CHATS IN THE BOOK-ROOM

By

HORACE N. PYM

E. LIBRIS.

Jonathan E. Backhouse.

January, 1896.

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For Jed: Backhouse

with the Author's love

February 1896

Chats in the Book-room

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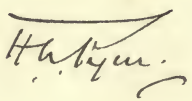

Walker and Boutall ph. fc.

Chats in the Book-room

By

Horace N. Pym

Editor of Caroline Fox's Journals; A Mother's Memoir;
A Tour Round my Book-shelves, etc. etc.

With Portrait by MOLLY EVANS, and Two Photogravures of the Book-room

"If any one, whom you do not know, relates strange stories, be not too ready to believe or report them, and yet (unless he is one of your familiar acquaintance) be not too forward to contradict him."—SIR MATTHEW HALE.

Privately Printed for the Author in the Year 1896 by Ballantyne, Hanson & Co.

To

My Dearly Loved Son

Julian Tindale Pym

I dedicate these "Chats in the Book-room," to which I ask him to extend that noble "Patience, sovereign o'er transmuted ill," which gilds and elevates his life.

H. N. P.

CHRISTMAS,
FOXWOLD CHASE, 1895.

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"Youth longs and manhood strives, but age remembers,
Sits by the raked-up ashes of the past,
Spreads its thin hands above the whitening embers,
That warm its creeping life-blood till the last."

O. W. Holmes.

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"I come not here your morning hour to sadden,
A limping pilgrim, leaning on his staff,—
I, who have never deemed it sin to gladden
This vale of sorrows with a wholesome laugh."

—The Iron Gate.

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Introduction.

" Some of your griefs you have cured,
And the sharpest you still have survived ;
But what torments of pain you endured,
From evils that never arrived ! "

A FEW years ago a little inconsequent volume was launched on partial acquaintance, telling of some ordinary books which line our friendly shelves, of some kindly friends who had read and chatted about them, some old stories they had told, and some happy memories they had awakened.

When those acquaintances had read

the little book, they asked, like Oliver, for more. A rash request, because, unlike Oliver, they get it in the shape of another "Olla Podrida" of book-chat, picture-gossip, and perchance a stray "chestnut." Their good-nature must be invoked to receive it, like C. S. Calverley's sojourners—

> "Who when they travel, if they find
> That they have left their pocket-compass,
> Or Murray, or thick boots behind,
> They raise no rumpus."

Chat No. 1.

"Lie softly, Leisure! Doubtless you,
With too serene a conscience drew
Your easy breath, and slumbered through
The gravest issue;
But we, to whom our age allows
Scarce space to wipe our weary brows,
Look down upon your narrow house,
Old friend, and miss you."

—Austin Dobson.

SINCE we made our last "Tour Round the Book-Shelves," death has removed one of the kindest friends, and most genial companions, of the Book-room. In Richard Corney Grain, Foxwold has lost one of its

pleasantest and most welcome guests, and it is doubtful, well as the public cared for and appreciated his genius, if it knew or suspected how generous a heart, and how wide a charity, moved beneath that massive frame. When rare half-holidays came, it was no uncommon thing for Dick Grain to dedicate them to the solace and amusement of some hospital or children's home, where, with a small cottage piano, he would, moving from ward to ward, give the suffering patients an hour's freedom from their pain, and some happy laughs amid their misery.

One day, after a series of short performances in the different parts of one of our large London hospitals, he was about to sing in the accident ward, when the secretary to the hospital gravely asked him "Not to be too funny in this room, for fear he'd

make the patients burst their bandages!"

Dick Grain was never so happy, so natural, or so amusing as when, of his own motion, he was singing to a nursery full of children in a country house.

Those who knew him well were aware that, delightful as were all his humorous impersonations, he had a graver and more impressive side to his lovable and admirable character, and that he would sometimes, when sure he would be understood, sing a pathetic song, which made the tears flow as rapidly as in others the smiles had been evoked.

Who that heard it will forget his little French song, supposed to be sung by one of the first Napoleon's old Guard for bread in the streets. He sang in a terrible, hoarse, cracked voice a song of victory, breaking off in the

middle of a line full of the sound of battle to cough a hacking cough, and beg a sous for the love of God!

Subjoined is one of his friendly little notes, full of the quiet happy humour that made him so welcome a guest in every friend's house.

HOTHFIELD PLACE,
ASHFORD, KENT.

"MY DEAR PYM,

I shall be proud to welcome you and Mrs. Pym on Wednesday the 26th, but why St. George's Hall? Why not go at once to a play and not to an entertainment? Plays at night. Entertainments in the afternoon. Besides, we are so empty in the evenings now, the new piece being four weeks overdue. Anyhow, I hope to see you at 8 Weymouth Street on Nov. 26th, at any hour after my work, say 10.15 or 10.30, and so on, every quarter of an hour.

"I am dwelling in the Halls of the Great, waited on by powdered menials, who rather look down on me, I think, and hide my clothes, and lay things out I don't wish to

put on, and button my collar on to my shirt, and my braces on to my ——, and when I try to throw the braces over my shoulders I hit my head with the buckle, and get my collar turned upside down, and tear out the buttons in my endeavours to get it right; and they fill my bath so full, that the displacement caused by my unwieldy body sends quarts of water through the ceiling on to the drawing-room—the Red Drawing-room. Piano covered with the choicest products of Eastern towns. Luckily the party is small, so we only occupy the Dragon's Blood Room, so perhaps they won't notice it. But a truce to fooling till Nov. 26.—Yours sincerely,

R. Corney Grain."

Nov. 16, 1890.

He was one of the most gifted, warmest-hearted friends; his cynicism was all upon the surface, and was never unkind, the big heart beat true beneath. His premature death has eclipsed the honest gaiety of this nation—" he should have died hereafter."

Chat No. 2.

" Sound, sound the clarion, fill the fife !
To all the sensual world proclaim,
One crowded hour of glorious life,
Is worth an age without a name."
—Old Mortality.

A PICTURE hangs at Foxwold of supreme interest and beauty, being a portrait of General Wolfe by Gainsborough. Its history is shortly this—painted in Bath in 1758, probably for Miss Lowther, to whom he was then engaged, and whose miniature he was wearing when death claimed him ; it afterwards became the property of Mr.

Gibbons, a picture collector, who lived in the Regent's Park in London, descending in due course to his son, whose widow eventually sold it to Thomas Woolner, the R.A. and sculptor; it was bought for Foxwold from Mrs. Woolner in 1895.

The great master has most wonderfully rendered the hero's long, gaunt, sallow face lit up by fine sad eyes full of coming sorrow and present ill-health. His cocked hat and red coat slashed with silver braid are brilliantly painted, whilst his red hair is discreetly subdued by a touch of powder.

One especial interest that attends this picture in its present home is, that within two miles of Foxwold he was born, and passed some youthful years in the picturesque little town of Westerham, his birthplace, and that his short and wonderful career will always be

especially connected with Squerryes Court, then the property of his friend George Warde, and still in the possession of that family.

Until recently no adequate or satisfactory life of Wolfe existed, but Mr. A. G. Bradley has now filled the gap with his beautiful and affecting monograph for the Macmillan Series of English Men of Action: a little book which should be read by every English boy who desires to know by what means this happy land is what it is.

In country houses the best decoration is portraits, portraits, and always portraits. In the town by all means show fine landscape and sea-scape—heathery hills and blue seas—fisher folks and plough boys — but when from your windows the happy autumn fields and glowing woods are seen, let the eye returning to the homely walls be

cheered with the answer of face to face, human interests and human features leading the memory into historic channels and memory's brightest corners. How pleasant it is in the room where, in the spirit, we now meet, to chat beneath the brilliant eyes of R. B. Sheridan, limned by Sir Joshua, or to note with a smile the dignified importance of Fuseli, painted by Harlow, or to turn to the last portrait of Sir Joshua Reynolds, painted by himself, and of which picture Mr. Ruskin once remarked, "How deaf he has drawn himself."

Of the fashion in particular painters' works, Christie's rooms give a most instructive object-lesson. It is within the writer's memory when Romneys could be bought for £20 apiece, and now that they are fetching thousands, the wise will turn to some other master

at present neglected, and gather for his store pictures quite as full of beauty and truth, and whose price will not cause his heirs to blaspheme.

A constant watchful attendance at Christies' is in itself a liberal education, and it seldom happens that those who know cannot during its pleasant season find "that grain of gold" which is often hidden away in a mass of mediocrity. And then those clever, courteous members of the great house are always ready to give the modest inquirer the full benefit of their vast knowledge, and, if necessary, will turn to their priceless records, and guide the timid, if appreciative, visitor into the right path of selection.

What a delightful thing it is to be present at a field-day in King Street. The early lunch at the club—the settling into a backed-chair at the exactly

proper angle to the rostrum and the picture-stand. (The rostrum, by the way, was made by Chippendale for the founder of the house.) At one o'clock the great Mr. Woods winds his way through the expectant throng, and is promptly shut into his pulpit, the steps of which are as promptly tucked in and the business and pleasure of the afternoon begins. Mr. Woods, dominating his audience

> "As some tall cliff, that lifts its awful form,
> Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm,"

gives a quick glance round the big room, now filled with well-known faces, whose nod to the auctioneer is often priceless. Sir William Agnew rubs shoulders with Lord Rosebery, and Sir T. C. Robinson whispers his doubts of a picture to a Trustee of the National Collection; old Mr. Vokins extols, if

you care to listen, the old English water-colourists, to many of whom he was a good friend, and Mr. George Redford makes some notes of the best pictures for the Press; but Mr. Woods' quiet incisive voice demands silence as Lot 1 is offered with little prefix, and soon finds a buyer at a moderate price.

The catalogues, which read so pleasantly and convey so much within a little space, are models of clever composition, beginning with items of lesser interest and carefully leading up to the great attractions of the afternoon, which fall to the bid of thousands of guineas from some great picture-buyer, amidst the applause of the general crowd.

A pure Romney, a winsome Gainsborough, a golden Turner, or a Corot full of mystery and beauty, will often evoke a round of hand-clapping when it appears upon the selling-easel, and a

swift and sharp contest between two or three well-known connoisseurs will excite the audience like a horse-race, a fencing bout, or a stage drama.

The history of Christies' is yet to be written, notwithstanding Mr. Redford's admirable work on "Art Sales," and when it is written it should be one of the most fascinating histories of the nineteenth century; but where is the Horace Walpole to indite such a work? and who possesses the necessary materials?

One curious little history I can tell concerning a sale in recent years of the Z—— collection of pictures and *objets d'art*, which will, to those who know it not, prove "a strange story."

A former owner, distinguished by his social qualities and position, in a fit of passion unfortunately killed his footman. The wretched victim had no

friends, and was therefore not missed, and the only person, besides his slayer, aware of his death, and how it was caused, was the butler. The crime was therefore successfully concealed, and no inquiries made. But after a little time the butler began to use his knowledge for his own personal purposes.

Putting the pressure of the black-mailer upon his unhappy master, he began to make him sing, by receiving as the price of his silence, first a fine picture or two, then some rare china, followed by art furniture, busts, more pictures, and more china, until he had well-nigh stripped the house.

Still, like the daughter of the horse-leech, crying, "Give, give!" he made his nominal master assign to him the entire estates, reserving only to himself a life interest, which, in his miserable state of bondage, did not last long.

The chief butler on his master's death took his name and possessions, ousting the rightful heirs; and after enjoying a wicked, but not uncommon, prosperity with his stolen goods for some years, he also died in the odour of sanctity, and went to his own place.

His successors, hearing uneasy rumours, determined to be rid of their tainted inheritance; so placed all the pictures and pretty things in the sale-market, and otherwise disposed of their ill-gotten property.

Chat No. 3.

" Where shall we adventure, to-day that we're afloat,
Wary of the weather, and steering by a star ?
Shall it be to Africa, a-steering of the boat,
To Providence, or Babylon, or off to Malabar."
—R. L. Stevenson.

THE best holiday for an over-worked man, who has little time to spare, and who has not given " hostages to fortune," is to sail across the herring-pond on a Cunarder or White Star hotel, and so get free from newspapers, letters, visitors, dinner-parties, and all the daily irritations of modern life.

Those grand Atlantic rollers fill the veins with new life, the tired brain with fresh ideas; and the happy, idle days slip away all too soon, after which a short stay in New York or Boston City, and then back again.

The study of character on board is always pleasant and instructive, and sometimes a happy friendship is begun which lasts beyond the voyage.

Then, again, the cliques into which the passengers so naturally fall, is funny to watch. The reading set, who early and late occupy the best placed chairs, and wade through a vast mass of miscellaneous literature, and are only roused therefrom by the ringing summons to meals; then there is the betting and gambling set, who fill card and smoking room as long as the rules permit, coming to the surface now and then for breath, and to see what the day's run has been,

or to organise fresh sweepstakes; then there is often an evangelical set, who gather in a ring upon the deck, if permitted, and sing hymns, and address in fervid tones the sinners around them; then there are the gossips (most pleasant folk these), the flirts, the deck pedestrians, those who dress three times a day, and those who dress hardly at all: and so the drama of a little world is played before a very appreciative little audience.

I remember on such a journey being greatly interested in the study of a delightful rugged old Scotch engineer, whose friendship I obtained by a genuine admiration for his devotion to his engines, and his belief in their personality. It was his habit in the evening, after a long day's run, to sit alongside these throbbing monsters and play his violin to them, upon which he was a

very fair performer, saying, "They deserved cheering up a bit after such a hard day's work!" This was a real and serious sentiment on his part, and inspired respect and an amused admiration on ours.

