

Of a more earnest and solemn, but not less imposing character was the Peace Festival, celebrated in the Crystal Palace on the 9th of May 1856.

The gloomy aspect of the morning inspired fears that the weather might prove less auspicious than it usually does on occasions graced by the presence of Queen Victoria. Still, however, train after train of well-filled carriages started from London Bridge; and when the doors of the Palace opened at eleven o'clock, the waiting crowd rapidly poured into the building, and every seat which commanded an advantageous view of the dais and centre transept was quickly filled, with the exception of that portion of the north gallery which was reserved for the families of peers and a few other favoured individuals.

Four hours dragged on their weary length.—So dense was the throng that no one could venture his seat without the risk of losing his place, and thus being deprived of the sight he had perhaps come far to enjoy; whilst every attempt to rise on the part of those who occupied the foremost seats was put down by cries from the less fortunate portion of the crowd—particularising some feature of dress or personal appearance: 'Down with bridal-bonnet! Down with well-looking-man! Down with blue parasol! &c'; and these home-thrusts, if unattended to, were enforced by an occasional discharge of harmless missiles, in the shape of half-pence, &c., which quickly brought the offenders to reason.

At length, however, the attention of the crowd was attracted by more stirring sights and sounds. The bands, which were playing in a raised orchestra behind the dais, were hushed, and from the further end of the aisle the air of *See the conquering Hero Comes*, and the measured tread of troops, fell upon our ear.—The veiled Scutari Monument at first concealed them from view, but in a few moments, a noble body of the Coldstream Guards entered the central transept, amidst the deafening cheers of the crowd; and at intervals they were followed by other bands of Crimean troops—the Scots Fusiliers, Grenadiers, Artillery, &c., each man wearing upon his breast the medal so bravely earned during nights of watchful toil and days of hard fought victory. Many a countenance there bore traces of suffering which told more eloquently than any words could speak all those gallant men had suffered and endured whilst fighting for their country and their Queen; but their bearing still bespoke the resolute spirit within, which no danger could ever daunt, nor any suffering quell.

As each body of men advanced, they took their places at either side of the dais, forming a guard of honour which reached on one side to the Scutari Monument, on the other, to the Peace Trophy. Each of these gigantic structures, reaching to the roof of the Palace was veiled by a not very picturesque drapery of sail-cloth. Imagination, however, had only the mere room to expatiate on their anticipated perfections; and patiently—or impatiently, as the case might be—the crowd awaited the lifting of the curtain.

The long-desired hour at length arrived.—At half-past 3 o'clock, a cheer from without told that Her Majesty, with her accustomed punctuality, had reached the gate of the Palace. In another moment, the band struck up *God Save the Queen*, the vast assemblage rose from their seats, and the royal party ascended the dais.

The Queen was on this occasion accompanied by a complete family party, and a happy thoroughly English-looking family they were: the Duchess of Kent, Prince Albert, the Duke of Cambridge, Prince of Wales and Prince Alfred—the two latter clad in Highland costume; whilst the Princess Royal and Princess Alice were dressed in emerald green—we hoped out of compliment to the sister isle. These formed the foremost figures of the group; whilst on either side stood some of Her Majesty's chief officers of state in court-dresses, and bearing their wands of office. There, too, stood Sir Joseph Paxton, the magician at whose bidding the wondrous structure in which we were assembled had sprung into existence. Grouped on each side of the dais appeared a brilliant band of officers, naval and military, covered for the most part with decorations; whilst in many instances the mutilated arm or the languid step told that the badge of honour had not been idly earned.

From amongst this gallant band the Queen's eye quickly singled out Sir Edmund Lyons, and a message was despatched to the brave old man, who promptly obeyed the royal summons. The moment he appeared on the dais, the Queen, with gracious cordiality, advanced to meet him, holding out her hand; and then, turning round, she seemed to present her children to the veteran, who, with an air of mingled affection and respect, shook hands with the youthful group. Whilst this episode was going on, repeated cheers bespoke the hearty sympathy felt by the people with the mark of distinction conferred by their Sovereign on the noble old man, who was still mourning the loss of a heroic son fallen in the service of his country. But now the buzz and stir of this vast human hive is hushed and in sweet and solemn strains those beautiful words from the oratorio of *Elis* are borne to our ears, sung as a quartet by Madame Rudersdorff, Mr and Mrs Lockey, and Mr Thomas:

We bless you in the name of the Lord;
Hear them, Lord, in the day of trouble:
God of Jacob, do Thou defend them—
O preserve them and keep them in peace.
Let them be blessed upon the earth.

