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ANNIE GRAY.

[Written for the Maple Leaf.

emory is ever busy with the past, and it is well for us that she loves best to linger on our joys. The year which has just fled, and which has accomplished so much in the destinies of the world, has been an eventful period in the history of my friend, Annie Gray.

Her mother, Mrs. Gray, was a widow, and early left to provide for the wants of three little children. She was born to affluence, but while yet a child, her father lost his fortune in some unsuccessful speculations, and was only able to save enough from the general wreck to educate his daughter. Early in life she married a young man, who, while struggling to maintain his little family, was seized with that dreadful scourge, consumption, and in a short time his weary frame yielded to the influence of the disease, and he was borne to his last resting place, leaving stricken hearts to bear the trials of life unaided by his sympathy and care.

Mrs. Gray's parents had been dead some time, and she knew that her sole dependence, under God, was upon her own exertions. Still, she did not despair; she felt a new impulse to energy and activity as she looked upon her fatherless children.

They lived in a small cottage, upon the banks of the Connecticut, with a neat little garden in the rear. Her eldest daughter, Annie, was a sweet child of eleven years, but very efficient of her age, and quite able to assist her mother in caring for the younger children, and attending to the house and garden. Mrs. Gray engaged, with a courageous heart, to obtain a livelihood for herself and children, who looked to her for daily bread. She had been so well educated, that she was able to instruct her children, and was, therefore, at no expense for this important part, of family training. She resorted to her needle as the means of support, and this, with the fruit of her garden, proved barely enough.

Mrs. Gray's children were loved by every one. There was a gentleness and grace in their whole aspect, which won all hearts. Mrs. Gray was a Christian, and her children were early taught to fear God and keep his

commandments; they knew it was their duty to be cheerful, and to put their trust in their Heavenly Father. As they always appeared happy, none knew the struggles in that widow's cottage; but anxiety and care made great inroads upon Mrs. Gray's health, while she toiled day and night to maintain her children. Mrs. Gray was aided in all efforts by her daughter Annie, who seemed, as she grew up to womanhood, to imbibe all her mother's energy, and to possess those excellencies which impart dignity to the humblest, or shed a lustre upon the most exalted condition. She assumed the burdens of life as if they were her highest pleasure, and went cheerfully to the severest duties, with the sweet consciousness that she was lightening the cares of her dear mother, and blessing the home of her sister and brother.

Nearly eight years had elapsed since the death of Mrs. Gray's husband, and it was with great sorrow that we beheld her footsteps verging on the brink of the grave. The scene which I witnessed at her dying bedside will never be forgotten. Her children were around her, in an agony of grief that melted the feelings of all who saw them. The neighbors came in to proffer kindness, and the pastor was there to offer the consolations of the Gospel to their breaking hearts. Before her death, she took her children, one by one, and gave each a mother's dying blessing; and to Annie she committed the care of Ella and Charles. Never did Annie appear so beautiful as when she restrained her own measureless grief to soothe the sorrow of her sister and brother. It was evident, now that the energetic head of the family was gone, that their small property would do little towards their support; they determined, therefore, to lease the old homestead. Annie hired a small room, and with the aid of her needle, as her mother had done, she took care of her sister Ella. Her brother Charles, a bright boy of fourteen, urged on by affectionate motives, entered a country store in the village, determined in some way to add to his sister's comfort. Hardly a day passed without Annie seeing her brother, and every Sunday they spent in her room and at church, cherishing the memories of maternal instruction, and strengthening each other in holy purposes of living.

While Annie was pursuing her daily routine, she was loved by the son of a rich merchant, Mr. Mertin, who immediately offered her his hand and fortune. She frankly told him that she had promised her dying mother to be a mother to her sister and brother; that they were dependent upon her for counsel and care; and she would not forsake her trust. Mr. Mertin, upon hearing this disinterested resolution, immediately proposed such arrangements that they were all included in the general provision for happiness.

They now spend the winter in the city, and the summer in the country, in the midst of old friends, and none of her neighbors envy her happiness, but think Mr. Mertin was fortunate to win such a prize, although he was worthy, elegant, and wealthy. I have seldom met a more beautiful illustration of the care Providence takes of those who put their trust in Him, than is shown in this happy family. I have long known my friend Annie Mertin, and have admired the way in which she has been led through the paths of simple duty, and along the way of self-denying labor, to the wealth and influence which virtue only merits, or can appropriately enjoy.

GENEVIEVE.

Montreal, January 14, 1854.

HAVEN'T THE CHANGE.

It was house-cleaning time, and I had an old woman at work scrubbing and cleaning paint.

"Polly is going, ma'am," said one of my domestics, as the twilight began to fall.

"Very well. Tell her that I shall want her to-morrow."

"I think she would like to have her money for to-day's work," said the girl.

I took out my purse, and found that I had nothing in it less than a sovereign.

"How much does she have a day?"

"Two shillings, ma'am."

"I haven't the change this evening. Tell her that I'll pay for both days to-morrow."

The girl left the room, and I thought no more of Polly for an hour. Tea-time had come and passed, when one of my domestics, who was rather communicative in her habits, said to me:

"I don't think, ma'am, old Polly liked your not paying her this evening."

"She must be very unreasonable, then," said I, without reflection. "I sent her word that I had no change. How did she expect I could pay her?"

"Some people are queer, you know, Mrs. Graham," remarked the girl, who had made the communication more for the pleasure of telling it than anything else.

I kept thinking over what the girl had said, until other suggestions came into my mind.

"I wish I had sent and got change," said I, as the idea that Polly might be really in want of money intruded itself. "It would have been very little trouble."

This was the beginning of a new train of reflection, which did not make me very happy. To avoid a little trouble, I had sent the poor woman away, after a hard day's work, without her money. That she stood in need of it, was evident from the fact that she had asked for it.

"How very thoughtless in me," said I, as I dwelt longer and longer on the subject.

"What's the matter?" inquired my husband, seeing me look serious.

"Nothing to be very much troubled at," I replied.

"Yet you are troubled."

"I am, and cannot help it. You will perhaps smile at me, but small causes sometimes produce much pain. Old Polly has been at work all day, scrubbing and cleaning. When night came, she asked for her wages; and I, instead of taking the trouble to get the money for her, sent her word that I hadn't the change. I didn't reflect that a poor old woman who has to go out to daily work must need her money as soon as it is earned. I am very sorry."

My husband did not reply for some time. My words appeared to have made considerable impression on his mind.

"Do you know where Polly lives?" he replied at length.

"No; but I will ask the girl." And immediately ringing the bell, I made inquiries as to where Polly lived; but no one in the house knew.

"It cannot be helped now," said my husband, in a tone of regret. "But I would be more thoughtful in future. The poor always have need of their money. Their daily labor rarely does more than supply their daily wants. I can never forget a circumstance that occurred when I was a boy. My mother was left a widow when I was but nine years old, and she was poor. It was by

the labor of her hands that she obtained shelter and food for herself and three little ones.

"Once, I remember the occurrence as if it had taken place yesterday, we were out of money and food. At breakfast-time our last morsel was eaten, and we went through the long day without a mouthful of bread. We all grew very hungry by night; but our mother encouraged us to be patient a little while longer, until she finished the garment she was making, when she would take that and some other work home to a lady who would pay her for the work. Then, she said, we should have a nice supper. At last the work was finished, and I went with my mother to help carry it home, for she was weak and sickly, and even a light burden fatigued her. The lady for whom she had made the garment was in good circumstances, and had no want unmet that money could supply. When we came into her presence, she took the work, and, after glancing at it carelessly, said,

"'It will do very well.'