The humours of one particular voyage which I have in my memory, were delightfully intensified by the presence on board of a very charming American child, called Flossie L——, about fourteen years old, who by her capital repartees, acute observation, and pretty face, kept her particular set of friends very much alive, and made all who knew her, her devoted slaves and admirers.

Her remark upon a preternaturally grave person, who marched the deck each day before our chairs, "that she guessed he had a lot of laughter coiled up in him somewhere," proved, be-

fore the voyage was over, to be quite true.

It was this gentleman who, one morning, solemnly confided to a friend that he was a little suspicious of the drains on board !

Americanisms, which are now every one's property, were at this time—I am speaking of twenty years ago—not so common, and glided from Flossie's pretty lips most enchantingly. To be told on a wet morning, with half a gale of wind blowing, " to put on a skin-coat and gum-boots " to meet the elements, was at that day startling, if useful, advice. She professed a serious attachment for a New York cousin, aged sixteen, " Because," she said, " he is so dissolute, plays cards, smokes cigars, reads novels, and runs away when offered candy." Her quieter moments on deck were passed in reading ' Dombey

and Son,' which, when finished, she pronounced to be all wrong, "only one really nice man in the book—Carker—and he ought to have married Floey."

Mr. Hugh Childers, then First Lord of the Admiralty, was a passenger on board our boat, and having with infinite kindness and patience explained to the child our daily progress with a big chart spread on the deck and coloured pins, was somewhat startled to see her execute a *pas seul* over his precious map and disappear down the nearest gangway, with the remark, "My sakes, Mr. Childers, how terribly frivolous you are!"

She had a youthful brother on board, who, one day at dinner, astonished his table by coolly saying, as he pointed to a most inoffensive old lady dining opposite to him, "Steward, take away that woman, she makes me sick!"

A stout and amiable friend of Flossie's, who shall be nameless in these blameless records, on coming in sight of land assumed, and I fear did it very badly, some emotion at the first sight of her great country, only to be crushed by her immediate order, given in the sight and hearing of some hundred delighted passengers, "Sailor, give this trembling elephant an arm, I guess he's going to be sick!" Luckily for him the voyage was practically over, but for its small remnant he was known to every one on board as the trembling elephant.

One day a pleasant little American neighbour at dinner touched one's sense of humour by naïvely saying, "If you don't remove that nasty little boiled hen in front of you, I know I must be ill."

Then there was a dull and solemn prig

on board, who at every meal gave us, unasked, and *apropos des bottes*, some tremendous facts and statistics to digest, such as the number of shrimps eaten each year in London, or how many miles of iron tubing go to make the Saltash bridge. Finding one morning on his deck-chair, just vacated, a copy of Whitaker's Almanack and a volume of Mayhew's "London Labour and the London Poor," we recognised the source of his elucidations, and promptly consigned his precious books to a watery grave. Of that voyage, so far as he was concerned, the rest was silence.

Upon remarking to an American on board that the gentleman in question was rather slow, he brought down a Nasmyth hammer with which to crack his nut by saying, "Slow, sir; yes, he's a big bit slower than the hour hand of eternity!"

I remember on another pleasant voyage to Boston meeting and forming lasting friendship with the late Judge Abbott of that city, whose stories and conversation were alike delightful. He spoke of a rival barrister, who once before the law courts, on opening his speech for the defence of some notorious prisoner, said, "Gentlemen, I shall divide my address to you into three parts, and in the first I shall confine myself to the *Facts* of this case; secondly, I shall endeavour to explain the *Law* of this case; and finally, I shall make an all-fired rush at your passions!"

It was Judge Abbott who told me that when at the Bar he defended, and successfully, a young man charged with forging and uttering bank-notes for large values. After going fully into the case, he was entirely convinced of his

client's innocence, an impression with which he succeeded in imbuing the court. After his acquittal, his client, to mark his extreme sense of gratitude to his counsel's ability, insisted upon paying him double fees. The judge's pleasure at this compliment became modified, when it soon after proved that the said fees were remitted in notes undoubtedly forged, and for the making of which he had just been tried and found "not guilty!"

Speaking one day of the general ignorance of the people one met, he very aptly quoted one of Beecher Ward's witty aphorisms, "That it is wonderful how much knowledge some people manage to steer clear of." Another quotation of his from the same ample source, I remember especially pleased me. Speaking of the morbid manner in which many dwelt persis-

tently on the more sorrowful incidents and accidents of their lives, he said, "Don't nurse your sorrows on your knee, but spank them and put them to bed!"

On one visit to the States I took a letter of special commendation to the worthy landlord of the Parker House Hotel in Boston. On arriving I delivered my missive at the bar, was told the good gentleman was out, was duly allotted excellent rooms, and later on sat down with an English travelling companion to an equally excellent dinner in the ladies' saloon. In the middle of our repast we saw a small Jewish-looking man wending his way between the many tables in, what is literally, the marble hall, towards us. Standing beside our table, and regarding us with the benignant expression of an archbishop, he carefully, though unasked,

filled and emptied a bumper of our well-iced Pommery Greno, saying, "Now, gentlemen, don't rise, but my name's Parker!"

Upon a first visit to America few things are more striking than the originality and vigour of some of the advertisements. One advocating the use of some hair-wash or cream pleased us greatly by the simple reason it gave for its purchase, "that it was both elegant and chaste." Another huge placard represented our Queen Victoria arrayed in crown, robes, and sceptre, drinking old Jacob Townsend's Sarsaparilla out of a pewter pint-pot. I also saw a most elaborate allegorical design with life-size figures, purporting to induce you to buy and try somebody's tobacco. I remember that a tall Yankee, supposed to represent Passion, was smoking the said tobacco in a very fiery and

aggressive manner, that with one hand he was binding Youth and Folly together with chains, presumably for refusing him a light, whilst with the other he chucked Vice under the chin, she having apparently been more amenable and polite.

To note how customs change, I one day in New York entered a car in the Broadway, taking the last vacant seat. A few minutes, and we stopped again to admit a stout negress laden with her market purchases. The car was hot, and I was glad to yield her my seat, and stand on the cooler outside platform. She took it with a wide grin, saying with a dramatic wave of her dusky paw, "You, sir, am a gentleman, de rest am 'ogs!" a speech which would not so many years ago have probably cost her her life at the next lamp-post.

A Washington doctor once told me the following little story, which seems to hold a peculiar humour of its own. A country lad and lassie, promised lovers, are in New York for a day's holiday. He takes her into one of those sugar-candy, preserved fruit, ice, and pastry shops which abound, and asks her tenderly what she'll have? She thinks she'll try a brandied peach. The waiter places a large glass cylinder holding perhaps a couple of dozen of them on their table, so that they may help themselves. These peaches, be it known, are preserved in a spirituous syrup, with the whole kernels interspersed, and are very expensive. To the horror of the young man, the girl just steadily worked her way through the whole bottleful. Having accomplished this feat without turning a hair, she pauses, when the lover, in a

delicate would-be sarcastic note, asks with effusion, if she won't try another peach? To which the girl coyly answers, "No thank you, I don't like them, the seeds scratch my throat!"

As is well known, most of the waiters and servants in American hotels are Irish. Dining with a dear old Canadian friend at the Windsor Hotel in New York, we were particularly amused by the quaint look and speech of the Irish gentleman who condescended to bring us our dinner. He had a face like an unpeeled kidney potato, with twinkling merry little blue eyes. Not feeling well, I had prescribed for myself a water diet during the meal, and hoped my guest would atone for my shortcomings with the wine. After he had twice helped himself to champagne, the while I modestly sipped my seltzer, my waiter's indignation at what he

supposed was nothing less than base treachery, found vent in the following stage-aside to me: "Hev an oi, sorr, on your frind, he's a-gaining on ye!"

Chat No. 4.

" Give them strength to brook and bear,
Trial pain, and trial care ;
Let them see Thy saving light ;
Be Thou ' Watchman of their night.' "
—Sabbath Evening Song.

ARMED with a special order of the then Lord Mayor, Sir Robert Nicholas Fowler, I sallied forth one lovely blue day in June, and timidly rang the little brass bell beside the little green door giving into Newgate Prison.

The gaol is now only used to house the prisoners on the days of trial, and for executions on the days of expiation ;

at other times, save for the presence of a couple of warders, it is entirely empty, and empty it was on this my day of call.

Presenting my mandate to the very civil warder who replied to my summons, I was (he having to guard the door) handed to his colleague's care, to be shown the mysteries of this great silent tomb, lying so gloomily amid the City's stir.

The first point of interest was the chapel, with that terribly suggestive chair, standing alone in the centre of the floor opposite the pulpit, on which the condemned used to sit the Sunday before his dreadful death, and, the observed of all the other prisoners, heard his own funeral sermon preached—a refinement of cruelty difficult to understand in this very Christian country. Then followed a visit to the condemned cells, two in number, and which are

situated far below the level of the outside street. They are small square rooms with whitewashed walls, enlivened by one or two peculiarly ill-chosen texts; in each is a fixed truckle bedstead, with a warder's fixed seat on either side. The warder in attendance stated that he had passed many nights in them with condemned prisoners, and had rarely found his charges either restless or unable to sleep well, long, and calmly!

There is an old story told of a murderer, about whose case some doubt was raised, and to whom the prison chaplain, as he lay under sentence of death, lent a Bible. In due course a free pardon arrived, and as the prisoner left the gaol, he turned to the chaplain saying, "Well, sir, here's your Bible; many thanks for the loan of it, and I only hope I shall never want it again."

Then we visited the pinioning room; this process is carried out by strapping on a sort of leather strait-waistcoat, with buckles at the back and outside sockets for the arms and wrists. While putting on one of these, I found the leather was cold and damp; it then occurred to me, with some horror, that it was still moist with the death-sweat of the executed.

The scaffold stands alone across one of the yards, in a little wooden building not inappropriately like a butcher's shop. When used, the large shutter in front is let down, and the interior is seen to consist of a heavy cross-beam on two uprights, a link or two of chain in the middle, a very deep drop, with padded leather sides to deaden the sound of the falling platform, a covered space on one side for the coffin, and on the other a strong lever, such as is

used on railways to move the points, and which here draws the bolt, releasing the platform on which the culprit stands; a high stool for the victim, should he prove nervous or faint—and that is all the furniture and fittings of this gruesome building.

The dark cell is perhaps the most dreadful part of this peculiarly ghastly show, and after being shut in it for a few minutes, which seemed hours, one fully understood its terrific taming power over the most rebellious prisoners: you are literally enveloped in a sort of velvety blackness that can be felt, which, with the absolute and awful silence, seemed to force the blood to the head and choke one.

Upon asking the warder to tell us something of the idiosyncrasies of the more celebrated criminals he had known, he stated that Wainright the murderer

was the most talkative, vain, and boastful person he had seen there, that his craving for tobacco was curiously extreme, and he was immensely gratified when the governor of the prison promised him a large cigar the night before his execution. The promise kept, he walked up and down the yard with the governor, detailing with unctuous pleasure his youthful amours and deceptions, like another Pepys. "But," added my informant, "the pleasantest, cheeriest man we ever had to hang in my time was Dr. Lampson, full of fun and anecdote, with nice manners that made him friends all round. He was outwardly very brave in facing his fate, and yet, as he walked to the scaffold, those behind him saw all the back muscles writhing, working, and twitching like snakes in a bag, and thus belying the calm face and gentle smile

in front. Ah! we missed him very much indeed, and were very sorry to lose him. A real gentleman he was in every way!"

It was pleasant, and a vast relief after this strange experience, to emerge suddenly from this dream of mad, sad, bad things into the roar of the City streets, to see the blue sky, and find men's faces looking once again pleasantly into our own; but, nevertheless, Newgate should be seen by the curious, and those who can do so without coercion, before it disappears.

Chat No. 5.

"To all their dated backs he turns you round:
These Aldus printed, those Du Sueil has bound."
—POPE.

IT is the present fashion to extol the old bookbinders at the expense of the living, and for collectors to give fabulous prices for a volume bound by De Thou, Geoffroy Tory, Philippe le Noir, the two Eves (Nicolas and Clovis), Le Gascon, Derome, and others.

Beautiful, rare, and interesting as their work is, I venture to say that we have

modern bookbinders in England and France who can, and do, if you give them plenty of time and a free hand as to price, produce work as fine, as original, as closely thought out, as beautiful in design, material, and colour, as that of any of the great masters of the craft of olden days.

For perfectly simple work of the best kind, examine the bindings of the late Francis Bedford ; and his name reminds me of a curious freak of the late Duke of Portland in relation to this art. He subscribed for all the ordinary newspapers and magazines of the day, and instead of consigning them to the waste-paper basket when read, had them whole bound in beautiful crushed morocco coats of many colours by the said Bedford ; then he had perfectly fitting oaken boxes made, lined with white velvet, and fitted with a patent Bramah lock and

duplicate keys, each box to hold one volume, the total cost of thus habiting this literary rubbish being about £40 a volume. Bedford kept a special staff of expert workmen upon this curious standing order until the Duke died. By his will he, unfortunately, made them heirlooms, otherwise they would have sold well as curiosities, many bibliophiles liking to have possessed a volume with so odd a history. Soon after the Duke's death I went over the well-known house in Cavendish Square with my kind friend Mr. Woods of King Street, and he showed me piles of these boxes, each containing its beautifully bound volume of uselessness.

