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POETRY.

"The reigning eagle of Parnassian skies.
Now soaring 'midst the tracks of light and air
And now the monarch of the woods and lair."

The Close of the Year.

G. D. PRENTICE.

'Tis midnight's holy hour—and silence now
Is brooding like a gentle spirit o'er
The still and pulseless world. Hark! on the winds
The bell's deep tones are swelling—'tis the knell
Of the departing year. No funeral train
Is sweeping past—yet, on you stream and wood,
With melancholy light, the moon beams rest
Like a pale, spotless, shroud—the air is stirred
As by a mourner's sigh—and on yon cloud
That floats so still and placidly through heaven,
The spirits of the seasons seem to stand,
Young Spring, bright Summer, Autumn's solemn form
And Winter with his aged locks, and breathe,
In mournful cadences that come abroad
Like the far wind harp's wild and touching wile,
A melancholy dirge o er the dead year
Gone from the earth forever;
'Tis a time
For memory and for tears. Within the deep
Still chambers of the heart a spectre dim,
Whose tones are like the wizard voice of Time
Heard from the tomb of Ages, pointing its cold
And solemn finger to the beautiful
And holy visions, that have passed away
And left no shadow of their loveliness
On the dead waste of life. That spectre lifts
The coffin lid of Hope, and Joy, and Love,
And, bending mournfully above the pale
Sweet forms, that slumber there scatters dead flowrs
O'er what has passed to no highness—The year
Has gone, and, with it, many a glorious throng
Of happy dreams. Its mark is on each brow,
And its shadow in each heart. In it's swift course,
It waved its sceptre o'er the beautiful—
And they are not. It laid its pallid hand
Upon the strong man—and the haughty form
Is fallen, and the flashing eye is dim,
It trod the hall of revelry, where thronged
The bright and joyous—and the tearful wail
Of stricken ones is heard where rest the song
And reckless shout resounded. It passed o'er
The battle plain, where sword and spear and shield
Flashed in the light of mid day—and the strength
Of surried hosts is shivered, and the grass,
Green from the soil of carnage, waves above
The crushed and mouldering skeletons. It came
And faded like a wreath of mist at eve,
Yet, ere it melted in the viewless air,
It heralded its millions to their home,
In the dim land of dreams.
Remorseless Time—
Fierce spirit of the Glass and Scythe—what power
Can stay him in his silent course, or melt
His iron heart to pity! On, still on,
He presses, and forever. The proud bird,
The Conder of the Andes—that can soar
Through Heaven's unfathomable depths, or brave
The fury of the northern hurricane
And bathe his plumage in the thunder's home,
Furls his broad wings at night fall and sinks down
To rest upon his mountain crag—but Time
Knows not the weight of sleep or weariness,
And night's deep darkness has no chain to bind
His rushing pinion. Revolutions sweep
O'er earth, like troubled visions o'er the breast
O'er dreaming Sorrow—Cities rise and sink
Like bubbles on the water—Fiery isles
Spring blazing from the Ocean, and go back
To their mysterious caverns—Mountains rear
To Heaven their bold and blackened cliffs, and bow
Their tall heads to the plain—new Empires rise,
Gathering the strength of many centuries
And rush down like the Alpine avalanche,
Startling the nations—and the very stars,
Yon bright and burning blazonry of God,
Glitter awhile in their eternal depths,
And like the Pleiad, loveliest of their train,
Shoot from their glorious spheres and pass away
To darkle in the trackless void—Yet Time,
Time the Tomb-builder—holds his fierce career,
Dark, stern, all pitiless, and pauses not.
Amid the mighty wrecks that strew his path,
To sit and muse, like other conquerors,
Upon the fearful ruin he has wrought.

DESULTORY SELECTIONS.

THE PAST AND THE NEW YEAR.

By Chief Justice Mellen, of Maine.

