

POETRY.

TIME.

[AN EXTRACT.]

Oh it is fearful, on the midnight couch,
When the rude rushing winds forget to move,
And the pale moon, that through the casement
high
Surveys the sleepless muses, stamps the hour
Of utter silence,—it is fearful then
To steer the mind, in deadly solitude,
Up the vague stream of probability;
To wind the mighty secrets of the past,
And turn the key of time!—Oh who can strive
To comprehend the vast, the awful truth,
Of the eternity that hath gone by,
And not recoil from the dismaying sense
Of human impotence? The life of man
Is summ'd in birth days and in sepulchres;
But the Eternal God had no beginning;
He hath no end. Time had been with him
For everlasting, ere the ædial world
Rose from the gulph in loveliness. Like Him
It knew no source, like Him 'twas uncreate.
What is then? The past Eternity!
We comprehend a future without end;
We feel it possible that even yon sun
May roll for ever; but we shrink amaz'd—
We stand aghast, when we reflect that Time
Knew no commencement.—That heap age on age
And million upon million, without end,
And we shall never span the void of days
That were, and are not but in retrospect.
The Past is an unfathomable depth,
Beyond the span of thought; 'tis an elapse
Which hath no mensuration, but hath been
For ever and for ever. H. K. WHITE.

The following lines are said to have been written by the mad poet Lee, while in Bedlam:
"If Fortune wrap thee warm,
Then friends about thee swarm
Like bees about a honey-pot:
But if dame Fortune frowns,
And cast thee fairly down,
Sw. Jove! thou may'st lie there and rot."

SELECTIONS.

THE BIBLE.

If the Bible were an uninteresting, dry, doctrinal work calculated only to implant abstract opinions, perhaps its circulation might yield no great benefit; if it were a controversial work, tainted with sectarian bitterness, it might, perhaps, produce much evil. But it is neither the one nor the other. Take from this wonderful book its divine origin and religious character, and it is still, in respect of curious information, attractive amusement, beneficial instruction, genius and talent, unrivalled in the whole range of literature. Looked at merely as a literary work, with reference to all the attributes of literary excellence, no other book, in any tongue, can enter into comparison with it. Paradise Lost is called the first poem in our language, and yet what is it, as poetry, compared with various parts of the Old Testament? Which of our writers could have written the Psalms, the book of Job, that of Isaiah, or even Ecclesiasticus? Were we to assume the four Gospels to be fictions, no author could be named capable of writing them. After reading all that men of the first genius and acquirements have written, we still find the finest specimens of varied originality, powerful description, beautiful narrative, profound wisdom, simplicity, pathos, and sublimity, lofty poetry, and overpowering eloquence, in the Bible. It never would have stood its ground as it has done, had it not been for its transcendent and inimitable beauties as a literary composition.

We do not care much for beauty without utility; we love what is practical, what is useful, what is calculated to yield daily benefit; and therefore we are the friends of the Bible. It is astonishing that the sacred volume is generally spoken of as though it were only calculated to implant abstract belief. Looked at merely with respect to amusement, no other book will bear reading so often; looked at with reference to beneficial instruction, no other book contains so much. No other book contains such a mass of sound practical wisdom—of every day wisdom, calculated to benefit all

ranks and descriptions, in all the duties and contingencies of life. A very large part of it relates not to abstract belief, but to general conduct. Putting religion out of sight, every man, from the statesman to the labourer, may draw that knowledge from it which will contribute essentially to his worldly success and happiness. He who is thoroughly acquainted with the Bible, is well acquainted with human nature, and with the best rules for managing the common concerns of life. He knows that which will not only make him a good member of society, but a prosperous man in his calling. He can scarcely fail of being a very intelligent sensible man, even if he be a stranger to other books. In addition to this, the Bible forms one of the best sources of comfort under sorrow and affliction. He who is persecuted and distressed—who is wronged and deserted—who is tortured by disease, or smitten by calamity—will find that to console and sustain him in the Psalms, and other parts of the Scriptures, which he will find in no other quarter.—*Blackwood's Magazine.*

NAPOLEAN AND THE ANTS.