But to return to our sheepskins. I would ask, where can you see finer workmanship than Mr. Joseph W. Zaehnsdorf puts into his enchanting covers? He once produced two lovely

pieces of softly tanned, vellum-like leather of the purest white colour, and asked if I knew what they were. After some ineffectual guesses, he stated that the one with the somewhat coarser texture was a man's skin, and the finer specimen a woman's. The idea was disagreeable, and I declined to purchase or to have any volumes belonging to my simple shelves clothed in such garments.

An English bookbinder who made a name in his day was Hayday; he flourished (as the biographical dictionaries are fond of saying) in the beginning of the present reign. I possess Samuel Rogers' "Poems" and "Italy," in two quarto volumes, bound by him very charmingly. In this size Turner's drawings, which illustrate these two books, are shown to admiration, and alone galvanise these otherwise dreary works. Hayday was succeeded by one

Mansell, who also did some good work; but I think domestic affliction beclouded his later years, and affected his business, as I have lost sight of him for some years.

Among other English bookbinders of the present day I would name Tout, whose simple, Quaker-like work, with Grolier tooling, is worth seeing. Mackenzie was, in his day, a good old Scotch binder; but the treasure I have personally found and introduced to many, is my excellent friend Mr. Birdsall of Northampton. His specialty is supposed to be in vellum bindings, which material he manipulates with a grace and finish very satisfactory to see. He can make the hinges of a vellum-bound book swing as easily as a friend's door. He spares no time, thought, or trouble in working out suitable designs for the books entrusted to his care. For in-

stance, I possess Benjamin D'Israeli's German Grammar, used by him when a boy, and to bind it as he felt it deserved, he specially cast a brass stamp, with D'Israeli's crest, which, impressed adown the back and on the panels, correctly finishes this interesting memento. Then, again, when he had Beau Brummell's "Life" to work upon, he used dies representing a poppy, as an emblem flower, a money-bag, very empty, and a teasel, signifying the hanger-on: these show thought, as well as a pleasant fancy, and greatly add to the interest of the completed binding.

I have some work by M. Marius Michel, the great French binder, whose show-cases in the Faubourg-Saint-Germain, in Paris, were a treat to examine. He was kind enough to let me one fine day select and take therefrom two volumes of E. A. Poe's works translated

and noted by Beaudelaire, beautifully clothed by him; and he, at the same visit, gave me an autograph copy of his "L'Ornamentation des Reliures Modernes," with which, when I returned to England, I asked Mr. Birdsall to do what he could. Set a binder to catch a binder, was in this case our motto, and Mr. Birdsall has, I think, fairly caught out his great rival, although I have not yet had an opportunity of taking M. Michel's opinion upon the Englishman's work.

. . . . .

One of the leading characteristics of the present day is its craze for work, unceasing work, work early and late, work done with a rush, destroying nerves, and rendering repose impossible. "Late taking rest and eating the bread of carefulness" do not go together, the bread being as a rule anything but carefully

consumed. R. L. Stevenson somewhere says, "So long as you are a bit of a coward, and inflexible in money matters, you fulfil the whole duty of man," and perhaps this is the creed of the present race of over-workers. In the City of London we see this hasting to be rich brought to the perfection of a Fine Art (with a capital F and a capital A).

Charles Dickens, who always resolved the wit of every question into a nut-shell, makes Eugene Wrayburn, in "Our Mutual Friend," strenuously object to being always urged forward in the path of energy.

"There's nothing like work," said Mr. Boffin; "look at the bees!"

"I beg your pardon," returned Eugene, with a reluctant smile, "but will you excuse my mentioning that I always protest against being referred to the bees? . . . I object on principle,

as a two-footed creature, to being constantly referred to insects and four-footed creatures. I object to being required to model my proceedings according to the proceedings of the bee, or the dog, or the spider, or the camel. I fully admit that the camel, for instance, is an excessively temperate person; but he has several stomachs to entertain himself with, and I have only one." . . .

"But," urged Mr. Boffin, "I said the bee, they work."

"Yes," returned Eugene disparagingly, "they work, but don't you think they overdo it? They work so much more than they need—they make so much more than they can eat—they are so incessantly boring and buzzing at their one idea till Death comes upon them—that don't you think they overdo it?"

Some time since I cut from the pages of the *St. James' Gazette* the following

"Cynical Song of the City," which pleasantly sets forth the present craze for work, and again proves, like Dickens' bee, that we rather overdo it :—

"Through the slush and the rain and the fog,
When a greatcoat is worth a king's ransom,
To the City we jolt and we jog
On foot, in a 'bus, or a hansom;
To labour a few years, and then have done,
A capital prospect at twenty-one!

There's a wife and three children to keep,
With chances of more in the offing;
We've a house at Earl's Court on the cheap,
And sometimes we get a day's golfing.
Well! sooner or later we'll have better fun;
The heart is still hopeful at thirty-one.

The boy's gone to college to-day,
The girls must have ladylike dresses;
Thank goodness we're able to pay—
The business has had its successes;
We must grind at the mill for the sake of our son.
Besides, we're still youngish at forty-one.

It has come! We've a house in the shires,
We're one of the land-owning gentry,
The children have all their desires,
But *we* must do more double-entry;

We must keep things together, no time left for
fun,
Ah! had we been twenty—not fifty—one!

A Baronet! J.P.! D.L.!
But it means harder work, little pleasure;
We must stick to the City as well,
Though we're tired and longing for leisure.
We shall soon become toothless, dyspeptic, and
done,
As rich as the Bank, though we can't chew a bun,
And the gold-grubber's grave is the goal that
we've won
At seventy—eighty—or ninety-one."

. . . . .

Guests at Foxwold are given the opportunity, when black Monday arrives, of catching a most unearthly and uneasily early train, which involves their rising with anything but a lark, swallowing a hurried breakfast, a mounting into fiery untamed one-horse shays soon after eight, and then being puffed away through South-Eastern tunnels to the busy hum of those unduly busy men of whom we speak.

To catch this early train, which means that you "leave the warm precincts of your cheerful bed, nor cast one longing lingering look behind," some of our friends most justly object, preferring the early calm, the well-considered uprisal, the dawdled breakfast, and the ladies' train at the maturer hour of 10.30. Our dear friend, Mr. Anstey Guthrie, having firmly and most wisely declined the early train and any consequent worm, one very chilly morn, as the early risers were starting for the station, appeared at his chamber window awfully arrayed in white, and muttering with the fervour of another John Bradford, "There goes Anstey Guthrie —but for the grace of God," plunged back into his rapidly cooling couch, "and left the world to darkness and to us."

Chat No. 6.

"It's idle to repine, I know;
I'll tell you what I'll do instead,
I'll drink my arrowroot, and go
To bed."—C. S. C.

MY good and kind old friend Robert Baxter, who now rests from his labours, was, during his long active life in Westminster (dispensing law to the rich and sharing its profits with the poor), one of the most charitable and hospitable of men.

Occasionally, however, even his goodness was taxed with such severity, as to somewhat try his patience.

The once well-known Mrs. X—— of A——, a philanthropic but foolish old woman, arrived late one evening, uninvited, at his house in Queen's Square, suffering from the first symptoms of rheumatic fever. Calmly establishing herself in the best guest-chamber, and surrounded by the necessary maid, nurse, and doctor, she turned her kind host's dwelling into a private hospital for many weeks. When at last she reached the stage of convalescence, and was allowed to take daily outings and airings, Mr. Baxter's capital old butler, Sage, had the privilege of carrying the fair but weighty invalid downstairs to the carriage, and upstairs to her rooms once, and often twice, a day. No small effort for any man's strength, however athletic he might be, and Sage, be it conceded, was a moderate giant.

The weeks dragged themselves away, and at last the welcome date for a final flitting to her own home arrived. Sage felt that he had well earned an extraordinary douceur for all his labours, and was not therefore surprised when the good lady on leaving slipped into his willing hand a suggestive looking folded-up blue slip of paper instead of the more limited gold. Retiring to his pantry to satisfy his very natural curiosity as to the amount of the vail so fully deserved, his feelings may be imagined, but not described, when he found that instead of the expected cheque, it was what, in evangelical circles, is called a leaflet, bearing on its face the following appropriate and cheerful text: "Thou fool! this night thy soul shall be required of thee!"

Whilst upon the subject of misapplied texts, another instance, touched

with a pleasant humour, occurs to me. Many years ago I visited for the first time an old friend and his wife in their pleasant country house. Upon being shown into what was evidently one of the best guest-chambers, I was intensely delighted to find over the mantelpiece the following framed text, in large illuminated letters: "Occupy till I come!" Unprepared to make so long a stay, I left on the Monday morning following, and have no doubt the generous invitation stills remains to welcome the coming guest.

Another story of a like nature was told us by Mr. Anstey Guthrie, and is therefore worth repeating. He once saw a long procession of happy school-children going to some feast, headed by a band of music and a standard-bearer. The latter was staggering beneath an immense banner, on which

was painted the Lion of Saint Mark's, rampant, with mouth, teeth, and claws ready and rapacious; underneath was the singularly appropriate and happy legend, "Suffer little children to come unto Me."

Another capital story from the same source, which time cannot wither, nor custom stale, is, that at some small English seaside resort a spirited and generous townsman has presented a number of free seats for the parade, each one adorned with an iron label stating that "Mr. Jones of this town presented these free seats for the public's use, the sea is his, and he made it."

Chat No. 7.

"Where are my friends? I am alone;
No playmate shares my beaker:
Some lie beneath the churchyard stone,
And some—before the Speaker:
And some compose a tragedy,
And some compose a rondo;
And some draw sword for Liberty,
And some draw pleas for John Doe."
—W. M. Praed.

"*All analysis comes late.*"—Aurora Leigh.

THE difficulty which has existed since Lord Tennyson's dramatic death, of choosing a successor to the Laureateship, has partly arisen from the presence of so many minor

poets, and the absence, with one remarkable exception, of any monarch of song.

The exception is, of course, Mr. Swinburne, who stands alone as the greatest living master of English verse. The objections to his appointment may, in some eyes, have importance, but time has sobered his more erratic flights, leaving a large residuum of fine work, both in poetry and prose, which would make him a worthy successor to any of those gone before.

Of the smaller fry, it is difficult to prophesy which will hereafter come to the front, and what of their work may live.

As Oliver Wendell Holmes so pathetically says :—

> " Deal gently with us, ye who read!
> Our largest hope is unfulfilled;
> The promise still outruns the deed;
> The tower, but not the spire we build.

Our whitest pearl we never find;
Our ripest fruit we never reach;
The flowering moments of the mind,
Lose half their petals in our speech."

The late Lord Lytton (Owen Meredith) was very unequal in all he produced. Perhaps the following ballad from his volume of "Selected Poems," published in 1894 by Longmans, is one of the best and most characteristic he has written :—

THE WOOD DEVIL.

I.

"In the wood, where I wander'd astray,
Came the Devil a-talking to me,
O mother! mother!
But why did ye tell me, and why did they say,
That the Devil's a horrible blackamoor? He
Black-faced and horrible? No, mother, no!
And how should a poor girl be likely to know
That the Devil's so gallant and gay, mother?
So gentle and gallant and gay,
With his curly head, and his comely face,
And his cap and feather, and saucy grace,
Mother! mother!

II.

And 'Pretty one, whither away?
And shall I come with you?' said he.
O mother! mother!
And so winsome he was, not a word could I say,
And he kiss'd me, and sweet were his kisses to me,
And he kiss'd me, and kiss'd till I kiss'd him again,
And O, not till he left me I knew to my pain
'Twas the Devil that led me astray, mother!
The Devil so gallant and gay,
With his curly head, and his comely face,
And his cap and feather, and saucy grace,
Mother! mother!"

Mr. Edmund Gosse's work is always scholarly and well thought out, framed in easy, pleasant English. In some of his poems he reminds one of the "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table." His song of the "Wounded Gull" is very like Dr. Holmes, both in subject and treatment:—

"The children laughed, and called it tame!
But ah! one dark and shrivell'd wing
Hung by its side; the gull was lame,
A suffering and deserted thing.

With painful care it downward crept;
Its eye was on the rolling sea;
Close to our very feet, it stept
Upon the wave, and then—was free.

Right out into the east it went
Too proud, we thought, to flap or shriek;
Slowly it steered, in wonderment
To find its enemies so meek.

Calmly it steered, and mortal dread
Disturbed nor crest nor glossy plume;
It could but die, and being dead,
The open sea should be its tomb.

We watched it till we saw it float
Almost beyond our furthest view;
It flickered like a paper boat,
Then faded in the dazzling blue.

It could but touch an English heart
To find an English bird so brave;
Our life-blood glowed to see it start
Thus boldly on the leaguered wave."

A few fortunate persons possess copies of Mr. Gosse's catalogue of his library, and it is, I rejoice to say, on the Foxwold shelves. It is a most charming work, reflecting on every page, by many subtle touches, the refined humour and

wide knowledge of the collector. Mr. Austin Dobson wrote for the final fly-leaf as follows :—

> "I doubt your painful Pedants who
> Can read a dictionary through ;
> But he must be a dismal dog,
> Who can't enjoy this Catalogue !"

Of the little mutual admiration and log-rolling society, whose headquarters are in Vigo Street, no serious account need be taken. Time will deal with these very minor poets, and whether kindly or not, Time will prove. They may possibly be able to await the verdict with a serene and confident patience —and so can we. An exception may perhaps be made for some of Mr. Arthur Symon's "Silhouettes," as the following extract will show :—

> "Emmy's exquisite youth and her virginal air,
> Eyes and teeth in the flash of a musical smile,
> Come to me out of the past, and I see her there
> As I saw her once for a while.

