

a battle. At length the Scots, after having in a night attack surprised the English camp, and nearly carried off the king, decamped at midnight, and retreating through a morass in their rear, had advanced a considerable way on their march towards Scotland before the English were aware that they had quitted their position.

When the English visited the deserted camp of their nimble foes, it presented a singular spectacle. In it were found an immense number of slaughtered cattle, and of red and fallow deer, and more than three hundred kettles made of skins of cattle, with the hair on, suspended on stakes over the half-extinguished fires, and full of meat and water ready for boiling, with about a thousand spit-racks with meat on them, and many thousand pairs of shoes made of raw hides with the hair on the outer side—a kind of buskins or *brogues* peculiar to Scotland, which procured for their wearers the name of the "rough footed Scots," and sometimes, from the colour of the hide, "red shanks." The only living things found in the camp were five English prisoners tied to trees, who had been commanded to say to their monarch, that "if he were displeased with what had been done, he might come and revenge himself on Scotland."

The Borderers, however, did not always act with equal prudence in avoiding great battles with the English. The imprudence of their leaders, the impatient valour of the troops, or the spirit of chivalry, often induced them to risk an engagement. A memorable example of this occurred in 1388, when a battle was fought at Otterbourne between the forces of Percy, son of the Earl of Northumberland, and those of Douglas, in which the latter was victorious. The shame of this disaster, as it was considered, was effaced at Homildon, where, fourteen years after, Hotspur gave a bloody defeat to the successor of the hero of Otterbourne—Archibald, the third Earl of Douglas. This victory sometimes inclined to one side, and sometimes to another. It was altogether a savage and unjustifiable warfare, whether carried on by the chiefs and their retainers, or at the instigation of the kings of the two countries.

From Hogg's Weekly Instructor.

#### THE OSTRICH.

THE habits of the ostrich are so remarkable, and have been so imperfectly described by travellers in general, that I cannot forbear bringing together here all the knowledge I acquired upon the subject. The drought and heat sometimes compel these gigantic birds to leave the plains, and then they pursue their course together in large flocks to the heights, where they find themselves more commodiously lodged. At the time of sitting, there are seldom more than four or five seen together, of which only one is a cock, the rest are hens. These hens lay their eggs all together in the same nest, which is nothing more than a round cavity in the clay, of such a size as to be covered by one of the birds when sitting upon it. A sort of wall is scraped up round with their feet, against which the eggs in the outer circle rest. Every egg stands upon its point in the nest, that the greatest possible number may be stowed within the space. When ten or twelve eggs are laid, they begin to sit, the hens taking their turns, and relieving each other during the day; and at night the cock alone sits, to guard the eggs against the jackals and wild cats, who will run almost any risk to procure them. Great numbers of these smaller beasts of prey have often been found crushed to death about the nests; a proof that the ostrich does not fight with them, but knows very well how to conquer them at once by its own resistless power; for it is certain that a stroke of its large foot trampling upon them, is enough to crush any such animal.

The hens continue to lay during the time they are sitting, and that not only till the nest is full, which happens when about thirty eggs are laid, but for some time after. The eggs laid after the nest is filled are deposited round about it, and seem designed by nature to satisfy the cravings of the above mentioned enemies, since they very much prefer the new-laid eggs to those which have been brooded. But they seem also to have a more important designation, that is, to assist in the nourishment of the young birds. These, when first hatched, are as large as a common pullet, and since their tender stomachs cannot digest the hard food eaten by the old ones, the spare eggs serve as their first nourishment. The increase of the ostrich race would be incalculable, had they not so many enemies, by which great numbers of the young are destroyed after they quit the nest.

The ostrich is a very prudent, wary creature, which is not easily ensnared in the open field; since it sees to a very great distance, and takes to flight upon the least idea of danger. For this reason the quaggas generally attach themselves, as it were instinctively, to a troop of ostriches, and fly with them, without the least idea that they are followed. Xenophon relates that the army of Cyrus met ostriches and wild asses together, in the plains of Syria.

