

## LITERATURE, &amp;c.

## The British Magazines.

From the London People's Journal.

## HOW TO GROW YOUNG AGAIN.

BY JOHN SAUNDERS.

"Oh that one might but live to obtain a single glance of the promised land, towards which we toil onwards so painfully!" was the exclamation of a poet to me the other day, as we ran together over the signs and tokens of the wondrous future of humanity, that now meet us in all directions. "We, men of the present generation," continued he, "may be—must be—content to sow that our children may reap; but who, at such a time, can resist the feeling—what would not one give to grow young again?"

The words rested upon my spirit—"What would not one give to grow young again!" and I soon found myself revelling in all the fantastic speculations of the philosophers of the middle ages; which seemed to me, for the moment, scarcely more difficult of realisation than the actual phenomena lately developed, which enable us to banish pain at will, to converse with our brethren at the antipodes with almost as much facility as with our next door neighbors, to reduce the mightiest powers of the universe (under God) to our will, so that the sun takes office as our portrait painter; and electricity condescends to carry our lamp. In fact, I began to experience a sort of contempt for the humility of the aspirations of the alchemists in merely proposing to make gold as plentiful as dust, and to give to life a renewable lease for ever. I was growing very enthusiastic indeed as to the progress of the world and man—but, also very sleepy; for it was after dinner; and somehow all things gradually and slowly faded away, whilst these words still seemed to murmur in my ear—"What would not one give to grow young again?"

"What will you give me for such a trifle?" said an odd-looking little man, whose bright, penetrating, youthful eyes shone strangely out from his quaint, antique features, and whose light, elastic movements were as oddly contrasted with the formal stiffness of his garb, which seemed heaven knows how many centuries old.

"Come, what will you give me for such a trifle?"

"Trifle!" said I, wonderingly; but hardly knowing what I said, in my surprise at the strange apparition before me.

"Yes—trifle. Of what earthly consequence can it be whether life be long or short—as it is now used. If there are always to be merely so many foolish men occupying the world, what matters it into how many generations they may be divided?"

"It matters a good deal, though, to the foolish men themselves," retorted I, "whether they have fifty or a hundred years of misery to endure; or, if their life be a happy one, whether that extend to—"

"Happy!" interrupted the little old man, with a bitter sneer; which, however, had changed into a tone of the deepest melancholy when he repeated the word. "Happy! Well, well, when that sort of life really becomes a question among men, we'll talk of it. Meantime, answer. What will you give me to make you grow young again?"

I was puzzled. How was I to know what he wanted? I looked around. Would he like a child or two? Or a few well-worn books, which looked as though all possible essence had been extracted from them long ago? Or a pot of flowers? Pooh! Then darker suspicions were aroused, and I said firmly—

"What do you want?"

"Oh, a trifle for a trifle; your soul merely."

"My soul!" murmured I, aghast; yet trying to look and speak fiercely.

"Your soul—your entire soul! my good friend," said he, looking into my eyes with such a mixture of audacity and good-humour, self-satisfaction and kindness, that I turned away, with a sort of notion that it was all over with me; that in fact my soul was already in his hands, and therefore, as I could not capitulate upon terms, I had better make the most of his generosity. But he had not waited for my decision. There he was marching about the room, snuffing the air inquiringly with his upturned nose, opening my cupboards, throwing up and down my windows, slamming to and fro my doors, commenting to himself all the while, in no very flattering terms, on my little domestic arrangements. At last he stopped.

"Give me a hammer and a chisel," said he. Presently the bricks and mortar were flying thickly about; and, before I could understand what the extraordinary being was doing, he had made a hideous gap over my chimney-piece, near the ceiling, and then stopped, evidently in admiration of his work.

"Now, my friend, you'll be speedily poisoned with the smoke from the chimney if you don't put in a ventilator; if you do, the bad air of your room is got rid of; so run, and let us get this settled!" I was, however, getting indignant at seeing my room so spoiled, and at the absurdity of his whole proceedings, and began to remonstrate; but he looked me steadily in the face, which grew at once stern and beautiful, and said, "My friend, I make laws—you obey them; and I know not how it was, but even as he spoke, a sense of his divine right to govern me seemed to tingle in every nerve of my body, and to overpower every desire of my mind. Who could he be?"