Emmy's laughter rings in my ears, as bright,
Fresh and sweet as the voice of a mountain brook,
And still I hear her telling us tales that night,
Out of Boccaccio's book.

There, in the midst of the villainous dancing-hall,
Leaning across the table, over the beer,
While the music maddened the whirling skirts of the ball,
As the midnight hour drew near.

There with the women, haggard, painted, and old,
One fresh bud in a garland withered and stale,
She, with her innocent voice and her clear eyes, told
Tale after shameless tale.

And ever the witching smile, to her face beguiled,
Paused and broadened, and broke in a ripple of fun,
And the soul of a child looked out of the eyes of a child,
Or ever the tale was done.

O my child, who wronged you first, and began
First the dance of death that you dance so well?
Soul for soul: and I think the soul of a man
Shall answer for yours in hell."

Mr. Austin Dobson and the late Mr. Locker-Lampson are perhaps the finest

writers of *vers de Société* since Praed; whilst in the broader school of humour C. S. Calverley, Mr. Dodgson (of "Alice in Wonderland" fame), and the late James Kenneth Stephen, stand alone and unchallenged; and Mr. Watson, if health serve, will go far; and so with some pathetic words of one of these moderns we will end this somewhat aimless chat:—

"My heart is dashed with cares and fears,
My song comes fluttering and is gone;
Oh, high above this home of tears,
Eternal joy,—sing on."

Chat No. 8.

" Punch ! in the presence of the passengers."

WITHIN the past year certain gentle disputes and friendly discussions as to the origin of *Punch*, and who its first real editor was, and whether or no Henry Mayhew evolved it with the help of suitable friends in a debtor's prison, remind us that Foxwold possesses some rather curious " memories " of this famous paper.

These disputes should now be put to rest for ever by Mr. Spielmann's

exhaustive "History of Mr. Punch," which, it may safely be supposed, appeared with some sort of authority from "Mr. Punch" himself.

One of our "Odds and Ends" is a kit-kat portrait in oil of Horace Mayhew, "Ponny," excellent both as a likeness and a work of art, which should eventually find hanging space in the celebrated *Punch* dining-room. There is also a pencil drawing of him, in which "the Count," as he was called, is dressed in the smartest fashion of that day, and crowned with a D'Orsay hat, resplendent, original, and gay.

He made a rather unhappy marriage late in his life, and found that habits from which he was not personally free showed themselves rather frequently in his wife's conduct. One day, in a state of emotion and whisky and water, he pressed Mark Lemon's hand, and, bursting

into tears, murmured, "My dear friend, she drinks! she drinks!!" "All right," was the editor's cheery reply, "my dear boy; cheer up, so do you!"

Near by hangs a characteristic pencil sketch of Douglas Jerrold, who, if small, was no hunchback (as has been lately stated), but was a very neatly made, active little man, with a grand head covered with a profusion of lightish hair, which he had a trick of throwing back, like a lion's mane, and a pair of bright piercing blue eyes. There is an engraving of a bust of him prefixed to his life (written by his son, Blanchard Jerrold), which well conveys the nobility of the well-set head. Then comes a capital drawing of Kenny Meadows in profile, and a thoroughly characteristic Irish phiz it is.

These pencil portraits are all from the gifted hand of Mr. George Augustus

Sala, and formerly belonged to Horace Mayhew himself. Mr. Sala, as is now well known by means of his auto-biography, was once an artist and book-illustrator, and Foxwold is the proud possessor of the only picture in oil extant from his brush. It is called "Saturday Night in a Gin-Palace": it is full of a Hogarthian power, and by its execution, drawing, and colour shows that had Mr. Sala made painting his profession instead of literature, he would have gone far and fared well. The little picture is signed "G. A. Sala," and was found many years ago in an old house in Brompton, when the present owner secured it for a moderate sum, and then wrote to Mr. Sala asking if the picture was authentic. A reply was received by the next post, in the beautiful handwriting for which he is famous, and runs as follows:—

46 Mecklenburgh Square, W.C.,
Tuesday, Twenty-fifth June 1878.

"Dear Sir,

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your courteous and (to me) singularly interesting note.

"Yes, the little old oil-picture of the 'Gin-Palace Bar' is mine sure enough. I can remember it as distinctly as though it had been painted yesterday. Great casks of liquor in the background; little stunted figures (including one of a dustman with a shovel) in the foreground. Details executed with laborious niggling minuteness; but the whole work must be now dingy and faded to almost total obscuration, since I remember that in painting it I only used turpentine for a medium, the spirit of which must have long since 'flown,' and left the pigment flat or 'scaly.'

"The thing was done in Paris six-and-twenty years ago (Ap. 1852), and being brought to London, was sold to the late Adolphus Ackermann, of the bygone art-publishing firm of Ackermann & Co., 96 Strand (premises now occupied by E. Rimmel, the perfumer), for the sum of five

pounds. I hope that you did not give more than a few shillings for it, for it was a vile little daub. I was at the time when I produced it an engraver and lithographer, and I believe that Mr. Ackermann only purchased the picture with a view to encourage me to 'take up' oil-painting. But I did not do so. I 'took up' literature instead, and a pretty market I have brought my pigs to! At all events, *you* possess the only picture in oil extant from the brush of

Yours very faithfully,

GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA."

To H. N. PYM, Esq.

When Mr. Sala afterwards called to see the picture, he altered his mind as to its being "a vile little daub," and found the colours as fresh and bright as when painted. We greatly value it, if only as the cause of a lasting friendship it started with the artist.

His own portrait by Vernet, in pen and ink, now graces our little gallery;

it is a back view, taken amidst his books, and a most characteristic and excellent likeness of this accomplished and versatile gentleman.*

One of our guest-chambers is solemnly dedicated to the honour and glory of "Mr. Punch," and on its walls hang some original oil sketches by John Leech, drawings by Charles Keene, Mr. Harry Furniss, Randolph Caldecote, Mr. Bernard Partridge, Mr. Anstey Guthrie, and Mr. Du Maurier; whilst kindly caricatures of some of the staff, and a print of the celebrated dinner-table, signed by the contributors, complete the decoration of a very cheery little room.

* Whilst these pages are passing through the press, George Augustus Sala has been mercifully permitted to rest from his labours. An unfortunate adventure with a new paper brought about serious troubles, physical and financial, and ended his useful and hard-working life in gloom: as Mr. Bancroft (a mutual friend) observed to the editor of this volume, "It is so sad when the autumn of such a life is tempestuous."—*December* 8, 1895.

Chat No. 9.

"Then be contented. Thou hast got
The most of heaven in thy young lot;
There's sky-blue in thy cup!
Thou'lt find thy Manhood all too fast—
Soon come, soon gone! and Age at last,
A sorry breaking-up."

—THOMAS HOOD.

IT was my good fortune some short time since to revisit that most educational of English towns, Bedford, and having many years ago had the extreme privilege of being a Bedford schoolboy, I was able to draw a comparison between then and now.

In the good old days these admirable

schools were managed in the good old way—plenty of classics, plenty of swishing, plenty of cricket and boating, and plenty of holidays. We sometimes turned out boys who afterwards made their mark in the big world, and the School Registers are proud to contain the names of such men as Burnell, the Oriental scholar, who out-knowledged even Sir William Jones in this respect; Colonel Fred. Burnaby, brave soldier and attractive travel writer; Inverarity, the lion-hunter and crack shot; Sir Henry Hawkins, stern judge and brilliant wit, and many others of like degree. Nor must we forgot that John Bunyan here learnt sufficient reading and writing to enable him in after years to pen his marvellous Book during his imprisonment in Bedford Gaol, which was then situated midway on the bridge over the river Ouse.

In that wonderful monument to the courage and enterprise of Mr. George Smith (kindest of friends and best of publishers), "The National Dictionary of Biography," the record is frequent of men who owed their education and perhaps best chance in the life they afterwards made a success, to Bedford School, but,—

"Long hushed are the chords that my boyhood enchanted,
As when the smooth wave by the angel was stirred,
Yet still with their music is memory haunted,
And oft in my dreams are their melodies heard."

But if the good old School was a success in those bygone days, what must be said for it now, when, under the Napoleon-like administration of its present chief, the school-house has been rebuilt in its own park, upon all the best and latest known principles of comfort and sanitation, where a boy

can, besides going through the full round of usual study, follow the bent of his own peculiar taste, and find special training, whether it be in horse-shoeing or music, chemistry or wood-carving, ambulance work or drawing from the figure; whilst the beautiful river is covered with boats, the cricket-fields and football yards are crowded, and the bathing stations are a constant joy?

Truly the present generation of Bedford boys are much blessed in their surroundings; and whilst they remember with gratitude the pious founder, Sir William Harper, should strive to do credit to his name and memory by the exercise of their powers in the battle of after-life, having received so thorough and broad-minded a training in the happy and receptive days of their youth.

Bedford town is now one of the most strikingly attractive in England, with its fine river embankment, its grand old churches, its statues erected to the memory of the "inspired tinker," Bunyan, and the prison philanthropist, Howard, both of whom lived about a mile or so from the town, the former at Elstow, the latter at Cardington. It was very good and heart-restoring to revisit the hospitable old school with its pleasant surroundings and to find, as Robert Louis Stevenson says, that, —

"Home from the Indies, and home from the ocean,
Heroes and soldiers they all shall come home;
Still they shall find the old mill-wheel in motion,
Turning and churning that river to foam."

. . . . .

Since printing our last little "Tour Round the Bookshelves," in which we ventured to include some capital lines by our evergreen and many-sided

friend Rudolf Chambers Lehmann, he has again added to the interest of our Visitors' Book under the following circumstances. Guests and home-birds were all resting after the exhausting idleness of an Easter holiday when they were suddenly aroused from their day-dreams by loud cries of "Fire!" accompanied by the sound of horses and chariots approaching the house at full speed. On looking out, like Sister Anne or a pretty page, we were able to assuage our guests' natural alarm by explaining that the local fire brigade were practising upon our vile bodies and dwelling, and if fear existed, danger did not. On their ultimately retiring, satisfied with their mock efforts, and fortified by beer, our welcome guest wrote with his usual flying pen the following characteristic lines to commemorate their visit :—

"FIRE! FIRE!!"

(AN EASTER MONDAY INCIDENT.)

"A day of days, an April day;
Cool air without, and cloudless sun;
Within, upon the ordered tray,
Cakes, and the luscious Sally-Lunn.
Since Pym has walked, and Guthrie climbed
To rob some feathered songster's nest,
Their toil needs tea, the hour has chimed—
Pour, lady, pour, and let them rest.

But hark! what sound disturbs their tea,
And clatters up the carriage drive?
A dinner guest? it cannot be;
No, no, the hour is only five.
What sight is this the fates disclose,
That breaks upon our startled view?
Two horses, countless yards of hose,
Nine firemen, and an engine too.

Where burns the fire? Tush, 'tis but sport;
The horses stop, the men descend,
Take hoses long, and hoses short,
And fit them deftly end to end.
Attention! lo their chieftain calls—
They run, they answer to their names,
And hypothetic water falls
In streams upon imagined flames.

Well done, ye braves, 'twas nobly done;
Accept, the peril past, our thanks;
Though all your toil was only fun,
And air was all that filled your tanks:
No, not for nought you came and dared,
Return in peace, and drink your fill;
It was, as Mrs. Pym declared,
'A highly interesting drill.'"

April 3, 1893.

Another poet whose pen sometimes gilds our modest Record of Angels' Visits, is a well-beloved cousin, Harry Luxmoore by name, at Eton known so well. His Christmas greeting for 1890 shall here appear, and prove to him how deep is Foxwold's affectionate obligation for wishes so delightfully expressed :—

"Glooms overhead a frozen sky,
Rings underfoot a snow-ribbed earth,
Yet somewhere slumbering sunbeams lie,
And somewhere sleeps the coming birth.

Folded in root and grain is lying,
The bud, the bloom we soon may see,
And in the old year now a-dying
Is hid the new year that shall be.

O what if snows be deep? so shrouded
  Matures the soil with promise rife
And sap, for all the skies be clouded,
  Ripens at heart a lustier life.

Then welcome winter—while we shiver
  Strength harbours deeper, and the blast
Of sounder, manlier force the giver
  Strips off betimes our withered past.

Come bud and bloom, come fruit and flower,
  Come weal, come woe, as best may be,
Still may the New Year's hidden dower
  Be good for you and Horace, and all the little
    ones, and good for me."

Chat No. 10.

"My ears are deaf with this impatient crowd:
Their wants are now grown mutinous and loud."
—DRYDEN.

THE following graphic account of the rising in Paris in 1848 was written by John Poole to Charles Dickens, and was recently found amongst the papers of Mrs. John Forster, the widow of the well-known writer, Dickens' friend and biographer, and is, I think, worthy of print.

John Poole was a some-time celebrated character, having written that

evergreen play "Paul Pry," as well as "Little Pedlington," and other humorous works mostly now forgotten.

As he grew old poverty came to bear him company, and was only prevented from causing him actual suffering by the usual generosity of Dickens and other members of that charmed circle, further aided by a small Government grant, obtained for him by the same faithful friend from Lord John Russell.

The letter is addressed to

CHARLES DICKENS, Esq.,
No. 1 Devonshire Terrace,
York Gate, Regent's Park,
LONDON,

and deals with the celebrated uprisal of the French mob, when a force of 75,000 regulars and nearly 200,000 National Guards was massed round Paris to resist it. The carnage was terrible, some 8000 persons being killed

on both sides, and 14,000 insurgents made prisoners.

