

CHEER YE UP.

BY ADELA MORTON.

CHEER UP, oh! stricken-hearted!
Though ye shed the silent tear;
Hope and trust should not be parted,
By the hand of doubt or fear.

Sighing mourner! does thy spirit
Bow to sorrow, sink with care?
Know that trusting souls inherit
Joy and bliss surpassing fair.

Is thy heart in trouble beating
Strong emotion? trust on still—
Hope and Faith will soon come meeting
At thy spirit's crystal rill.

There the pearls of Promise dropping,
Soon shall dazzle Hope's bright eye,
And thy Faith in a sweetness stopping,
Bring the jewels from the sky.

Is thy spirit now unstringing
Every chord of heavenly birth?
Let new Trust, her gladness bringing,
Lift thee far away from earth.

Catch thee now, thou hast taken,
Strains seraphic from on high,
Let not now thy harp be broken,
While sweet Mercy hovers nigh.

Time hath weeping, hath its burden,
Time hath sighing, Time hath care,
But beyond there is a guerdon,
Ye may gain it—it is there!

Then cheer up, oh stricken-hearted!
Spirit-calm will come to thee!
The mellow tints ye mourn departed,
Robe the sky beyond our sea!

Then be Hoping, Trusting, Praying!
Be ye steady, firm, and true!
And no more shalt thou go straying,
With the better land in view.

From Jerrold's London Magazine.

SIGNS OF THE (OLDEN) TIMES.

HERALDRY I take to be the art of chivalric sign-painting. The Griffins, the Unicorns, the Dracons, the Hands and Daggers, the Bleeding Hearts and so forth, which the forefathers of our infallible hereditary legislators were in the practice of adopting as signs and symbols of their families; were, I presume, in their day, very much analogous to the Magpies and Stumps, the Pigs and Whistles, the Swans with two Necks, and the Green Men and Stills, with which that respectable body, licensed victuallers of this empire, are still in the habit of adorning their establishments. The 'Bear and Ragged Staff' may be kept in countenance by the modern 'Marquis of Granby's Head,' and the ancient Black Boars and White Harts, which flourish on the baron's scutcheon, or waved in silken folds to the breeze over the square donjon of the baron's keep, still swing gratefully above the tavern door the harbingers and heralds of 'Good Entertainment for Man and Horse.'

Now I confess having a very much greater respect for signs than for coats of arms. The one class of symbols, at all events, indicate the whereabouts of honest traffic, while the others, when they were in full force and glory, frequently flourished in places where lodgings for a year or so might be obtained in a cool, bequeathed dungeon, at no higher rate than the whole of the worldly goods and chattels of the entertained. No doubt it was very pretty and romantic to blow your bugle at eventide before some Front-de-Bœuf's castle, and see the drawbridge falling, and the seneschals hurrying forth to receive the wildered guest. But then, when one comes to reflect that the worthy baron might take it into his head to get up a pleasant and inexpensive evening's amusement for his retainers, by rifling his guest's saddle bags, and thereafter chopping off his head in the castle court, by way of a graceful finish to the festivities, I must say for my own part—the taste is horribly vulgar, no doubt—that I would prefer, on the whole stopping, now-a-days, at the Castle Tavern, to putting up, a few odd hundred years ago, at the Castle: that I would gladly exchange a flourish of the bugle horn for a peal of the chambermaid's bell—may, that I would even give up the Seneschal, in favour of 'Boots.'

The feudal times were no doubt very nice time indeed to write novels about, but, on the whole, I think they are best admired at a distance. Ruined castles are very beautiful things—in ruins. I doubt much, however, whether their ten-feet-thick walls, garnished with loop-hole grates where captives wept,

were such agreeable objects of contemplation to the unprotected foot traveller, as now-a-days when we catch sight of their crumbling remnants from a speeding railway train. The truth is, that the baronial keeps of old were very much of the same nature with those establishments, which, in modern thieves' dialect, are denominated 'kens,' and 'fences'—in other words—refuges for robbers, and receptacles for stolen goods. 'The man,' said King James V. of Scotland, pointing to a Border Castle, 'the man who built that tower, was a thief in his heart.' Indeed it is a pretty patent fact, that not a few of the 'great old families' of England would be, at this present moment, 'great

old families' in Norfolk Island, had an effective system of metropolitan and detective police existed in the times of their founders—the Burke-lamented-days of chivalry.