"My mother lingered; perceiving which, the lady said, rather rudely,

"'You want your money, I suppose. How much does the work come to?'

"'Six shillings,' replied my mother. The lady took out her purse; and, after looking in it, said,

"'I haven't the change this evening. Call over any time, and you shall have it.'

"And without giving my mother time more earnestly to urge her request, turned from us and left the room. I never shall forget the night that followed. My mother's feelings were sensitive, and independent. She could not make known her want. An hour after our return home, she sat weeping with her children around her, when a neighbor came in, and, learning our situation, supplied the present need."

This relation did not make me feel any the more comfortable. Anxiously I waited, on the next morning, the arrival of Polly. As soon as she came I sent for her, and, handing her the money she had earned on the day before, said,

"I'm sorry I hadn't the change for you last night, Polly. I hope you didn't want it very badly."

Polly hesitated a little, and then replied,

"Well, ma'am, I did want it very much, or I wouldn't have asked for it. My poor daughter Hetty is sick, and I wanted to get her something nice to

eat."

"I'm very sorry," said I, with sincere regret. "How is Hetty this morning?"

"She isn't so well, ma'am. And I feel very anxious about her."

"Come up to me in half an hour, Polly," said I.

The old woman went down stairs. When she appeared again, according to my desire, I had a basket for her, in which were some wine, sugar, fruit, and various little matters that I thought her daughter would relish, and told her to go at once and take them to the sick girl. Her expressions of gratitude touched my feelings deeply. Never since have I omitted, under any pretence, to pay the poor their wages as soon as earned.

A DISCOVERY.

In a narrow street in Paris, called Rue St. Eloi, stood the shop of a petty broker. Among the articles for sale was an old arm-chair, so worn with age, that no one would give forty cents for it, being all the poor dealer asked. Tired of seeing so long a useless encumbrance, he resolved to beat it to pieces, and convert the horsehair to some more profitable purpose. On proceeding to do this, what were his joy and surprise to find, concealed in the seat, a roll of paper, in which were wrapped notes of the Bank of France to the amount of 1.150 francs, or 225 dollars!

TO EDLA.

• • • • "Holy be the lay
Which, mourning, soothes the mourner on his way."—ROGERS.

In letters, and in studied phrase unskilled,
I cannot gild and polish simple thought;
Wilt thou not kindly then
Accept, tho' rude, my thanks.

I'm grateful, Edla, and would have thee know
How joyously thy gentle words have stirred,
And woke the fondest hopes
Within my drooping heart.

The brightest orbs that deck the firmament,
When most they glad us with their heavenly light,
Are but the ministers
Of soothing sympathy.

The blooming earth,—yea, the whole universe,
In an accordant song, loudly proclaims
Jehovah's general law
Of our affinity.

Teaching, that he who dries the mourner's tears,
And soothes the parched fever of his heart
With fitly spoken words
Of Him who loveth us,—

Even he himself shall feel within his soul
The freshing influence of the "tender rain;"
He, gently watering,
Himself, shall watered be.

Believe me, Edla,—choice have been thy words,
And for my sake,—that "Angel-sister" shall,
In all thy darkest hours,
Brood o'er thee lovingly.

PERSOLUS.

Montreal, 24th Dec., 1853.

Sponge.

SPONGE.—Opposite Rhodes is a little island, called Himia. At the bottom of the sea, sponge is found in greater abundance than in any other part of the Mediterranean. The inhabitants make a good living by fishing for this sponge, of which an immense quantity is bought by the Turks, to be used in their baths. In this island, no girl is allowed to marry before she has proved her courage and dexterity by bringing up a certain quantity of sponge.

A CHAPTER ABOUT BEES.

A most charming and interesting work concerning "Bees; their Habits, Management, and Treatment," has recently been published in London by G. Routledge. The author is a clergyman, and must have devoted a good deal of time and research to these sagacious and useful little creatures. Perhaps many of our readers are bee-keepers, and they would like to know something of the wonders of the hive-workers in other countries. We shall give a few extracts from this "book for the country," believing that our many friends will thereby be both delighted and profited. Mr. Wood, the author, has entered with nice distinctness into the intricacies and mysteries of the bee kingdom. He thus speaks of "Queen bees and their subjects:"—

The people thus rapidly coming into existence, where are its future governors? Watch the old queen as the spring advances, the period when all these changes are at their climax, and you will be more than ever astonished at the wondrous phenomena of the bee-mind. See how restlessly she runs about. Now she seems about to go on laying eggs; but hurriedly withdraws without doing so. No wonder she is agitated. She is about to abdicate; not about to lay down the cares and glory of sovereignty, certainly; but about to quit her established, peaceable, and quiet kingdom, to go she knows not whither, with a part of her subjects, exposed to she knows not what accident, before she may again find herself by her comfortable, regal warm comb (her

fire) side. But she respects the laws of nature, and obeys them. In those cells which she runs over in so much agitation, lurks her successor, waiting but for the proper hour to ascend the throne. How easily she could tear open the cells and destroy her! But a power greater than ambition withholds her. The bees no longer pay her their usual attention. An idea of divided allegiance seems troubling them. They get as excited as their queen. Some terrible calamity—civil war, perhaps—impends. Oh, no! the bees are at once too sensible and too unselfish. They divide—perhaps take leave of each other affectionately—and off goes the first swarm, led by their reluctant but duty-obeying monarch.

The swarm does not go off at an early period of the day, or at a very late one, but generally starts from its parent hive between ten in the morning to three or four in the afternoon, although instances have been known of swarms starting as early as seven in the morning, and as late as five in the afternoon. This instinct is useful enough to the proprietor who is anxiously expecting a swarm, as he need not commence his watch before seven or eight, and is released about four. It seems rather strange that the rightful queen should always go off with the swarm instead of remaining in office and sending the newly emancipated princess, if she may be so called, to take charge of the swarm. But so it is, and almost every queen-bee owes her throne to usurpation, and will in all probability, if she lives long enough, be dispossessed of it by the same means. She makes a terrible disturbance, though, before she does set off; and were the bees possessed of reason, we might almost think that they left the hive for the sake of peace and quietness. At all events the old queen uses her experience to some purpose, for she will not leave her former kingdom unless the day is a very fine one.