It was only by General Cavaignac's firmness and tactful management under Lamartine's directions, that the mob was reduced and the Republican Government established. The general was afterwards nearly elected President of the French Republic, receiving 1,448,000 votes, but Prince Louis Napoleon beat him, and, as history tells, held the reins in various capacities for the next twenty eventful years.

Poole's letter, as that of an eye-witness, gives a remarkably clear impression of the scene as it appeared in his orbit. Dickens, on receiving it, evidently sent it the round of his friends, and it then remained in John Forster's possession until his death.

"(PARIS), *Saturday*, 8 *July* 1848.

"MY DEAR DICKENS,

I wrote to you through the Embassy on the 22nd June, giving you an address for the three last Dombeys, and enclosing a catalogue of the ex-King's wine; and on the 16th I sent you a word in a letter to Macready. Dombeys not yet arrived, and I shall wait no longer to acknowledge their arrival (as I have been doing), but at once proceed to give you a few lines. Since the day of my writing to you I have lived four years: Friday (the 23rd), Saturday, Sunday, Monday, each a year.

"The proceedings of the three days of February were mere child's-play compared with these. Never shall I forget them, for they showed me scenes of blood and death. Friday morning the '*rappel*' was beat—always a disagreeable hint. Presently I heard discharges of musketry, then they beat the '*générale*.' My *concierge* ran into my room, and, with a long white face, told me the mob had erected huge barricades in the Faubourg-Saint-Denis, and above, down to

the Porte St. Denis, and that tremendous fighting was going on there. (The Porte St. Denis bears marks of the fray.) 'Then, Madame Blanchard,' I said, 'as you seem to be breaking out again, I shall take a *sac-de-nuit*, and say adieu to you till you shall have returned to your good behaviour.'—'But monsieur could not get away for love or money—the insurgents have possession of the Chemin de Fer, and had torn up the rails as far as St. Denis.' This was what she had been told, so I went out to ascertain the fact.

"Impossible to approach that quarter, and difficult to turn the corner of a street without interruption—groups of fifteen, twenty, thirty, fifty, in blouses, dotted all about. Towards evening matters seemed rather more tranquil, and between six and seven o'clock I contrived (though not easily) to make my way to Sestels, in the Rue St. Honoré (one of the very best of the second-rate restaurateurs in Paris, 'which note'). The large saloon was filled with men in uniform, National Guards chiefly, and only two women there. I was there about an hour, and in that time three dead bodies

were carried past on covered litters. It was thought the disturbances were pretty well over, as a powerful body of troops had been ordered down to the scene of action.

"At about eight o'clock I went out for the purpose of making a visit in the Rue d'Enghien, but found the whole width of the Boulevard Montmartre, which, as you know, leads to the Boulevard St. Denis, defended by a compact body of National Guards—impassable! Between nine and ten o'clock three regiments of cavalry, with cannon—a long, long procession—marched in the direction of the scene of insurrection. This was a comforting sight, and as such everybody seemed to consider it, and I went home. And this was Midsummer Eve!—Walpurgis Night!

"The next day, Saturday, Midsummer Day, I never shall forget! Sleep had been hopeless—the night had been disturbed by the frequent beating of the '*générale*' and the cry '*Aux Armes!*' Every now and then I looked up at the sky, expecting to see it red from some direful conflagration. Day came, and soon the firing of musketry was heard, now from the direction of the Faubourg-Saint-

Antoine, now from the Faubourg-Saint-Marceaux. Then came the heavy booming of cannon—death in every echo! From twelve till nearly one, and again after a pause, it was dreadful. (I cannot make 'fun' of this, like the facetious correspondent of the *Morning Post*. Who is he? Surely he must be an ex-reporter for the Cobourg Play-house, with his vulgar, ill-timed play-house quotations. I am utterly disgusted and revolted at the tasteless levity with which he describes scenes of blood and destruction and death, and so treats of matters, all of which require grave and sober handling. And then he describes, as an eye-witness, things which, happen though they did, I am certain he could not have been present to see.)

"Well, as we were soon to be in a state of siege, and strictly confined to home, I can tell you nothing but what I saw here on this very spot. One event is a remembrance for life. In this house lived General de Bourgon, one of what they call the 'old Africans.' In the course of the morning General Korte (another of them) called on him, and said, 'I dare say Cavaignac has plenty to do. I will go and ask him if we can be of any service

to him. If we can, I will send for you, so keep yourself in the way.' He was in Paris 'on leave,' and had no horse with him, so he sent Blanchard (the *concierge*) to the *manége*, which is in the next street, to inquire whether they had a horse that would 'stand fire.' Yes; but they would not let it go out. The next message intimated that they must send it, or it would be taken by force. At about two o'clock, going out, I met, coming out of his apartments on the second floor (I, you know, am on the fourth), General de Bourgon, in plain clothes, accompanied by his wife and his sister-in-law—the latter a very beautiful woman, somewhat in the style of Mrs. Norton. As usual, we exchanged *bon-jours* in passing. I went as far as the boulevard at the end of the street. There was a strong guard at the 'Hotel des Affaires Étrangers,' and there I was stopped. An officer of the National Guard asked me whether I was proceeding in the direction of my residence. Answering in the negative, he said (but with great courtesy), 'Then, sir, I advise you to return; it is in your interest I do so; besides' (pointing in the direction where was heard a heavy firing), 'd'ailleurs,

monsieur, ce n'est pas aujourd'hui un jour de promenade.'

"I returned, and tried by the Place Vendôme, but about half-way up the Rue de la Paix was again stopped. After loitering about for an hour, and unable to get anything in the shape of positive information, I returned home. Shortly after three I saw the General de Bourgon in full uniform, and on horseback. He proceeded a few paces, stopped to have one of his stirrup-leathers adjusted, and then, followed by an orderly, went off at a brisk trot. Soon afterwards a guard was placed in the middle and at each end of this street; no one was allowed to loiter, or to quit it but with good reason, and only then was passed on by one sentinel to the next, so from that moment I was not out of the house till Monday morning.

"At about half-past six the street—usually a noisy one—being perfectly still, I heard the measured tramp of feet approaching from the direction of the boulevard. I went to the window, and saw about fifteen or eighteen soldiers, some bearing, and the rest guarding, a litter, on which was stretched a wounded officer. He was bare-headed, his

black stock had been removed, his coat thrown wide open, and over his left thigh was spread a soldier's grey greatcoat. To my horror the procession stopped at this door. It was the General brought home desperately wounded! I ran down and saw him brought up to his apartment, crying out with agony at every shake he received on the winding, slippery staircase. On the following Friday (the 30th), at eleven o'clock at noon, after severe suffering, he died. In the course of the day I saw him; his neck was uncovered, and the eyes open (a painter had been making a sketch of him)—he looked like one in placid contemplation. Previously to the fatal result, at one of my frequent visits of inquiry, I saw Madame de Bourgon (the sister-in-law). She replied mournfully, but without apparent emotion, 'We are in hopes they will be able to perform the amputation to-morrow.' (They could not.) 'But see! he has passed his life, as it were, on the field of battle—twelve years in Africa —and to fall in this way! But it was his duty to go out.'

"'And, madame, how is she?'

"'Eh, mon Dieu, monsieur! how would

you have her be? But a soldier's wife must be prepared for these things.'

"(She, the sister-in-law, is the wife of the general's brother, Colonel de Bourgon.) His friend, General Korte, too, was wounded, but not dangerously.

"In all the African campaigns only two generals were killed, in these street fights six! But the insurgents fought at tremendous advantage. On that said Saturday afternoon two incidents occurred, trifling if you will, but they struck me. A large flight of crows passed over, taking a direction towards the prison of St. Lazare, showing that fighting was murderous; and a rainbow (one of the most beautiful I ever saw) rested like an arch on the line of roof of the opposite houses. Beneath it seemed to come the noise of the fight; the sign of peace and the sounds of war and death. Mrs. Norton could make a verse or two out of this. This was Midsummer's Day!

"Our Midsummer Night's dreams were not pleasant, believe me. No—there was no sleep on that night—a night of terrible anxiety. Paris was in a state of siege—no one allowed to be out of the house, nor a

window permitted to be opened. All night was heard in ceaseless round, from the sentinel under my very window—'Sentinelle prenez garde à vous.' I can hardly describe by words the peculiar tone in which this was uttered, but the syllable 'nelle' was accented, and the word 'vous' was uttered briskly and sharply, like a sort of bark. This was given *fortissimo*—repeated by the next *forte*—beyond him, *piano*—further on, *pianissimo* — till it returned, louder and louder, and then died away again, and so on, and on, and on till daybreak. Then was beat the '*rappel*'—then the '*générale*' —then again the firing.

"This was Sunday morning, and from five o'clock till ten at night was not the happiest, but the longest day of my life. Any sort of occupation was out of the question. Each hour appeared a day. Impossible to get out, or to receive a visit, or to send a message, or to procure any reliable information as to what was going on, or how or when these doings were likely to end. All was doubt, uncertainty, dread and anxiety intolerable. The only information to be procured was from the bearers of some wounded men as

they passed now and then to the Ambulance (the temporary hospital established at the Church of the Assumption). But no two accounts were alike. I was suffering deep anxiety concerning a good kind French family of my acquaintance, living within a five minutes' walk of this place. 'Could I by any possibility procure a commissionaire to carry a note for me? I'll give him five francs (the hire being ten sous).' 'Not, sir,' said my *concierge*, 'if you would give a hundred!' The poor general wanted some soldiers from the barracks (next to the Assumption) to carry an order for him. After great difficulty the wife of the *concierge* was allowed to go and fetch one; but she was searched for ammunition by the first sentinel, and then passed on thus and back again from one to another. No post in—no letters—no newspapers. At length, at a month's end, night came. That night like the last—'Sentinelle prenez garde à vous,' &c. &c.

"On Monday morning (26th), after a sleepless night—for, for any means we had of knowing to the contrary, the insurgents might at any moment be expected to attack

this quarter, a quarter marked down by them for fire and pillage—at about eight o'clock, I lay down on a sofa and slept soundly till ten; I awoke, and was struck by the appalling silence! This is a noisy street. Always from about seven in the morning till late in the day one's head is distracted by the shrill cries of itinerant traders (to these are now added the cries of the vendors of cheap newspapers), the passage of carriages and carts of all descriptions, street-singers, organ-grinders endless, the screeching of parrots and barking of dogs exposed for sale by a *grocer* on the opposite side of the way, together with the swarming of his and his neighbour's dirty children—all was hushed; not a footfall, 'not (a line that is not often applicable here) a drum was heard.' Yes, I repeat it, this universal silence was appalling! Not a person, save the still guards on duty, was to be seen. The shops were all closed, and, but for this circumstance, it seemed like a Sunday! Strange! (and I find it was the same with many other persons to whom I have mentioned the circumstance) I was uncertain during these anxious days as to the day of the week. At

about eleven o'clock the *concierge* came to tell me that the insurrection was at an end. In less than an hour there was heard a sharp fusillade and a heavy cannonade in the direction of the Faubourg-Saint-Antoine. The insurgents had strengthened themselves at that point (she came to say), but that, so far as she could learn, General Cavaignac had at length resolved, by bombarding the *quartier*, to suppress the insurrection before the day should end. *And he did!*

"Frequently during the day parties of tired soldiers, scarcely able to walk, passed on their way from the scene of action to their barracks or their bivouac; wounded men were every now and then brought to the Ambulance close by—one a Cuirassier, who, as the guard saluted him, smiled faintly, and just raised his hand in sign of recognition, which fell again at his side; and, most striking of all, bands of prisoners from among the insurgents!! Among them such hideous faces! scarcely human! No one knows whence they come. Like the stormy petrel, they only are seen in troubled times. I saw some such in the days of February, but never before, nor afterwards, till now. Imagine

O. Smith, well "made-up" for one of the bloodiest and most melodramatic of his bloody melodramas — a Parisian dandy compared with some of these. Some of them naked to the waist, smeared with blood, hair and beard matted and of incalculable growth, blood-shot eyes, scowling ferocious brutes, their tigers' mouths blackened with gunpowder— creatures to look at and shudder! And into their hands was Paris and its peaceable honest inhabitants threatened to fall. With this I end.

Ever, my dear Dickens,

Cordially and sincerely yours,

JOHN POOLE.

"I began this on Saturday, and have been writing it, as best as I can, till now, Tuesday, three o'clock. Pray acknowledge the receipt when or if you receive it. This is a general letter to you all. If Forster thinks any paragraph of this worthy the *Examiner*, he may use it. Why does not the rogue write to me? Has he, or can he have, taken huff at anything? though I cannot imagine why

or at what. But *nobody* writes to me. I can and will, some day, tell you a comic incident connected with all this, but it would not have been in keeping with the rest of this letter. Paris is now quiet, but very dull."

Chat No. 11.

" All round the house is the jet black night ;
It stares through the window-pane ;
It crawls in the corners, hiding from the light,
And it moves with the moving flame.

Now my little heart goes a-beating like a drum,
With the breath of the Bogie in my hair;
And all round the candle the crooked shadows come
And go marching along up the stair.

The shadow of the balusters, the shadow of the lamp,
The shadow of the child that goes to bed—
All the wicked shadows coming, tramp, tramp, tramp,
With the black night overhead."

—R. L. Stevenson.

ON the beautiful rocks of Red Head, near Arbroath, and surrounded by the glamour of Sir Walter Scott's " Antiquary," which was written

in the alongside village of Auchmithie, and the plot and incidents of which are principally placed here, stands Ethie Castle, the Scotch home of the Earls of Northesk, and once one of the many residences of Cardinal Beaton, whose portrait by Titian hangs in the hall.

