

## LITERATURE, &amp;c.

## The British Magazines.

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## NORTHERN LOVES AND LEGENDS.

BY FREDRIKA BREMER.

CERTAINLY, you have observed how strangely, sometimes, the clouds, at morning or evening, group themselves round the sun and are lighted up by it, and you have thought sometimes, "If this should be represented in painting people would say, 'It is unnatural, it is not true.' So even is human life. We often find events, looking, when related or described in books, even so unnatural, and yet, are perfectly true to reality, to nature, though not to every day nature. For example, if any one should tell, that once, a first kiss was given, by a young, modest lady, publicly, and in a public square, to a young man that she saw for the first time, certainly, all young ladies, and old ladies, and young gentlemen, and old gentlemen, would, with one voice, call out, "It is not true; it is impossible." Well, I entreat your attention to the following little story, for whose truth and reality I will be responsible.

## STORY OF A FIRST KISS.

In the University of Upsala, in Sweden, lived a young student—a lonely youth, with a great love for studies, but without means of pursuing them. He was poor and without connections. Still he studied on, living in great poverty, but keeping up a cheerful heart, and trying not to look at the future, which looked so grimly at him. His good humor and good qualities made him beloved by his young comrades. Once he was standing with some of them in the great square of Upsala, prating away an hour of leisure, when the attention of the young men became arrested by a very young and elegant lady, who, at the side of an elderly one, walked slowly over the place. It was the daughter of the Governor of Uppland, residing in the city, and the lady with her was her governess. She was generally known for her beauty and for her goodness and gentleness of character, and was looked upon with great admiration by the students. As the young men now stood silently gazing at her, as she passed on like a graceful vision, one of them exclaimed,

"Well, it would be worth something to have a kiss from such a mouth!" The poor young student, the hero of our story, who was looking intently at that pure and angelic face, exclaimed, as if by inspiration, "Well, I think I could have it." "What?" cried his friends in a chorus, "are you crazy? Do you know her?" etc. "Not at all," he answered; "but I think she would kiss me, just now, if I asked her." "What, in this place, before all our eyes?" "In this place before your eyes." "Freely?" "Freely." "Well, if she will give you a kiss in that manner, I will give you a thousand dollars," exclaimed one of the party. "And I!" "And I!" cried three or four others, for it so happened that several rich young men were in the group, and bets ran high on so improbable an event, and the challenge was made and received in less time than we take to relate it.

Our hero—my authority tells not whether he was handsome or plain—I have my peculiar reasons for believing that he was rather plain but singularly good looking at the same time—our hero immediately walked off to meet the young lady. He bowed to her, and said, "My lady, my fortune is in your hands." She looked at him in astonishment, but arrested her steps. He proceeded to state his name and condition, his aspirations, and related simply and truly what had just passed between him and his companions. The young lady listened attentively, and when he had ceased to speak, she said, blushing, but with great sweetness, "If by so little a thing so much good could be effected, it would be very foolish in me to refuse your request"—and she kissed the young man publicly, in the open square.

Next day, the student was sent for by the Governor. He wanted to see the man who had dared to ask a kiss of his daughter in that way, and whom she had consented to kiss so. He received him with a severe and scrutinizing brow, but after an hour's conversation, was so pleased with him that he offered him to dine at his table during the course of his studies at Upsala.

Our young friend now pursued his studies in a manner which soon made him regarded as the most promising scholar at the University. Three years were not passed after the day of the first kiss, when the young man was allowed to give a second one to the lovely daughter of the Governor, as to his betrothed bride.

He became, later, one of the greatest scholars in Sweden, as much respected for his learning as for his character. His works will endure for ever among the works of science, and from his happy union sprung a family well known in Sweden in the present day, and whose wealth of fortune and high position in society, are regarded as small things compared with its wealth of goodness and love.

## THE BLIND MAN AND THE BLIND GOD.

All ages, all peoples, have believed in a special Providence. The heathen believed in favoritism exercised by the gods, in their favoring and protecting certain individuals to the exclusion of others. It is the privilege of the Christian to believe in the special Providence of a paternal God manifested to every child of man, and which, sooner or later, during his wanderings through the many man-

sions of his existence, will clearly be disclosed to him. "God enters by a private door to every individual," says a modern and most genial writer. "So in his heart, so in his house, or outward world. And though that Divine visitation does, for many persons, not take place during their stay on earth, there are several instances in which it is so clearly seen, even here, that we cannot help exclaiming, 'It is the Lord!'"