The ostriches are particularly careful to conceal, if possible, the places where their nests are made. They never go directly to them, but run round in a circle at a considerable distance before they attempt to approach the spot. On the contrary, they always run directly up to the springs where they drink, and the impression they make on the ground, in the desolate places they inhabit, are often mistaken for the footsteps of men. The females, in sitting, when they are to relieve each other, either both remove a while to a distance from the nest, or

change so hastily, that any one who might by chance be spying about, could never see both at once. In the day time, they occasionally quit the nest entirely, and leave the care of warming the eggs to the sun alone. If at any time they find that the place of their nest is discovered, that either a man or a beast of prey has been at it and has disturbed the arrangement of the eggs, or taken any away, they immediately destroy the nest themselves, break all the eggs to pieces, and seek out some other spot to make a new one. When the colonist therefore finds a nest, he contents himself with taking one or two of the spare eggs that are lying near, observing carefully to smooth over any footsteps which may have been made, so that they may not be perceived by the birds. Thus visits to the nests may be often repeated, and it may be converted into a storehouse of very pleasant food, where every two or three days, as many eggs may be procured as are wanted to regale the whole household.

An ostrich's egg weighs commonly near three pounds, and is considered as equal in its square contents to twenty four hen's eggs. The yolk has a very pleasant flavour, yet, it must be owned, not the delicacy of a hen's egg. It is so nourishing and so soon satisfies, that no one can eat a great deal at once. Four very hungry persons would be requisite to eat a whole ostrich's egg; and eight Africans, who are used to so much harder living, might make a meal of it. These eggs will keep for a very long time they are often brought to Cape Town, where they are sold at the price of half a dollar each.

In the summer months of July, August, and September, the greatest number of ostriches' nests are to be found; but the feathers, which are always scattered about the nest at the time of sitting, are of very little value. I have however, at all times of the year, found nests with eggs that have been brooded: the contrasts of the seasons being much less forcible in this part of the world than in Europe, the habits of animals are consequently much less fixed and regular. The ostrich sits from thirty-six to forty days before the young are hatched.

It is well known that the male alone furnishes the beautiful white feathers which have for so long a time been a favourite ornament in the head-dress of our European ladies. They are purchased from the people who collect them, for as high as three or four shillings each; they are however, given at a lower price, in exchange for European wares and clothing. Almost all the colonists upon the borders have a little magazine of these feathers laid by, and when they would make a friendly present to a guest, it is generally an ostrich's feather. Few of them are, however, prepared in such a manner as to be wholly fit for the use of the European dealers. The female ostriches are entirely black, or rather, in their youth, of a very dark grey, but have no white feathers in the tail. In every other respect the colour excepted, their feathers are as good as those of the males. It is very true, as Mr. Barrow says, that small stones are sometimes found in the ostrich's eggs; it is not, however, very common; and, among all that I ever saw opened, I never met with one.

From the Christian Treasury.

#### BE GENTLE TO THY MOTHER.

Be gentle to thy Mother; long she bore  
Thine infant fretfulness and silly youth;  
Nor rudely scorn the faithful voice that o'er  
Thy cradle prayed, and taught thee lisping truth.

Yes, she is old; yet on thy manly brow  
She looks, and claims thee as her child e'en now.

Uphold thy mother; close to her warm heart  
She carried, fed thee, lulled thee to thy rest;  
Then taught thy tottering limbs their untied art,

Exulting in thee fledging from her nest;  
And, now her steps are feeble, be her stay,  
Whose strength was thine, in thy most feeble day.

Cherish thy mother; brief perchance the time  
May be that she will claim the care she gave;  
Past are her hopes of youth, her harvest-prime  
Of joy on earth; her friends are in the grave;  
But for her children, she could lay her head  
Gladly to rest among the precious dead.

Be tender to thy mother; words unkind,  
Or light neglect from thee, will give a pang  
To that fond bosom, where thou art enshrined  
In love inutterable, more than fang  
Of venom'd serpent. Wound not her strong trust,  
As thou wouldest hope for peace when she is dust.

O mother mine! God grant I ne'er forget,  
Whatever be my grief, or what my joy,  
The unmeasured, unextinguishable debt  
I owe thy love; but find my sweet employ,  
Ever through thy remaining days, to be  
To thee as faithful as thou wast to me!

G. W. BETHUNE.

From Chambers's Edinburgh Journal.