* * * * *

So, gradually, quiet is restored. And then, we may see the nurse-bees once more at work, engaged not only in tending the ordinary young, but in what may be called the culminating point of their annual labours, the helping forth into the world the royal scions, and from which they will supply their own queenless realm. They accordingly scrape away from one of the royal cells the wax that has been so lavishly bestowed upon it. Doubt not but they know which is the right one, that is to say, where lies the oldest of the young unborn queens. And here is exhibited another remarkable example of the bee-provision. The eggs in the royal cells were all laid with an interval of at least a day between each. Now that they are coming to maturity accordingly, they come not altogether, but in due succession, by

which means the bees, as we shall see, have time to know how many of them they shall want, and be able to provide accordingly. In due time the royal pupa within obeys the stirring influences that call upon her to burst her cerement, and she would at once emerge into perfect life, but that the nurse-bees, who keep watch and ward over her, knowing what is good for her better than she does herself as yet, immediately solder over the top of the cell with wax, and keep her prisoner for about two days. Why? In order, evidently, that she may not, like the young bees, be unable to fly when she emerges from the hive. And that is not left to guess-work. The bees know accurately when she is prepared, and most likely, by means of the quality or nature of the sounds she emits, which to man's grosser ears come in the shape of a number of monotonous notes, so rapidly repeated as almost to combine into one continuous sound. At last she comes forth in her perfect beauty and power. * * * But it is in every sense a spring season, with its changeable weathers and moods. The young queen learns—how, we wish some one would tell us—that there are other young queens, successors and possible rivals, in the hive. She, too, grows excited, whilst, unlike the old queen, she knows not what to do between conflicting impulses. She rushes to the cells—she will tear them open—she will sting the tenants to death—she will—but no; the cells are powerfully guarded, it is for the community to determine in a legitimate mode how these vast questions are to be dealt with; they warn her away; they bite her if she resists. She would even be in danger, but that, in case of extremity, she is in possession of some magical words (we tell no fairy-tale) that in an instant render the sentinels motionless. But if, taking advantage of this calm, she again approaches the forbidden ground, they recover themselves, and, in military phrase, do their duty. Huber witnessed this most interesting scene more than once. He describes the young queen at such a time as standing with her thorax against a comb, and crossing her wings upon her back, keeping them in motion, but not unfolding them, whilst she emitted the dread mysterious sounds, which were responded to by the weaker and hoarser cries of the yet pent-up unborn queens that she seeks to destroy. And what is it the bees want her to do, but learn the lesson bequeathed to her by her predecessor—leave the hive with another colony, and relinquish the rights of sovereignty over the parent community in favor of one of her helpless sisters. And so, at last, she departs, and a second colony is speedily in course of establishment. Possibly a third, and yet a fourth, and a fifth, may follow; the number of swarms being determined, no doubt, in ordinary circumstances, by the number of the bees, and the heat of the hive. But when the last swarm has departed, and the number of the inhabitants so lessened that the guards of the royal cells can no longer preserve their efficiency, the remaining young queens emerge as

they please, two or three at a time, and civil war, alas! does at last take place. But what an admirable mode of making civil war it is. It is the monarchs who fight, and who are but few in number, and must therefore, soon bring the contest to an end; it is the bee people that look on, quite content to pay allegiance to the conqueror. Of course no bee-subject can thus be in danger, by espousing the wrong side, of losing his property, or his rank, or have his temper exasperated by defeat and humiliation: the contest affects none of these things. Let us, too, watch the contest. Two young aspirants for the throne are meeting; they rush at each other; each seizes with her teeth the antennæ of her rival; they cling in mortal combat so close together that head, belly, and breast are mutually opposed. But nature has made them aware of the danger of instant death to both, should they in that position launch at each other the fatal dart. So they separate by a tacit mutual consent, and would apparently leave the combat to be determined at some other time. But that will not do for the bees. They can stand no shilly-shallying in the matter. They must and will know who is to be their ruler. Is government to stand still because the would-be governors are cowards?—Certainly not. So the rivals are again driven together into the arena, no matter how often the queens seek to evade the mortal issue, until at last the stronger one seizes the other and inflicts the death-pang.

Bees' loyalty is no lip loyalty. Dr. Warder once tested this with cold-blooded cruelty:—

DEVOTION TO THE QUEEN.

"Having shaken on the grass all the bees from a hive which they had only tenanted the day before, he searched for the queen by stirring amongst them with a stick. Having found and placed her, with a few attendants, in a box, she was taken into his parlour, where the box being opened, she and her attendants immediately flew to the window, when he clipped off one of her wings, returned her to the box, and confined her there for above an hour. In less than a quarter of an hour the swarm ascertained the loss of their queen, and, instead of clustering together in one social mass, they diffused themselves over a space of several feet, were much agitated, and uttered a piteous sound. An hour afterwards, they all took flight, and settled upon the hedge where they had first alighted after leaving the parent stock; but instead of hanging together like a bunch of grapes, as when the queen was with them, and as swarms usually hang, they extended themselves thirty feet along the hedge, in small bunches of forty, fifty, or more. The queen was now presented to them, when they all quietly gathered round her, with a joyful hum, and formed one harmonious cluster. At night the doctor hived

them again, and on the following morning repeated his experiment, to see whether the bees would rise. The queen being in a mutilated state, and unable to accompany them, they surrounded her for several hours, apparently willing to die with her, rather than desert her in distress. The queen was a second time removed, when they spread themselves out again, as though searching for her. Her repeated restoration to them, at different parts of their circle, produced one uniform result; and these poor, loyal, and loving creatures always marched and countermarched every way as the queen was laid! The doctor persevered in these experiments till, after five days and nights of fasting, they all died of famine, except the queen, who lived a few hours longer, and then died. The attachment of the queen to the working-bees appeared to be equally as strong as their attachment to her; though offered honey on several occasions during the period of her separation from them, she constantly refused it, disdaining a life, that was no life to her without the company of those which she could not have." What did Burke mean by saying the age of chivalry was gone? Had he forgotten the bees.

It seems that some bee-proprietors, after a good deal of experience, become quite indifferent to the sting:—

There have been several instances of bees choosing to make their nests in the roof or tower of a church, and an instance came very recently under the writer's notice. For several years the congregation had been considerably annoyed by the presence of bees during the service, but had made no particular endeavours to rid themselves of the plague. One summer, however, brought with it such an increase of bees that it was deemed necessary to institute an inquiry; for the winged intruders came in such numbers, and buzzed about so loudly, and frightened the juvenile portion of the congregation to such a degree, that the service could not proceed with any comfort. After some search a hole was discovered in the roof of the church, through which the bees were constantly passing. This was accordingly stopped up, and the workmen retired congratulating themselves on getting rid of their winged enemies so easily. They were, however, quite mistaken, for the bees descended in undiminished numbers. The roof was again examined, and found to be in such bad repair, that the colony of bees, who had taken up their residence between the roof and the leads, had found numerous openings, which they had enlarged for their own purposes. How to eject this formidable band was now the subject of deep consultation. Sulphur smoke would not answer, because it would soon pass out through the apertures in the roof, and besides, there was a very prevalent alarm lest the church should be set on fire. At last a veteran apiarian was sent for from

the next village. He immediately planted a ladder against the exterior wall, and examined the stones until he discovered the entrance to the bees' habitation. It was a mere fissure between two stones, where some of the mortar had fallen out, and the remainder being extracted by the bees for their own convenience. After surveying the prospect for some time, he declared that a stone must be taken out before the bees could be dislodged, and immediately began to loosen the stone which had already been partly deprived of its mortar. The bees, of course, were highly indignant at such an assault, but the man coolly proceeded with the work, not heeding their anger in the least. When the stone had been completely loosened, he laid by the crowbar, and deliberately pulled it out with his hands. Out rushed a perfect cloud of bees full in his face; but he quietly laid the stone down, and contented himself with brushing them off his face until he had made further investigations. All the spectators took to flight at the first appearance of the enraged bees; but their imperturbable enemy remained quietly at his post, and after descending the ladder pulled some eight or ten bees out of his hair, and remarked that they had not stung him so much as he expected. It turned out that the man was almost invulnerable to stings; and although several dozen stings or so were in his face they did not leave the slightest mark, and certainly did not appear to inconvenience him in the very smallest degree. He afterwards in the same cool manner extracted the greater part of the combs, and the bees taking the hint speedily evacuated the premises. There was but little honey, but abundance of black worn out combs, and plenty of young bees in every stage of advancement.