The close of the year, whose knell is heard, amid the chills and gloom of winter, when all around reminds us of our departed friends and the loss we have sustained, is peculiarly adapted to arouse us from our inattention to the lapse of time, and impress on our hearts the solemn truth that life itself is but a vapor. Many, it is true, when they look into the grave of the year, may experience a rush of bitter feeling, as they fondly recollect how many cherished hopes they have been called upon to bury in the tomb, during the lapse of the year, how many friends have proved false and ungrateful—how many of their sons have gone down in the gloom of solitude, or amidst scenes of sickness and poverty, or of sighing and sorrow. All this is true, and such ever has been and ever will be the complexion of human life. But though thousands are thus educated in a school where such is the salutary discipline, yet millions have been spending the year in peace and joy—in health and abundance.—Their journey has been gladdened with sunshine, & their course has been through fields of beauty and beside the still waters of comfort. It is useful—it is a species of gratitude thus to look back and trace the course we have been pursuing. If it has been delightful, our hearts should melt in tenderness while we look to the fountain of all our blessings. If our course has been wearisome through fields of sterility or melancholy and companionless, we should remember that Wisdom and Goodness preside over our destinies, whether we are breasting the storm, or calmly beholding the rainbow of promise. The year that is bidding us adieu, was pleasure in its course, and in its decline gradual and beautiful. An unusual degree of softness distinguished its autum, resembling the last years of the life of man, when the agitation of the passions have in a great measure subsided; when his feelings have become tranquilized and all around him peaceful and serene, if he has been careful to regulate his conduct, on life's journey, by the principles of justice and the commands of duty—if in his social intercourse his passions have been preserved in due subjection to the influences of his benevolent heart displaying itself in acts of mercy like the good Samaritan.

"Sure the last end
Of the good man is peace. How calm his exit!
Night dews fall not more gently on the ground,
Nor weary, worn out winds expire so soft."

The year to which we are just to be introduced is, in one sense, a perfect stranger, though we have long been intimate with the family to which it belongs, & of course have some general acquaintance with certain features of its character, leading us to anticipate its promises and its failure to perform them in many instances—its smiles and its tears—its flatteries and its frowns—its gaieties and hopes—its gradual decline—decay and desolution: but we have abundant reason too for indulging the belief that we may enjoy thousands of blessings, if we are disposed to cherish proper feelings to be kind and courteous and obliging, & ever on our guard to avoid unnecessarily wounding the feelings of others; ever ready to acknowledge the favors we receive, and render a suitable return.

How easily all this may be done! How often is it grossly neglected! He who consults his own ease and comfort cannot in any manner attain the desired result so readily and certainly, as by habitually consulting the ease and comfort of others, with whom he is in the habit of associating: and this is true politeness also. A man who is dissatisfied with himself and those around him, and laboring under the darkening influence of disturbed or morose feelings 'may travel from Dan to Beersheba and say it is all barren,'—to him it will appear so, and the effect would be the same if his journey lay amidst the most delightful scenes of rural beauty. The seasons of the year all give their annual lessons for instruction. It is our wisdom to regard them carefully. Spring summons us all to cheerful activity, with assurance that our labor will not be in vain. Summer performs what spring had promised, and shews us the advantage listening to early instruction and wisely improving it.—Ten thousand songsters are filling the branches with their animating strains of music and gratitude, and teaching us to enjoy, as they do, the countless blessings and bounties of nature; their music is never failing—nor do we see it ending in discords. Let us all, as we journey onward together through the year, learn to tune our hearts as they do their voices, and pass the fleeting period in harmony, and in that cheerfulness which the excellent Addison has honored with the name of a continual expression of gratitude to Heaven.

In Germany the study and practice of music are general among the people. Besides other advantages resulting from making music a part of common education, it is not romantic or utopian to observe that it teaches how easily music—pure and surpassing music—may be made on the same instrument, which under an ignorant or purposed touch will send forth discords in prodigious varieties. He who has become acquainted, though not a master of it, well knows how to avoid those combinations of sound which are painful to the ear, and often tend to disturb the feelings and passions. What tones are sweeter than those produced by gentle breeze of heaven in passing over the strings of the Æolian Harp? The reason is those strings are so attuned as that their vibrations will not respond except in notes of harmony: but only disorder the strings, by increasing the tension of some and decreasing that of others and the sweetest zephyr will produce nothing but the vilest discords, resembling angry passions. Let us then, in our journey through the year on which we have entered, acquire as much as possible a knowledge of the science and the art of social and domestic moral music. Let us learn to measure our time with care, to cultivate our voices, that they may lose all harshness; let each attend to his own part, and strive to excel in in that. Let us consider our feelings, passions and dispositions, as the strings of the Harp; and the ordinary events of life as the breeze which give vibration to the strings: if these strings—our feelings, passions and dispositions—are in proper tune, under due regulation, and preserving a just relation each to all the others, we have then all the elements of moral music, domestic and social, and in a few weeks, by due regard to all the principles and arrangements above mentioned, we shall soon be good scholars, giving & receiving all that pleasure which harmony can afford. and as the sober autum advances, our tastes for this kind of music will be more and more ripened towards perfection; and when cold Decemberly evenings shall arrive, we can listen to the angry music of the elements abroad, full of discordant strains, sweeping by our peaceful homes, while within them all may be the music of the heart, in its gentlest movements.