"Come here," I obeyed. "Let me feel your pulse. Ha! ha! as usual of course;

anything but what a pulse should be, that is, firm and regular as the beat of a troop of infantry. D'ye sleep pleasantly at night?—Of course not. D'ye wake with a desire to run, to work, to enjoy, to live, every morning?—Of course not; your brain is worn out with the useless labour, of disturbed sleep. D'ye find yourself capable of accomplishing much work in a little time, and without any exhaustion, beyond that natural fatigue which gives a zest to repose?—Of course not. Oh, I understand. You are all alike. You are men; not children. You are too sensible and too busy to heed these trifles. To work to live is a foolish thought; but to live to work is a grand idea. What's health to an extra thousand in the consols?" Here he stopped, and resumed in a changed tone, "Well, my friend, I mean to interfere a little in these matters; be grateful, I shall begin with you. What time do you rise?"

"Oh, about eight or nine o'clock, or so."

"Then to-morrow morning you'll rise at seven precisely, and in the summer you will never be in bed after five."

"Shan't I?" said I, musingly.

"As soon as you rise you'll go forth, and walk for an hour in the purest air of your neighbourhood. Or, if fond of gardening, do that instead."

"I have no garden."

"Then ask permission to work in somebody else's. But do it—or walk. Prepare the body for the labor of digestion, prepare the mind for the labor of life, by a draught from the all-quickening air; and then you will understand what breakfast really means. Did you never enjoy an inn breakfast after a long morning ride outside a coach in the sharp air? I see your mouth waters to think on't. Be wise, then, and take such a breakfast every day. It is the appetite, my friend, not the dishes that are wanting. The same with all your other meals. I—that is, I mean, Nature—is always prepared to give every one an appetite if they will but go to nature to fetch it."

"And if they can't?"

"If they won't, my friend (there is no can't), then Nature benevolently says—Try dyspepsia! But what's this?"

"My children's battledores and shuttlecocks."

"Very good. We are all children; with a difference. Men are children who have lost their love of enjoyment in simple things, and have not found it in anything else. Let us go back; perhaps that may prove the shortest way to go on. Come, take your stand. Are you ready?"

"Bless my soul! you don't think I do such things?"

"If your soul, my friend, is to be blessed, you must do a great many such things. Pray, do you understand Nature better than I?" and here he looked at me with an irresistibly roguish glance. "And yet," he added, "I do sometimes begin to think, men know me better than I know myself—they grow so consummately clever, and do such wonderful things in my name. Now then—here goes!" and the absurd little old man made me play with him until the sweat exhaled from every pore. Obeying him, mechanically, I then threw a cloak over me, went out, and followed him through the streets, I knew not whither, until I reached the edge of some water; which seemed to me now to expand into the far-spreading sea, and now to contract into Peerless Pool; to be now the ship-covered Thames, now the beautifully wooded banks of Kensington Gardens.

"Plunge!"

"Nonsense, I can't swim."

"More shame for you; but the water is shallow enough. Plunge!"

"But I shall catch cold. Don't you think—the water looks very—very—damp?"

"Ha, ha, come, jokes won't save you. Now, head foremost! And so, with an imploring look upwards, and with a heroism that those only can understand who have felt its necessity, in I went.

"I shall dine with you to-morrow," said he. "In what proportions in your food do you mix your proteinaceous principles for nourishing, and your carbonaceous principles for warming, the body?"

I gazed a moment in speechless astonishment; then burst out into peals of hearty laughter. As soon as I could recover my gravity and my respect, I said, "All I know is, I eat my beef, and my mutton, and my veal, and my pork, and my vegetables, and my pastry, and my—"

"And are ill or well, easy or oppressed, just as it may happen afterwards? Hay? And you suppose a stomach was made merely that you might heap up into it any amount of stuff that pleases the palate, and is called food. Why, my friend, this ignorance of things, this baseless fancy, might make the angels laugh at thee, did they not rather weep to perceive food, the key-stone of the arch of health, that material support upon which alone you can raise the great, and beautiful, and holy temple of life, degraded into a palate-tickler; a pander to sensualism, a guide to the bottomless depths of human degradation. Is it for you in your profound conceit, to ask why Nature has bound in one indissoluble union the body and soul of man, so that they shall rise or fall together? Is it for you to judge and to despise the material necessities of humanity, you who may derive strength, happiness, and long life from their ministrations, but who will derive only weakness, disease, and a premature death? No wonder the cook, who should be a profound chemist and physiologist, and somewhat of an artist, and of a moral philosopher into the bargain, is degraded into a menial servant, who stimulates all the evils he should correct, and obeys the ignorance he should teach. What is your Liebig, my friend, but a cook—a cook worthy of his vocation?"

