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HOME AND FRIENDS.

Oh, there's a power to make each hour
As sweet as heaven designed it;
Nor need we roam to bring it home,
Though few there be who find it!
We seek too high for things close by,
And lose what nature found us;
For life has here no charms so dear
As Home and Friends around us!

We oft destroy the present joy
For future hopes and praise them;
Whilst flowers as sweet bloom at our feet,
If we'd but stoop to raise them!
For things afar still sweeter are,
When youth's bright spell hath bound us;
But soon we're taught that earth has naught
Like Home and Friends around us.

The Friends that speed in time of need,
When Hope's last reed is shaken,
To show us still, that come what will,
We are not quite forsaken.
Though all were nigh—if but the light
From Friendship's altar crowned us,
'T would prove the bliss of earth was this—
Our Home and Friends around us!

PERSECUTION OF THE HUGUENOTS.

France has had her moral, as well as her military heroes. Some of the finest specimens of character which the world has produced were found among the Huguenots, who sacrificed every earthly advantage for the cause of religion. In the second volume of his history of England, Macaulay has occasion to describe the persecution which was raised against them by Louis XIV., before which they fled as exiles to different parts of Europe, Africa and America. France has paid dearly for the loss of those true-hearted Christians, whom her haughty Government drove from their homes. Had their influence been preserved to her, the complexion of her history would have been different, and perhaps she might have been saved from that "baptism of blood" through which, in modern times, it has been her destiny to pass.

The long and heroic struggle which the Huguenots had maintained against the Government had been brought to a final close by the ability and vigour of Richelieu. That great statesman vanquished them; but he confirmed to them the liberty of conscience which had been bestowed on them by the edict of Nantes. They were suffered, under some restraints of no galling kind, to worship God according to their own ritual, and to write in defence of their own doctrine. They were admissible to political and military employment; nor did their heresy, during a considerable time, practically impede their rise in the world. Some of them commanded the armies of the State, and others presided over important departments of the civil administration. At length, a change took place. Louis the Fourteenth had, from an early age, regarded the Calvinists with an aversion at once religious and political. As a zealous Roman Catholic, he detested their theological dogmas. As a prince, fond of arbitrary power, he detested those republican theories which were intermingled with the Genevese divinity. He gradually retrenched all the privileges which the schismatics enjoyed. He interfered with the education of Protestant children, confiscated property bequeathed to Protestant consistories, and on frivolous pretences shut up Protestant churches. The Protestant ministers were harassed by the tax-gatherers. The Protestant magistrates were deprived of the honor of nobility. The Protestant officers of the royal household were informed that his majesty dispensed with their services. Orders were given that no Protestant should be ad-

mitted into the legal profession. The oppressed sect showed some faint signs of that spirit which, in the preceding century, had bidden defiance to the whole power of the house of Valois. Massacres and executions followed. Dragoons were quartered in the towns where the heretics were numerous, and in the country seats of the heretic gentry; and the cruelty and licentiousness of these rude missionaries were sanctioned or leniently censured by the Government. Still, however, the Edict of Nantes, though practically violated in its most essential provisions, had not been formally rescinded; and the king repeatedly declared, in solemn public acts, that he was resolved to maintain it. But the bigots and flatterers who had his ear gave him advice which he was but too willing to take. They represented to him that his rigorous policy had been eminently successful; that little or no resistance had been made to his will; that thousands of Huguenots had already been converted; that, if he would take the one decisive step which yet remained, those who were still obstinate would speedily submit, France would be purged from the taint of heresy, and her prince would have earned a heavenly crown not less glorious than that of Saint Louis. These arguments prevailed. The final blow was struck. The Edict of Nantes was revoked; and a crowd of decrees against the sectaries appeared in rapid succession. Boys and girls were torn from their parents, and sent to be educated in convents. All Calvinistic ministers were commanded either to abjure their religion, or to quit their country within a fortnight. The other professors of the Reformed faith were forbidden to leave the kingdom; and, in order to prevent them from making their escape, the out-ports and frontiers were strictly guarded. It was thought that the flocks thus separated from the evil shepherds, would soon return to the true fold; but, in spite of all the vigilance of the military police, there was a vast emigration. It was calculated that, in a few months, fifty thousand families quitted France forever. Nor were the refugees such as a country can well spare. They were generally persons of intelligent minds, of industrious habits, and of austere morals. In the list are to be found names eminent in war, in science, in literature, and in art. Some of the exiles offered their swords to William of Orange, and distinguished themselves by the fury with which they fought against their persecutor. Others avenged themselves with weapons still more formidable, and, by means of the presses of Holland, England, and Germany, inflamed, during thirty years, the public mind of Europe against the French Government. A more peaceful class erected silk manufactories in the eastern suburbs of London. One detachment of emigrants taught the Saxons to make the stuffs and hats of which France had hitherto enjoyed a monopoly. Another planted the first vines in the neighbourhood of the Cape of Good Hope.

In ordinary circumstances the Courts of Spain and of Rome would have eagerly applauded a prince who had made vigorous war on heresy; but such was the hatred inspired by the injustice and haughtiness of Louis, that, when he became a persecutor, the courts of Spain and Rome took the side of religious liberty, and loudly reprobated the cruelty of turning a savage and licentious soldiery loose on an unoffending people. One cry of grief and rage rose from the whole of Protestant Europe. The tidings of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes reached England about a week before the day to which the Parliament stood adjourned. It was clear, then, that the spirit of Gardiner and of Alva was still the spirit of the Roman Catholic church. Louis was not

inferior to James in generosity and humanity, and was certainly far superior to James in all the abilities and acquirements of a statesman. Louis had, like James, repeatedly promised to respect the privileges of his Protestant subjects; yet Louis was now avowedly a persecutor of the Reformed religion. What reason was there, then, to doubt, that James waited only for an opportunity to follow the example? He was already forming, in defiance of the law, a military force, officered to a great extent by Roman Catholics. Was there anything unreasonable in the apprehension that this force might be employed to do what the French Dragoons had done?

