

Pan and Lizard," "Truant Boy," "Genius of Music," "Genius of Painting," "Evening Star," "Morning," and "Washington." His bas-reliefs are "Homer led by the Genius of Poetry," "Belisarius at the Porta Pinciana," "Hagar and Ishmael," "Ruth, Naomi, and Orpah," "Youth and Old Age," several "Monuments," one of which was to "Charles Carroll of Carrollton;" and he had just finished a group of "Ganymede and the Eagle of Jupiter," engraved for the London Art Journal; also many busts of incomparable merit.

JULIA WARD HOWE.

MRS. HOWE is one of the very few women who have gained an individuality in our literature. We have produced many women of talent, many who have challenged admiration for their mental excellence; but the number of those whose works are of that positive, reliant character which stamps them for leaders, is comparatively small. The late Edgar A. Poe, in his classification of the female poets embraced in Dr. Griswold's volume, ranked the names in this order of excellence, viz.: First, Mrs. Osgood; then Mrs. Amelia B. Welby, Miss Alice Cary, Miss Talley, Mrs. Whitman, Miss Lynch, Miss Frances A. Fuller (Mrs. Barritt), Miss Lucy Hooper, Mrs. Oakes Smith, Mrs. Ellett, Mrs. Hewitt, &c., &c. He further added, "the next, *skillful merely*, of those mentioned, are Mrs. Osgood, Miss Lynch (Mrs. Botta), and Mrs. Sigourney. The most imaginative are Miss Cary, Mrs. Osgood, Miss Talley, Miss Fuller. The most accomplished are Mrs. Ellett, Mrs. Eames, Mrs. Lewis, Mrs. Whitman, and Mrs. Oakes Smith." This estimate of the capable (if at times unjust) critic would now have to be considerably qualified and altered—such changes have a few years wrought. Excepting Mrs. Osgood, none named have held their given place; two or three have extended their fame, but most of the number, having produced nothing superior to that upon which the judgment was founded, have rather retrogressed, verifying the maxim of war—to stand was to lose ground. Their places, however, are occupied by others whose names have since become identified with our literature. Mrs. Howe must be



Julia Ward Howe

named first among this latter class—the volumes, "Passion Flowers," and "Words for the Hour," having served to give her an enviable position, while her attainments in the fields of philosophy, in modern languages, and in the classics have placed her first among our "accomplished" female writers.

The reserve peculiar to persons of true worth has prevented the public from becoming much acquainted with Mrs. Howe's personal history and mental experience; and we therefore take pleasure in laying before the readers of this Journal a narrative of unusual interest, in the author's own simple and candid language. It was written to us, in answer to our friendly inquiry; and, as no restrictions were laid upon its use, we prefer to give it place instead of any reproduction of our own, which would, we are sure, fail to tell the story as well. She writes:

"I am exceedingly puzzled as to what events in my life may be worth stating. I suppose that almost any one might feel

the same perplexity in speaking of himself. All the events of our lives seem so familiar and common to us, that we almost fear to transcend modesty in directing public attention to them.

"I was born on the 27th of May, 1819. My mother, whom I lost at the age of five years, was a poetical woman, of as much literary culture as her early marriage and short life could allow. Her loss, keenly felt, imparted a tinge of melancholy to my early years. It soon became a tradition in the family that her mantle had fallen upon me; but I began to weave rhymes and verses before I knew anything of what she had done. My earliest recollection of mental operations is that of fiery, feverish dreams, and the attempt to embody them in language. I was anxious to learn to write, for the sake of committing my thoughts to paper, and having once acquired, in some degree, the power of expression, my life early took a studious and thoughtful turn, and my thoughts flowed in the channel which they have since worn

deeper and deeper. My early studies were like those of other girls, except that my ready memory caused me always to be put in the advanced classes; thus, when but ten years old, I studied Paley's Moral Philosophy, with girls of sixteen and eighteen. The same precocious excellence was expected in my compositions, but the inequalities of a child's temperament did not allow me always to keep up to this unreasonable standard of exertion. On the whole, however, I passed for a studious child, greatly infested with the vice of scribbling. The study of languages was always a delight to me. I acquired early a knowledge of the French language, and soon solicited and obtained permission to study Italian, to which I devoted myself with enthusiasm. At the age of sixteen I began the study of German, and having received a moderate degree of instruction, I occupied some years in the study of Goethe, Schiller, Jean Paul, and Herder. My reading in English was grave for my years, and included works on history and philosophy rather than fiction or poetry. I had always been passionately devoted to music, and had always the best tuition that money could command.

