expression.

NEW-YEAR'S CALLS.

It is right that the first day of the year should be a merry one: but it unfortunately happens that we cannot be merry by rule. Learning, wisdom, and riches, may all be systematically obtained. But merriment must come of itself.—We all know what the result was when a certain king commanded all his subjects to be happy on a certain day, and offered a premium to the happiest. As anybody but a king might have foreseen, he had not a happy subject in his kingdom when the day arrived. It is greatly to be wondered at that kings and legislators would not take a lesson from this well meaning Prince, and let people alone, to be happy or not in their own way, and at their own time. The *laissez faire* principle is the only safe rule for a Legislator. All that men need is to be let alone. If they cannot make their own happiness laws will do them no good.

There are no legal requirements compelling men to be merry on New-year's day, but there is a social law, more stringent than any statute, which ordains that every body shall meet the New-year with a smile. On that day we must forget all the lame, and blind, and poor; forget all our own aches and cares, and go out into the cold streets with laughing countenances, wishing every body many returns of the day, and paying every body compliments of the season; and when night falls we begin to wish that we may never see another day like it.

Nothing can be more truly delightful than calling to see one's friends on New-year's day, and reviving the friendships, which but for this annual sacrifice on the domestic altar, might be chilled to death by neglect. But a delightful social habit is fast becoming a distressing fashion. La-

dies boast of the number of calls they receive, and gentlemen of the number of calls they make. Ambitious housekeepers vie with each other in their set-outs, and kind heartedness and good cheer are banished for formal politeness and gaudy parade. The elegant and refined are simple and cheerful on these occasions, as they are on all others; but the vulgar rich, and the aspiring poor, make dreadful sacrifices in the endeavor to be merry on New-year's day.

Happily, the innocent joyousness of children, the happiness of servants in their gifts, and all who on this day receive from their employers the approbatory present which sweetens a twelve month's toil, are entirely beyond the reach of show or ceremony. Pride and envy cannot touch them, and for their sakes may New-year's be always a day of gifts and good wishes.

The first day of the year is a fit occasion for moralising, but in New-York we leave that duty for the day after.

A friend has given us a sketch of the manner of making New-years' calls, which we do not think greatly out of the way. Of course it will appear very vulgar to some, but to others it may appear very genteel. We think that something like it might have been seen on either side of Broadway this week.

Mrs. Skillett is the wife of a dry goods jobber in Cedar street; her house is in something place, Seventh street. It is a great point to live in a "place," with genteel people. Mrs. Skillett's house is two stories high, with attic and basement; a brick front with red sand stone dressings, and a Grecian door way; her husband's name on a silver plate, SKILLET, ornaments the door, which is bronzed; the windows are shaded by green Venetian blinds on the outside and by transparencies of Gothic views in the inside; the exact size of the house is twenty-five by forty feet. The yard contains a little circular patch of grass, which is green sometimes, a trellised screen painted white, and a grape vine, which looks, at this season, like a Boa-Constrictor hung up to dry. On the first floor are the two parlors. The hall contains a mahogany hat stand shaped like a harp, a Gothic stove, and a Gothic lantern. The parlors are furnished exactly alike, and are connected by sliding doors veneered with mahogany; the floors are carpeted with the brightest of colors, and the walls are whiter than snow, and appear much colder; the chairs are mahogany with Gothic backs and satin bottoms, the piano rose wood, and the mantle ornaments bronze.—There is a pleasant smell of varnish still lingering around the furniture, to remind you that it is perfectly new and in the latest fashion.

In the front parlor sits Mrs. Skillett, with her two daughters and a friend from the country, flaunting in Cachemere dresses, much gayer than the carpets; all three are gloved in white kid, and have gold pencil cases suspended from their necks.

In the back parlor stands a marble centre table, heaped up with a variety of fancy eatables, prominent among which is a huge frosted cake, with a sugar Cupidon, or a pair of doves standing in the centre; this is surrounded by a German silver cake basket, filled with cookies,—a salver of the same material filled with sandwiches, a fruit dish with grapes and oranges, some little glass mugs filled with hot lemonade, two decanters of wine, a flask of maraschino, and a variety of sugar gimcracks.

A pull of the bell is heard at the street door; the two Miss Skillett, and their friend from the country, all three run to the window and peep under the blind, and pop back into their seats again, to look perfectly unconcerned when the "callers" enter.