James was almost as much disturbed as his subjects by the conduct of the court of Versailles. In truth, that court had acted as if it had meant to embarrass and annoy him. He was about to ask from a Protestant Legislature a full toleration for Roman Catholics. Nothing, therefore, could be more unwelcome to him than the intelligence that, in a neighbouring country, toleration had just been withdrawn by a Roman Catholic government from Protestants. His vexation was increased by a speech which the bishop of Valence, in the name of the Gallican clergy, addressed at this time to Louis the Fourteenth. The pious sovereign of England, the orator said, looked to the most Christian king, the eldest son of the church, for support against a heretical nation. It was remarked that the members of the House of Commons showed particular anxiety to procure copies of the harangue, and that it was read by all Englishmen with indignation and alarm. James was desirous to counteract the impression which these things had made, and was, also, at that moment, by no means unwilling to let all Europe see that he was not the slave of France. He, therefore, declared publicly that he disapproved of the manner in which the Huguenots had been treated, granted to the exiles some relief from his privy purse, and, by letters under his great seal, invited his subjects to imitate his liberality. In a very few months it became clear that all this compassion was simulated merely for the purpose of cajoling his Parliament; that he regarded the refugees with mortal hatred, and that he regretted nothing so much as his own inability to do what Louis had done.

IDIOCY.

One of the most valuable documents which has been published for sometime, says the Boston Traveller, is Dr. Howe's Report upon Idiocy. It makes a pamphlet of nearly 151 pages, and abounds with facts and statements which are worthy of all consideration. In 1846, commissioners were appointed by an act of the Massachusetts Legislature, to inquire into the condition of the Idiots of the Commonwealth, to ascertain their number and whether anything could be done in their behalf. The report now before us contains the results of this commission. By diligent inquiries in nearly one hundred towns in the State, the commissioners have ascertained and examined the condition of 574 helpless and hopeless Idiots; and on the basis of these enquiries, the opinion is expressed that there are over 1300 in the entire State of Massachusetts, in various stages of idiocy. The commissioners, personally, or by a competent agent, minutely examined the condition of over 400 of these unfortunate beings, and in their report furnish a series of tables, occupying 46 pages, which exhibit the age, the physical and mental condition of these poor creatures, and a mass of facts respecting the causes of idiocy and the proper method of dealing with idiots, for which the Commonwealth and the world at large owe these gentlemen a debt of gratitude. The picture of degradation, wretchedness and

misery which the details of this report present, is perfectly overwhelming. It is enough to move the hearts of the most callous and to stir the very soul of humanity to exertion.—The improvement made by the commissioners of the facts developed by their investigations is thus set forth:

'The moral to be drawn from the existence of the individual idiots is this—he, or his parents, have so far violated the natural laws, so far marred the beautiful organism of the body, that it is an unfit instrument for the manifestation of the powers of the soul. The moral to be drawn from the prevalent existence of idiocy in society, is, that a very large class of persons ignore the conditions upon which alone health and reason are given to men, and consequently they sin in various ways; they disregard the conditions which should be observed in intermarriage; they overlook the hereditary transmission of certain morbid tendencies, as they pervert the natural appetites of the body into lusts of divers kinds,—the natural emotions of the mind into fearful passions, and thus bring down the awful consequences of their own ignorance and sin upon the heads of their unoffending children.

'Idiocy is found in all civilized countries, but it is not an evil necessarily inherent in society; it is not an accident; and much less is it a special dispensation of Providence; to suppose it can be so, is an insult to the Majesty of Heaven. No! It is merely the result of a violation of natural laws which are simple, clear, and beautiful; which require only to be seen and known, in order to be loved; and which, if strictly observed for two or three generations, would totally remove from any family, however strongly predisposed to insanity or idiocy, all possibility of its recurrence.'

An interesting and important part of this report relates to the improvement—moral, intellectual and physical—of which idiots, even the most degraded and brutal, are susceptible. Facts are detailed respecting schools which have been established in Europe for the instruction of this wretched class of our fellow creatures, which show conclusively that the most helpless and wretched of idiots may be greatly improved in their physical condition, and, comparatively speaking, elevated morally and intellectually.

A SIMPLE INCIDENT.

A poor man (at Hamburg) was to be buried: four men bore the coffin, and the wife followed. They had some difficulty in passing through the narrow lane; the way was straight; not a sunbeam found its way down here,—it was only when they emerged into the broader streets, that the sun-light fell on the humble coffin. I heard a story about this funeral, which is as poetically touching as it is true. Within this narrow street, high up in an equally narrow chamber, lay this poor corpse. The wife sat and wept over it; she knew of no expedient to get it buried—she had no means. The window stood open, when a canary-bird flew into the room and settled by the head of the corpse, where it began to sing;—it made a strange impression on the woman; she could weep no longer, for she imagined it must have come down to her from the Lord. The bird was tame; it allowed itself to be caught directly; and she related the circumstance to a neighbour, and showed her the bird, the woman remembered that she had shortly before read an advertisement in the newspaper about a canary-bird that had flown away from its home. It was the same bird; and the woman, on restoring it to its owners, found there humane hearts, who rendered her such assistance as enabled her to bury the dead.—*Rambles in the Hartz Mountains, by H. C. Anderson.*