"I must now say a word of my father, who was, in his day, a man of no common influence and character. He was a majestic person, of somewhat severe aspect and reserved manners, but with a vein of true geniality, with great benevolence of heart, and with a piety which, ever deep and sincere, assumed at times a certain tone of asceticism. This great gravity, and the absence of a mother, naturally subdued the tone of the whole household; and though a greatly cherished set of children, we were not a very merry one. I had scarce any of the amusements either of childhood or of youth, and the quiet indoor life which I led out of school, fostered the imaginative qualities of my mind, without giving sufficient outward interest to counterbalance the introspective tendency.

Partly in consequence of this, perhaps, I have always been an extremely absent person, and much of the time unconscious of what passes around me. In the large rooms of my father's house I walked up and down perpetually alone, dreaming of extraordinary things that I should see and do. I now began to read Shakspeare and Byron, and to try my hand at poems and plays. I have published none of the productions of this period, and I regard it as a piece of great good fortune that I did

not, for a little praise or a little censure would have been a much more disturbing element in those days than in these. I wrote, however, and published at the request of my friends, a review of Lamartine's *Jocelyn*, with metrical translation, which attracted some attention. Various verses of mine, too, found their way into the public prints without any effort of mine. My great delight was in composition, and publication entered little into my thoughts. I published a little later a review of the minor poems of Goethe and Schiller, which was also well received.

"I must here mention my obligations to Dr. Cogswell my beloved master in those days, and since made memorable by the design and execution of the Astor Library, all of which, save the *material basis*, came from him. He directed and assisted my otherwise solitary studies, and was the kind and severe critic of all my prose writings. His taste and judgment were equally admirable, and no one knew the weak point of a sentence better than he. To this day I write with a fear of his correction before my eyes; and if I am out of the reach of his ferule, I am within the scope of his rhetoric. I speak, however, of prose compositions, having in poetry the merit of obstinacy, and never altering a line to please any one but myself.

"At the age of twenty I lost the aid and support of my noble father, who had in all things bounteously discharged a parent's duty towards me. While he had spared no expense in my education and training, he had accustomed me to simplicity of dress and of life, and had never allowed me to acquire the vices of show and extravagance. He had always labored to impress upon me his own theological views. In the sorrow of his death, I turned to these for support, and clung to them with new ardor; but in the years of study and seclusion which followed, and after especial study of the Bible, I was obliged to relax the grim dogmas of Calvinistic faith, and to make for myself a milder and more merciful form of belief. This was a period of great mental ferment and unrest to me. The logical completeness of the Calvinistic theology seemed to impose it as a limit beyond which thought could not rightly go; and on this wise, for a time, I accepted it. But much of my culture had been too liberal for these narrow bounds, and my German studies had engendered a habit of philosophizing quite irreconcilable with the dogmas of the orthodox faith, in

their literal interpretation. I continued, however, under their influence for the space of a year or two, during which my many compositions, mostly unpublished, were on religious themes, and breathed the spirit commonly called mystic. Among these were three poems on the Life and Character of Christ, which I value, and may, one day, publish. The death of a beloved brother, very near to me in age and sympathy, gave great intensity to my religious nature at this time, and brought me into a sort of hallucination, akin to the spiritualism of these days, in which I seemed to live surrounded by the spirits of the departed, quite loosened from the interests of practical life, and looking forward to death as the only thing to be desired. But these abstractions which gratify, in a degree, the emotional nature of man, give no aliment to his understanding, and no real experience to his moral nature, which is formed to wrestle with external difficulties. At the earnest solicitation of a valued friend of my father, the late James Wadsworth, of Geneseo, I broke away from these tyrannous imaginings, and began to occupy myself again with more practical, or, philosophically speaking, more objective studies and considerations. I now applied myself assiduously to the study of the Latin language, and to works on history, and to the philosophy of history, and with the aid of cheerful society, and of most kind and intelligent relatives, I recovered the natural, healthy tone of my mind.

"My religious opinions had, however, wrought in themselves a great change, and for many years I continued to regard the popular theology with the horror of one who had narrowly escaped madness at its hands. I continued my studious habits with only occasional inconsiderable publications up to the time of my marriage, which took place in my twenty-fourth year. I accompanied Dr. Howe to England, where we were kindly received, and where Dr. Howe's reputation in matters of philanthropy opened to both of us a wide circle of interests. It was here that we made the acquaintance of Florence Nightingale, who was then a young girl, dreaming of Protestant nunneries and great benevolent enterprises. We visited also the continent, and spent some time in Rome, where Crawford's wonderful genius impressed me at once. I felt that he was different from any of the other sculptors whose studios I visited. They seemed

busied in compiling features from the world around them, he seemed busy in impressing in outward form something that was within his own mind. He became endeared to us by many touching and beautiful traits of character before we ever dreamed of the nearer tie which was to connect him with us, in his marriage with my sister, now unhappily dissolved by death.