Many of the operations connected with bees require both firmness and delicacy in the operator. The bee-history has the following record, and parallel scenes have occurred, within the last two or three years. Thorley writes:—

"In or about the year 1717, one of my swarms settling among the close-twisted branches of some codling-trees, and not to be got into an hive without more help, my maid-servant, hired into the family the Michaelmas before, being in the garden, very officiously offered her assistance, so far as to hold the hive while I dislodged the bees, she being little apprehensive of what followed.

"Having never been acquainted with bees, and likewise afraid, she put a linen cloth over her head and shoulders, concluding that would be a sufficient guard, and secure her from their swords. A few of the bees fell into the hive; some upon the ground; but the main body of them upon the cloth which covered her upper garments.

"No sooner had I taken the hive out of her hands, but, in a terrible fright and surprise, she cried out the bees had got under the covering, crowding up towards her breast and face, which immediately put her into a trembling posture. When I perceived the veil was of no further service, she at last gave me leave to remove it. This done, a most affecting spectacle presented itself to the view of all the company, filling me with the deepest distress and concern, as I thought myself the unhappy instrument of drawing her into so great and imminent hazard of her life, which now so manifestly lay at stake.

"It is not in my power to tell the confusion and distress of mind I was in, from the awful apprehensions it raised; and her dread and terror in such circumstances may reasonably be supposed to be much more. Every moment she was at the point of retiring with all the bees about her. Vain thought! to escape by flight. She might have left the place indeed, but could not the company, and the remedy would have been much worse than the disease. Had she enraged them, all resistance had been vain, and nothing less than her life would have atoned for the offence. And now to have had that life (in so much jeopardy) insured, what would I not have given!

"To prevent, therefore, a flight which must have been attended with so fatal a consequence, I spared not to urge all the arguments I could think of, and use the most affectionate entreaties, begging her, with all the earnestness in my power, to stand her ground, and keep her present posture; in order to which, I had encouragement to hope, in a little space, for a full discharge from her disagreeable companions; on the other hand, assuring her she had no other chance for her life. I was, through necessity, constantly reasoning with her, or else beseeching and encouraging her.

"I began to search among them for the queen, now got in a great body upon her breast, about her neck, and up to her chin. I presently saw her, and immediately seized her, taking her from the crowd, with some of the commons in company with her, and put them together into the hive. Here I watched her for some time, and as I did not observe that she came out, I conceived an expectation of seeing the whole body quickly abandon their settlement; but instead of that, I soon observed them, to my greater sorrow and surprise, gathering closer together without the least signal for departing. Upon this I immediately reflected, that either there must be another sovereign, or that the same was returned. I directly commenced a second search, and in a short time, with a most agreeable surprise, found a second or the same; she strove, by entering further into the crowd, to escape me, which I was fully determined against; and apprehending her without any further ceremony, or the least apology, I re-conducted her with a great

number of the populace into the hive. And now the melancholy scene began to change, and give way to one infinitely more agreeable and pleasant.

"The bees, presently missing their queen, began to dislodge and repair to the hive, crowding into it in multitudes, and in the greatest hurry imaginable. And in the space of two or three minutes the maid had not a single bee about her, neither had she so much as one sting, a small number of which would have quickly stopped her breath.

"How inexpressible the pleasure which succeeded her past fears! What joy appeared in every countenance upon so signal a deliverance! and what mutual congratulations were heard! I never call to mind the wonderful escape without a secret and very sensible pleasure. I hope never to see such another sight, though I triumph in this most noble stand and glorious victory."

FIRELIGHT FANCIES.

[For the Maple Leaf.

In this world of trial and sorrow,
We meet but to love and part,—
What to-day is a joy,—to-morrow
May rend, with a pang, the heart.

We meet, and the years of our absence
Are lost in the joy of sight!—
We forget, in the lov'd one's presence.
The sorrows that mark'd their flight.

Oblivion, with hand of kindness,
Lets fall a veil o'er the strife,
And we gladly cherish the blindness
That sees but the charms of life.

We revel in hope and in gladness
Till, swift as night, or a cloud,
The grey-tinted mantle of sadness
Falls o'er our hopes, like a shroud.

We arouse from a strange, sweet slumber—
We wake to part, and to weep,
And to muse with sorrowful wonder,
On the dreamy joys of sleep.

But, thanks to the Glorious Giver,
It need not *ever* be so,
Beyond Death's dark, billowy river
We shall hear no plaint of wo.

We shall wander together, fearless,
On that verdant thither shore,
Our eyes will forever be tearless,
We shall meet, to part *no more*.

Oh! *worth* all our sorrow and sighing,
Oh! *worth* all our toil and care—
Is the hope that we, after dying,
Shall dwell with our lov'd ones there.

Then, as we climb over life's mountains,

With faith, let us fix our eyes
On the beautiful vales and fountains
Of the land beyond the skies.

EDLA.

Montreal, January 18th, 1854.

ICE-BERGS

Cohesion is that force by which the particles of matter are held together. That the particles of a solid are more closely bound together than those of a liquid, and the particles of a liquid than those of a gas, is quite evident, and, consequently, the cohesive force is greater. All substances, or substances

with but few exceptions, may assume any one of the three states already mentioned, liquidity being the intermediate. Heat acts as an antagonist force to cohesion, and hence it is that, as the temperature is raised, the cohesive power is overcome, and expansion, the effect of increased temperature, becomes more evident.

That liquids expand most as they approach the boiling point, and contract most as they are brought nearer to solidification, is true as a general rule; but there are some partial exceptions, of which water is the most remarkable.

The French, anxious to have a standard system of measures, founded upon some natural principle, incapable of change, so long as matter and its laws exist, have taken water in its greatest state of condensation, as giving an opportunity of attaining this desirable object. The unit of weight, called a gramme, is the weight of a cube of distilled water at its point of greatest condensation, and the centimeter is the length of the side of the cube, or one hundredth part of a metre, equal to 39,3702 English inches.

It would be easy to select many instances of the effects produced by the contraction of water in freezing; one or two may be mentioned. The glass bottles in our bed-rooms are, after severe frosty nights, frequently found broken, and the water converted into ice; water-pipes are burst, and great damage is done to newly constructed buildings, when the mortar, plaster, or cement contains much water. In nature the same agent is active. Rocks are not unfrequently torn asunder, in mountainous districts, by the freezing of the atmospheric waters which fill the fissures. The exterior of rocks and soils is crumbled in the same manner, and made fit for vegetation.

On one fact, however, we must more particularly dwell. Water expands by heat, and, to a certain point, contracts by cold. The coldest portions of the fluid are, therefore, so long as the cold remains within this limit, in the lower parts. If the contraction by cold continued until the water became ice, the lower parts of the liquid would be first frozen, and when congealed, scarcely any heat applied at the surface could melt the mass, for the warm fluid could not descend through the colder parts. To show that this is the case, Count Rumford made water boil at the top of a vessel, while the ice at the bottom was not thawed.

Suppose, then, the same law that is thus apparent, had prevailed in our lakes and seas. Each of them would have had a bed of ice, increasing with the continuance of the cold, till the whole was frozen. On their surface there could only be such pools of water as could be produced by the thawing of

the summer sun, and these would be congealed again on the return of frost. And so the process would advance, till all the water of these reservoirs became ice. Such a change would be fearful indeed; how, then, can the evils of it be averted?