A pause ensues; and then, whilst the bands play Beethoven's Funeral March, the Scutari Monument is slowly unveiled. The tall granite obelisk, with the weeping angels at its base, and surrounded by the comrades of those in whose memory the monument at Scutari is to be erected, awakened many a saddening recollection; and as the thoughts of the spectators were carried back to those sickening scenes of death and devastation, most truly were the aspirations natural to such a moment expressed in the lines set to a Russian air, and worthily rendered by Madame Rudersdorff, accompanied in the second verse by Mr and Mrs Lockey—

HYMN.

God, the all-terrible! King who ordainest
Great winds Thy chariot, the lightnings Thy
sword,
Shew forth Thy pity on high where thou
reignest;
Give to us peace in our time, O Lord!

God the all-merciful! earth hath forsaken
Thy ways of blessedness, slighted Thy word;
Bid not Thy wrath in its terrors awaken;
Give to us peace in our time, O Lord!

So shall Thy children, in thankful devotion,
Laud Him who saved them from peril ab-
horred,
Singing in chorus from ocean to ocean,
Peace to the nations, and praise to the
Lord.

H. F. CHORLEY.

Now followed a more joyous ceremony.—Another veil was raised, and the Peace Trophy, facing the Scutari Monument, was unfolded to our view amidst enthusiastic bursts of applause, and the triumphant strains of *Rule Britannia* played by the congregated bands.

That Baron Marochetti's Peace Trophy is open to criticism, few will deny; but the figure of Peace which crowns its summit, clad in white and golden drapery, and bearing a green olive-branch in her hand, has a beauty of expression which would redeem many faults. Besides, criticism was happily not the prevalent feeling of the moment; and unmingled satisfaction seemed to reign among the crowd as gradually the tumult subsided, and the clear full voices of Madame Rudersdorff and Mrs Lockey were again heard mingling in the brief, but charming duet from *Judas Maccabæus*.

Oh, lovely Peace, with plenty crowned,
Come spread thy blessings all around;
Let fleecy flocks the hills adorn,
And valleys smile with wavy corn.

During the pause which followed this duet, the Queen held brief consultation with her royal cousin, and then, in obedience as it appears to Her Majesty's suggestion, the whole of the troops defiled past the dais, as if passing in review before her. It was evident, as the brave fellows marched past, that the Queen's observant eye was attracted by one and another who had probably on some former occasion been pointed out to her as having distinguished himself in the war; for more than once she pointed towards some individual soldier, and then turned inquiringly towards the Duke of Cambridge, who stood by her side.

The bands during this interval played our own national airs, as well as those of France, Russia, and Sardinia; thus mingling in the sweet sounds of harmony strains dear to the hearts of nations, so recently at variance with each other.

This stirring scene, so rich in varied interest as well as deep emotions, was compressed into the space of one brief hour. At half-past four o'clock, her majesty rose from her seat, and once again was she greeted by an outburst of prolonged and enthusiastic cheering from the multitude—a demonstration of loyalty which she acknowledged by advancing to the front of the dais, where she courtesied thrice in graceful lowliness to the assembled throng, gazing around her the while with a look expressive of grateful affection—a look such as a woman and a sovereign only could bestow.

Thus ended the Peace Festival of 1856, a festival not clouded like the former one with anticipations of a coming struggle, nor saddened by the expectation of blood-stained victories but rich in hopes for the future—a future of peace and enterprise, in which we trust our only rivalry with other nations will be one of progress—a rivalry in which every energy will be directed towards undertakings connected with the wellbeing and happiness of mankind, the prosperity of every kindred and of every tongue on the face of the whole earth.

THE MARQUESAS ISLANDS.