It is a melancholy truth that we ourselves manufacture seven eighths of what we are disposed to term our misfortunes in this world. Want of precaution mars our arrangements: want of prudence exposes us to dangers which we might easily have avoided—want of patience often hurries us into difficulties, and disqualifies us to bear them with calmness or decency. Indulgence in follies and fashions often plants the seeds of wasting disease. Intemperance in our passions always is followed by unwelcome sensation, & sometimes with a scene of shame. Stimulants are succeeded by debility, and when they are used to excess, we know and daily witness the dreadful results—if death is not one of them—either the death of the offender, or of some other destroyed by his hand in the tempest of infuriated passions—we are too often compelled to mourn over the desolation they occasion—presenting in one view.

"Hate, grief, despair, the family of pain."

SKETCH OF A SMALL BEER POLITICIAN.

'Mr. Simeon Jenkins entered at an early stage of his career upon the arena of public life, having been employed by his honored mother to dispose of a basket full of hard boiled eggs, on election day, before he was eight years old. He often dwells with much unction upon this, his debut; and declares that even at that drawing period, he had cut his eye-teeth.

"'There was'nt a feller there,' Mr Jenkins often says, 'but could find out which side I was on, for all they tried hard enough. They thought I was soft, but I let 'em know I was as much baked as any on 'em. 'Be you a democrat?' says one. 'Buy some eggs and I'll tell ye, says I; and by the time he'd bought his eggs, I could tell well enough which side he belonged to, and I'd hand him out a ticket according, for I had blue ones in one end o' my basket, & white ones in the other, and when night come, and I got off the stump to go home, I had eighteen shillin' and four pence in my pocket.'

'From this suspicious commencement may be dated Mr. Jenkins' glowing desire to serve the public.—Each successive election day saw him at his post.—From eggs he advanced to pies, from pies, to almanacs, whiskey, powder and shot, foot balls, playing cards, and, at length, for ambition ever did grow with what it fed on, he brought into the field a large turkey, which was tied to a post and stoned to death at twenty five cents a throw. By this time, the still youthful aspirant had become quite the man of the world; could smoke twenty four cigars per diem, if any body else would pay for them: play cards, in old Harler's shop, from noon till day break, and rise winner; and all this with suitable trimmings of gin and hard words. But he never lost sight of the main chance. He had made up his mind to serve his country, and he was all this time convincing his fellow citizens of the disinterested purity of his sentiments.

"'Patriotism,' he would say, 'patriotism is the thing! Any man that's too proud to serve his country, aint fit to live. Some think so much o' themselves, that if they cant have jist what they think they're fit for, they wont take nothing; but for my part, I call myself a American citizen; and any office that's in the gift o' the people will suit me. I'm up to any thing. And as there aint no other man about here—no suitable man, I mean—that got a horse, why I'd be willing to be constable, if the people's a mind to, though it would be a dead loss to me in my business, to be sure; but I could do any thing for my country. Hurra for patriotism! them's my sentiments.'

'It can scarcely be doubted that Mr. Jenkins became a very popular citizen, or that he usually played a conspicuous part at the polls. Offices began to fall to his share, and though they were generally such as brought more honor than profit, office is office, and Mr. Jenkins did not grumble. Things were going on admirably.

'The spoils of office glitter in his eyes,
He climbs, he pants, he grasps them;'

Or thought he was just going to grasp them, when, presto! he found himself in the minority; the wheel of fortune turned, and Mr. Jenkins and his party were left undermost. Here was a dilemma! His zeal in the public service was ardent as ever, but how could he get a chance to show it unless his party was in power? His resolution was soon taken. He called his friends together, mounted a stump, which had fortunately been left standing not far from the door of his shop, and then and there gave 'reasons for my ratting' in terms sublime enough for any meridian.