God who enacted the law, to which reference has just been made, has modified it for our existence and welfare. As cold increases, water contracts; but after a certain diminution of temperature, though there is a further increase of cold, so far from contracting, it actually expands till it reaches the point at which it becomes ice. The greatest density of water is at forty degrees, and when at or near this point, it will lie at the bottom with cooler water, or with ice floating above it. The cooling process may go on at the surface, but water colder than forty degrees cannot descend to displace water that is warmer. At the bottom of deep water, ice, therefore, can never be formed. The coldest water, in approaching the freezing point, rises to the surface; there ice is formed, and there it will remain till the air and the sun restore it to its fluid state. Every winter we have some proof of this in the ice that floats for a time on our ponds, lakes, and rivers. What, then, must be the evidence afforded in the polar regions on which the eye of the poet was fixed when he said:

> ——————————————The muse
> Then sweeps the howling margin of the main;
> Where, undissolving, from the first of time,
> Snows swell on snows amazing to the sky;
> And icy mountains, high on mountains piled,
> Seen to the shivering sailors, from afar,
> Shapeless and white, an atmosphere of clouds,
> Projected huge, and horrid o'er the surge,
> Alps frown on Alps; or, rushing hideous down,
> As if old Chaos was again returned,
> Wide rend the deep, and shake the solid pole.
> Ocean itself no longer can resist
> The blinding fury; but, in all its rage
> Of tempest taken by the boundless frost,
> Is many a fathom to the bottom chain'd.

Ice-bergs are islands of frozen water, considerably elevated, generally perpendicular on one side, and sloping gradually down on the other. They are sometimes two hundred feet in height. Floating ice has about one-seventh of its thickness above water; but ice-bergs are sometimes aground, and therefore show a greater proportion of their height. They are formed

either by the pressure of large masses of ice upon each other by winds and currents; or are detached by their own weight, or the action of waves, from the vast glaciers which abound in Greenland and Spitzbergen. It is to be observed, that sea-water requires a lower temperature, by three degrees and a half of Fahrenheit, to freeze, than is necessary for common water. Man often employs rafts for his safety and convenience, but here the Arctic bear sometimes takes his stand; and, doubtless, to his surprise, is left to the wide ocean, as the ice-berg melts beneath him. The masses of ice which have been frozen together, gradually separate as summer advances, and clear spaces of water are left; but these begin again to be frozen over as early as the end of September. When, then, we look on ice in the water of our own land, or on representations of it on the mighty deep, let us remember that here a law operates without which the whole economy of the material world would be disarranged. Thus as we trace the operation of natural causes, we find that a knowledge of God's works, even in the inanimate world, affords new sources of gratitude; nor can we sufficiently adore his wisdom and love who has so amply provided for the existence and comfort of feeling and thinking beings.—*Selected*.

TWO IN HEAVEN.

"You have two children," said I.

"I have four," was the reply, "two on earth, two in heaven."

Here spoke the mother, still hers, only "gone before." Still remembered, loved, and cherished, by the hearth, and at the board; their places not yet filled; even though their successors draw life from the same faithful breast where their dying heads were pillowed.

"Two in heaven!" Safely housed from storm and tempest, no sickness there nor drooping head, nor fading eye, nor weary feet. By the green pastures, tended by the Good Shepherd, linger the little lambs of the heavenly fold.

"Two in heaven." Earth less attractive, eternity nearer, invisible cords drawing the maternal soul upwards, "still, small voices" ever whispering "come!" to the world-weary spirit!

"Two in heaven." Mother of angels! walk softly—holy eyes watch thy footsteps—cherub faces bend to listen! Keep thy spirit free from earth's taint, so shalt thou "go to them, though they may not return to thee!"—*Fanny Fern*.

IMPROMPTU.

METRICAL REPLIES TO "EDLA'S" QUESTIONS—"LIFE! LOVE! DEATH! WHAT ARE THEY?"

I.

"We might be happy, but this clay will sink
Its spark immortal."—BYRON.

LIFE!—'Tis a fretful, feverish dream
  That plays upon the brow of time—
A vision shadowy, which seems
  Too evanescent for our clime;—
A paltry nothing, fraught with pain;
In strength 'tis weakness,—only vain.

II.

"Oh, if the soul immortal be,
Is not its love immortal too?"—HEMANS.

LOVE!—What is it? Keen desire,
  Memories of sunny youth,
Kindling of celestial fire,
  Imaged in eternal Truth;—
Thoughts which love from earth to roam,
Seeking Heaven, their native home.

III.

"One struggle more, and I am free."—BYRON.

DEATH!—Oh, death, how fearful thou,
  Motive power of fear and dread,
Tyrant of the moment, "now,"
  Easer of the aching head;—
Ruthless cause of bitter tears,
Gentle soother of our fears.

PERSOLUS.

10th January, 1854.

I dwell less on the disappointments of life, and shelter myself less amid its deep shadows and funereal glooms, because my eye is always detecting stray rays of celestial glory that come treading their way through the dark clouds of earthly sorrow, and my ear often hears the strains of sweet melody that are wafted from angelic lyres.

THE DYING WIFE.

[Written for the Maple Leaf.

In a steamboat on the Mississippi River, the saloons and berths are all above water, and fitted up with every accommodation for passengers who may require to be on board several days. The lower deck is generally filled with flat-boatmen, or dealers in western produce, who, having disposed of their stock, take passage back. A motley assemblage they make,—smoking, drinking, gambling, playing the violin, and other amusements, follow each other in rapid succession, or prevail at the same time. Often five or six hundred persons occupy this deck, which extends the whole length of the boat, except where the machinery of the engine fills a space; and around the glowing furnace faces may be seen begrimed with coal dust and marked with passion lines. The noise and confusion of this part of the boat is horrible, so many desperadoes are always among them, that the Captain seldom hazards an interference with their revels.

The flat-boatmen are known to have money,—their rafts of produce raised on the fertile plains of Indiana and Illinois, meet with ready purchasers in the southern cities, and the flat-boats are sold to wood merchants: thus these men turn their faces homeward with well filled pockets, little dreaming of the keen eyes that watch them, or the allurements they may meet to draw them to the gaming table, where they seldom fail to lose much of the fruits of their hard-earned toil. The love of gaming, like the passion for intoxicating drinks, excites in its victims a frenzied fever; they rush on madly until certain ruin stares them in the face, and then they are ready for any deed of desperation. It will be a happy era for the ignorant and

unsuspecting passenger when wholesome, efficient laws shall oblige steamboat Captains to search out, and land all gamblers, as soon as detected.

It was in the crowded saloon of a steamboat bound to Cincinnati that I first met Henrietta B— —. Her large mournful eyes attracted my attention at once, and my interest in her was increased on observing that she was evidently in a deep decline; an elderly lady busied herself in arranging some cushions for the invalid, who looked anxiously around as if expecting some one else.

The variety of faces and characters, which are to be seen in such a place furnish fine studies for the philosopher, and as I was fresh from a devoted attendance on "Stewart" and "Brown," I thought it a suitable time to apply the principles I had learned. I soon, therefore, gave causes for the lines of thought and sorrow that seemed to be traced on that fair young face, and wove quite a history of blighted hopes and joys to match the touching tones of her voice, and the deep feeling looking out of her eyes. I little thought while lost in my reveries, how much my skeleton history was like life. It wanted only a name and reality. Some movement made it necessary for me to change my seat, and I, fortunately for my infant romance, was obliged to take one near the lady, in time to hear her anxiously inquire of her companion if she thought Ernest would soon be back; "I do not know my child," said the lady, whom I then observed particularly for the first time, and noticed the strong resemblance between the two, except that the elder lady was taller; "I do not know what detains him, perhaps the baggage; he surely will not stop long." The object of this solicitude soon afterwards appeared, and I understood at once the nature of the trial that was breaking the heart of that young wife. Her husband approached her kindly, but it was evident that he had first attended to his own taste and feelings before coming in, as a slight unsteadiness in manner, and an unnatural glow on his countenance betokened. The hectic deepened on her cheek, as with the penetration of a fond heart she discovered his situation, and turning quickly she made room for him near her, evidently desirous of keeping him from returning to the charmed circle in the gentlemen's saloon, where he might be tempted to take the intoxicating glass.