"I continued to prosecute my studies after my return from Europe, in spite of many household occupations, and the birth of children. The experience of years has enabled me to blend domestic and literary pursuits not inharmoniously, and far from railing at the common duties of life, I have learned to believe that such cares and responsibilities are a great support to women, and able to counterbalance most advantageously the extravagances of a poetical temperament. In the years that followed I published little, though never relinquishing the pursuit and hope of poetical excellence. I visited Europe again in 1850, and remained absent some fourteen months.

"After my return, I wrote and published the volume of poems called 'Passion Flowers,' and for the first time became practically acquainted with the 'World-side view' of authorship. Two years later, my second volume, 'Words for the Hour,' made its appearance. It has been less read than its predecessor; I think it the more thoughtful and artistic work of the two; but the world must decide which it likes best. I have since, as you know, brought out and published a stage play, 'The World's Own,' which has had very warm friends, and equally ardent enemies. Neither of these have materially altered my own view of the merits of the work. I know that its motive was an earnest one—I know that its elaboration was thorough, painful and conscientious; I believe that in its whole course I have kept near to the nature of man and of woman in the relations which form its subject, and I am compelled to think that its severest critics have not been the friends either of high art or of worthy living. I have only to add, that within the last ten years, I have been a careful student of Swedenborg, Comte, Hegel, Dante, Virgil, and others, and that I find the society of these great minds a joy above the pleasures of authorship, the pains of criticism, and the petty cares and greater trials of life."

We have reserved little space in which to refer to the poetry of this lady. The

volume "Passion Flowers," published anonymously, in 1853, we think, excited singular attention. Its clear, reliant diction, treating lightly the rules of art—its pathos and power—its freedom from affectations and morbid passion—its beauty of imagery and clear converse with nature—served to create a marked sensation in literary circles. The press throughout the country quoted largely from it; and "who is the author?" became a general inquiry. Its authoress could not long be concealed; and, since the secret became known, Mrs. Howe has been a "bright particular star" in our literary firmament. The second volume, named—"Words for the Hour"—possessed all the excellencies of the first work, and also betrayed more attention to the requisitions of rythmical construction, giving to her lyrics the easy flow of exquisite expression. The volume fully sustained the impression made by her first book. "The World's Own," to which she refers, was brought out in Boston and New-York, in the winter of 1855-6. It was not a theatrical success; owing, somewhat, to the nature of the subject, but more, we think, to the want of experience, on the part of the author, in writing for the immediate apprehension and excitement of a popular audience. Thus "The Cenci" is not an acting play, owing to the unwillingness of Shelley so to subdue expression and incident as to render them touching and acceptable to a promiscuous assembly. What may be read with interest in the closet, may shock the mind when its interest is intensified by the illusions of the well-ordered stage personation. None knew this fact better than Shakspeare, and his most revolting characterisations are made perfectly acceptable and proper, through the care and caution with which they are introduced and managed, as well as through the counterbalancing characters sure to be thrown in for relief. Mrs. Howe, we think, went at her subject too deliberately, too directly, threw in too little sub-character for relief, allowed too free utterance to the feeling of the moment; and the consequence was, the audience, unprepared for such directness, refused to sanction the play; and the press condemned in whole what a more competent judgment would simply have qualified in part. "Theatrical critics" of our press, with few exceptions, are illy fitted for their office. When we see them applaud such mongrel drama as now usurps the stage, we can

easily infer that the drama of a higher intellectual and ideal character must meet with their disapproval, or, what is worse, with their inappreciative "criticism."

That Mrs. Howe possesses the requisites of a great dramatist, is the impression of all best qualified to judge; and we can but hope she will devote much of her labors to that almost neglected field of our literature.

UNDER THE ROSE.

From the French of Alphonse Karr,



OUR yellow rose is the souvenir of a curious history.

It was my habit to visit, some two years since, an elderly lady residing in my neighborhood, whom I admired for her *esprit*, no less than for her amiable and benevolent disposition. She was passionately fond of flowers, and you would scarcely credit the pains I took in arranging the bouquets that I occasionally presented, or how delighted I was at her astonishment at receiving a flower that was rare to her, or of a variety not common in the country.

I met at her house, the other evening, an old gentleman who has lately taken possession of a very large property in the neighborhood, which he had inherited from some distant relative, on condition that he should assume his name, and who, in consequence, is known as M. Descondraies.

He caused himself to be presented at my old friend's, and I might with reason be jealous of his delicate attentions. The acquaintance soon ripened into a mutual friendship, and they spent nearly all their evening together at tric-trac.

I saluted silently, without interrupting the game. When it was finished I offered Madame Lorgere a bouquet of yellow roses, which I had brought for her.

My roses were very beautiful, which was not the case with the yellow roses of that year, the frequent rains having seriously interfered with their florescence. Mine, however, being protected by an overhanging roof, were, perhaps, the only ones that were well opened. Madame Lorgere exclaimed with delight at the sight of the bouquet.

My flowers elicited no remark from M. Descondraies, who was apparently absorbed in reflection. I was at a loss to