

spurning the praise and flattery my success would inspire, take a proud farewell of my fickle and ungrateful countrymen. The longer I bough upon, the more was I pleased with this latter resolution, and panted with eagerness for the moment of contemptuous disdain, in which, flinging off the caresses of false friends, I should carry to other lands those talents which my own was unworthy to possess. It was but a few days before this, the prior of the Augustine monastery had called upon me, to beg I would paint an altar-piece for their chapel; they wished to have a kneeling figure of Mary, to whom the shrine was dedicated; but the subject, being a favorite one of Titian's, had at that time deterred me. Its difficulty was now its charm; and as I pondered over in my mind the features I wished to transfer to my canvas, I suddenly remembered a painting which I had had for some years in my possession, and which, from the surpassing loveliness of the countenance it represented, as well as the beauty of its execution had long fascinated me. I now reverted to it a once, and opening a secret drawer in my cabinet, took out the picture and placed it before me. It was a small and most beautifully painted enamel, representing two figures—one that of an old and stern visaged man, upon whose harsh and severe features there played a scowl of deadly hate and scorn: he stood, drawn up to his full height, his hands and arms widely extended before him, as if in the act of performing some mystic or sacred rite over the lovely being who knelt at his feet, in an attitude of the deepest and most reverential supplication; this was a lovely girl, her age scarcely eighteen years; her forehead, fair as alabaster, were shaded by two braids of dark brown hair, which hung back in heavy locks upon her neck and shoulders. Her eyes, of the deepest blue, were upraised and tearful, and the parted lips seemed almost to utter a murmured prayer, as her heaving bosom told some inward anguish; her hands were firmly clasped, but the arms hung powerless before her, and the whole figure conveyed the most perfect abandonment to grief it was possible to conceive. Here were the features, here the very attitude I desired.—Could I only succeed in imparting to my Madonna the lovely and sorrow-struck countenance before me, my triumph was certain. I had walked every gallery of Europe, from one to the other; I had visited every collection, where a good picture was to be found, yet never had I beheld the same magic power of conveying, in one single scene so much of storied interest as this small picture displayed. The features of that beautiful girl, too, had the semblance of being copied from the life. There are certain slight and indescribable traits by which a painter will, in almost every case, distinguish when nature, and only fancy have lent the subject; and here every thing tended to make me believe it to be a portrait. The manner in which I became possessed of it, also, contributed to invest it with a more than common interest in my eyes. The circumstances were these: When a very young man, and only a short time settled at Rome, whither I had gone to prosecute my studies as a painter, the slender state of my purse had compelled me to take up my residence in one of the less known suburbs of the city. In the same humble dwelling in which I took up my abode there lived an old and paralytic man whom age and infirmity had rendered bed-ridden for years.

At first my occupation being entirely without doors, left me but little opportunity to see or know much of him; but when winter closed in, and confined me whole days to the house, my acquaintance with him gradually increased, and to my great surprise, I discovered in this poverty-struck and decrepit old man, one who possessed the most intimate and critical knowledge of art; every gallery was familiar to him—he knew the history of each celebrated picture, and distinguished originals from their copies by such traits of discernment as evinced the most consummate intimacy with the deepest secrets of colouring, and, in a word, showed himself to be, what I afterwards learned he was a most accomplished artist; but the circumstances which threw him into his present mean and wretched condition ever remained a mystery. Various little acts of kindness and attention, which I had in my power to bestow, seemed to make a great impression on him, while my own friendless and solitary situation drew me into closer intimacy with one who seemed to have fewer of this world's comforts than myself. To him, therefore, I confided all the circumstances which led me to Rome—my ardent desire for distinction, my longing for eminence in art: while he, by his advice and counsel, which he was well qualified to afford, directed my studies, and encouraged my efforts.

Our acquaintance thus formed, rapidly ripened into friendship, and it was with pleasure I hurried from my gayer and more volatile companions, to the poor and humble abode, where my old and feeble friend awaited me with impatience.

(To be continued.)

QUESTION FOR A DEBATING CLUB.—Which is the proudest—a girl with her first beau, or a woman with her first baby.

God hears the heart without the words, but he never hears the words without the heart.

THE CORN COUNTRIES OF EUROPE.

BY MR. CAIRD.