AMONG the few animals which are to be met with in Typee, there were none which I looked upon with more interest than a beautiful golden-hued species of lizard. It measured perhaps five inches from head to tail, and was, most gracefully proportioned. Numbers of these creatures were to be seen basking in the sunshine upon the thatching of the houses, and multitudes at all hours of the day showed their glittering sides as they ran frolicking between the spears of grass, or raced in troops up and down the tall shafts of the cocoa-nut trees. But

the remarkable beauty of these little animals and their lively ways were not their only claims upon my admiration. They were perfectly tame and insensible to fear. Frequently, after seating myself upon the ground in some shady place during the heat of the day, I would be completely overrun with them. If I brushed one off my arm, it would leap perhaps into my hair; when I tried to frighten it away by gently pinching its leg, it would turn for protection to the very hand that attacked it. And beautiful birds fly over the valley of Typee. You see them perched aloft among the immovable boughs of the majestic bread-fruit trees, or gently swaying on the elastic branches of the Omoo; skimming over the palmetto thatching of the bamboo-huts; passing like spirits on the wing through the shadows of the grove, and sometimes descending into the bosom of the valley in gleaming flights from the mountains. Their plumage is purple and azure, crimson and white, black and gold; with bills of every tint—bright bloody red, jet-black, and ivory white; and their eyes are bright and sparkling; they go sailing through the air in starry throngs; but, alas! the spell of dumbness is upon them all—there is not a single warbler in the valley! I know not why it was, but the sight of these birds, generally the ministers of gladness, always oppressed me with melancholy. As in their dumb beauty they hovered by me whilst I was walking, or looked down upon me with steady, curious eyes from out the foliage, I was almost inclined to fancy that they were gazing upon a stranger, and that they commiserated his fate. *Melville.*

THE ALPINE PASS.

IMMEDIATELY on leaving the valley we entered on the debris of avalanches, which fortunately bore us. It was a steady pull, hour after hour, mile after mile, up this pathless mass of snow, that seemed to go like the roof of a house at an unbroken angle of forty-five degrees, up and up, till the eye wearied with the prospect. My friends gave out the first hour, while I, though the weakest of the party, seemed to gain strength the higher I ascended. The cold rare atmosphere acted like a powerful stimulant on my sensitive nervous system, rendering me for the time insensible to fatigue. I soon distanced my friends, while my guide kept cautioning me to keep the centre of the gorge, so that I could flee either to one side or the other, should an avalanche see fit to come down just at the time I saw fit to pass. I pressed on, and soon lost sight of every living thing. The silent snow-fields and lofty peaks were around me, and the deep blue heavens bending brightly over all. I thought I was near the top, when suddenly these rose right in my very face a cone covered with snow of virgin purity.

I had ascended beyond the reach of avalanches, and stood on snow that lay as it had fallen. I confess I was for a moment discouraged and lonely. Near as this smooth, trackless height appeared, a broad inclined plain of soft snow was to be traversed before I could reach it. I sat down in the yielding mass and hailed to the guide. I could hear the faint reply, far, far down the breast of the mountain, and at length caught a glimpse of this form, bent almost double, and toiling like a black insect up the white acclivity. I telegraphed to him to know if I was to climb that smooth peak. He answered yes, and that I was to keep to the right. I must confess I could see no particular choice in sides, but pressed on. The clean drifts hung along its acclivities just as the wintry storm had left them, and every step sunk me in mid-leg deep. This was too much; I could not ascend the face of that peak of snow direct; it was too steep; and I was compelled to go backwards and forwards in a zig-zag direction to make any progress. At length, exhausted and panting, I fell on my face, and pressed my cheek to the cold snow. I felt as if I never could take another step; my breath became difficult and thick, from the straining efforts I was compelled to put forth at every step, while the perspiration streamed in torrents from my face and body. But a cold shiver just then passing through my frame, admonished me, I had already lain too long; so whipping up my flagging spirits, I pushed on. A black spot at length appeared in the wide waste of snow. It was the deserted house of refuge, and I hailed it with joy, for I knew I was at the top. But, oh! as I approached the thing, dreary enough at best, and found it empty; the door broken down by the fierce storm, and the deserted room filled with snow-drifts; my heart died within me and I gave a double shiver. I crept to the windward side of the dismal concern to shield myself from the freezing blast, which swept by without check, and seemed wholly unconscious that I had clothing on; and crouched meekly in the sunbeams. But as I looked up, about and beneath me, what a wild ruinous world of peaks and crags, and river mountains, rose on my wandering vision.—*Kavanaugh.*

THE BLACK PRINCE.