The Ants had appeared in greater numbers in his bed-room, since he occupied it less, and had climbed upon his table, on which there was usually some sugar. Allured by the bait, they had immediately established a chain of communication, and taken possession of the sugar basin. Napoleon was anxious that they should not be disturbed in their plans; he only now and then moved the sugar, following their manoeuvres, and admiring the activity and industry they displayed until they found it again. "This is not instinct," said he; "it is much more—it is sagacity, intelligence, the ideal of civil association. But these little beings have not our passions, our cupidity; they assist, but do not destroy each other. I have vainly endeavoured to defeat their purpose, I have removed the sugar to every part of room! they have been one, two, or some times three days, looking for it, but have always succeeded at last. The idea strikes me to surround the table with water, and see whether that will stop them. Doctor, send for some." But water did not stop them: the sugar was still pillaged. The Emperor then substituted vinegar, and the ants no longer ventured to approach.—"You see it is not instinct alone that guides them; they are prompted by something else; but what, I know not. However, be the principle which directs them what it may, they offer to man an example worthy of observation and reflection. It is only by perseverance and tenaciousness that any object can be attained."—*Last days of Napoleon.*

A GHOST.

[FROM THE MEMOIRS OF MADAME DE GENLIS.]

"At a social entertainment (says the Countess) the Chevalier de Jaucour was requested to relate his grand story about the tapestry. I had always heard of this adventure as being perfectly true; for he gave his word of honour that he added nothing to the story, and he was incapable of telling a lie. The adventure became prophetic at the period of the revolution. He was twelve years of age when his father, who wished to send him to the army, under the care of one of his uncles brought him to his chateau. The same evening, after supper, he was conducted to a large room, where he was to sleep; on a stool in the middle of the room was placed a lighted lamp, and he was left alone. He undressed himself, and went immediately into bed, leaving the lamp burning. He had no inclination to sleep, and as he had scarcely looked at his room on entering it, he now amused himself

with examining it. His eyes were attracted by an old curtain of tapestry, wrought with figures, which hung opposite to him. The object was striking: it represented a temple, of which all the gates were closed. At the top of the staircase belonging to the edifice, stood a kind of pontiff or high priest, clothed in a long white robe, holding in one hand a bundle of rods, and in the other a key. Suddenly the boy, who gazed earnestly on the figure, began to rub his eyes, which he thought deceived him; then he looked again, and his surprise and wonder rendered him motionless! He saw the figure move, and slowly descend the steps of the staircase! At last it quitted the tapestry, and walked into the room, crossed the chamber, and stood near the bed; and addressing the poor boy, who was almost petrified with fear, it pronounced distinctly these words:—"These rods will scourge many—when thou shalt see them raised on high, then stay not, but seize the key of the open country, and flee!" On pronouncing these words, the figure turned round, walked up to the tapestry, remounted the steps, & replaced itself in its former position. The youth, covered with a cold sweat, remained for more than a quarter of an hour so bereft of strength, that he had not the power to call for assistance. At last some one came; but not wishing to confide his adventure to a servant, he merely said that he felt unwell, and a person was set to watch by his bed side during the remainder of the night. On the following day, his father having questioned him on his pretended malady he related what he had seen. Instead of laughing at him, as the Chevalier expected, the Count listened very attentively, and then said,—"This is very remarkable, for my father, in his early youth, in this very chamber, and with the same personage represented in that tapestry, met with a singular adventure." * * * The Chevalier would gladly have heard the detail of his grandfather's vision, but the Count refused to say any more upon the subject, and even desired his son never to mention it again; and he caused the tapestry to be pulled down and burned in his presence."

POWER OF IMAGINATION.