I have spoken of heraldry—of coats of arms—the Signs of the bold barons of yore. The actual device was frequently not remarkable for aught but mere senseless invention of impossible monsters—distorted to impossible attitudes. Sometimes, however, the nature of the composition gave a shrewd hint of the profession, tastes, and predilection of the exhibitor. Now we have a hand and dagger, indicating that the owner of the device was given to those practices, which, when they are now-a-days made the subject of a newspaper paragraph are generally headed 'The knife again';—occasionally the peculiarity in question was merely pictorially hinted at, by a bloody hand. Implements of war and dungeon furniture generally cut a conspicuous figure in the devices of our respectable ancestors, but you may wade through many a book of heraldry without finding a trace of the slightest penchant for enlightened generosity or honest industry.

The mottoes however were peculiarities significant. If the device did not let the cat out of the bag—the legend did. The coolness indeed with which thievish mottoes was assumed is quite delicious. We may be a nation of merchants—but so, in one respect, we always were. The feudal baron of old in his impregnable tower was a merchant, although not quite in the sense of the word as understood now-a-days. No doubt both the 'House' and the 'Caste' dealt, and still deal in monies and merchandise; the difference simply is, that the former makes ventures with its own property—the latter, whenever it could, operated upon other people's.

Thus the merchant, now-a-days, enters upon a speculation—the feudal gentleman rode a foray: He of the counting-house has dealings with other counting houses—He of the castle had dealings with other castles; but they confined in most cases to the pillaging line of business. The man of the ledger collects his debts—the man of the lance gathered in his black mail. The one has his clerks, the other had his mess troops. The first had his correspondents, the other had his spies. The former rears cities—the latter burned villages.

Taking this view of the case, and looking at a good many of the founders of our ancient families as gentlemen well to do in the burglary and sheep-stealing line of business, nothing can be more appropriate than the mottoes which they chose, to hint the nature of their callings. The old legend of the Scots of Harden was 'Reparabit cornua Phæbe,' in plain English, 'There will soon be moonlight.' The hint is most suggestive. You could no more misunderstand it than you can the 'Country orders carefully attended to' of the tradesman in the next street. Moonlight!—Can we mistake the delicate insinuation. 'Diana's foresters!—Gentleman of the shade!—Minions of the moon!' The ancient motto of the Buccleuch family was similar—'Best riding by moonlight.' Yes—especially when one is burdened with his neighbours' goods, or is making off surreptitiously with his own.

The Cramston family boasts a peculiarly self-denying and Christian legend. It is 'Thou shalt want ere I want.' But, as Lord John Manners will tell us—there was such high-minded generosity in the soaring chivalry of yore! 'Per igrum et gladium,' the motto of another noble family, breathes a fine spirit of peace and good-will towards men—strikingly contrasted with the sordid and selfish dictum, 'Buy in the cheapest market, sell in the dearest,' of modern shopkeeping days. 'Forth Fortune, and fill the fetters,' would be a very good legend for a turkey or a bailiff. It happens, however, to be that of the Athol family, who probably distinguished their pursuits from those of ignoble cagers of criminals, by carefully abstaining from making legal captures, and only filling their fetters with those who might be instrumental in filling the pockets of their captors. 'Grip Fast' is a piece of advice we have seen on an ancient scutcheon. It was probably quite sapienterogatory. 'Ride Through' is another legend, which may, I presume, be rendered 'Don't stand on bones—Go the whole hog—Make a clean sweep.' While such maxims as 'Spare Nought,' (Tweedle)—'A ma puissance,' Stamford and Warrington give a fine notion of the power and the disposition of the magnates of those good old times which Young England would fain dig up in all her festering rottenness from the grave.

But no—they are gone—past recall. The workshop and the counting-house have put down the castle and the keep. The spirit and the symbols of the ancient age are outworn together. Burglary, highway robbery, and arson, would not, now-a-days, be accounted a brilliant foray, or killing, no murder; while the peaceful merchants who now hold the sway, once exercised but by titled robbers and gold-spurred burglars, would hardly think of conforming so far to the spirit of times gone by, as—in forming a company or entering upon a commercial speculation—boldly to blazon such a device as a pair of loaded scales, graced with such a motto as 'Success to Swindling.'

From Hopkins on the Ten Commandments.

PROFANE SWEARING.