Although I suspected there was something of a hobby perceptible in all this, I did not venture to remonstrate; but soothed the old gentleman by saying I would get the *Chemistry of Food* immediately, and study it.

"Very well," continued he; "do not forget then, that early hours, ventilation within doors, and plenty of the pure air without doors, regular ablution of the skin, cheerful sports and exercise, and the most nourishing and suitable diet, used in temperance, are the laws of bodily health. You have neglected them, and your neglect is shortening your life; attend to them, and from this hour until you have attained perfect health you shall be virtually growing younger daily, the value of your life, as the insurance offices phrase it, shall be constantly increasing. When perfect health is thus obtained, it is easy, by the observance of the same laws, to keep it until the true old age comes; and if your philosophers can tell at what age that state must arrive, they know more than I do. Indeed," said he, whispering mysteriously, "I think—" but here he checked himself, and said, "No; speculations of this kind are out of place, till the world grows more worthy of the glorious destiny that may be unfolded from them. Obey me, and you shall have your reward. This is your first lesson. Master it, and I will give you another."

Time seemed to pass on; and every day I found my mind spontaneously elevating itself, higher and higher above the tedium of life, and becoming fuller of spirits and hope.

I wondered what my next lesson would be, and often desired its commencement; but my teacher said—"No, no, get strong first. You can do nothing well without health. I am weary of all this sickness of thought and feeling, that overspreads like a veil the fair world, and shuts out the clear view of the stars; a veil that some men fancy to be poetry, while in truth it is only indigestion."

At length, however, one day, as he found me just returned from my morning walk, sitting down to breakfast, with a glow over my face, which spoke truly of the healthy blood that was circulating through my frame, his eyes kindled, and as soon as I had satisfied my sharp appetite he began:

"So much for the basement, now for the edifice. Health, my friend, is a great enjoyment in itself, independent of its uses. It has pleased God in his goodness to make it so. But health itself will fail if it be not used for its objects,—the culture of the higher health and objects of the mind. Mind and body will each prey upon the other, if they do not, instead, mutually assist each other. Let study therefore form a portion of your life, however necessarily small it may happen to be; study of your own constitution; of the meaning of the social relations of men; of the profound mysteries of what you call the material world about you. Grow, in a word, more and more learned, more and more wise, more and more loving; in order that you may fulfil more and more nobly, the duties life imposes upon you. Oh," said he with an inexpressible glow of light overspreading his face, "did men but thus make each day of their lives a step upward towards heaven, how high would they not be at the end of their journey; below and above, what would not then be their prospects!"

After a pause,

"Do you cultivate music; do you sing?"

"No. I have a bad voice unfortunately."

"That's music's misfortune, my friend, rather than yours. But it by no means follows, that because you can't give any particular pleasure to music, that she will give none to you. This very common reason for the neglect of music—the divinest of all the arts—and the one best fitted to leave the impress of its divinity in the hearts and minds of the universal people, arises from the error of thinking of, and referring to self, when we fancy we are thinking of, and referring to things, which are infinitely greater than self. Pray, correct this sad and conceited mistake. Love and study music purely for its own sake, and you will assuredly find your reward. Especially will you find it one of the most potent of the guardian angels of the hearth, ever busy refining, soothing, elevating."

"Are you married?"

"Yes."

"And you quarrel occasionally, I suppose, like other married people?"

"Yes—yes, but only like other married people."

"Did you love each other when you married?"

"Dearly."

"Did not the air then seem to you purer—more crystal-like than now? Did not everything seem more beautiful through that air? Did not she especially seem through it to be surrounded with countless inexpressible graces? Did not the future seem to you an inexhaustible world of flowers, through which she and you would wander hand-in-hand together, till at last, like weary children, you would lie down together, happy in the past union; happier in the hope of the future one?"

"Hum! it's so long ago—but I do think we had some such fancies. Youth and love you know, are proverbially foolish."