SINCE the date of my last letter I have gone nearly 400 miles further through the centre of Europe, passing through various regions of cultivation, which seem to be governed more by elevation than latitude. Thus, in the beautiful vicinity of Dresden Indian, corn is ripening on the plain, and vines along the slopes; while two degrees further south, in the late and poor country between Prague and Brunn, you might fancy yourself at this moment travelling in the Highlands, looking at the herds mowing their first crop of late meadow hay, and the bare-footed lassies treading it out. When Brunn is reached we are back again at the Indian corn; and all along the bare plain, stretching some eighty or ninety miles to Presburg, the corn harvest has been so long secured, that the people have almost forgotten it. So quickly in these railway times does a man pass from one scene of busy activity to another, in the morning finding the German bauer trotting along the stubbles with his light wagon-load of corn; at mid-day passing the Bohemian shepherd at his hay-harvest, and with his patches of oats hardly yet ripe; and in the evening buying ripe grapes at the carriage window from a little Austrian maiden at 1d. a bunch.

The ride from Dresden to Aussig, on the way to Prague, though nowise agricultural, must not be passed without notice. There is nothing on the Rhine to equal it in picturesque beauty, except the river itself, whose great and ever-flowing volume of water is far grander than the Elbe. But on other points give me the Saxon-Switzerland rather than the Drachenfels. The rocky cliffs on either side rise to a height of 200 to 300 feet, many of them quite perpendicular, and every patch of earth and crevice is clothed with wood, thus making a living cover to their summits. Here and there a rocky prominence juts boldly out, rising sheer up from the water's edge, like a lofty keep. The river runs smoothly along below, and now and then the loveliest glens debouch upon it on either side, with little villages lying quite in their bosom. A church, monastery, or noble's schloss, occupies the most conspicuous points; and the strip of green land along the margin of the river, from which the fresh mown hay has just been cleared, bears plum trees loaded with ripe fruit. Now we pass a steamer slowly toiling up against the stream, and soon meet another coming down swiftly with it. Great rafts of wood are floating down from the distant mountain sides nearer its source; and the stream saw mills, with wharves, are conveniently placed for converting the wood before parting on its voyage to the sea.

For some fifty miles after leaving this charming scene we are carried swiftly through a rich, level country to Prague, abounding with orchards of ripe plums, and from which, judging by the stubble, heavy crops of corn appear to have been carried. The next 150 miles from Prague to Brunn, the Leeds of Austria, is very uninteresting—a cold bleak, late country, where the oats are barely ripe, and the meadow hay not all cut. Here, and to the south of Brunn, the women handle the scythe like men, and trains of them may be seen at the railway works, following each other with wheelbarrows along the plank like navvies.

South of Brunn the country altogether changes. Indian corn is found in plenty, and the universal potato. It seems to grow in every climate, and spite of the political economists, to take root and prosper. The general harvest is long over, and the land is too dry for making a favourable preparation for wheat sowing. Near Vienna the long drought is said to have injured the produce of the harvest, and in Austrian Galicia we learn that the wheat had been a bulky but not very productive crop.—With reference to Galicia one result of the Paris agricultural competition was mentioned with me which was interesting. A Galician noble took to the exhibition a splendid mast as a specimen of his forest produce. This attracted the notice of an Englishman, who visited the count's estate, and not entered into a contract with him for the disposal of his wood.—The count will thus turn to very great pecuniary advantage a source of wealth which he possessed, but which was altogether valueless till the Paris show brought it before the notice of the public.

Soon after entering Hungary we reach Presburg, on the capital of the country and the seat of the Diet. It was market-day, and the public streets and the market places were crowded with the country people and the wagons. Several thousand people were there, the women selling fruit and vegetables by retail, the men disposing of the more weighty produce wholesale. The light wagons, with their pair of lean but active horses or large white oxen, stand in close columns all day along the streets, till their owners have finished their market.—The men are a fine, intelligent-looking race, dressed in loose blue cloth jackets and long leather boots, and with low-crowned broad beaver hats. The women are much better looking than the Germans, and very active and clever at their bargains. They have stands of peaches, grapes, plums, and pears, while in the street are piled little mounds of melons at about 6d. each, and cucumbers at 1d. Potatoes, which

are of various sizes—some very large—are sold according to size, and by retail, at seven to nine for a penny, and by the sack at the rate of 40s. to 50s. the ton. Mutton sells at 5d. a pound, and the finest wheat flour at 50s. the sack of about 200 lbs. The crop has not been more than an average, and the price continues very firm. The English prices at present do not admit of any business being done in the wheat of this country for export to England, and the present demand in the country takes up the whole supply.