Day after day I came in contact with this little group. I watched them with a kind of feverish anxiety, for I saw that the lady's strength failed: soon she was obliged to keep her state-room; then she became quite ill, and at last a medical man, who was among the passengers, advised that she should be removed to a hammock which had been suspended in the cabin, where she could get more air, and feel the motion of the boat less.

My sympathy was strongly excited when I learned her history, as fragments of it were related to me, by her almost heart-broken mother. Henrietta B—— was a native of F—— in Virginia, where she was reared with all the tenderness and care that affluent circumstances could afford. Before she completed her eighteenth year, she became attached to Ernest B ——, a young lawyer of promising character; brilliant in talent, and well cultivated in mind, he seemed just the one to make her happy. Shortly after their marriage, the settlement of some important business called him south. In the gay society of a large southern city, he was not proof against the insidious advances of a predisposed taste for excitement. He returned to his bride much altered, and though she strove to hope for the best, and cheerfully accompanied him on a second journey, continued disappointment, and sorrow in regard to him, seemed to wither her heart; she faded rapidly, and her mother hastened to her, hoping yet to save her by bringing her back to her native air; now it seemed evident that she was going home to die. What a lesson! thought I, as I saw the effects of intemperance in the disappointed hopes of that young heart. She grew very weak, and seldom spoke except to her husband, who hung over her in intense anguish, and when remorse, or sorrow for her whom he had wronged rose too high, he tried to brace himself to bear his trial by occasional absences at the "bar" of the boat.

At last, however, it appeared doubtful whether she could live to reach Cincinnati; her eyes looked like fawn's eyes, so large and mournful, and followed her husband's every movement, as if loth to lose sight of him for an instant. They seemed to say, "Oh! let my death be your life."

It was the Sabbath; never shall I forget it,—sounds of shouting and laughing, mingled with the lively tones of a violin, reached our ears from the babel of confusion in the lower deck. The uproar startled her spirit, and disturbed the solemn thoughts that filled her mind. One ever ready to act and sympathise in a good cause, ventured down among the noisy revellers, to try and induce them to be quiet, both for the sake of the day, and the poor sufferer whose hours seemed so nearly numbered. Then as the day advanced we gathered round her cot, and sang. Ernest B—— had a rich voice, and he appeared to forget everything but the holy solemnity of the scene; his deep feeling lent a pathos to his tones, that went to my heart. We sung of the parting spirit soaring to its eternal home, of faith—that Saviour, who has lighted the tomb with beams of heavenly glory; and as the melody rose and fell round the couch of that dying one, I received impressions and experienced emotions that have never been effaced; and though when we arrived at Louisville, the poor sick lady was carried on shore, and I saw her

no more, I have no doubt that she was indeed done with earth, and that our songs and prayers were among the last things of which she had any consciousness.

Oh! mournful are the histories of the young and gifted, the happy and the good, who have suffered, and died victims of intemperance and its effects! Mournful! that is, indeed, too sweet a word to express the idea,—a rounded, graceful period to a naked truth, set forth, skeleton-like, without drapery;—rather, I should say, bitter, bleeding, despairing histories, written in tears—baptized in blood.

Montreal, January, 1854.

THE CHRISTMAS TREE.

A group of happy children stood round a Christmas tree,
And the mother's heart beat joyously her beauteous ones to see;
The boys so brave and noble, with their gladsome air and mien,
And between them, smiling sweetly, an angel form was seen.

The only little daughter, in her innocence how gay,
Had hailed with child-like rapture, the dawn of Christmas day;
And as she stood among them, with her golden locks so bright,
She well might be mistaken for a form of angel light!

And others too were gazing down the happy scene above,
Well pleased to mark the gathering of innocence and love;
But sorrow mingled with their joy, for they knew the fairest there,
Would ne'er again a Christmas day on earth be there to share.

The green boughs of the Christmas tree are sparkling bright and rare,
With pretty gifts and pictures gay, for each to have a share;
And eagerly are little hands held out to take the prize,
Of far more worth than costly gems in fairy childhood's eyes.

Save one, and her soft eyes are bent where on his mother's knee,
The holy babe of Bethlehem is sleeping peacefully;
She sought nor toy, nor trinket, from among the many there,
But the picture of the holy child was in her eyes more fair.

Then from the radiant branches, all joyously she sings,
(An angel form one well might deem, naught wanting but the wings);
The hymn by her so cherished, hark! hark! the angels sing,
Glory to God the Highest! and to the heaven-born King!

What thought thou then, fond mother, as wildly to thy heart,
Thou clasped that lov'd one in thy arms, as thou would'st never part;—
Didst think that o'er another year, of that young cherished life
Had passed away, that she would sing beneath the tree of life?

And Christmas came,—but now no tree lights up the gladsome hall,
A gloom, a deep and fearful gloom, has fallen over all;
The angel band who hovered o'er the little daughter fair,
Have taken her from her home below, their home above to share!

Gone! gone! the many day-dreams of the future bright and fair,

Which with the fondly loved one, thy mother hoped to share;
Thy downy bed is vacant, where with untired delight,
She watched thee sleeping sweetly, as night succeeded night.

Hushed! hushed! the voice whose accents soft like gentle music stole,
As grateful dew from heaven above into the weary soul;
Still! still! the fairy step which once did glide around the hearth,
And made the home thy presence blessed, a Paradise on earth!

And wildly throbs the yearning heart, with sorrow none can tell,
Save those alone, upon whose hearts like anguish hath befell;
A sorrow, such as he alone, who sent it e'er can still,
A blank no future joy on earth can ever, ever fill!

The angel child has vanished, and in her stead is there,
Brooding above the stricken one, the angel of despair;
Suggesting fearful, harrowing thoughts of sorrow and of dread,
The past! the past! fond mother think, thy darling's with the dead!

Away thou cruel tempter, from the sorely tried, away,
Yes even through this bitter grief, faith pours a heavenly ray;
Raising the hope so crushed to rest, upon that better shore,
Where safely dwells that precious one with God for evermore.

Then upwards gaze, earth's sorrowing ones, where sweetly she does rest,
Secure from evil, strife, or woe, upon her Saviour's breast;
Who to the fold has taken this lamb, so free from sin,
That those she loved on earth so well, may strive to enter in!