Many of the quaint old rooms have secret staircases at the bed-heads leading to rooms above or below, and forming convenient modes of escape if the occupants of the middle chambers were threatened with sudden attack. There are also some dungeon-like rooms below, with walls of vast thickness, and "squints" through which to fire arrows or musket-balls. The castle has been greatly improved and partly restored by its last owner, without removing or destroying any of its characteristic points.

Searching, when a guest there some

years ago, amongst the literary and other curious remains, which add a great charm to this most interesting house, the writer was impressed with the following characteristic letter from Charles II. to the then Lord Northesk, which he was permitted to copy, and now to print. The letter is curious, as showing the evident belief that the King held in his Divine right to interfere with his subjects' affairs.

It is a holograph, beautifully written in a small clear hand—not unlike that of W. M. Thackeray—and has been fastened with a seal, still unbroken, no larger than a pea, but which nevertheless contains the crown and complete royal arms, and is a most beautiful specimen of seal-engraving. It would be interesting to know if this seal still exists amongst the curiosities at Windsor Castle :—

WHITEHALL, 20 *Nov.* 1672.

"MY LORD NORTHESK,

I am so much concerned in my L[d] Balcarriess that, hearing he is in suite of one of your daughters, I must lett you know, you cannot bestow her upon a person of whose worth and fidelity I have a better esteeme, which moves me hartily to recommend to you and your Lady, your franck compliance with his designe, and as I do realy intend to be very kinde to him, and to do him good as occasion offers, as well for his father's sake as his owne, so if you and your Lady condescend to his pretension, and use him kindly in it, I shall take it very kindly at your hands, and reckon it to be done upon the accounte of

Your affectionate frinde,

CHARLES R."

For the EARLE OF NORTHESK.

Looking at the fine portrait of the recipient of this royal request, which hangs in the castle, and the stern, unrelenting expression of the otherwise

handsome face, it is not difficult to presume that he somewhat resented this interference with his domestic plans. No copy of Lord Northesk's reply exists, but its contents may be guessed by the second letter from Whitehall, this time written by Lord Lauderdale :—

WHITEHALL, 18 *Jany.* 1673.

"MY LORD,

Yesterday I received yours of the 7th instant, and, according to your desire, I acquainted the King with it. His Majesty commanded me to signify to you that he is satisfied. For as he did recommend that marriage, supposing that it was acceptable to both parties, so he did not intend to lay any constraint upon you. Therfor he leaves you to dispose of your daughter as you please. This is by His Majesty's command signified to your Lordship by,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most humble servant,

LAUDERDALE."

EARL NORTHESK.

As, however, the marriage eventually did take place, let us hope that the young couple arranged it themselves, without any further expression of Royal wishes by the evidently well-meaning, if somewhat imperative, King.

Ethie has, of course, its family legends and ghosts—what old Scotch house is without them?—but the following, which I am most kindly permitted to repeat, is so curious in its modern confirmation, that it is well worth adding to the store of such weird narratives.

Many years ago, it is said that a lady in the castle destroyed her young child in one of the rooms, which afterwards bore the stigma of the association. Eventually the room was closed, the door screwed up, and heavy wooden shutters were fastened outside the windows. But those who occupied the

rooms above and below this gruesome chamber would often hear, in the watches of the night, the pattering of little feet over the floor, and the sound of the little wheels of a child's cart being dragged to and fro ; a peculiarity connected with this sound being, that one wheel creaked and chirruped as it moved. Years rolled by, and the room continued to bear its sinister character until the late Lord Northesk succeeded to the property, when he very wisely determined to bring, if possible, the legend to an end, and probe the ghostly story to its truthful or fictitious base.

Consequently he had the outside window shutters removed, and the heavy wall-door unscrewed, and then, with some members of his family present, ordered the door to be forced back. When the room was open and

birds began to sing, it proved to be quite destitute of furniture or ornament. It had a bare hearth-stone, on which some grey ashes still rested, and by the side of the hearth was a child's little wooden go-cart on four solid wooden wheels !

Turning to his daughter, my lord asked her to wheel the little carriage across the floor of the room. When she did so, it was with a strange sense of something uncanny that the listeners heard one wheel creak and chirrup as it ran !

Since then the baby footsteps have ceased, and the room is once more devoted to ordinary uses, but the ghostly little go-cart still rests at Ethie for the curious to see and to handle. Many friends and neighbours yet live who testify to having heard the patter of the feet and the creak of

the little wheel in former days, when the room was a haunted reality, but now the

> " Little feet no more go lightly,
> Vision broken ! "

Chat No. 12.

"I work on,
Through all the bristling fence of nights and days,
Which hedge time in from the eternities."
—Mrs. Browning.

THE late Cardinal Manning always felt a great interest in our parish of Brasted. In former times it formed part of Hever Chase, the property of Sir Thomas Boleyn (the father of Queen Anne Boleyn), who lived at Hever Castle, about four miles from Brasted, a fine Tudor specimen of domestic architecture, which is now somewhat

jealously shown to the public on certain days. Hever Castle is the original of Bovor Castle, immortalised by Mr. Burnand in his wonderful "Happy Thoughts."

The Cardinal's father, who was at one time an opulent city merchant, and sometime Governor of the Bank of England, owned the estate of Combe Bank, formerly the English location of the Argyll family, whose Duke sat in the House of Lords, until quite a recent date, as Baron Sundridge, the name of the adjacent village.

In Sundridge Church are some family busts of the Argylls by Mrs. Dawson Damer, who stayed much at Combe Bank, and who lies buried with all her graving and sculpting tools in Sundridge churchyard.

The Cardinal and his elder brother, Charles Manning, passed some youthful

years in this house, and when financial trouble overtook their father, and he was obliged to part with the property, it became the ever-present desire and day-dream of the elder son to succeed in life and repurchase the place. He succeeded well in life, and enjoyed a very long and happy one; but he never became the owner of Combe Bank, the hope to do so only fading with his life.

He owned, or leased, a pleasant old house at Littlehampton; and if his brother, the Cardinal, was in need of rest, he would lend it to him, when the Cardinal's method of relaxation was to go to bed in a sea-looking room, and, with window open, read, write, and contemplate for some three or four days and nights, and then arise refreshed like a giant, and return to the manifold duties waiting for him in town.

The Cardinal's home in London was formerly the Guard's Institute in the Vauxhall Bridge Road, which, failing in its first intention, was purchased as the palace for the then newly-elected Cardinal-Archbishop of Westminster. It proved to be rather a dreary, draughty, uncomfortable abode, but having the advantage of a double staircase and some large reception rooms, was useful for the clerical assemblies he used to invoke.

I had the privilege, without being a member of his church, of being allowed to attend the meetings of the *Academia* which the Cardinal held every now and then during the London season. His friends would gather in one of the big rooms a little before eight in the evening, and sit in darkened circles around a small centre table, before which a high-backed carved chair stood. The entire light for the apartment proceeded

from two big silver candlesticks on the table. As the clock chimed eight, the Cardinal, clothed in crimson cassock and skull-cap, would glide into the room, and standing before the episcopal chair, murmur a short Latin prayer, after which the discussion of the evening would begin; when all that wished had had their little say, the Cardinal replied to the points raised by the various speakers, and closed the debate; after which he held a sort of informal reception, welcoming individually every guest.

No one but a Rembrandt could give the beautiful effect of the half-lights and heavy black shadows of this striking gathering, with its centre of colour and light in the tall red figure of the Cardinal, his noble face and picturesque dress forming a mind-picture which can never fade from the memory.

The strong theatrical effect, combined with the real simplicity of the scene, the personal interest of many of those who took part in the discussion, the associations with the past, the speculation whither the innovation of the installation of a Roman Catholic Archbishop in Westminster was tending, giving the observer bountiful food for much solemn thought.

Upon our book-shelves repose four volumes of the Cardinal's sermons, preached when a member of the Church of England, and Archdeacon of Chichester. They were bought at Bishop Wilberforce's sale, who was the Cardinal's brother-in-law, and contain the autograph of William Wilberforce, the bishop's eldest brother. Upon the same shelf will be found a copy of "Parochial Sermons" by John Henry Newman, Vicar of St. Mary the Virgin's,

Oxford. This volume formerly belonged to Bishop Stanley, and came from the library of his celebrated son, Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, sometime Dean of Westminster.

. . . . .

A good book might be written by one who is duly qualified on "the Poets who are not read." It would not be flattering to the ghosts of many of the departed great, but there is so much assumption on the part of the general reader, that he knows them all, has read them all, and generally likes them all, which if examined into closely would prove a snare and a delusion, that one is tempted to administer some gentle interrogatories upon the subject. First and foremost, then, who now reads Byron? His works rest on the shelves, it is true, but are they ever opened, except to verify a quotation? Does the

general reader of this time steadily go through "Childe Harold," "Don Juan," and his other splendid works. Not death but sleep prevails, from which perchance one day he may awake and again enjoy his share of fame and favour. It is the fashion with many persons to express the utmost sympathy with and acute knowledge of the work of Robert Browning, but we doubt if many of these could pass a Civil Service examination in the very poems they name so glibly. He is so hard to understand without time and close study, that few have the inclination to give either in these days of pressure, worry, and rush.

Upon neglected shelves Cowper and Crabbe lie dusty and unopened—the only person who read Crabbe in these days was the late Edward FitzGerald; and it is a small class apart that still

looks up to Wordsworth. The stars of Keats and Shelley, it is true, are just now in the ascendant, and may so remain for a little while.

It is difficult and dangerous, we are told, to prophesy unless we know, but our private opinion is that Lord Tennyson's fame has been declining since his death, and that a large portion of his poems and all his plays will die, leaving a living residuum of such splendid work as "Maud," "In Memoriam," and some of his short poems.

America has furnished us with Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, whose charm and finish is likely to continue its hold upon our imagination; then there is the Quaker poet Whittier, who will probably only live in a song or two; and Longfellow, whose popularity has a long time since declined. He once wrote a sort of novel or romance called

"Hyperion," which showed his reading public for the first time that he was possessed of a gentle humour, which does not often appear in his poems. For instance, one of his characters, by name Berkley, wishing to console a jilted lover, says—

"'I was once as desperately in love as you are now; I adored, and was rejected.'

"'You are in love with certain attributes,' said the lady.

"'Damn your attributes, madam,' said I; 'I know nothing of attributes.'

"'Sir,' said she, with dignity, 'you have been drinking.'

"So we parted. She was married afterwards to another, who knew something about attributes, I suppose. I have seen her once since, and only once. She had a baby in a yellow gown. I hate a baby in a yellow

gown. How glad I am she did not marry me."

The fate of most poets is to be cut up for Dictionaries of Quotations, for which amiable purpose they are often admirably adapted.

Chat No. 13.

She will return, I know she will,
She will not leave me here alone."

STAYING many years ago in a pleasant country-house, whilst walking home after evening church my host remarked, as we passed in the growing darkness a house from which streamed a light down the path from the front door, "Ah! Jane has not yet returned." The phrase sounded odd, and when we were snugly ensconced in the smoking-room, he that evening told me the following story, which, however, then

stopped mid-way, but to which I am now able to add the sequel.

A certain John Manson (the name is, of course, fictitious), an elderly wealthy City bachelor, married late in life a young girl of great beauty, and with no friends or relations.

She found her husband's country home, in which she was necessarily much alone, very dull, and she thought that he was hard and unsympathising when he was at home; whereas, although a curt, reserved manner gave this impression, he was really full of love for, and confidence in his young wife, and inwardly chafed at and deplored his want of power to show what his real feelings were.

The misunderstanding between them grew and widened, like the poetical "rift within the lute," and soon after the birth of her child, a girl, she left

her home with her baby, merely leaving a few lines of curt farewell, and was henceforth lost to him. His belief in her honesty never wavered; and night after night, with his own hand, he lighted and placed in a certain hall-window a lamp which thus illuminated the path to the door, saying, "Jane will return, poor dear; and it's sure to be at night, and she'll like to see the light."

Years passed by, and Jane made no sign, the light each evening shining uselessly; and still a stranger to her home, she died, leaving her daughter, now a beautiful girl of twenty, and marvellously like what her mother was when she married.

The husband, unaware of the death of his wife, himself came to lay him for the last beneath his own roof-tree, and still his one cry was, "Jane will return." It seemed as if he could not pass in peace

from this world's rack until it was accomplished—when, lo! a miracle came to pass; for the daughter arrived one evening with a letter from her mother, written when she was dying, and asking her husband's forgiveness, and the light still beamed from the beacon window.

The old man was only semi-conscious, and mistaking his child for her mother, with a strong voice cried out, "I knew you'd come back," and died in the moment of the joy of her supposed return.

By a curious coincidence, since writing this true story, which was told to me in 1865, some of the incidents, in an altered form, have found a place in Mr. Ian Maclaren's popular book, "Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush." It would be interesting to know from whence he drew his inspiration, and whether his

story should perchance trace back to a common ancestor in mine.

. . . . .

A few years ago Mr. Walter Hamilton published, in six volumes, the most complete collection of English parodies ever brought together. Amongst others, he gave a vast number upon the well-known poem by Charles Wolfe of "Not a drum was heard." Page after page is covered with them, upon every possible subject; but the following one, written by an "American cousin" many years ago, and which was not accessible to Mr. Hamilton, is perhaps worth repeating and preserving. He called it "The Mosquito Hunt," and it runs as follows, if my memory serves me faithfully, I having no written note of it :—

"Not a sound was heard, but a horrible hum,
As around our chamber we hurried,
In search of the insect whose trumpet and drum
Our delectable slumber had worried.