#### THE MARTYRDOM OF GIVING.

THERE are some persons in the world whose nature is composed of such mean, and sordid elements, that they seem to have little

idea of opening their hand except for the purposes of getting and grasping. They move not in obedience to the centrifugal law of love, which throw everything off from the centre, but to the centripetal law of self, which draws everything towards it. *L. s. d.* may be said to be their whole alphabet, and No. 1 the limit of their calculations. They have a horror of collection sermons, and 'boxing-day' is their abhorrence. They cannot endure the sight of a poor relation; and such is their sensibility of pocket, that they can infallibly distinguish the knock of any one who comes on a 'begging errand.' Public dinners they scrupulously avoid, because of those 'annoying collections;' and at any time they would as soon lose some of the blood which circulates in their body, as part with any of that more valued blood which circulates in their pocket. Those who know them, appeal to their generosity with a hopeless shrug, knowing that 'Cant afford it,' 'Bad times,' &c. will be the almost certain response. The vital tide of money, intended to circulate freely through the arteries and veins of society, coagulates in their purse; and that which was given for life and health, produces, by stagnating, nothing but moral disease and corruption.

There are some so entirely possessed by these feelings, that it is an agony and a martyrdom to them to pay even the strict demands of justice. They can scarcely be persuaded to regard a creditor as a being of the same nature as a debtor. It is a part of their system to postpone payment as long as possible; and we have known men, of substance and standing in society, from whom nothing could wring payment of their debt but the iron hand of the law. Such men give a world of unnecessary trouble, besides causing much vexation and annoyance. If, after twenty 'Not at home's,' 'Call again's,' &c. you obtain a settlement, you may deem yourself fortunate; if, however, double that number of journeys be inflicted on you, you must not be surprised.

There are others, again, who scrupulously respect the claims of justice—men of honour and integrity, who would not cheat you of a farthing, yet to whom giving is such a martyrdom, that you can scarcely draw a mite of money from them for the most clamant case of distress or the most useful public object. They seldom buy the smallest article without cheapening; they must have the greatest possible amount of work for the least possible remuneration, and the little they do give, is done with a grudging reluctance, that shows what mental agony it costs them to part with their gold.

It is often curious to observe how some of those who feel most acutely the martyrdom of giving, yet awkwardly endeavour to hide it by an occasional effort at liberal things. How often, for instance, the most sordid man in the neighbourhood will be among the first to put his name to a subscription list, or yield to the offer of the chair at a public meeting, which has been made as an oblation to his vanity, though he knows that that honour must cost him a five-pound note! How he will contrive to worm his name among the gold lettered list of benefactors that hangs up in the parish church, as though he had been one of the Oberlins or Howards of the human family! How often do such men seek to atone for a life of avarice and oppression by leaving an immense sum to some religious or benevolent society! If one action could make a character, if a princely legacy could atone for a sordid life, such a deed might be called munificent; but the immense sums frequently left by such men only serve to prove how keenly they felt in their lifetime the martyrdom of giving, as men of more liberal spirit would have chosen rather to be their own executors, and not have allowed the first act of their liberality to be the last one of their life.

It is interesting also to notice what little things will sometimes develop this feeling of mental martyrdom in connexion with giving. How the pretty and refined bell of the party, who never speaks of money but with indifference and contempt, and who sat down to the card-table with the greatest good temper and cheerfulness, strangely frowns and sullenly looks as she empties her purse to pay the envied winner! How the miserly master, who has for many a tedious month promised his faithful servant some token of his approbation, sends at last for him with all solemnity into the drawing-room, and presents him with a magnificent crown-piece, reminding him that it must not be considered as a precedent! How the fastidious, sensitive trifler who hates nothing so much as the sight of poverty, except it be its appeals, beset by the clamorous beggar, at last, to get rid of the annoyance, angrily flings him a halfpenny into the kennel! How the attentive hearer, who had apparently hung with the deepest interest upon the lips of the preacher, will rise immediately he discovers that the sermon is to be illustrated with 'plates,' and that the last appeal is the *argumentum ad crumenam*; and, wriggling his difficult way from the farther end of the crowded pew hurriedly makes for the door, in the eyes of the whole congregation, in order to save his endangered shilling!