C. H.

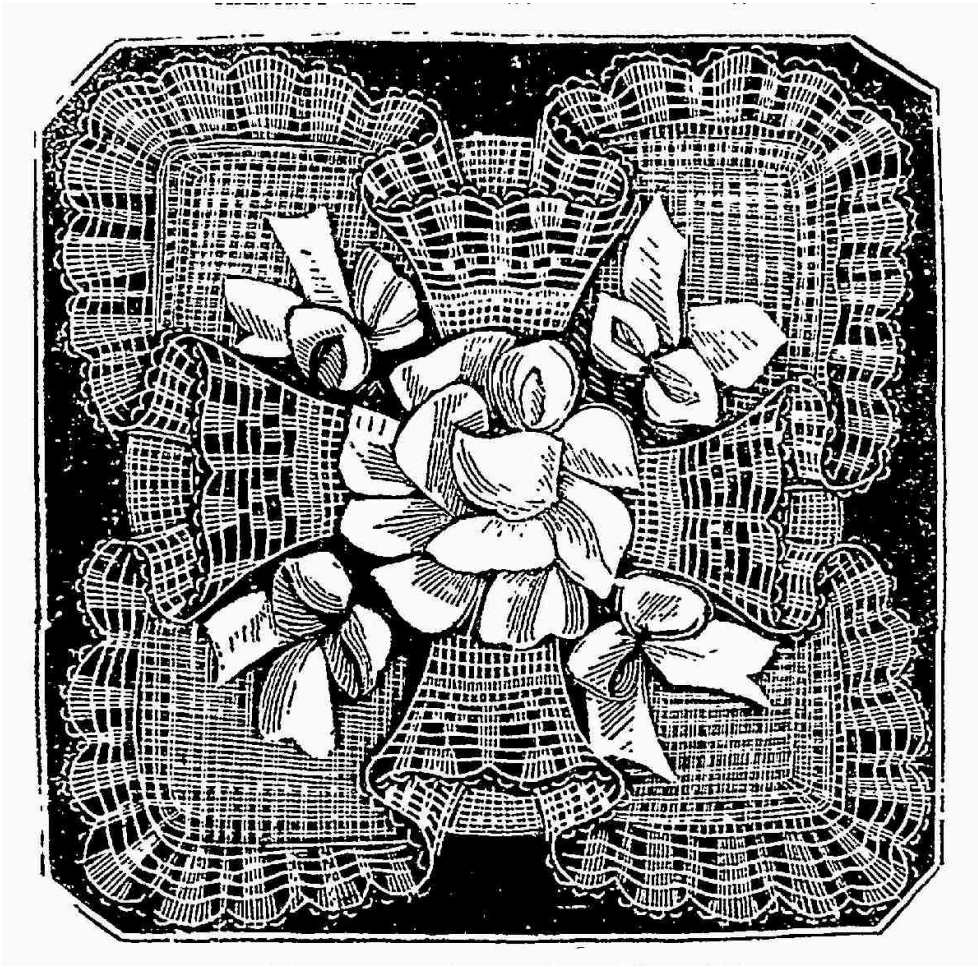
Ravenscourt, 12th Dec., 1853.

Curiosity of a Spider's Web.

CURIOSITY OF A SPIDER'S WEB.—The body of every spider contains four little masses pierced with a multitude of imperceptible holes, each hole

permitting the passage of a single thread; all the threads to the amount of a thousand to each mass, join together when they come out, and make the single thread with which the spider spins his web; so that what we call a spider's thread consists of more than four thousand united.—*Selected*.

CHESTNUT BASKET FOR THE DESSERT TABLE.



MATERIALS.—Half a yard of pink glazed calico; ditto of flannel; 3½ yards of pink satin ribbon, 1½ inches wide; and seven reels of Messrs. Walter Evans and Co.'s Boar Head crotchet cotton, No. 12. An average worker will use W. Boulton and Son's crochet-hook, No. 16.

This elegant novelty for the dessert table consists of a square of crochet, edged with lace, which is afterwards folded into the form seen in the engraving. It is lined with pink glazed calico and flannel, (the former being on the outside); a knot of pink ribbon is placed at each corner, and in order

to cover the opening in the centre, a double round of flannel, of the proper dimensions, is quilted with a similar piece of pink calico, and tacked so as to form a lid. It is decorated with bows of pink ribbon, which entirely covers it.

The inner square of the toilet-cover first given would do well for this purpose, working it on a foundation of 262 stitches and with one row of Dc, and one of open square crochet before the pattern is begun.

The nearest centre is to be filled with the initials of the owner, and should be drawn on checked paper, of not more than 31 squares, and worked in.

For the border which is worked all round.

1st Round.—* 1 dc, 1 ch, miss 1 * repeat all round, without missing any at the corners.

2nd Round.—* 1 dc, 3 ch, miss 3 * all round, missing only 1, in several stitches at the corners.

3rd Round.—* 3 dc, (the centre on 1 dc, 6 ch), miss 6, 1 dc, on dc, 6 ch, * repeat all round.

4th Round.—* 3 dc, on 3 dc, 4 ch, miss 4, 5 dc, 4 ch, miss 4, * repeat all round.

5th Round.—* 1 dc, on the centre of 3 dc, 3 ch, miss 3, 3 dc, 3 ch, miss 3, 3 dc, 3 ch, miss 3, * repeat all round.

6th Round.—* 3 dc, over 3 dc, in the 4th row, 4 ch, miss 4, 5 dc, 4 ch, miss 4, * repeat all round.

7th Round.—* 3 dc, over 3 dc, 6 ch, miss 6, 1 dc over the centre of 5 dc, 6 ch, miss 6, * repeat all round.

8th Round.—* 5 sc, (coming over 3 dc, and 1 chain on each side), 4 ch, miss 4, 5 dc, on 3, 4 ch, miss 4. *

9th Round.—* 3 sc, on the centre of 5 sc, 4 ch, miss 1 s, and 3 ch, 10 dc, over the 5 dc, and one chain on each side, 4 ch. *

10th Round.—* sc, on centre of 3 sc, 5 ch, miss 4, 1 sc, 5 ch, miss 3, 1 sc, 5 ch, miss 2, 1 sc, 5 ch, miss 3, 1 sc, 5 ch. *

Cut out the rounds of flannel and calico nearly of the diameter of the square of crochet, not including the edging. Fold it into the form seen in the engraving; then make it up as directed.

I SEE A MAN.

I see a man.
I do not see his shabby dress,
I see him in his manliness;
I see his axe; I see his spade;
I see the man that God has made.
If such a man before you stand,
Give him your heart—give him your hand,
And praise your Maker for such men:
They make this old earth young again.

NIL DESPERANDUM—NO NEVER!

Every cloud has a silvered lining; and He who wove it knows when to turn it out. So, after every night, however long or dark, there shall yet come a golden morning. Your noblest powers are never developed in prosperity. Any bark may glide in smooth water with a favoring gale; but that is a brave, skilful oarsman, who rows up stream against the current, with adverse winds, and no cheering voice to wish him "God speed." Keep your head above the wave; let neither sullen despair nor weak vascillation drag you under. Heed not the poisoned arrow of sneaking treachery that whizzes past you from the shore. Judas sold himself when he sold his Master; and for him there dawned no resurrection morning! 'Tis glorious to battle on with a brave heart, while cowering pusillanimity turns trembling back. Dream not of the word "surrender!" When one frail human reed after another breaks, or bends beneath you, lean on the "Rock of Ages!"

The Great Architect passes you through the furnace but to purify. The fire may scorch, but it never shall consume you. He will yet label you "fine gold." The narrow path may be thorny to your tender feet; but the "promised land" lies beyond! The clusters of Hope may be seen with the eye of faith; your hand shall yet grasp them; your eyes revel from the mountain top, over

the green pastures and still waters of peace. You shall yet unbuckle your dusty armour, while soft zephyrs shall fan your victor temples. *Nil desperandum*.

FANNY FERN.

WONDERS OF CHEMISTRY.