1. It is a sin which hath very little or no temptation to commit it. The two great baits by which the devil allures men to wickedness, are profit and pleasure; but now this common oath swearing is the most unprofitable barren sin in the world. What fruit brings it forth, but only the abhorrence and detestation of all

serious persons, and the tremendous judgment of God? The swearer gains nothing by it at present, but only the reputation of being a devil incarnate; and, for the future, his gains shall be, only the torments of those devils and damned spirits, whose language he hath learned and speaks. He that sows the wind of an oath, shall reap the whirlwind of God's fury.

Again, what pleasure is there in it? Which of his senses doth it please and gratify? 'Were I an epicure,' saith one 'I would hate swearing.' Were men resolved to give themselves up to all manner of sensual delights, yet there is so little that can be strained from this common sin, that certainly unless they intended to do the devil a pleasure, rather than themselves, they would never set their black months against heaven, nor blaspheme the great God who sits enthroned there. Ask them, why they indulge themselves in such a provoking sin? why, some cannot forbear out of mere custom; and others are pleased with the lofty sound and genteel phrase of an oath, and count it a special grace and ornament of speaking. And what are these temptations? Are these such strong and mighty provocations, that you cannot forbear? Shall the holy name of the great God be torn in pieces by you, only to patch and fill up the rents of your idle talk? If this be the motive and inducement that makes you commit so great a sin (as commonly there is no other) know that you perish in fools' perdition, and sell your souls to damnation and eternal perdition, for very nothing.

Others, perhaps, will plead for their excuse, that they never used to swear, but when they are vexed, and put into a passion. But what a madness is this, when men anger thee, to strike at God, and to provoke him for more than others can provoke thee? If thou art never so highly incensed, why shouldst thou throw thy poisonous foam in God's face? Hast thou no other way of venting thy passion, but to fly in God's face, and to revenge thyself on him, when men injure thee? Certainly thy passion can be no more a temptation to do this, than it would be to stab thy father, because thine enemy hath struck thee.

2. It is a most foolish sin, because it contradicts the very end for which they commit it. The common swearer, perhaps, thinks that he shall be much the sooner believed for his oaths; whereas, with all serious and judicious persons, there is nothing that doth more lighten the credit of his speeches, than his rash binding, and confirming the truth of them by swearing. For what reason have I to think that man speaks truth, who doth as far suspect himself as to think what he relates is not creditable unless he swear to it; and certainly, he that owes God no more respect, than to violate the sanctity and reverence of his name upon every trifling occasion, cannot easily be thought to owe the truth so much respect as not to violate it, especially considering that there are far stronger temptations unto lying than under swearing.

3. Consider that the devil is the author and father, not of lying only, but of swearing also: 'Let your yea be yea, and your nay nay,' saith our Saviour; 'or whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil' (Matt. v. 37); that is, it cometh of the evil one, who is still prompting the swearer; and putteth oaths upon the tip of his tongue.

LIFE ASSURANCE.

The time was when life assurance was thought a thing of doubtful propriety. It looked like speculating upon life and death; moreover, it was considered not entirely consistent with an unreserved reliance on the providence of God. Upon reflection, however, it will be seen that there is not only no inconsistency between life assurance and the principles of enlightened religion but that there is a beautiful harmony between the principles of Christianity and those which united them together as a society. True Christianity required its disciples to be self-denied, and life assurance taught the same lesson. True Christianity taught them to be frugal, and, by a happy necessity life assurance taught many to be frugal too. True Christianity taught them to have a warm regard to the welfare of those who had special claims upon them—the claims of natural relationship; and life assurance also taught this duty. True Christianity required that they should not only weep with those that wept, but should rejoice with those that rejoiced; and any who heard of the immense sums of money which had been expended upon the surviving families and relatives of those who had been assured, could not doubt that a vast amount of good, must have been, under God, accomplished in this way—good, the remembrance of which might well fill them with sympathising gratitude and joy.

While life assurance was in harmony with important moral and Christian virtues, it was lifted to check evils which were likely to arise even among the most conscientious in its absence. In defect of life assurance, a good man who feels himself bound and who desires to make him suitable provision for his family, has no resource but to accumulate during his lifetime. But there is no small danger of this passing into a selfish and hoarding habit which may come to effect his general character. Hence one advantage of life assurance: it is a defence against unamiable and unchristian dispositions; nay, the source of danger is converted into a means of good.—Rev. J. G. Lorrimer.

Polished steel will not shine in the dark; no more can reason, however refined, shine efficaciously, but as it reflects the light of Divine truth, shed from heaven.