"My friend, if ever this world is to become good and great, it is from youth and love will come the wisdom that will make it so. Fancies! ask yourself, what would be your life now if these fancies were facts? Did it never occur to you that it is in these moments of inspiration, we may really perceive what we are naturally, what we are habitually? Again I say to you, go back. Break off at once the habits of querulousness and irritability, which grow upon us from the contemplation of the

particular faults of those who are dear to us; determine to find good in all she says and does, if that be possible, forgive her when it is not; shun her presence when you feel you cannot do good, seek it ever when the faintest impulse of a better nature seems to arise. You may have—must have—many disappointments, but you will eventually have glorious triumphs. You will find that come back again to you both, which if it have not exactly the romance of the honeymoon, shall have the deep tenderness of marriage—and be beyond all price unto you. Each of you shall realise all that was most worthy of realization in your young dreams. Each of you shall become aware that there is no more beautiful or glorious possession in this world, one more worthy of sacred love and unwearied care, than the heart of another. The truth which has practically become to you a fable, that marriage makes two one, shall start forth into wondrous life and beauty; and amaze you with the absurdity as well as the unhappiness of your past years."

"You have children; too?"

"Yes—thank God!"

"Ha! you thank God that you have children, but express no such thankfulness that you had a wife! Well, my friend, you do right to let your natural feelings and state of mind express themselves frankly. It is more love—more wisdom—more vital truth, that we want, not less plain speaking. But come, upon that basis the love of children, may parents find certain strength, if they will, to recover lost love for each other; and so to make home a temple of spontaneous, but everlasting worship. As is the home, so will be all that radiates from it; business, citizenship, civilization; art, science, religion; all will be raised or lowered by the standard erected there. Oh, you did well to thank God for children. You will yet thank him more, when you truly perceive what their presence involves. You all know the circle, childhood, manhood, and childhood again. Strange, that you so fantastically misapprehend its meaning. When manhood comes, with all its stern duties and conflicts, no wonder if the sunshine is apt to seem more frequently clouded than before, that impulses have less power, that the business, the means of life swallow up all consideration of the ends. Yet, what pains does Nature take to tell you the truth, and to bring you back when you have wandered away. See those children about you; why do you watch them in all their sweet abandonment to the impulses of the moment? why is it that they have the power to make you live over again your own childhood? why are you so interested to see from what homely materials they draw such rich and abundant enjoyment? why do you unconsciously smile at their grotesque fan, and share unexpectedly in their heartfelt laughter? why do the very depths of your heart seem so often about to break up, and the waters of love to flow over them in one irrepressible gush—why all this? but that they may teach you again, when you can better understand the lesson than before, the old divine simplicity and purity of life, of which they are the eternal types; while you guide them thro' the unaccustomed and dangerous mazes of society? Is there a more beautiful, a more noble spectacle under the sun, than a man who has passed through all the knowledge of the good and evil of the world, and emerged at last—pure—earnest—simple! All stains washed away in the tears of repentance! prepare to do and to suffer with the quiet heroism of a martyr; to fulfil all the daily duties of life with courage and love, and yet who is equally prepared to lie down in the first field of buttercups he passes through; and wonder and muse for the thousandth time, at the inexhaustible glories of God's creation!"

"But what as to my duties as a citizen?"

"Some day, perhaps I may give you a third lesson on that subject. Let me now say—When thou hast done thy duty to thyself, and to those whom God has confided to thy care, thou wilt find thyself qualified, and only then qualified, to go forth to instruct thy fellow-men. And then in, in God's name go."

"And in the meantime?"

"Act by the mental light of to-day, whilst, purifying the light for better and higher action to-morrow. Farewell!"

SEVERE BUT JUST.

The New York Tribune mentions an incident as occurring in the Circuit Court on the 8th inst., in which a man, summoned as a juror, was severely reproved by the court for making frivolous objections or excuses in reference to performing jury duty. Judge Hiram Grey presided, and the juror having exhausted almost every subterfuge, the Judge called him up in open Court, and thus addressed him:

"You have several times yesterday and to-day asked the court to excuse you from serving on the jury, and have as often rendered a different excuse. I have finally concluded to comply with your request—but not any grounds you stated—You first said you were sick, which I was satisfied was untrue. You next said you were considerably deaf but you heard my first whisper which appeared to favor your application, and I know that that excuse was false. On the next application you said your wife was sick; of that I cannot consent to inquire here. Now I shall excuse you from any further attendance here, not on any ground assigned by you but for reasons of my own. A man who will so dishonor himself, and violate all the obligations he owes to society, is unfit to be entrusted with the decision of disputed rights between his fellow citizens; and I dismiss you as utterly unworthy of a seat with your fellow jurors. The juror attempted to explain, but the Judge peremptorily ordered him to leave the court."