I have been often struck, while travelling on the continent, with the absurdity of foreigners ascribing a pre-eminence of appetite to John Bull. Nothing can be more untrue. In France, Germany, and now even in remote Hungary, dinner seems the greatest occupation of the day. The number of dishes, and the quantity of solid substantial food gobbled up by a thin pale faced, moustached foreigner, fills an Englishman with amazement; and doubtless this universal taste for good things has caused the abundance and excellence of the dinners which one meets everywhere. At Presburg, yesterday, we had soup, caviare which would have gladdened the heart of an alderman, stewed beef with macaroni, dressed fowl with rice, dressed fish with potatoes, game with compot soufflé; and all this, with a half-bottle of excellent Hungarian wine, cost but 4s. And as for hotels, London has long been complained of; but it will be heard with some surprise that there is not a hotel in Trafalgar-square which can in any respect for a moment bear comparison with either of the three principal hotels in Pesth, the capital of Hungary.

The passport system in Austria certainly gives much trouble, and must occasion much expense to the government. But the officials are extremely polite, and their revenue officers at the frontier at once passed the luggage without inspection, on receiving an answer to their inquiry that there was nothing contraband in it.

The Pass-office, while we were there, was crowded with people of all ranks getting passes without which no one can move from one town to another. They seemed all to take it good humouredly, and, no doubt, like the eels, the habit becomes easy when one is used to it.

In the evening we crossed the Danube to the public gardens to see a Hungarian play in an open air theatre. The house was divided into boxes, gallery and arena. The fumes of tobacco-smoke filled the air; tall trees shut us in on every side. The stage was at one end, and very spacious. The acting, which was in Hungarian, was energetic and picturesque, and seemed to give general satisfaction.

CANT.

WE know not a more certain symptom of hypocrisy in religion than in minds, themselves obviously worldly in the extreme, an exaggerated condemnation of all little worldliness in all other honest people gravely jogging, or gaily skipping along their path of life. Those people are often the least worldly, on whom they who make the loudest boast of their unworldliness seek basely to affix that opprobrious epithet. For they walk the world with a heart pure as it is cheerful; they are by that unpretending purity saved from infection; and as there are as many fair and healthy faces to be seen in the smoke and stir of cities, as in the rural wilds, so also are there as many fair and healthy spirits. The world—the wicked world—has not the power over us Christians that the canters say; and as for the mere amusement of the world,—frivolous as they may too often be,—little or no power have they over that which is "so majestic." Yet to listen to some folks, you would think that all the boys and girls one sees, "like gay creatures of the element," dancing under a chandellier pendant from the roof, like some starry constellation were quadrilling away to the sound of music, into the bottomless pit. Is it not, for example most disgusting and loathsome, to hear some broad-backed, thick calved, greasy-faced, well-fed, and not-badly-drunk cartiff of some canting caste, distinguished in private and public life for the gross greediness with which they gobble up everything, eatable within reach of their hairy fists,—preaching and praying, and exhorting young people, full of flesh and blood of the purest and clearest quality, to forsake and forswear the world,—to quell within them all mortal vanities, and appetites, and lusts? To whom is the hound haranguing: What means he by lusts, while the sweet face is before him of that innocent girl, of fifteen or twenty? For what are years to her, into whose eyes God and the Saviour have put that light angelical!—that ineffable loveliness, as pure from taint as the beauty of the rose blushing on her lily breast, which she gathered in the dewy garden a few hours ago, among the earliest songs of birds, while yet the pensive expression had not time to leave her countenance, still lingering there from the piety of her soul breathed prayers? Shocking, to hear the ugly monster coarsely canting to such a creature of her—corruption! She knows that she belongs to a fallen nature. Oftentimes her tears have flowed to think how undeserving she was of all the goodness showered on her head from Heaven. Often had she looked on the lilies of the field, and envied their inno-

cence. Meek and humble is she, even in her most joyful happiness; contrite and repentant even over the shadows of sin that may have crossed her spirit, as the shadows of the clouds suddenly over "a stationary spot of sunshine." Even for her sake she knows that "Jesus wept." With what a reverent touch do these delicate hands of hers turn over the leaves of the New Testament! Her father and her mother intensely feel themselves to be Christians, while she reads to them of the crucifixion. She remembers not the time when she knew not him who died to save sinners.—*Professor Wilson's Essays.*

MOUNT ETNA.