"'My friends and feller citizens,' said this self-sacrificing patriot, 'I find myself conglomerated in such a way, that my feelins' suffers severely. I'm situvate d in a peculiar situvation. O' one side, I see my dear friends, pussonal friends—friends, that stuck to me like wax, through thick and thin, never shinnyin' off and on, but up to the scratch, and no mistake.—O' t'other side I behold my country, my bleedin' country, the land that fetched me into this world o' trouble. Now, sence things be as they be, and can't be no otherways as I see, I feel kind o' screwed into an auger-hole to know what to do. If I hunt over the history of the universal world from the creation of man to the present day, I see that men has always had difficulties; and that some has took one way to get shut of 'em, and some another. My candid and unrefragable opinion is, that rather than remain useless, buckled down to the shop, and indulging in selfishness, it is my solemn dooty to change my ticket. It is severe, my friends, but dooty is dooty. And now, if any man calls me a turn-coat,' continued the orator, gently spitting in his hands, rubbing them together, and rolling his eyes round the assembly, 'all I say is, let him say it so that I can hear him.

'The last argument was irresistible, if even the others might have brooked discussion, for Mr. Jenkins stands six feet two in his stockings, when he wears any, and gesticulates with a pair of arms as long and muscular as Rob Roy's. So, though the audience did not cheer him, they contended themselves with dropping off one by one, without calling in question the patriotism of the rising statesman.

'The very next election saw Mr. Jenkins justice of the peace, and it was in this honorable capacity that I have made most of my acquaintance with him, though we began with threatenings of a storm. He called to take the acknowledgment of a deed, and I, anxious for my country's honor, for I too am something of a patriot in my own way, took the liberty of pointing out to his notice a trifling slip of the pen: videlicit—'Justas of Peace,' which manner of writing those words I informed him had gone out of fashion.

'He reddened, looked at me very sharp for a moment, and then said he thanked me; but subjoined:

'Book-learning is a good thing enough where there aint too much of it. For my part, I've seen a good many that know'd books that did'nt know much else. The proper cultivation and edication of the human intellect, has been the comprehensive study of the human understanding from the original creation of the universal world to the present day, and there has been a good many ways tried besides book-learning. Not but what that's very well in its place.'

And the justice took his leave with somewhat of a swelling air. But we are excellent friends, notwithstanding this hard rub; and Mr. Jenkins favors me now and then with half an hour's conversations, when he has had leisure to read up for the occasion in an odd volume of the Cyclopædia, which holds an honored place in a corner of his shop. *He* ought, in fairness, to give me previous notice, that I might study the dictionary a little, for the hard words with which he arms himself for these keen encounters,' often push me to the very limits of my English."

MATHEW'S LAST VISIT TO BOSTON.

From his Memories, by Mrs. Mathews.

Notwithstanding my husband's general state of suffering, and utter inability to shake off his depression, he was able for a few hours to make the most gigantic efforts to overcome both. On the stage, for instance, for which he would prepare with tearful eyes and painful frame, his audience never felt that they were extracting amusement from a sufferer. Occasionally he would dine out, with a very kind friend, Mr. Manners, (the English Consul) whom we had known many years before in England, and others, and never allowed his ill health to be guessed at, farther than his altered looks betrayed it. He was so much attached to Mrs. Elliot and her children, that with them he felt at home and often cheerful. He even did not object to meet parties at her house, as well as at Mr. Thorndike's, to whom we were indebted for many valued attentions. At these parties we became acquainted with Dr. Wainwright, whom, as the customs of America would not allow a churchman to visit a theatre, Mr. Mathews took great pleasure in entertaining whenever they met.

The preaching of Dr. Wainwright, as well as his reading of the service, was most impressive and beautiful. His harmonious voice, perfect English, untainted with any local intonation of vulgarism, his benign countenance, and fine mind, rendered him very popular, especially with Europeans; and my husband, ill as he was, never omitted to tend service when he could possibly go out. To show how strong was his will to rise above his complaint, when not utterly cast down, one Sunday he had announced that it would be impossible for him to go out that day; he was not, he said, able to walk to church, (the weather being bright and dry, no carriage had been prepared, and could not then be had in time) and he begged Mrs. Elliot and myself to proceed without him.

In a few minutes after our arrival, to our great surprise, he entered the pew, telling as afterwards that, considering it would be his last opportunity of hearing service performed by Dr. Wainwright, he had, notwithstanding all his suffering from lameness and want of breath, managed to follow us.

It happened that this was his last attendance at Church! The Doctor's sermon turned on a very affecting subject—the probability that a reunion with those we most loved on earth would form a portion of the joys of the blessed hereafter. My husband wept continually throughout the sermon, although he seemed unusually tranquil and happy the rest of the day.

Wherever he went (except when he dined out) his little Fop was his perpetual companion. He derived the greatest solace from his presence and attachment, which was as remarkable as his intelligence was extraordinary. When Mr. Mathews went to church, Fop walked to the door with him, and was sent back with the servant who had followed to take care of him; and, on our quitting church, there the little animal was sure to be found, either reconducted by the said servant, or, in case of the man being behind time, (of which this creature was a correct calculator) Fop would find his way without him, appear sitting at the porch (not attempting to enter) when the service was ended, patiently waiting for his master.