Such an instance we would give in the following story of two yet living individuals. And that the blind god is here made the messenger of the seeing one, will not impair his reputation.

The young Charles A— followed, as physician, with the Swedish army, when that, in year 1814, with threatening movement entered the valleys of Norway, then resisting the annexation to Sweden resolved upon by the European Monarchs at the Congress at Vienna. A dangerous disease of the eyes broke out in the camp. The young and talented physician exerted himself with as much assiduity as good luck. All the patients recovered, but he himself finally caught it, and to him alone it proved fatal. No help would help him. His eyeballs burst, and his eyesight was lost without remedy. He was about twenty five years of age when he thus was bereft of the light. He was a young man of the highest promise, handsome in person, ardent, aspiring, and gifted with rare faculties for his profession. He was ambitious, and visions of future fame and greatness had, as brilliant stars, beckoned him onward. To be from these sunny heights cast down and shut up in the abyss of utter darkness, was a dreadful shock to such a mind. It was to be buried alive. So he felt it. Life to him was a blank, and worse than a blank. His active soul preyed upon itself. And though he grappled sternly with his destiny, bearing without complaint what he must bear, black melancholy seized upon his mind and made him savage and solitary. He shut himself up from the company of his fellow creatures and seemed to waste away.

"It must not be so," said a kind and earnest friend to him one day; "it must become otherwise with you. Come, let us go together into the country, among forests and birds and people there, and see if they will not give us a better feeling of life than this close and smoky city. Come, I am going to see my relations in Wirmland, and that is about a hundred miles from here: come with me—be my companion; we will make friends with nature and men, and thus endeavor to forget all our sorrows."

The good friend carried his point, and went off with Charles on his journey. On the second day after their departure they stopped at a little country town to change their horses.

"Wait for me a moment," said Charles's friend to him, after having led him up into a room in the tavern. "I must call on an acquaintance of mine here, but I will be back within half an hour, and we will proceed on our journey."

He went away, and Charles waited half an hour, and then another, and yet another half hour, and still the friend did not come back. Impatient and anxious, the blind young man began to walk about the house, feeling his way with his stick. He found his way out in the vestry, and, hearing light footsteps on the staircase, he called out, asking who was there?

"Who is it that calls?" answered a female voice.

The blind man named himself, his condition, his friend, also his anxiety about him.

"Charles A—," repeated the voice: "oh, then, you are my cousin, and I have heard of you, and, I daresay, you of me and my family, though we have never seen one another. My name is Maria W.—My father and myself are on our way to our country place, in the vicinity of this town, after a journey of some weeks. Permit me to lead you into my father's room, while we will make enquiries for your friend."

Charles's hand was clasped by that of Maria, and he was led by her into her father's presence.

Inquires were made for the friend, which brought back the melancholy tidings that he had, in the street, been seized by an attack of apoplexy, taken into an apothecary's shop and expired in an hour afterwards without recovering his senses.

Maria and her father took Charles to their seat in the country. Maria felt as if a brother was given unto her, whom she ought to comfort and care for. Her whole woman's heart was moved for the solitary sufferer. She led him about in the forests, and on the green meadows around her home. She made him feel the fresh, sweet, perfumed air; made him smell the flowers of the field, listen to the birds and the singing brooks. It was spring time, and the birchwood, putting forth its leaves, filled the air with fragrance. The skylark, that wonderful bird, circling in the azure sky, made the space ring with song; and every little rivulet in the fields warbled joyously, winding its way through mosses and grasses.

Charles and Maria wandered hand and hand in that beautiful and expanding nature, as two beautiful and happy spirits. Then they were happy there, in the company of one another. Charles awakened to new life. Near Maria he felt as if he saw the green fields, the sunshine, the blue sky, that she saw. His sense of smell, his feeling, his ear opened with delight to the fragrance of the winds, the sounds which surrounded him, like flowing, ministering spirits. And the lovely girl, his faithful companion, shared

and heightened still more every happy feeling.