Aquafortis and the air we breathe are made of the same materials. Linen and sugar, and the spirits of wine, are so much alike in their chemical composition, that an old shirt can be converted into its own weight in sugar, and the sugar into spirits of wine. Wine is made of two substances, one of which is the cause of almost all combinations in burning, and the other will burn with more rapidity than anything in nature. The famous Peruvian bark, so much used to strengthen the stomach, and the poisonous principle of opium, are found to consist of the same materials.

THINGS USEFUL AND AGREEABLE.

[SELECTED.]

The soul has its green fields, and waving woods, and running waters, and in and beside them can refresh itself with perpetual delight. Without fatigue it can ascend mountains, and gaze on illimitable scenes of air and earth, or stray through grassy meadows, and feel no languor from the noontide heat.

A simple glance at the powers of the mind,—its capacities, store-houses of memory, range of thought, taste, refinement, capabilities of happiness, and exquisite organization,—affords strong presumptive evidence that it was not made to perish with the body. So wonderful a structure, animating this living material organization, connected with all external structures—with the earth, sun, and stars;—so Godlike a substance,—united to the great God, soaring for companionship with angels, capable of loving and adoring the

Supreme Being, could not have been made to sport here awhile, amid an ocean of mysteries and uncertainties, to be at last flung as a worthless wreck upon the shores of eternity.

There are some beautiful appearances which frost frequently assumes, to cheer us, as it were, and give an agreeable exercise to our taste in the absence of that loveliness which the hand of an indulgent Creator sheds so profusely over our fields and gardens in the genial months of spring and summer. Hoar frost is occasioned by the freezing of mist or dew. It forms elegant and varied foliations on the glass of windows;—this happens when the air within the room is impregnated with moisture. The coldness of the glass causes the floating vapor to be condensed on its surface, where it shoots out, as it freezes into those flowery crystals which excite our admiration.

Damascus is a celebrated City of Asia Minor, frequently mentioned in the Bible. It is situated about one hundred and thirty-six miles north-east of Jerusalem, and contains a population of about one hundred and seventy thousand inhabitants. The situation of the city, in a beautiful valley, well-watered, and surrounded by orchards, has been celebrated with enthusiasm by Oriental writers. The city was formerly famous for the manufacture of sabres, or swords, of a peculiarly fine temper; and the beautiful figured linens and silks called damasks take their name from this city. It was on his journey to this city that St. Paul was converted.

The Danube River is the largest in Europe. It rises in the Grand Duchy of Baden, in Germany, runs through Bavaria, Austria, Hungary, and Turkey, to the Black Sea, into which it empties by five mouths. Its whole length is about eighteen hundred miles, and, in its course, it receives the waters of about sixty rivers.

In Cordova, in Spain, there is a Cathedral which is divided into seventeen aisles, by rows of marble columns, of which there are seven hundred and seventy-eight.

Persian painting is so purely mechanical that even those unacquainted with drawing and coloring will find no difficulty in it. It differs from painting generally in this particular, that no attempt is made to copy from nature; it is rather a mosaic work of colors, consisting of quaint scrolls and arabesques, flowers of extraordinary hues and forms, birds of marvellous plumage, and devices which have only their oddity to recommend them. It does not require, as other kinds of painting do, those delicate touches, and that softening and blending of color and shade which is considered the

beauty of a flower or landscape drawing generally. Its outlines are all abrupt, its colors contrast, and not blend with one another, and brilliancy rather than delicacy is the effect aimed at.

A Warm Remonstrance.—An Englishman and a German were travelling together in a diligence, and both smoking. The German did all in his power to draw his companion into conversation, but to no purpose. At one moment he would, with superabundant politeness, apologise for drawing his attention to the fact, that the ashes of his cigar had fallen on his waistcoat, or a spark was endangering his neckerchief. At length, the Englishman exclaimed, "Why, my friend, can't you let me alone? Your coat-tail has been burning for the last ten minutes, but I didn't bother you about it."

Shadow Buff.—Hang a sheet across one end of the room, and place a table with a lighted candle upon it, about a yard behind the screen. Choose "buff" from the party, and place him in front of the screen, with his face towards it; then let each of the party pass between the table and the screen in any way they please, such as on tip-toe, or on their knees; and, as the shadow of each will be disguised by their gestures, "buff" must endeavor to name each person as they pass behind the screen; and, if he is successful, the person first-named correctly becomes "buff," and the game commences again.

RECIPES.

Boiled Plum Pudding, without Eggs.—Pour over twelve crackers, after they have been broken, one quart of milk, let it stand over night; strain it through a cullender the next morning, then add a quarter of a pound of suet, a pound of raisins, half a pound of currants, a little salt, and a tea-cupful of molasses. Boil it three or four hours. To be eaten with a rich sauce.

Bread and Butter Pudding.—Cut the bread in thin slices, butter them, and put a layer into a well-buttered dish. Strew currants and raisins, and citron or sweetmeats over it; then another layer of bread and fruit, and so on until the dish is filled. Beat six eggs, with one pint of milk, a little salt, nutmeg, and a spoonful of rose water; sweeten it to your taste, and cover it over with bread. Let it soak an hour or two before baking. Bake one half hour.

Chapped Hands.—The following is an excellent remedy for this great inconvenience, from which so many suffer at this period of the year:—Two ounces olive oil, one ounce white wax, one ounce spermaceti, the whole to be dissolved over the fire until all the ingredients become amalgamated; when cool, it is fit for use.

DISTICH.

Montreal, 27th January, 1854.

DEAR EDITOR,—The subjoined distich was penned in "the golden days of happy memory, the reign of good Queen Bess;" indeed they are, I believe, very generally accredited to Queen Elizabeth herself, who, it appears, perpetrated the satire or pun upon one of the Mordaunt family; perhaps it may, with propriety, fill a corner of the "Leaf."

"The word of denial, and letter of fifty,
Makes a gentleman's name that never was thrifty."

Will any of the juveniles be kind enough to tell me what the gentleman's name was?

OSCAR.

ANSWER TO RIDDLE.

Montreal, 12th January, 1854.

DEAR EDITOR,—In answer to "A.T.C." I beg to state, that I should find no difficulty in dividing the eight gallons of whisky into equal parts as required. For his information, I will proceed to explain:—First, fill the three gal. cask, empty that into the five, fill the three gal. cask once more; from that fill up the five (5); which when done will leave remaining in the three gal. cask, one gallon; then empty the contents of the five gallon cask into the eight gallon cask; next pour the gallon still remaining in the three gallon cask into

the five; then fill the three from the larger cask, and from the three fill into the five, and you have four gallons.

JEANIE.

EDITORIAL.

The articles and selections for this number are quite varied in character, and will, we trust, be found interesting. The fact that there are those who take an interest in our labors, and send contributions for our pages, is cheering; and though all of these articles are not inserted, the mental effort is beneficial to the writers, who should not be discouraged, but write again—a second or third trial may be more satisfactory.

We miss our friend Mrs. Traill's pleasing articles for the young, and gladly receive her assurance that she will try to find some moments from her literary engagements to devote to the readers of the *Maple Leaf*.

The Riddle which appeared in the last number, seemed to excite much attention. We have received a number of answers, and select one of the shortest for insertion.

The weather has been very severe lately, the mercury fell as low as 26° below zero. This intense cold does not continue many days at a time, or it would be very trying.

We should like to induce some of our correspondents to give a lucid explanation of the thermometer, and the principle upon which mercury is employed to show the various degrees of heat and cold.