

CHRISTIAN



VISITOR.

A Family Newspaper: devoted to

Religious & General Intelligence

REV. E. D. VERY,

"BY PURENESS, BY KNOWLEDGE—BY LOVE UNFEIGNED."—ST. PAUL.

EDITOR.

Volume V.

SAINT JOHN, NEW-BRUNSWICK, FRIDAY, MAY 28, 1852.

Number 19.

THE SPRING.

MAY.—The month has opened beautifully with its bright sunlight, its greening grass, its bursting buds, and the carol of its birds, but to some it speaks "a voice of sadness" to whom these lines of BRYANT will come with tearful expression:

The May sun sheds an amber light
On new leaved woods and lawns between;
But she who, with a smile more bright,
Welcomed and watched the springing green,
Is in her grave,
Low in her grave.

The fair white blossoms of the wood
In groups beside the pathway stand;
But one, the gentle and the good,
Who cropped them with a fairer hand,
Is in her grave,
Low in her grave.

Upon the woodland's morning airs
The small birds' mingled notes are flung;
But she whose voice, more sweet than theirs,
Once bade me listen while they sung,
Is in her grave,
Low in her grave.

The music of the early year
Brings tears of anguish to my eyes;
My heart aches when the flowers appear,
For then I think of her who lies
Within the grave,
Low in the grave.

EMERSON'S LECTURE ON GREAT BRITAIN.

(From the Montreal Herald.)

Mr. Emerson had an excellent audience on Monday night, consisting of between five or six hundred persons of the *elite* of our society. He commenced his lecture by a compliment to the antiquity and present importance of the city he was in, and then mentioned that the lecture he had been asked to deliver was one he had already read before at Boston and New York on his return from England, and one which, prepared for an American audience, was in some respects less fitted for an audience forming part of the British Empire. He then took for a kind of text the question what it was which made England what she was, the most successful country in the world—where you got the best knives and forks, the best magnifying glasses, saw the best machine shops, hammers that could crack an egg without smashing it, or flatten a mass of iron into a plate—the country of all useful inventions—which was giving its language and laws to the majority of the human race—where on every side the traveler saw triumph of labour—where nothing was left as it was made—where the fields looked as if traced with a pencil instead of cut with a plough—that England in fact, which was at once a huge mill, a vast hotel, and a Palais Royal for all sorts of things that a man might require—cushioned, comfortable, and perfect from one end to the other! One answer to this was to be found partly in the exclamation of W. S. Landor—who would live in a new country when he could live in an old! The conveniences of old countries, especially of old cities no familiarity could exhaust. The accumulated riches of all past ages were yielded to each individual. There were in London Saxon arches, Norman windows, Medieval doors. The Tower of London was built by Julius Cæsar; Westminster Abbey by the Churchmen; Palaces by Inigo Jones; the Post Office and the Docks—an accumulation of accommodation which the wealth of Europe could not purchase, but the use and enjoyment of which was engaged by a traveller for his trifling subscription. Everything was the most excellent in its kind. In

London Rothschild and Baring were your bankers; Dollond and Troughton made your mathematical instruments; Broadwood your pianos; Faraday and Airey delivered your lectures; in Parliament Russell, Peel and D'Israeli made the speeches; Wellington was at the head of the military; Turner and Landseer painted for you; Dickens and Thackeray wrote for you; Rachael and Macready played for you; Jenny Lind and Sontag sang for you; Taglioni and Cerito danced for you; and Soyer was your cook. Then England had the best working climate in the world. You can go out every day in the year, and work every day in the year; but Ireland enjoyed the same climate—therefore, there seemed to be something in race. It must be held that the Britons and Saxons made a good cross.—Thus Englishmen had vigor of the inward and outward man. Natives of other countries looked slight and undersized by the side of them. One hundred taken at random in the street, would weigh more by one quarter than one hundred Americans; yet the skeleton was not bigger. They were, however, in better case—round, ruddy and handsome. The American traveller in England found himself among his grandfathers and grandmothers—the very people, whose pictures he had been used to see at home, of the ancestors of his family, over the mantel pieces. The dresses, too, were the same. The gentlemen in the railway carriages looked as if they had built up houses of buckram all round them, and they spoke as if they were speaking out of the window. The women, too, were not any of your tall figures with floating drapery round them; yet both sexes were handsome, as they had been for ages. For, to-day the men had the very air of the cross-legged crusaders who were seen on the tombs in the cathedrals.—The old men preserved their youthful appearance; they were ruddy and strong. They had all what they valued most in their horses, mettle and bottom; and a gentleman, describing Lord Clarendon to him, said of him—"He has pluck like a cock; he will fight till he dies." Every body had this pluck. The gentlemen had it; the merchants had it; the women had it; the bishops had it; the newspapers had it. The *Times* was said to be the pluckiest thing in the world; and Lord John Russell was represented to be willing to take charge of the channel fleet. When he was in England, the times were not very satisfactory as to commercial security; but one thing was plain—let who would fall, England would not. The traveller formed this conviction—"These people have sat here a thousand years, and here they will continue to sit." They will not break out into any strange desperate revolution like their neighbors across the channel, for they have continence as they have energy. On this side the Atlantic people thought they lived in a growing country, and that England had done long ago; but England was growing still. Birkenhead increased as fast as South Boston or Brooklyn; the towns of Lancashire would soon touch each other; and London was filling up Middlesex.

