

Poetry.

THE MAY-FLY.

"The angler's May-fly, the most short-lived in its perfect state of any of the insect race, emerges from the water, where it passes its aurelia state, about six in the evening, and dies about eleven at night."—*White's Selborne.*

THE sun of the eve was warm and bright
When the May-fly burst his shell,
And he wanton'd awhile in that fair light
O'er the river's gentle swell;
And the deepening tints of the crimson sky
Still gleam'd on the wing of the glad May-fly.

The colours of sunset pass'd away,
The crimson and yellow green,
And the evening-star's enchanting ray
In the waveless stream was seen;
Till the deep repose of the stillest night
Was hushing about his giddy flight.

The noon of the night is nearly come—
There's a crescent in the sky—
The silence still hears the myriad hum
Of the insect revelry.
The hum has ceas'd—the quiet wave
Is now the sportive May-fly's grave.

Oh! thine was a blessed lot—to spring,
In thy lustiness to air,
And sail about, on untiring wing,
Through a world most rich and fair,
To drop at once in thy watery bed,
Like a leaf that the willow branch has shed.

And who shall say that his thread of years
Is a life more blest than thine?
Has his feverish dream of doubts and fears
Such joys as those which shine
In the constant pleasures of thy way,
Most happy child of the happy May?

For thou wert born when the earth was clad
With her robe of buds and flowers,
And didst float about with a soul as glad
As a bird in the sunny showers;
And the hour of thy death had a sweet repose,
Like a melody, sweetest at its close.

Nor too brief the date of thy cheerful race—
'Tis its use that measures time,
And the mighty Spirit that fills all space
With His life and His will sublime,
May see that the May-fly and the Man
Each flutter out the same small span.

And the fly that is born with the sinking sun
To die ere the midnight hour,
May have deeper joy, ere his course he run,
Than man in his pride and power,
And the insect's minutes be spared the fears
And the anxious doubts of our threescore years.

His change is pass'd—the unconscious worm
Has burst his bonds of earth;
But who shall compare his passing term
Of joy, with that glorious birth
Which awaits the Just, whose mortal day
Is the prelude to an endless May?

Miscellaneous.

ANCIENT WELL.

On the shores of the Moray Firth, in the parish of Duffus, stands the small but neat and thriving fishing station of Burghead. The town is of no very ancient standing, but the promontory is said by antiquarians to have formed a station for the Romans, when that wonderful people colonized our rugged strands. To the north is a perpendicular rock, which the Danes surrounded with a rampart of oaken logs, or stakes, portions of which have been frequently dug up, together with hatchets, and quantities of burned grain. In digging at the time of the erection of the harbour, the worthy proprietor informed us, his men found about 30 small figures of bulls cut in stone, that are supposed to have been trophies carved by the Romans, as we strike medals in commemoration of any signal victory. Another scrap of Roman antiquity was dug up by the workmen—a small brass coin, which an eminent antiquary, Sir T. Dick Lauder, said was one of the tokens in common use among the Roman soldiers to note their allowances of wine. But by far the most curious and antique object at Burghead is a large well, cut out of the solid rock, into a chamber, to the depth of about twenty feet, and twelve feet square. You descend to the spring by a flight of twenty steps, cut also out of the rock, which have been much worn by footsteps, supposed to be those of the Roman soldiers, and their successors, the Danes; for it is plausibly conjectured that this gigantic well must have been the one used in days of yore by the soldiers of the garrison. Ten times the present population of Burghead, daily frequenting the spring, would scarcely perhaps in centuries have made such an impression on these steps of massive rocks. The well was discovered about fifteen years ago, when some im-

provements on the pier were in progress. A want of water was severely felt by the labourers; and as they were one day lamenting their scarcity of this cheap but invaluable element of nature, an old man suggested that they should dig in a certain spot, where, according to immemorial tradition, a well would be found. They resolved to try, and immediately commenced operations; but after excavating a depth of 10 or 12 feet on the side of the hill, they got tired of the project and desisted. The late Duke of Gordon, who was one of the proprietors of the harbour, and who happened at the time to be visiting, hearing the story of the well, told the men to dig away, and not to mind a day or two's labour. They accordingly set to again, and at length succeeded, at the depth of from twenty to thirty feet from the surface, in finding the long-hidden well, and verifying the truth of the old tradition.—*Inverness Courier.*

CURIOUS TYPOGRAPHICAL ANECDOTE.—It is well known to literary people, that in preparing works for the press, it is usual for the printer, after the proof-sheets have been seen by the author, to go over them again, and clear them of what are called typographical errors, such as wrong spellings, inaccuracies of punctuation, and similar imperfections. In performing this office for a celebrated northern critic and editor, a printer, now dead, was in the habit of introducing a much greater number of commas than it appeared to the author the sense required. The case was provoking, but did not produce a formal remonstrance, until Mr. W—n himself accidentally afforded the learned editor an opportunity of signifying his dissatisfaction with the plethora of punctuation under which his compositions were made to labour. The worthy printer, coming to a passage one day which he could not understand, very naturally took it into his head that it was unintelligible, and transmitted it to his employer, with a remark on the margin, that "there appeared some obscurity in it." The sheet was immediately returned, with this reply, which we give verbatim—"Mr. J—n sees no obscurity here, except such as arises from the d—d quantity of commas, which Mr. W—n seems to keep in a pepper-box beside him, for the purpose of dusting all his proofs with."—*Edinburgh Literary Journal.*