The door opens, and in come three gentlemen in white gloves and very red noses; they try to smile, but their frozen features won't. One is Mr. Davis, a young attorney, the second Mr. Jones, a hardware jobber, and the third is Mr. Green, a teller in a bank. They all three ejaculate together, in a kind of desperate manner, "the compliments of the season to you, ladies;" upon which the ladies smile and curtsy, and say, "thank you; many returns of the day to yourselves." A few words are exchanged about the weather, the Opera, or the Bishop, as the case may be; and Mr. Jones, under pretence of looking at the mantel ornaments, steps up to the grate and slyly warms the ends of his fingers. Mrs. Skillett then says, "gentlemen, won't you walk into the next room and take some refreshments?"

The three gentlemen follow Mrs. Skillett, and two of them take a glass of wine, but Mr. Jones, on pretended temperance principles, takes a glass of lemonade, because it is hot. They all three refuse cake, but Mr. Davis eats one grape, and says it is "splendid."

They return again to the parlor, and one of the young ladies tells Mr. Jones to walk up to the fire and warm himself, upon which that gentleman tells a very palpable story in saying that he is "not in the least cold." They then make a bow, bid the ladies good morning, and hurry off to some other "place," to repeat the same agreeable ceremony.

At night, the ladies sum up the number of their calls, and the gentlemen boast of the number of their visits. Mr. Jones tells his friends, the next day, with an air of indifference, that he didn't make many calls—only a hundred and fifty, or so—and wonders what the ladies of his acquaintance, whom he slighted, will think of him.

This imposing ceremony is, of course, attended with a good many variations on the above, not the least infrequent of which, is the case of a young gentleman from the country, who, being unaccustomed to the business, falls into the dreadful mistake of drinking full glasses of sweet wine, at the first two or three houses which he calls at, and is, in consequence, obliged to be carried off to his boarding-house and put to bed, before half of his calls are made. ■

A SONG.

TO MY WIFE.

A lily thou wast when I saw thee first,
A lily-bud not opened quite,
That hourly grew more pure and white,
By morning, and noontide and evening burst;
In all of nature thou hadst thy share,
Thou wast waited on
By the wind and sun,
The rain and the dew for thee took care,
It seemed thou never couldst be more fair.

A lily thou wast when I saw thee first,
A lily-bud, but O, how strange,
How full of wonder was the change,
When, ripe with all sweetness, thy full bloom burst,
How did the tears to my glad eyes start
When the woman-flower
Reached its blossoming hour,
And I saw the warm deeps of thy golden heart!

Glad death may pluck thee, but never before
The gold dust of thy bloom divine
Hath dropt from thy heart into mine,
To quicken its faint germs of heavenly love;
For no breeze comes nigh thee but carries away
Some impulses bright
Of fragrance and light,
Which fell upon souls that were lone and astray,
To plant fruitful hopes of the flower of a Day.

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL.

NOTICES OF NEW BOOKS.

THE AMERICAN POULTEEN'S COMPANION, with Illustrations and Portraits of Fowls, taken from life: By C. N. Bement. New York: Saxton & Miles, 1845; pp. 378.

This little treatise, as the author modestly calls it, was undertaken by urgent solicitation of his friends, who knew the author's ability for the task. "There are few persons," he observes, "who do not like a fresh egg, or a fine fat pullet." He might substitute *no*, for *few*; perhaps there is no article of food so universally eaten as eggs, and none so necessary to eat fresh. "From my earliest youth," says Mr. Bement, "I have always taken great interest in all kinds of domestic stock, especially poultry, when well cooked and laid before me." No one who has had the good fortune to eat at Mr. Bement's table—his public one, we mean—will doubt this. His treatise is accordingly a labor of love; and to those who have ever been engaged in the pleasant business of rearing poultry, it will read like a fairy tale. Hereafter, Mr. Bement will divide attention with Moubray—if he does not supplant that classic of the barn-yard altogether, which we regard by no means improbable. The book is very handsomely printed, on fine paper, and the cuts are something better than we usually find in similar works.

FLOWERS FOR CHILDREN: By L. Maria Child, Author of "The Mother's Book," "Letters from New York," etc. etc., No. 1 and 2. C. S. Francis & Co., New York.