We sought for him darkly at dead of night,
Our coverlet carefully turning,
By the shine of the moonbeam's misty light,
And our candle dimly burning.

About an hour had seemed to elapse,
Ere we met with the wretch that had bit us;
And raising our shoe, gave some terrible slaps,
Which made the mosquito's quietus.

Quickly and gladly we turned from the dead,
And left him all smash'd and gory;
We blew out the candle, and popped into bed,
And determined to tell you the story!"

Chat No. 14.

"The welcome news is in the letter found,
The carrier's not commissioned to expound:
It speaks itself."

—DRYDEN.

A PLEASANT hour may perhaps be passed in searching through the family autograph-box in the book-room. Its contents are varied and far-fetched. A capital series of letters from that best and most genial of correspondents, James Payn, are there to puzzle, by their very difficult caligraphy, the would-be reader. Mr. Payn, a dear

friend to Foxwold, is now a great invalid, and a brave sufferer, keeping, despite his pain, the same bright spirit, the same brilliant wit, and delighting with the same enchanting conversation. Out of all his work, there is nothing so beautiful as his lay-sermons, published in a small volume called "Some Private Views;" and but a little while since he wrote, on his invalid couch, a most affecting study, called "The Backwater of Life;" it has only up to the present time appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine*, but will doubtless be soon collected with other work in a more permanent form. It is a pathetic picture of how suffering may be relieved by wit, wisdom, and courage.

As Mr. Leslie Stephen well says in his brother's life, "For such literature the British public has shown a considerable avidity ever since the days of Addison.

In spite of occasional disavowals, it really loves a sermon, and is glad to hear preachers who are not bound by the proprieties of the religious pulpit. Some essayists, like Johnson, have been as solemn as the true clerical performer, and some have diverged into the humorous with Charles Lamb, or the cynical with Hazlitt."[1]

In Mr. Payn's lay-sermons we have the humour and the pathos, the tears being very close to the laughter; and they reflect in a peculiarly strong manner the tender wit and delicate fancy of their author.

But to return to our autograph-box. Here we find letters from such varied authors as Josef Israels, the Dutch painter, Hubert Herkomer, W. B. Richmond, Mrs. Carlyle, Wilkie Collins,

[1] "Life of Sir T. FitzJames Stephen," by his Brother, Leslie Stephen. Smith, Elder & Co., 1895.

Dean Stanley, and a host of other interesting people. Perhaps a few extracts, where judicious and inoffensive, may give an interest to this especial chat.

The late Mrs. Charles Fox of Trebah was in herself, both socially and intellectually, a very remarkable woman. Born in the Lake Country, and belonging to the Society of Friends, she formed, as a girl, many happy friendships with the Wordsworths, the Southeys, the Coleridges, and all that charmed circle of intellect, every scrap of whose sayings and doings are so full of interest, and so dearly cherished.

These friendships she continued to preserve after her marriage, and when she had exchanged her lovely lake home for an equally beautiful and interesting one on the Cornish coast, first at Perran and afterwards at Trebah.

One of her special friendships was with Hartley Coleridge, who indited several of his sonnets to his beautiful young friend.

The subjoined letter gives a pleasant picture of his friendly correspondence, and has not been included in the published papers by his brother, the Rev. Derwent Coleridge, who edited his remains.

"DEAR SARAH,

If a stranger to the fold
Of happy innocents, where thou art one,
May so address thee by a name he loves,
Both for a mother's and a sister's sake,
And surely loves it not the less for thine.
Dear Sarah, strange it needs must seem to thee
That I should choose the quaint disguise of verse,
And, like a mimic masquer, come before thee
To tell my simple tale of country news,
Or,—sooth to tell thee,—I have nought to tell
But what a most intelligencing gossip
Would hardly mention on her morning rounds:
Things that a newspaper would not record
In the dead-blank recess of Parliament.

Yet so it is,—my thoughts are so confused,
My memory is so wild a wilderness,
I need the order of the measured line
To help me, whensoe'er I would attempt
To methodise the random notices
Of purblind observation. Easier far
The minuet step of slippery sliding verse,
Than the strong stately walk of steadfast prose.

Since you have left us, many a beauteous change
Hath Nature wrought on the eternal hills;
And not an hour hath past that hath not done
Its work of beauty. When December winds,
Hungry and fell, were chasing the dry leaves,
Shrill o'er the valley at the dead of night,
'Twas sweet, for watchers such as I, to mark
How bright, how very bright, the stars would shine
Through the deep rifts of congregated clouds;
How very distant seemed the azure sky;
And when at morn the lazy, weeping fog,
Long lingering, loath to leave the slumbrous lake,
Whitened, diffusive, as the rising sun
Shed on the western hills his rosiest beams,
I thought of thee, and thought our peaceful vale
Had lost one heart that could have felt its peace,
One eye that saw its beauties, and one soul
That made its peace and beauty all her own.

One morn there was a kindly boon of heaven,
That made the leafless woods so beautiful,
It was sore pity that one spirit lives,

That owns the presence of Eternal God
In all the world of Nature and of Mind,
Who did not see it. Low the vapour hung
On the flat fields, and streak'd with level layers
The lower regions of the mountainous round;
But every summit, and the lovely line
Of mountain tops, stood in the pale blue sky
Boldly defined. The cloudless sun dispelled
The hazy masses, and a lucid veil
But softened every charm it not concealed.
Then every tree that climbs the steep fell-side—
Young oak, yet laden with sere foliage;
Larch, springing upwards, with its spikey top
And spiney garb of horizontal boughs;
The veteran ash, strong-knotted, wreathed and twined,
As if some Dæmon dwelt within its trunk,
And shot forth branches, serpent-like; uprear'd
The holly and the yew, that never fade
And never smile; these, and whate'er beside,
Or stubborn stump, or thin-arm'd underwood,
Clothe the bleak strong girth of Silverhow
(You know the place, and every stream and brook
Is known to you) by ministry of Frost,
Were turned to shapes of Orient adamant,
As if the whitest crystals, new endow'd
With vital or with vegetative power,
Had burst from earth, to mimic every form
Of curious beauty that the earth could boast,
Or, like a tossing sea of curly plumes,
Frozen in an instant——"

"So much for verse, which, being execrably bad, cannot be excused, except by friendship, therefore is the fitter for a friendly epistle. There's logic for you! In fact, my dear lady, I am so much delighted, not to say flattered, by your wish that I should write to you, that I can't help being rather silly. It will be a sad loss to me when your excellent mother leaves Grasmere; and to-morrow my friend Archer and I dine at Dale End, for our farewell. But so it must be. I am always happy to hear anything of your little ones, who are such very sweet creatures that one might almost think it a pity they should ever grow up to be big women, and know only better than they do now. Among all the anecdotes of childhood that have been recorded, I never heard of one so characteristic as Jenny-Kitty's wish to inform Lord Dunstanville of the miseries of the negroes. Bless its little soul! I am truly sorry to hear that you have been suffering bodily illness, though I know that it cannot disturb the serenity of your mind. I hope little Derwent did not disturb you with his crown; I am told he is a lovely little wretch, and you say he has eyes like mine.

I hope he will see his way better with them. Derwent has never answered my letter, but I complain not; I dare say he has more than enough to do.[1] Thank you kindly for your kindness to him and his lady. I hope the friendship of Friends will not obstruct his rising in the Church, and that he will consult his own interest prudently, paying court to the powers that be, yet never so far committing himself as to miss an opportunity of ingratiating himself with the powers that may be. Let him not utter, far less write, any sentence that will not bear a twofold interpretation! For the present let his liberality go no further than a very liberal explanation of the words consistency and gratitude may carry him; let him always be honest when it is his interest to be so, and sometimes when it may appear not to be so; and never be a knave under a deanery or a rectory of five thousand a year! My best remembrances to your husband, and kisses for Juliet and Jenny-Kitty, though she did

[1] The Rev. Derwent Coleridge was at the time keeping a school at Helston, which was within an easy distance of Perran, where Mrs. Fox was at this time living.

say she liked Mr. Barber far better than me. I can't say I agree with her in that particular, having a weak partiality for

Your affectionate friend,

HARTLEY COLERIDGE."

Another friend of the Fox family was the late John Bright, and the following letter to the now well-known Caroline Fox of Penjerrick will be read with interest :—

TORQUAY, 10 *mo.* 13, 1868.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

I hope the 'one cloud' has passed away. I was much pleased with the earnestness and feeling of the poem, and wished to ask thee for a copy of it, but was afraid to give thee the trouble of writing it out for me.

"For myself, I have endeavoured only to speak when I have had something to say which it seemed to me ought to be said, and I did not feel that the sentiment of the poem condemned me.

"We had a pleasant visit to Kynance

Cove. It is a charming place, and we were delighted with it. We went on through Helston to Penzance: the day following we visited the Logan Rock and the Land's End, and in the afternoon the celebrated Mount—the weather all we could wish for. We were greatly pleased with the Mount, and I shall not read 'Lycidas' with less interest now that I have seen the place of the 'great vision.' We found the hotel to which you kindly directed us perfect in all respects. On Friday we came from Penzance to Truro, and posted to St. Columb, where we spent a night at Mr. Northy's—the day and night were very wet. Next day we posted to Tintagel, and back to Launceston, taking the train there for Torquay.

"We were pressed for time at Tintagel, but were pleased with what we saw.

"Here, we are in a land of beauty and of summer, the beauty beyond my expectation, and the climate like that of Nice. Yesterday we drove round to see the sights, and W. Pengelly and Mr. Vivian went with us to Kent's Cavern, Anstey's Cove, and the round of exquisite views. We are at Cash's Hotel, but visit our friend Susan Midgley in the

day and evening. To-morrow we start for Street, to stay a day or two with my daughter Helen, and are to spend Sunday at Bath. We have seen much and enjoyed much in our excursion, but we shall remember nothing with more pleasure than your kindness and our stay at Penjerrick.

"Elizabeth joins me in kind and affectionate remembrance of you, and in the hope that thy dear father did not suffer from the 'long hours' to which my talk subjected him. When we get back to our bleak region and home of cold and smoke, we shall often think of your pleasant retreat, and of the wonderful gardens at Penjerrick.

Believe me,

Always sincerely thy friend,

JOHN BRIGHT."

To CAROLINE FOX,
Penjerrick, Falmouth.

There are few men whose every uttered word is regarded with greater respect and interest than Mr. Ruskin. It is well known that he has always

been a wide and careful collector of minerals, gems, and fine specimens of the art and nature world. One of his various agents, through whom at one time he made many such purchases, both for himself and his Oxford and Sheffield museums, was Mr. Bryce Wright, the mineralogist, and to him are addressed the following five letters :—

BRANTWOOD, CONISTON, LANCASHIRE,
22nd May '81.

"MY DEAR WRIGHT,

I am very greatly obliged to you for letting me see these opals, quite unexampled, as you rightly say, from that locality —but from that locality *I* never buy—my kind is the opal formed in pores and cavities, throughout the mass of that compact brown jasper—this, which is merely a superficial crust of jelly on the surface of a nasty brown sandstone, I do not myself value in the least. I wish you could get at some of the geology

of the two sorts, but I suppose everything is kept close by the diggers and the Jews at present.

"As for the cameos, the best of the two, 'supposed' (by whom?) to represent Isis, represents neither Egyptian nor Oxonian Isis, but only an ill-made French woman of the town bathing at Boulogne, and the other is only a 'Minerve' of the Halles, a *petroleuse* in a mob-cap, sulphur-fire colour.

"I don't depreciate what I want to buy, as you know well, but it is not safe to send me things in the set way 'supposed' to be this or that! If you ever get any more nice little cranes, or cockatoos, looking like what they're supposed to be meant for, they shall at least be returned with compliments.

"I send back the box by to-day's rail; put down all expenses to my account, as I am always amused and interested by a parcel from you.

"You needn't print this letter as an advertisement, unless you like!

Ever faithfully yours,

J. Ruskin."

BRANTWOOD, *23rd May.*

"MY DEAR WRIGHT,

The silver's safe here, and I want to buy it for Sheffield, but the price seems to me awful. It must always be attached to it at the museum, and I fear great displeasure from the public for giving you such a price. What is there in the specimen to make it so valuable? I have not anything like it, nor do I recollect its like (or I shouldn't want it), but if so rare, why does not the British Museum take it.

Ever truly yours,

J. RUSKIN."

BRANTWOOD, *Wednesday.*

"MY DEAR WRIGHT,

I am very glad of your long and interesting letter, and can perfectly understand all your difficulties, and have always observed your activity and attention to your business with much sympathy, but of late certainly I have been frightened at your prices, and, before I saw the golds, was rather

uneasy at having so soon to pay for them. But you are quite right in your estimate of the interest and value of the collection, and I hope to be able to be of considerable service to you yet, though I fear it cannot be in buying specimens at seventy guineas, unless there is something to be shown for the money, like that great native silver!

"I have really not been able to examine the red ones yet—the golds alone were more than I could judge of till I got a quiet hour this morning. I might possibly offer to change some of the locally interesting ones for a proustite, but I can't afford any more cash just now.

Ever very heartily yours,

J. RUSKIN."

BRANTWOOD,
3rd Nov. or 4th (?), *Friday.*

"DEAR WRIGHT,

My telegram will, I hope, enable you to act with promptness about the golds, which will be of extreme value to me; and

its short saying about the proustites will, I hope, not be construed by you as meaning that I will buy them also. You don't really suppose that you are to be paid interest of money on minerals, merely because they have lain long in your hands.