CURIOUS LITERARY DISCOVERY.—A very interesting work has lately been discovered, which will excite the attention of all biblical students and divines of every denomination; it is a translation from the original Hebrew manuscript of the book of Jasher, referred to as a work of credit and reputation in holy scripture, first in Joshua x. 13, and again in 2 Sam. i. 18. This book was kept as a memorial of the great events which had happened from the beginning of time, especially to the family and descendants of Abraham, by the Kings of Judah. After the Babylonish captivity, it fell into the possession of the Persian Kings, and was preserved with great care in the city of Gazna; from whence a translation was procured by the great Alcuin, who flourished in the 8th century, at the cost of several bars of gold, presented to those who had the custody of it. He brought this translation to his own country, having employed, with his companions, seven years in pilgrimage, three of which were spent in Gazna, in order to his obtaining this important and interesting work. After his return to England, he was made Abbot of Canterbury, and having lived in the highest honour, died in the year 804, leaving this, with other manuscripts, to his friend, a clergyman in Yorkshire. It appears to have been preserved with religious care for many centuries, until about 100 years since it fell into the hands of a gentleman who certifies that on its cover was the following testimony of our great reformer Wickliffe:—"I have read the book of Jasher twice over, and I much approve of it, as a piece of great antiquity and curiosity, but I cannot consent that it should be made a part of the Canon of Scripture." (Signed Wickliffe.)—This gentleman, who modestly conceals his name, communicated it to a noble lord, who appears to have been high in office, when a rumour prevailed of a new translation of the Bible. His lordship's opinion of it was, that it should be published, as a work of great sincerity, plainness, and truth; and further, his lordship added, "it is my opinion the Book of Jasher ought to have been printed in the Holy Bible before the book of Joshua." From that period this invaluable work has lain concealed, until by an accident it fell into the hands of the present possessor, who proposes to publish it in a way worthy its excel-

lence for truth, antiquity, and evident originality.—*Bristol Journal.*

A CORPORAL'S LOVE.—The following curious letter was lately found amongst the papers of a deceased magistrate:—"Glasgow-barracks, 26th May, 1797.—Honoured Sir, This is to let you know that I, Hugh Galley, corporal in his Grace the Duke of Gordon's regiment, humbly begs of your honour, that he, through your help, might marry Jane McDonald, prisoner in the cells of Glasgow, who was put in through bad company that she unfortunately happened to be in, and brought her to a disgrace by folly—it being her first crime since she was born. Honoured sir, I, your humble servant, will be happy to marry her before your face, if you think that I am in a scheme. Honoured sir, I beg of you, if it will not take place any other way, be so kind as to send for her to your house, and let me marry her there, and confine her back again, and I will be happy to have the pleasure of that same. Honoured sir, be not angry for being so positively, because I am afraid that the regiment will move from the barracks, and that is the reason of it. I can give you a sight of certificates from the parish, that I was brought up. Honoured sir, I trust in my God that you will have pity on me, and the Lord will pay your kindness. Honoured sir, all that I have said to you I hope that your good sense will conceal it from my officers and brother soldiers; not that I see any shame in it, but they would look down on me for ever for marrying any out of the confinement. My good character you may hear in the regiment; thank God that they have nothing to say to me as yet. Honoured sir, I am your humble and most obedient sorrowful servant, till death, Hugh Galley, corporal, North F. Highlanders.—To Mr.—, magistrate in the city of Glasgow."—*Edinburgh Observer.*

SOMNAMBULISM.—A most laughable circumstance occurred on Monday night week, after an auction sale of household furniture, at the village of Great Ousebourne, in this county. The auctioneer and his clerk retired to bed in the same room, leaving some company below, who not so much fatigued as the auctioneer, were regaling themselves and talking over the day's purchases. On a sudden, these worthy wights were alarmed by hearing the auctioneer calling out from above, "a going, a going, a going;" the company went up stairs to ascertain what was to be sold at that hour of the night, when, to their utter astonishment, they found the auctioneer upon his legs in the middle of the room, going through his professional functions with great zest. He was not at all daunted by the presence of the company, but rather encouraged and went on selling the bedding, until he had sold all the cloths of his clerk; and he would have sold the bed from under him, had he not been prevented by the by-standers;—quilts, blankets, sheets, bolsters, and pillows—every thing went in proper order. In endeavouring to prevent him from putting the bed up by auction, he awoke, and found that the pleasure he had been enjoying, in disposing of the goods around him to "the best bidder," was but a dream.—*Leeds Intelligencer.*

SINGULAR DISCOVERY. Mr. Horton, a gentleman who has been engaged in boring for water in Providence, has presented to the public some remarkable results. In his second experiment in boring, he selected the extreme point of a wharf, many yards from the original land. He bored through the artificial soil—then through a stratum of mud—then through bog meadow, containing good peat—then through sand, pebbles and quartz gravel. At this point water, impregnated with copperas and arsenic, broke forth, but determining to proceed farther, Mr. Horton next struck a vine yard and drew up vines, grapes, grape seed, leaves, acorns, hazel nuts, pine burs, and the seeds of unknown fruits, together with pure water. This was 35 feet below the bed of the river.—*Boston Palladium.*

There is a widow of the name of Ann Rowbottom, of Dakenfield, 80 years of age, who is cutting five teeth on the lower jaw! She frequently complains of the pain which is attendant on cutting teeth.—*Stockport Advertiser.*

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