The celebrated Dr. Cullen, of Edinburgh, had in one of his lectures, stated, that the imagination was sometimes the cause of diseases. A few of the students, being desirous of bringing the remarks of their learned preceptor to the test of experience, left the city one summer morning, expecting to fall in with a simple waggoner with whom they were acquainted, and who they knew would come to Edinburgh with a load of coals that day. They arranged themselves so as to be at the distance of a quarter of a mile from each other. The first on meeting the man accosted him thus:—"Jock, what is the matter with you? you seem very unwell?"—"Unwell," said he; "de'il has't the matter wi' me. I only wish I was in Edinburgh to get my portabe." In a few minutes, he was met by a second one, who, with a very serious countenance, said,—"Dear me, Jock, what makes you go abroad in such a situation? you look as pale as death."—"I feel unco pain in my head," said Jock, "and begin to feel awful tired as I am ganging along the road." He was asked the same question by a third.—"The poor fellow now began to believe he was really indisposed. He felt sick at his stomach, and to use his own words, "ilka bane in his body was sae sair that he could scarcely gang ony farther. In troth, he didna ken how to haud up his head." He made shift to crawl along till he came to the fourth, who told him he looked the picture of death. "You need na tell me that," said Jock; "I find that I'm no lang for this world. Oh, my head! Oh, my back!

I canna stan.' Oh, do my guid master, let me lean on your arm; tak me into the hoos, or I shall dee by the side of the dyke." Jock was accordingly put to bed, received medical aid from those on whose skill he reposed the fullest confidence and was well on the ensuing day! It is no more than fair to state, that the students were so much pleased with their experiment, that they were perfectly willing to pay for it, and accordingly, they presented Jock with fifty guineas, for the uneasiness they had given him.

WHIST.

[FROM THE SPORTING MAGAZINE.]

I send you a curious instance where the odd trick was lost at a game of whist; and I enumerate the particulars, that all doubts may subside, which would certainly be excited on a first view of the hands. One party held ace, king, seven, six, five, and four of trumps (clubs); ace, queen, and eight of hearts; queen and knave of diamonds; and king and tray of spades; his partner, queen, knave, ten, and nine of trumps. The adversaries consequently had only the eight, deuce, and tray of trumps, two of which made, as well as ace and king of diamonds, king of hearts, and ace and queen of spades. To add to the singularity in this instance, the score was 6 and 9, consequently the odd trick won the game against the four honours.

The cards in each hand were, A and B partners against C and D; C deals, and turns up the eight of clubs, having also, ace, queen, ten, and deuce of spades; king, seven hearts, and one small diamond. B held queen, knave, ten, and nine of trumps, ten and nine of hearts, two small spades, and five little diamonds. D had the deuce and tray of trumps; ace, king, five diamonds, five small spades, and knave of hearts. A's hand as above.

The game was played as follows:

First trick. B plays off, and not having a trick in his hand (exclusively of the trumps), leads ten of hearts; D puts on the knave; A runs his queen; won by C with the king.

Second. C plays his only diamond; won by D with the king.

Third. D plays the ace of diamonds, and finding the revoke in his partner, continues the suit.

Fourth. A, his queen and knave of diamonds having fallen to the two preceding tricks, and knowing that C turned up the eighth, throws away his losing heart, so as to have the command of the next lead, his hand then consisting of his six trumps, ace of hearts only, and king and tray of spades; C trumps with the eight.

Fifth. C leads a heart, D trumps it; the ace falls.

Sixth. D leads a spade, A puts on the king, C wins it with the ace; and,

Seventh. Returns the queen, which wins the game.

The two best players of the four were partners, and held the trumps; the others may fairly be considered not less than second rate players. As a devotee of the game of whist, I sat upon thorns during the playing of the hands, having, of course, seen the strength of A and B, and their adversaries' weakness; though many good judges to whom I have mentioned it agree that there was no bad play on the part of the former. There is an old adage, "That one man may steal a horse whilst another can't look over a hedge," and it is not, perhaps, inappropriate here; the leading of a single card, which five and forty times out of fifty losses great score, in this instance won the game.

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