It is refreshing, however, to turn from the contemplation of such pictures of selfishness to others of liberality and disinterestedness, and which, we have faith enough in human nature to believe, are not so few nor so difficult to find as some imagine. In paying visits to the poor, I have often been agreeably surprised at the liberality and kindness displayed by the humbler orders towards each other. An instance or two may not be irrelevant. I was inquiring in a wretched alley one evening after two children, when, observing a very poor-looking man I accosted him, and inquired

if he knew what had become of them. He replied that they were in the union; that they had suddenly lost both their parents; that they had no friends to care for them, and that he had himself kept them for several weeks; but that he himself was very poor, and his own family large, and therefore he was at last compelled, unwillingly, to consign them to public charity. On another occasion I paid a visit to a poor man who with his wife and family, occupied merely a garret, and procured a miserable living by working up tin culinary utensils, and selling them in the street. I was leaving the room, when a wretched-looking girl, crouching by the fire, attracted my attention, and I asked the man if she were his daughter? 'No, sir,' said he; 'we know nothing of her, except that my wife found her sitting at a door one evening, and learning that she had been deserted by her parents, we took pity on her, and brought her here, and she has been with us several weeks, and we have succeeded also in getting her into a school.' Such instances of kindness and liberality do honour to human nature, and prove that, if giving be a martyrdom to some who have ample means, and exercise great influence, yet, on the other hand, the most noble sentiments may be united to the most ignoble condition, and those who have the least to give, may be the most liberal in disposing of it. Honour to the open-handed and liberal hearted, who feel the truth of that Heaven-descended saying, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive,' and who, in their conduct, the happy reflection that they are in this respect imitating Him who 'openeth his hand,' and is emphatically styled 'the Great Giver!'

From the Youths' Cabinet.

#### THE LITTLE GIRL AND THE RAIN.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

"MOTHER, it rains," said a little girl, who was looking out at the window. "I am sorry not to make a visit to Emma. She invited me twice before, but it rained, and now it is raining hard again."

"I hope you will not be unhappy, my dear," said her mother. "I think I notice the tears upon your cheeks. I will not say it is a little thing, for the troubles of children seem great to them, but I trust you will be patient, and wait pleasantly for good weather."

"Mother, you have told me that God knows every thing, and he is always good. Then he certainly must know that there is but one Saturday afternoon in the week, and that all is all time I have to play with my little friends. He must know that it has rained these three holidays, when I wished so much to go abroad. And can he not make sunshine whenever he pleases?"

"We cannot understand all the ways of God, my child; but the Bible tells us he is wise and good. Look out in your little garden and see how happy the rose-buds are to catch the soft rain in their bosoms, and how the violets lift up their sweet faces to meet it, and as the drop falls into the quiet stream, how it dimples with gladness and gratitude. The cattle will drink at the stream and be refreshed. Should it be dried up, they would be troubled; and were the green grass to grow brown and die, they would be troubled still more, and some of them might perish for want of food."

Then the good mother told her daughter of the sandy deserts in the East, and of the camel who patiently bears thirst for many days, and how the fainting traveller watched for the rain cloud, and blessed God when he found water; and she showed her the picture of the caravan, and told her how they were sometimes buried under sands of the desert. And she told her a story of the mother who wandered into the wilderness with her son, and when the water was spent in the bottle, she laid him under the shade to die, and went and prayed in her anguish to God, then how an angel brought the water from heaven, and her son lived. She told another story from the Bible, how there fell no rain in Israel for more than three years, and the grass dried up, and the brooks wasted away, and the cattle died, and how the great prophet prayed earnestly to God, and the skies sent their blessed rain, and earth gave forth her fruit. Many other things this good mother said to her child, to teach and entertain her. Then they sang together a sweet hymn or two, and the little girl was surprised to find the afternoon so swiftly spent, for the time passed pleasantly.

So she thanked her kind mother for the stories she had told, and the pictures she had shown her. And she smiled, and said: "What God pleases is best."

Her mother kissed her child and said: "Carry this sweet spirit with you, my daughter, as long as you live, and you will have gathered more wisdom from the storm than from the sunshine."

#### CHANGES OF FORTUNE.

A MAGNIFICENT column was commenced by Napoleon upon the heights near Boulogne, to commemorate his celebrated intended invasion (of England.) The column is now finished, and its history should afford a salutary lesson to the princes of the earth. As Bonaparte never accomplished his invasion, so he never finished his monument. But when the Bourbons came back to the throne of France, they resumed the prosecution of this magnificent work, with a design to make it a monument of their restoration; but before they could complete it, they were driven from the kingdom; and Louis Philippe has finished the column as a memorial of his elevation to the