THE ERUPTION IN 1669.

FOR many days previous the sky had been overcast, and the weather, notwithstanding the season, oppressively hot. The thunder and lightning were incessant, and the eruption was at length ushered in by a violent shock of an earthquake, which levelled most of the houses at Nicolosi. Two great chasms then opened near that village, from whence ashes were thrown out in such quantities, that in a few weeks a double hill, called Monte Rosso, 450 feet high, was formed, and the surrounding country was covered to such a depth, that nothing but the tops of the trees could be seen. The lava ran in a stream fifty feet deep, and four miles wide, overwhelming in its course fourteen towns and villages; and had it not separated before reaching Catania, that city would have been virtually annihilated, as were Herculaneum and Pompeii. The walls had been purposefully raised to a height of sixty feet, to repel the danger if possible, but the torrent accumulated behind them, and poured down in a cascade of fire upon the town. It still continued to advance, and after a course of fifteen miles, ran into the sea, where it formed a mole 600 yards long. The walls were neither thrown down nor fused by contact with the ignited matter and have since been discovered by Prince Biscari, when excavating in search of a well, known to have existed in a certain spot, and from the steps of which the lava may now be seen curling over like a monstrous billow in the very act of falling. The great crater fell in during this eruption, and a fissure six feet wide, and twelve miles long, opened in the plain of S. Leo. In the space of six weeks, the habitations of 27,000 persons were destroyed, a vast extent of the most fertile land rendered desolate for ages, the course of rivers changed, and the whole face of the district transformed. Since that time there have been several eruptions, of which the most remarkable were those of 1787, 1811, and 1819, but the lava having seldom reached the cultivated region, the devastation committed was consequently trifling.—*Marquis of Ormonde.*

THE MARSEILLES.

AN exchange gives the following brief history of the world-renowned former National Anthela of France. It says:

'The history of this song now heard in France no more, now crushed down in the heart of the French people, now made to give way to *Pantant pour la Syrie*, is not without interest as a matter of history. It was composed, words and music, by a young royalist officer of artillery, Robert de Lisle by name. He was stationed at Strasburg at the time when France was heaving with the throes of the revolution. He was famed throughout the country as a favorite of the muses of poetry and song. The winter of 1792 was one of scarcity in Strasburg and at the table of a poor acquaintance, Deitrick, who could set but little food before his guest, de Lisle always found a bottle of generous wine. It was on an evening of this gloomy season of want and of turmoil, when Deitrick and de Lisle warming themselves with the old 'Faternian,' that the former proposed to the latter that he should produce one of those hymns which convey to the soul of the people the enthusiasm which suggested it. De Lisle repaired at midnight to his lodgings, and there, on his clavichord, now composing the air before the words, and now the words before the air, in a sort of frenzy, struck off a hymn, which, says a distinguished French writer, 'seems a recovered echo of Thermopylae—it was heroism sung.' Overcome at length, and exhausted, he fell asleep, and it was not until the next day that he wrote out the hymn and presented it to his friend Deitrick. The hymn of the country was found. Alas! it proved the requiem to poor Deitrick. He went to the scaffold to its notes within a year.

It flew from city to city. At the opening and close of the clubs in Marseilles, it was sung, and hence its name. De Lisle himself, prescribed as a royalist, heard that song while fleeing for safety from his country, and what he had created in a moment of enthusiasm and as an incentive to freedom, became the death cry of the revolutionist and stirred the blood of desperate men to the most fearful deeds of tyranny and terror.

DECISION OF CHARACTER.—Without it no man or woman is ever worth a button nor ever can be. Without it a man becomes at once a good natured nobody the poverty stricken possessor of one solitary principle that of obliging everybody under the sun merely for the asking.