She brought to him the flowers, the grasses and the mosses, and described them to him. He told her their names, their qualities, their life; told her much of the great mysterious life in nature. In the evenings she read to him, or he played to her on the piano; that talent which he had early acquired, developed itself at once with a power and a beauty which was a surprise as well as a delight to himself. The harmonies of life, of creation, which now dawned upon his soul, were embodied in his music, and his soul seemed to raise and expand on its wings. Even his intellectual powers acquired new strength, and thoughts and words came to him which made him a poet. His health and strength came again—he was again, though deprived of his eyes, the handsome Charles A—.

So a year passed. Then came a crash which threatened to destroy the innocent happiness of the two lovers—for lovers they were although they had never said it nor thought of it. Maria's father died, and his creditors seized upon his fortune. All debts being paid, nothing remained to his only child but a small annuity, scarcely enough for her support.

"What shall we do now?" said Charles; and with a smile, which only served more to set off the deep melancholy of his feelings, he added: "I can only play for you."

"And I shall work for you!" exclaimed Maria with sudden inspiration, and with cheerful firmness she went on: "Charles, we must not part. I shall work for us both. I can—I will. When I was very young I used to make dolls, representing our peasantry in different Provinces, in their Provincial costumes, and other toys for children, and had them sold at the fairs, to procure me some needle money beyond what my father allowed me; and it was astonishing how much I made by it. Now, I will again keep up the play of my childish years, and make earnest of it. And I have the feeling that I shall succeed, and by that means get a livelihood for us both. Then we must never part again."

"Maria, my sweet companion, my dear Maria, how good and noble you are. But I cannot consent; I cannot be so selfish. You must not, in the bloom of your life, be chained to the destiny of a blind man; indeed you must not. Ah! if I was not poor, or if I was a man that could support you, do something for you, oh, then, how blessed should I be with you. But now, as I am, infirm, unable—"

"Be still, Charles. Speak not so. You know better. You say I must not. Charles, you know I must. You must feel that, separated from you, I never more could be happy; that life would be worthless to me if I cannot devote it to you—serve you—love you! Oh, yes, Charles, now I must say it, for I know it is so. I love you, and must always love you. And can you do nothing for me, Charles? Cannot you love me—that I know you do—and be happy with me? and cannot you talk to me and play for me as nobody else can? Oh, Charles, since I am with you, a new being has awakened within me. The world seems changed; it has become more wide, more beautiful; life seems ennobled. When I hear your music all mysteries in heaven and earth seemed disclosed to me; all care seems so little, all goodness so great, and every discord of life is solved in harmony. And is that nothing, to impart such life, such delight? Ah, say rather that it is nothing that I can do for you. I can work for you, I can cherish you; I can lead you about as your servant or your dog. But gladly will I take up my humble part, and thank Him that has appointed it to me. Charles, let us both thank and obey Him, for He has given me to you and you to me, as help and joy in life. Do you not know, do you not feel, do you not see it, dear?"

He knew, he felt, he saw it all. The light and joy of love dawned upon the blind man. Clasp the dear inspired girl to his heart, his heart beating against her heart, he looked into her soul, in his own, looked out in futurity, time, eternity, and saw it all lit up as by a rising sun; all was clear and true. Glistening tears of joy started from his eyes.

"Come," said he, "come, let us go to the altar."

They were married. From the altar she led him to their new home, a neat and comfortable little dwelling, provided by one part of their small fortune. There was his piano, and there, in the same room was her working desk. There they sat together. How pleasantly she worked away while she was listening to his music.

Then came the regular walk, before dinner, in the open air; then the little dinner, always greatly enjoyed.

When evening came Maria reposed from her work, and read to her husband, or wrote what he dictated, thoughts, poetry to her very dear. Often would a friend drop in, take part of their tea, and enliven the hour with news from without, or pleasant talk. So years glided swiftly and peacefully away.

Maria succeeded in her plans; her dolls and toys for children enabled her to sustain prettily the household. She even could afford now and then to treat her husband with some of the little luxuries of life. His happy smile was the sunshine of her soul.

When I saw them they were old. They were walking under shady trees, arm in arm. It was a summer's day. His hair was silver grey, and fell down in graceful locks; her dress was white;—they looked happy and serene.

"See, that is beautiful," said my compan-

ion, taking off his hat to them. "She is with him always, so gentle and cheerful! They are a happy pair!"  
And he told me the story.