We are gratified to learn that the sale of these charming little books is in some degree proportioned to their merits. The accomplished author of them never uses her pen in vain, because she never uses it with a sinister motive. She has been accused of extravagance and affectation, in some of her writings, merely because she was unaffected, and gave a true expression to her feelings. These "Flowers for Children" have all the freshness and unpretending beauty of the flowers for children which God sprinkles in the high ways and fields, and we think that children must love them as well, for they have come from the hands of one who has unbounded love for them. It is a most responsible task to write a book for a child; and unless it be done by proper hands, it were better that books for the nursery should contain nothing more intelligent than the old classic rhymes which we have inherited from the fatherland, the "hey diddle, diddles," and "goosey, goosey, gander" of our infancy. Very different from nursery rhymes are the "Flowers" of Mrs. Child. They breathe a fragrance that is as grateful in the library as in the nursery. As the child is father of the man, his mental food should always be of the same quality, though given in different quantities. No book is fit for a child that is not profitable for a man. Children are quicker to detect untruths than men, because they are more truthful themselves; and therefore, no books can ever be acceptable, or profitable to them, which are not simply and truthfully written. They are the best critics in the world, and the most fastidious, in regard to style. Involved sentences, harsh, abrupt, jerked out expressions, high sounding phrases, they will not tolerate. Whoever writes for children, must be gentle, truthful, confiding, and above all, sincere. It is children who have conferred immortality on such truthful writers as De Foe and Bunyan.

Mrs. Child has the truthfulness and simplicity of those old masters—but she has something besides—a warm glow of love for the human race, which seems to surround her pen like a halo. Many of these unpretending "flowers" are as fit for men who are just on the verge of second childhood, as for those who are yet in their first.

THE MAGAZINES.

Among all our M. P's. (as George Cruikshank calls the monthly periodicals,) the Knickerbocker is the oldest. This nobody will deny. The London Literary Gazette says it is the best, which somebody probably will dispute, for it is the fate of every body and everything in this world to have enemies as well as friends. If old age is an evidence of a good constitution in a man, it is no less so in a magazine. The Knickerbocker must have something good about it, or it never could have lived to its present age. The January number contains an admirable essay on Plagiarists and Plagiarisms by Polygon, who is always instructive and amusing; and a delicate piece of verse by John Waters, whose prose essays are more like poetry than his verses. These two writers would alone give value to a magazine.

The Democratic Review comes next to the Knickerbocker in point of age, but it has not yet come to hand, with us; the election of Mr. Polk, we believe, retarded the publication of the last two numbers in some way. The Democratic Review for this month, contains a paper on the inequalities of wealth, which has merit enough to sanctify all its other contents.

The Columbian, for January, appears to have been out of print before the month arrived, for we have seen an advertisement in all the papers, informing all those ladies and gentlemen who were disappointed in obtaining their numbers, that a new edition had been struck off.

We have heard of but one new monthly journal being started in the country, Mr. Simms's Southern Magazine; but a good many new ones will make their appearance on the first of January, in London; among them are "The Shilling Magazine," by Douglas Jerrold, published by the Punch proprietors, and "Geo. Cruikshank's Table Book," edited by Gilbert A. à Becket. Chapman & Hall also announce a new monthly series of cheap fiction and history, among which will be a life of Talleyrand, by Thackeray. The "New Edinburgh Review," for the million, price a shilling, which has been published a few months, appears to be thriving, and a new Edinburgh publication, on the million principle, has been announced, to be called the "Edinburgh Tales," by Mrs. Johnstone, price three half pence. A new weekly paper will also be started in London, price sixpence, to be called the Historical Register.

Bentley's Miscellany, for December, contains the first of a series of papers headed, "Notes of a Loiterer in New York." By Henry Cooke.

But judging from the first specimen of these new Notes on America, we should think they were taken by somebody who had never been out of the sound of Bow-bells. The following is said of the captain of one of our London packets: "The little captain no sooner took command than he began to guess and calculate, speak through his nose, and brag—affording us an amusing specimen of his class. His ship was a pretty considerable go-ahead ship, she was; she would tear slick through it like a scalded hog, she would; greased lightning was a fool to her, it was." It would be as impossible for any sailor to talk in this manner, to say nothing of the impossibility of the master of a ship doing so, as it would for a Russian prince. It is the Cockney imitation of a Western boatman. This is given as the reply of the bar-keeper of a steam-boat, which took the writer from the Quarantine to the Battery: "Well, now, I calculate, stranger, you'll get any drink in that there printed list, fixed right away, from a sherry cobbler to a common cocktail." Such talk as this was never heard on our seaboard, and if ever heard in America at all, it must have been in a region which we have never visited. If Mr. Bentley is anxious to enrich his pages with specimens of Americanisms, he can find an abundance of them in American works within his reach; or he will find a plenty of American pens that could be employed in his service, for a very moderate compensation.

To CORRESPONDENTS—If I will send a communication for him at our office.

"C. M." puzzles us with his queries. It's almost decide which is the most popular Poet, the one whose poems go through fourteen editions of a hundred each, or the one whose poems reach no higher than three editions of a thousand each; An edition is an edition beyond dispute, and fourteen are certainly preferable to three; The proper authority to decide on the preferableness of the two cases, we think, are the poet's publishers. The advice of "F." will be duly heeded.

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