"If I sold my old arm-chair, which has got the rickets, would you expect the purchaser to pay me forty years' interest on the original price? Your proustite may perhaps be as good as ever it was, but it is not worth more to me or Sheffield because you have had either the enjoyment or the care of it longer than you expected!

"But I am really very seriously obliged by the *sight* of it, with the others, and perhaps may make an effort to lump some of the new ones with the gold in an estimate of large purchase. I think the gold, by your description, must be a great credit to Sheffield and to me; perhaps I mayn't be able to part with it!

Ever faithfully yours,

J. Ruskin."

HERNE HILL, S.E., 6 *May* '84.

"MY DEAR BRYCE,

I can't resist this tourmaline, and have carried it off with me. For you and Regent Street it's not monstrous in price neither; but I must send you back your (pink!) apatite. I wish I'd come to see you, but have been laid up all the time I've been here—just got to the pictures, and that's all.

Yours always,

(much to my damage!)

J. R."

Chat No. 15.

"Scarcely she knew, that she was great or fair,
Or wise beyond what other women are."

—Dryden.

AN oval picture that hangs opposite Sheridan's portrait is a fine presentment of the Marquis de Ségur, by Vanloo.

The Marquis was born in 1724, and eventually became a marshal of France, and minister of war to Louis XVI. After his royal master's execution he fell into very low water, and it was only by his calm intrepidity in very trying

circumstances that he escaped the guillotine. His memoirs have from time to time appeared, generally under the authority of some of his descendants. This interesting portrait belonged to the family of de Ségur, and was parted with by the present head of the house to the late Mrs. Lyne Stephens, who gave it to us.

The history of this admirable woman is deeply interesting in every detail. She was the daughter of Colonel Duvernay, a member of a good old French family, who was ruined by the French Revolution of 1785. Born at Versailles in the year 1812, her father had the child named Yolande Marie Louise; and she was educated at the Conservatoire in Paris, where they soon discovered her wonderful talent for dancing. This art was encouraged, developed, and trained to the uttermost; and when, in

due time, she appeared upon the ballet stage, she took the town by storm, and at once came to the foremost rank as the well-known Mademoiselle Duvernay, rivalling, if not excelling, the two Ellsslers, Cerito, and Taglioni.

She made wide the fame of the Cachucha dance, which was specially rearranged for her; and the world was immediately deluged with her portraits, some good, some bad, many very apocryphal, and many very indifferent.

In one of W. M. Thackeray's wonderful "Roundabout Papers," which perhaps contain some of the most beautiful work he ever gave us, he thus recalls, in a semi-playful, semi-pathetic tone, his recollections of the great *danseuse*. "In William IV.'s time, when I think of Duvernay dancing in as the Bayadère, I say it was a vision of loveliness such as mortal eyes can't see nowadays.

How well I remember the tune to which she used to appear! Kaled used to say to the Sultan, 'My lord, a troop of those dancing and singing girls called Bayadères approaches,' and to the clash of cymbals and the thumping of my heart, in she used to dance! There has never been anything like it—never."

After a few years of brilliant successes she retired from the stage she had done so much to grace and dignify, and married the late Mr. Stephens Lyne Stephens, who in those days, and after his good old father's death, was considered one of the richest commoners in England.

He died in 1860, after a far too short, but intensely happy, married life; and having no children, left his widow, as far as was in his power, complete mistress of his large fortune. They

were both devoted to art, and being very acute connoisseurs, had collected a superb quantity of the best pictures, the rarest old French furniture, and the finest china.

The bulk of these remarkable collections was dispersed at Christie's in a nine-days'-wonder sale in 1895, and proved the great attraction of the season, buyers from Paris, New York, Vienna, and Berlin eagerly competing with London for the best things.

Some of the more remarkable prices are here noted, as being of permanent interest to the art-loving world, and testifying how little hard times can affect the sale of a really fine and genuine collection.

As a rule, the prices obtained were very far in excess of those paid for the various objects, in many cases reaching four and five times their original cost.

A pair of Mandarin vases sold for 1070 guineas. The beautiful Sèvres oviform vase, given by Louis XV. to the Marquis de Montcalm, 1900 guineas. A pair of Sèvres blue and gold Jardinières, 5¼ inches high, 1900 guineas. A clock by Berthoud, 1000 guineas. A small upright Louis XVI. secretaire, 800 guineas. Another rather like it, 960 guineas. A marble bust of Louis XIV., 567 guineas. Three Sèvres oviform vases, from Lord Pembroke's collection, 5000 guineas. A single oviform Sèvres vase, 760 guineas. A pair of Sèvres vases, 1050 guineas. A very beautiful Sedan chair, in Italian work of the sixteenth century, 600 guineas. A clock by Causard, 720 guineas. A Louis XV. upright secretaire, 1320 guineas. "Dogs and Gamekeeper," painted by Troyon, 2850 guineas. "The Infanta," a full-length portrait by Velasquez, 4300 guineas. A bust of the Infanta, also by Velasquez, 770 guineas. "Faith presenting the Eucharist," a splendid work by Murillo, 2350 guineas. "The Prince of Orange Hunting," by Cuyp, 2000 guineas. "The Village Inn," by Van Ostade, 1660 guineas. A fine specimen of Terburg's work, 1950 guineas. A portrait by Madame Vigée

le Brun, 2250 guineas. A lovely portrait by Nattier, 3900 guineas. Watteau's celebrated picture of "La Gamme d'Amour," 3350 guineas. A pair of small Lancret's Illustrations to La Fontaine brought respectively 1300 guineas and 1050 guineas. Drouais' superb portrait of Madame du Barry, 690 guineas; and a small head of a girl by Greuze sold for 710 guineas.

Small pieces of china of no remarkable merit, but bearing a greatly enhanced value from belonging to this celebrated collection, obtained wonderful prices. For example:—

A Sang-de Bœuf Crackle vase, 12½ inches high, 280 guineas. A pair of china Kylins, 360 guineas. A circular Pesaro dish, 155 guineas. A pair of Sèvres dark blue oviform vases, 1000 guineas. Three Sèvres vases, 1520 guineas. Two small panels of old French tapestry, 285 guineas. Another pair, 710 guineas. A circular Sèvres bowl, 13 inches in diameter, 300 guineas.

The ormolu ornaments of the time of Louis XIV. brought great sums; for instance—

An ormolu inkstand sold for 72 guineas. A pair of wall lights, 102 guineas. A pair of ormolu candlesticks, 400 guineas. Another pair, 500 guineas. A pair of ormolu and-irons, 220 guineas.

Little tables of Louis XV. period also sold amazingly.

An oblong one, 21½ inches wide, 285 guineas. An upright secretaire, 580 guineas. A small Louis XVI. chest of drawers, 315 guineas. A pair of Louis XVI. mahogany cabinets, 950 guineas. A pair of Louis XVI. bronze candelabra brought 525 guineas; and an ebony cabinet of the same time fetched the extraordinary price of 1700 guineas; and a little Louis XV. gold chatelaine sold for 300 guineas.

The grand total obtained by this remarkable sale, together with some of the plate and jewels, amounted to £158,000!

For thirty-four years, as a widow, Mrs. Lyne Stephens administered, with the utmost wisdom and the broadest generosity, the large trust thus placed in her most capable hands. Building and restoring churches for both creeds (she being Catholic and her late husband Protestant); endowing needy young couples whom she considered had some claim upon her, if only as friends; further adding to and completing her art collections, and finishing and beautifying her different homes in Norfolk, Paris, and Roehampton.

Generous to the fullest degree, she would warmly resent the least attempt to impose upon her. An amusing instance of this occurred many years ago, when one of her husband's relations, considering he had some extraordinary claim upon the widow's generosity, again and again pressed her for

large benevolences, which for a season he obtained. Getting tired of his importunity, she at last declined to render further help, and received in reply a very abusive letter from the claimant, which wound up by stating that if the desired assistance were not forthcoming by a certain date, the applicant would set up a fruit-stall in front of her then town-house in Piccadilly, and so shame her into compliance with his request. She immediately wrote him a pretty little letter in reply, saying, "That it was with sincere pleasure she had heard of her correspondent's intention of pursuing for the first time an honest calling whereby to earn his bread, and that if his oranges were good, she had given orders that they should be bought for her servants' hall!"

During the Franco-German war of 1870 she remained in Paris in her

beautiful home in the Faubourg-Saint-Honoré, and would daily sally forth to help the sufferings which the people in Paris were undergoing. No one will ever know the vast extent of the sacrifice she then made. Her men-servants had all left to fight for their country, and she was alone in the big house, with only two or three maids to accompany her. During the Commune she continued her daily walks abroad, and was always recognised by the mob as a good Frenchwoman, doing her utmost for the needs of the very poor. Her friend, the late Sir Richard Wallace, who was also in Paris during these troubles, well earned his baronetcy by his care of the poor English shut up in the city during the siege; but although Mrs. Lyne Stephens' charity was quite as wide and generous as his, she never received, nor did she expect or desire it,

one word of acknowledgment or thanks from any of the powers that were.

She died at Lynford, from the result of a fall on a parquet floor, on the 2nd September 1894, aged 82, full of physical vigour and intellectual brightness, and still remarkable for her personal beauty; finding life to the last full of many interests, but impressed by the sadness of having outlived nearly all her early friends and contemporaries.

She lingered nearly three weeks after the actual fall, during which her affectionate gratitude to all who watched and tended her, her bright recognition when faces she loved came near, her quick response to all that was said and done, were beautiful and touching to see, and very sweet to remember. Her last words to the writer of these lines when he bade her farewell were, "My fondest love to my beloved Julian;" our

invalid son at Foxwold, for whom she always evinced the deepest affection and sympathy.

In her funeral sermon, preached by Canon Scott, himself an intimate friend, in the beautiful church she had built for Cambridge, to a crowded and deeply sympathetic audience, he eloquently observed: "Greatly indeed was she indebted to God; richly had she been endowed with gifts of every kind; of natural character, of special intelligence, of winning attractiveness, which compelled homage from all who came under the charm of her influence; with the result of widespread renown and unbounded wealth. . . . Therefore it was that the blessing of God came in another form—by the discipline of suffering and trial. There was the trial of loneliness. Soon bereft, as she was, of her husband, of whose affection

we may judge by the way in which he had laid all he possessed at her feet; French and Catholic, living amongst those who were not of her faith or nation, though enjoying their devoted friendship. With advancing years, deprived by death even of those intimate friends, she was lonely in a sense throughout her life. . . . Nor must it be omitted that her great gift to Cambridge was not merely an easy one out of superfluous wealth, but that it involved some personal sacrifice. Friends of late had missed the sight of costly jewels, which for years had formed a part of her personal adornment. What had become of a necklace of rarest pearls, now no longer worn?—They had been sacrificed for the erection of this very church."

Again, in a Pastoral Letter by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Northamp-

ton to his flock, dated the 28th of November 1894, he says: "We take occasion of this our Advent pastoral, to commend to your prayers the soul of one who has recently passed away, Mrs. Lyne Stephens. Her innumerable works of religion and charity during her life, force us to acknowledge our indebtedness to her; she built at her sole cost the churches of Lynford, Shefford, and Cambridge, and she gave a large donation for the church at Wellingborough. It was she who gave the presbytery and the endowment of Lynford, the rectory at Cambridge, and our own residence at Northampton. By a large donation she greatly helped the new episcopal income fund, and she was generous to the Holy Father on the occasion of his first jubilee. Our indebtedness was increased by her bequests, one to ourselves as the Bishop,

one for the maintenance of the fabric of the Cambridge Church, another for the Boy's Home at Shefford, and a fourth to the Clergy Fund of this Diocese. Her name has been inscribed in our *Liber Vitæ*, among the great benefactors whether living or dead, and for these we constantly offer up prayers that God may bless their good estate in life, and after death receive them to their reward."

To the inmates of Foxwold she was for nearly a quarter of a century a true and loving friend, paying them frequent little visits, and entering with the deepest sympathy into the lives of those who also loved her very dearly.

The house bears, through her generosity, many marks of her exquisite taste and broad bounty, and her memory will always be fragrant and beautiful to those who knew her.

There are three portraits of her at Roehampton. The first, as a most winsome, lovely girl, drawn life-size by a great pastellist in the reign of Louis Philippe; the second, as a handsome matron, in the happy years of her all too short married life; and the last, by Carolus Duran, was painted in Paris in 1888. This has been charmingly engraved, and represents her as a most lovely old lady, with abundant iron-grey hair and large violet eyes, very wide apart. She was intellectually as well as physically one of the strongest women, and she never had a day's illness, until her fatal accident, in her life. Her conversation and power of repartee was extremely clever and brilliant. A shrewd observer of character, she rarely made a mistake in her first estimate of people, and her sometimes adverse judgments, which at first sight appeared

harsh, were invariably justified by the history of after-events.

Her charity was illimitable, and was always, as far as possible, concealed. A simple-lived, brave, warm-hearted, generous woman, her death has created a peculiar void, which will not in our time be again filled:—

"For some we loved, the loveliest and the best,
That from his Vintage, rolling Time hath prest,
Have drunk their Cup, a Round or two before,
And one by one crept silently to rest."

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"Studious he sate, with all his books around,
Sinking from thought to thought, a vast profound;
Plunged for his sense, but found no bottom there;
Then wrote, and flounder'd on, in mere despair."

—Pope.

THE READER (*loquiter*).

"*Glad of a quarrel, straight I clap the door;*
Sir, let me see your works and you no more!"

—POPE.