THE INFLUENCE OF SCIENCE ON AGRICULTURE.

Agriculture in the main is a science founded upon facts. There certainly is no reason why these facts should not be recorded and communicated in books; but there is this great advantage in its being so done over mere oral communication, in that the record of it is likely to be much more exact. In all our intercourse with farmers, we have found no reluctance in communicating what they have done; but many of these identical persons will speak with scorn of agricultural books and papers; and yet most of these agricultural books and papers communicate only what others have done.

But the knowledge of mere facts and actual experiments, connected with cultivation, is not all that is important in agriculture. Science in various departments has an intimate connexion with agriculture. Chemistry has already rendered much and promises to render still more substantial aid to agriculture. It is intimately concerned with the nature of soils and of manures; with the operations of heat and cold, of dryness and moisture upon vegetation; with many of the uses and modes of preparation of vegetable products; and with the influences of various substances in nature upon animal and vegetable life.—We are not over sanguine in our expectations of the advantages which are to be derived from the application of chemical science to agriculture, because we perfectly understand that there is a limit to the researches of man, beyond which his sagacity cannot penetrate. Chemistry may explain to us the primary component parts of different soils and manures, and yet find it impossible so to combine these different properties and elements as to produce the soil best and most exactly fitted to advance vegetation in the most perfect manner; as chemistry may be able to explain with exactness the component parts of blood, and yet be unable by the combination of any substances, in the most careful and exact manner, to produce a single perfect drop. Yet no one can doubt that chemistry, though it may not accomplise all that might be desired, may yet effect much that is useful. It may point out fundamental deficiencies in some soils which art can as easily remove; and it may often detect the existence of mineral substances or acids, which operate as poison to vegetation, but which could be detected and corrected by no other means.

The application of chemical science to agriculture is comparatively of recent date and its advances are of course imperfect; but we do not see why in respect to manures for example, it may not presently enable us to supply them in an artificial and concentrated form, so as to dispense with an immense amount of labor which is now necessary.

Chemistry has already rendered an immense benefit to agriculture, to mention no other case, in teaching the art of manufacturing sugar from beets, and especially in the great improvements which have been introduced into this process, by which the expense of the manufacture is greatly reduced and the amount per centage obtained is very much increased. The process of refining the product is likewise a chemical operation, in which science has lent its aid to the greatest advantage.

We might illustrate the importance and advantages of science to agriculture in various other respects: not only of chemistry but of botany, of mechanics, of mineralogy, of comparative anatomy, of the veterinary art, and in truth of every description of natural science. All knowledge of this kind, to say nothing of its value as a means of enjoyment and a source of highest pleasure and improvement, has a direct bearing upon cultivation, general husbandry, and agricultural improvement.

The farmer likewise is directly concerned in the science of political economy. He is a citizen, and as such has responsible duties to discharge to the community. If the cultivator of large products, he is interested in all questions relating to the protection of domestic industry, in the commerce which deals in the large products of agriculture, and in which the trade of the world is concerned.

The farmer likewise is deeply concerned in every thing connected with education and the improvement of the mind. 'Knowledge is power;' physical power: moral power. Knowledge is pleasure. The mind was made for the acquisition of knowledge as much as the body was made to desire food. In proportion as education, intellectual education, proceeds among the farmers their perceptions are sharpened, their judgment strengthened and improved; and all this will have an immediate and most useful bearing upon their great art as well as upon their personal character. In proportion as education advances among the farmers, their rank as a class in society is at once advanced; their self-respect stimulated and their ambition of excellence in their particular pursuit awakened. In proportion as education advances, a new and inexhaustless source of pleasure is continually unfolding itself to them; and their intervals of leisure instead of being devoted to low sensual indulgences or squandered in inaction and stupidity, will become fruitful in innocent pleasures and improvements.

Under these circumstances we recommend books to farmers. We think associations of the kind which we here notice, may be made eminently instrumental not only of direct improvement in the practical parts of the art by inducing experiments and by the communicating of these experiments to each other, and by exciting a spirited emulation in an art and pursuit where rivalry and emulation can possibly do no harm; but also by leading to mental improvement; by stimurating intellectual and scientific inquiry, not only all those branches of knowledge which bear either directly or indirectly upon the art itself, but in

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