Speaking of the great faculty of the Englishman for minding his own business, Mr. Emerson said:—Each man showed an entire neglect of every other—each was, acted, and suffered without the smallest reference to any one else; only he was very careful not to annoy any one else. He knew no country where eccentricity was so completely unnoticed.—A man wore on his head a wig, or a shawl, or a hat, or he stood on his head and no remark was made upon it. In public a stranger would think him deaf; his eyes never wandered from his table, or his newspaper; and it seemed a kind of offence to look a man in the face till he was introduced to you; but the introduc-

tion had all the validity of a contract, obliging to reciprocal duties. Even to give a man your private address on a card was a token of friendship.

It was certain that an Englishman had a confidence in the power and performance of his nation, which made him provokingly incurious about other nations. When they saw a handsome foreigner they said he looked like an Englishman, and if they offered a foreigner any delicacy or showed him any very exquisite piece of workmanship, they asked if the people in his country had anything like it. At the same time there was no pride so easily forgiven, or so much respected because so well founded. The Englishman was proud but he was admirable—he knew all things; and he could do all things.

Another cause of England being what she was, was the existence of a model class, fostered from the earliest period of her history, having the means of the best education to develop its advantages. This class seemed to gain as much as it lost by its position. It surveyed society, as it were, from the top of St. Paul's, and if it never heard plain truth as poorer people did, it saw the best of all things everywhere, and was so placed as easily to infer the sum and genius of them instead of tedious particulars. The good behaviour of this class deserved all its fame, and it was inevitable that it exercised a great influence on the character of the state. This class indeed furnished the best models to England and to the world. From this came the fact that the English tried in their schools rather to turn out gentlemen than scholars or masters in the several branches. There was, however, much of the culture thus stimulated that would not bear analysis; for it was too material, and rested too much on wealth; on the knowledge of boxing, boating, shooting, dogs and horses. With all this there was a carefulness and fastidiousness about trifles which caused the neglect of other things of more importance.

Manly exercises were followed from youth by the Englishman. He was so much on horseback as to be a centaur, and cricket and boating were the common sports of lads.—These things of course gave them vigour of body. Even the habit of betting did good as it produced an accuracy of knowledge about common things not met with elsewhere.—"Which is the longest," an Englishman would say, "the Mississippi or Missouri?" "Oh," an American would reply, "I don't know; they are about the same length." "That won't do," would be the response, "I've got a bet on it."

The great boast of the English was what would be called in steel their temper. They took a good working edge. St. George was not so much their representative as Alfred the working king, and England had many such. William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester, was one who by steady practical talent, sound judgment and a certain humble magnanimity, contrived to build roads and causeways, to erect Winchester Cathedral, to found Winchester School, and to endow Winchester College. When he was at Oxford, he was shown over by that College and over every portal was engraved the device of William—"Manners maketh the man." Amongst other foundations was one at St. Cross, by which William provided that every human creature for ever who asked should have a cup of beer and a piece of bread. When he was at Winchester, he knocked at the door and found by his horn of beer and piece of bread, that William of Wykeham Wood held good five hundred years after his decease. The Duke of Wellington in this respect was justly looked on as the type of the English character—that character clenched every nail it drove, undertook nothing

but what it accomplished never mind at what pains. In England the leather took seven years to tan. At Rodgers' in Sheffield they told him there was no luck in making good steel, that every knife in the hundred or thousand was equally well tempered. Tenacity was the element of their success. Herschel was another good example of this. For four years he buried himself in the wilds of Africa, then returned to labour for eight years in preparing his observations for publication, and that being done they would not be useful for thirty years more; but at the end of that time they would be precious.

This tenacity, which may sometimes become obstinacy, is yet a necessary ingredient in manly character. A good specimen of it was afforded, when a great French minister came to England in exile. He was proposed as a member of a distinguished club and blackballed. Perhaps this would not have taken place under the circumstances, elsewhere; but some one remembered what he had read in his newspaper long before, and he acted accordingly.

It was common to contrast Englishmen with their descendants abroad; but he did not think the Englishmen could be quite just to Americans; for they were annoyed with a number of small habits which the Americans gave themselves no trouble about, and did not see that the American facility was in fact their own self-reliance under different circumstances.—The American was indeed related to the future; the Englishman mortgaged to the past.

He was aware there was a dark side of the picture—that the determination of the national mind of England on wealth had a tendency to develop pauperism; and that the well fed and well educated bodies were attended by the poor neglected, deformed skeletons—that there were two Englands—rich Norman, Saxon, social England, and poor Celtic, drudging Chartist England. He mentioned the fact only and it was important to state it. Another effect of this determination of the national mind was to limit every success to material success. The English had no more poetry than Platoism. They were good at paragraph writing; understood conversation made up of men and manners; were full of information as to facts; and appreciated the House of Commons' mixture of good sense and joking; but they have no ideal; no faith like Kepler and Euler, that experience must follow the natural law, not the law experience—no political belief like that of Milton and Hooker. It would perhaps not be admitted among Englishmen; but it was generally thought on this side the Atlantic, that books of larger scope, like those of Coleridge and Southey, were not appreciated in England till they had come across the Atlantic.

Notwithstanding these deductions, he found the English benign, gentle, hospitable, with great respect for truth and love of mankind, and this throughout society. An eminent American merchant known throughout the world, said to him, "I have lived here for thirty years, and no man attempted to cheat me." Looking in the faces of the Members of Parliament, you came to the conclusion that they were men who wished to do right. Properly introduced, he did not think there was in the world such sincerity and truth, as in English hospitality; and they were as gentle and peaceful as they were brave and magnanimous. At Oxford, among 1200 of the most spirited young men, a duel was unknown. England then was what she was, first, because of her multitudes and antiquity; second, on account of her working climate; thirdly, on account of her superior class; and lastly, on account of the tenacity and high moral qualities of the people.

The above is but a hasty and imperfect sketch of the leading points of the lecture.