AT the battle of Poitiers, fought in the year 1356, the English army, commanded by Prince Edward, did not amount to twelve thousand men; while that of the French, under King John, exceeded sixty thousand. Notwithstand-

ing so great a disproportion in point of numbers, the courage of the English, and the good conduct of the prince, gained the victory. The French forces were completely defeated; and King John, with many other persons of rank, was taken prisoner. Here commences the real and truly admirable heroism of Edward; for victories are vulgar things in comparison with that moderation and humanity displayed by a young prince of twenty-seven years of age, not yet cooled from the fury of battle, and elated by an extraordinary and unexpected success as had ever crowned the arms of any commander. He came forth to meet the captive king with all the marks of regard and sympathy; administered comfort to him amidst his misfortunes; paid him the tribute of praise due to his valour; and ascribed his own victory merely to the blind chance of war, or to a superior providence, which controls all the efforts of human art and prudence. The behaviour of John showed him not unworthy of this courteous treatment. More touched by Edward's generosity than by his own calamities, he said, that notwithstanding his own defeat and captivity, his honor was still unimpaired; and that though he yielded the victory, it was at least gained by a prince of the most consummate valour and humanity.

THE ENGLISH CLIMATE.

WE verily think that a glance at the array of insect and reptile abominations which entomologists are so fond of sticking pins through and arranging in a species of monster meeting in cabinets of natural history, is quite enough to make any sane man to congratulate himself with a perfect flush of inward delight, that his lot is cast in a land where the most formidable insect plagues consist of an occasional wasp in the summer air, and an occasional black beetle crawling over the winter's hearth—not that we have any affection for either race—on the contrary, we cordially wish that a war of extermination could somehow be got up between the fat gentleman in black and the thin gentleman in yellow. But after all, what are those horrible beings with no end of legs—with eyes where nobody would look for eyes—and, as Sidney Smith said, with heads where, with all due submission, their tails ought to be? What are our poor hopping fleas, industrious or idle—our harmless 'crickets on the hearth'—our buzzing blue bottles, to the entomologist abortions one sees in the British Museum—spiders, like crabs rubbed over with bear's grease and turned hairy—scorpions with their horny eyes and fever giving stings, the only satisfactory trait in their character, by the way, being their reported aptitude to sting themselves out of the world—centipedes, those obscure things, those achorontic individuals, form a swarm of which we would run faster than from a park of artillery.—*Jervold.*

PLATO AND SHAKSPEARE.

THERE is only one thing in the world like a dialogue of Plato—and that is a play of Shakspeare. A comparison of the two will give the English reader some insight into a lecturer's difficulties with Plato as his text book. With our English poet as all the world is a stage—so on the philosopher's stage is crowded all the world. Shakspeare knows no more of unities than nature—a drunken porter, and a Macbeth that murders sleep, shuffle each other off the same stage. The voice of man is as the sound of many waters—the wail of woe and the ring of laughter blend together in the hum of Great Babylon. With an ear for every sound, Shakspeare wrote of them as he heard, and also seen them. With a mind as music itself, he knew a higher harmony than the laws of the drama could have taught him, and modulated discords as a master musician only can do. To understand Plato is to understand Shakspeare. None but these two could so nobly play the buffoon, or negligently act the noble. Shakspeare is no more a playwright than Plato a philosopher in the pedant sense of the word—to the one all the world is a stage, to the other all the world an academy. The motto of the Globe theatre, 'Totus mundus agit histrionem,' suited such an imperial fancy as Shakspeare's, which laid the whole world under contribution. The range of Plato's is no less extensive. It is even more wonderful in the philosopher than the poet; for that discursiveness which enables us to alight on truth in poetry leads us off the scent in philosophy.

COMMONPLACE WOMEN.

HEAVEN knows how many simple letters from simple minded women; have been kissed, cherished, and wept over by men of far loftier intellect. Therefore it was no marvel that the childish epistle of Hope Anstead was read and re-read, with lingering eyes and a throbbing heart. So it will always be to the end of time. It is a lesson worth learning by these young creatures who seek to allure by their accomplishments, or to dazzle by their genius that though he may admire, no man ever loves a woman for these things. He loves her for what is essentially distinct from, though not incompatible with them—her woman's nature and her woman's heart. This is why we so often see a man of high genius or intellectual power pass by the De Staëls and the Corrines, to take unto his bosom a wayside flower, who