## BERLIN AT NIGHT.

THE sun is setting. People come pouring out of the shops of the Swiss confectioners; the Correspondents from Berlin looking pleased, for they have packed up intelligence enough to furnish news by the next post for their respective papers. Republicans, democrats, socialists, repair to private rooms to finish their discussions; a solitary adherent of absolute monarchy goes home by himself, and takes with him some bon-bons for his wife.

Where are the various groups bound for? For the Concerts—the Italian Opera—the Winter Garden—the French Theatre—the Mercantile and Scientific Lectures—the Anti-Champagne Club—the Keep-on-your-Hat Society—to the saloons, the Colosseum—to musical meetings—to polytechnic, statistical, geographical, philological, antiquarian, religious, temperance, social, or benevolent associations. Faint lights are twinkling from garret windows, where poor mechanics are still hard at work, and will be for hours to come; theatres are brilliantly illuminated; carriages drive through the streets to balls and parties; political toasts are received with three times three; and the night watchman comes out again and calls "Past ten o'clock," and sees that on his beat all the doors are shut. Gendarmes order merry gentlemen to take their cigars out of their mouths. A doctor's carriage drives rapidly past—"there is some one determined not to die without medical assistance." Here, in this ground floor dwelling you can hear a dispute going on about the German Catholics—from others come songs in favor of liberty. Gradually the streets become more and more silent, dark and lonely; Carriages return from parties—eleven o'clock, twelve o'clock strikes—the last hackney-coaches go nodding wearily homeward to their stables; the last cigar-shops put up their shutters; in the hotels and wine-houses there is still noise, and from afar is faintly heard the music of a serenade; but all else is hushed—everybody goes to bed—whoever is not kept awake by care and sorrow, goes to sleep, while stars twinkle, and God wakes and watches over all.—*Westminster Review.*

## HUMBLE ORIGIN OF LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC MEN.

WHAT have evening hours done for mechanics who had only ten hours' toil? What in the moral, what in the religious, what in the scientific world? Hearken to these facts! One of the best editors of the Westminster Review could ever boast; and one of the most brilliant writers of the passing hour, was a cooper in Aberdeen. One of the Editors of a London daily journal was a baker in Elgin; perhaps the best reporter on the Times was a weaver in Edinburgh; the editor of the Witness was a stonemason. One of the ablest ministers in London was a blacksmith in Dundee; another was a watchmaker in Banff; the late Dr. Milne of China, was a herd-boy in Rhynie; the Principal of the London Missionary Society's College at Hong Kong, was a saddler at Huntly; and one of the best missionaries that ever went to India was a tailor in Keith. The leading mechanist on the London and Birmingham railway, with £700 a year, was a mechanic in Glasgow; and perhaps the richest iron-founder in England was a working man in Moray. Sir James Clark, her Majesty's physician, was a druggist in Banff. Joseph Hume was a sailor first, and then a laborer at the pestle and mortar at Montrose; Mr Macgregor the member for Glasgow, was a poor boy in Ross-shire; James Wilson, the member for Westbury, was a ploughman in Had-dington; and Arthur Anderson the member for Orkney, earned his bread by the sweat of his brow in the Ultima Thule.—*North of Scotland Gazette.*

## TOBACCO.

Tobacco plays a most important part in this country as to the habits of the people.—However used—whether smoked, chewed, or used as snuff—its action on the system is but little different. It is essentially a narcotic; and as such it is detrimental to the power and healthiness of the nervous system—as such, it stimulates at the expense of subsequent depression and eventual loss of tone—as such it interferes with the functions of assimilation and expenditure—and as such is injurious to the health of the system. Tobacco exerts more marked and injurious effects when chewed, less of these when smoked, and is least deleterious when used in the form of snuff. This is only, however, a question of degree; and in the temperate climates the use of tobacco in any way, can only be justifiable when, from poverty of diet, and consequent vital depression, the effects of a habitually used narcotic may not be undesirable.

THE ALPHABET—The alphabet may be varied so many millions of times, that if a man could accomplish the impossible task of reading one hundred thousand words in an hour, it would require four thousand six hundred and fifty millions of men to read these words, according to the above hourly proportion, in twenty thousand years.

Poverty wants some, luxury many, and avarice all things.