

## THE SLEEPING CHILD.

(From the German.)

Soft lulled by gentle mother—  
With sweetest lullaby—  
Her boy will have none other—  
She only must sit nigh.

How knows that drowsy baby—  
Who guards him while he sleeps—  
As from his pillow may be  
With half shut eyes he peeps?

No sorrows can he number—  
Soft breathing, rosy boy—  
How calm the happy slumber  
Safe rocked by love and joy!

F. J. M.

## A DAY AT THE MUSEUM READING ROOM.

One of the genuine "sights" of the Metropolis, and the one most certain to please and astonish strangers, is the great Reading Rotunda, devised by the clever Italian director whose bust looks down from over the entrance door. The visitor suddenly introduced can hardly conceal his wonder and gratification as he gazes round at the enormous chamber, so lofty, airy and vast; so still, and yet so crowded; so comfortable and warm, like any private library. In the centre is seen the raised circular enclosure, where the officials and directors sit and carry on the business of the room, commanding a good and perfect view of all that goes on, while from it radiate the desks, where readers or writers—for there are far more of the latter than of the former—sit and work. The reader's desk is almost too luxurious. Nothing more complete or thoughtfully devised could be conceived. There is a choice of three kinds of chairs; stuffed leathers, cane-bottomed, and highly polished mahogany; so the most *difficile* as to this nice matter may suit themselves. Below, there is a place for "stowing away" the hat; in front to the right, the reader lets down a small-padded shelf, on which he can put away his books for consultation; to the left, a book-stand comes out, ingeniously contrived to move in any direction on a swivel or axis, to rise or fall at any angle, with a rack. In the centre is an inkstand, with a steel pen and two quills; there is also a paper-cutter, a blotting-pad, and a heavy press-weight to keep the book open. Surely this is all *de luxe*, and many a scribbling being is not nearly so well provided at home. Further, there are little hardy book-cases standing apart, filled with reference indexes to reviews and magazines—with that wonderful one to the *Times*, which the industrious Samuel Palmer slaves at untiringly, working his way at double tides, backwards as well as forwards, through the old as well as through the current numbers. I have noticed this patient workman and his assistant at their drudging but useful work. The next step is to consult the catalogue—a library in itself, whose folios are disposed on two deep shelves near the ground, and fitted into the circular enclosure or table which forms the central ring. Here is the whole alphabet, as found disposed in nearly six hundred MS. folio volumes, bound in whole purple calf, and yet being perpetually re-bound, the corners being tipped with metal to protect them against wear and tear. A careful examination of the catalogue would of itself result in many curiosities. The authors rejoicing in the name of Smith fill three or four of the folio volumes. Popular writers or classical fill half a volume, or innumerable pages as the case may be. England has a couple of volumes to itself, in which we find all the kings in their order, and all that concerns each. So with France. Periodical publications, "P. P." in the notation have quite a catalogue of their own. All these and more are here found gathered together to the number of some twenty volumes or so. They are ordered alphabetically according to cities—Antwerp, Berlin, Calcutta, &c.; the Antwerp magazines and journals being again put alphabetically. To help those who know a magazine by its name but not its country, a general index in some fresh volumes is given. London, however, has a set of volumes to itself. There is also a wonderful music catalogue, extending to some thirty or forty folio volumes, and a marvellous so-called "catalogue" of the prints which has now reached to four or five volumes arranged chronologically. The museum reader is a special type. Certainly three-fourths are genuine workers—book-makers, copyists. One is amazed at the bodman-like patience and diligence shown—especially in the wearisome duties of collating, carried on with an unflinching conscientiousness by some wizened Dryasdust, who comes week after week, and goes through the great folio line by line. There are fair "damozels" who work like any copying-clerks, and whose appearance is antagonistic to their drudgery. They have a volume of old letters before them, which they copy out fair for some literary man who has cash and position. Every year the crowd of readers increases, while the Reading Room, in spite of rearrangement, remains pretty much the same after twenty years or so. When all the scholars of the new schools and universities are in full work, the pressure will become serious. Yet, there can never be found any real remedy; and no room of whatever size, could be found sufficient to hold the "readers of the nation." There are a few desks set apart, like compartments in a railway train, "for ladies only," and one of the standing seats of the place—perfectly supported, too, by experience—is, that these are left solitary and unattended. Now, I believe, books are

seldom stolen; indeed, a Museum book is so ingeniously stamped on the title page and on certain pages that it becomes worthless for other purposes, and cannot be offered for sale without certain detection. Every print in every volume is thus stamped—it may be conceived what a labour this must be, in these days of copious illustrations. Without this precaution, they would to a certainty be cut out. Such is the best specimen in the world of "Reading made easy;" by every kind of convenience and unbounded courtesy extended with prodigality even to the working literary man, as no one so well as the present writer can testify.—*Belgravia*.

## THE BEWITCHED CLOCK.

At about half-past eleven o'clock one Sunday night, a huge man, dressed in blue broadcloth, might have been seen entering Deacon Barber's kitchen window, in Appleton, in the State of Maine. It was Joe Mayweed who had thus burglariously made his way into the deacon's kitchen.

"Wonder how much the old deacon made by orderin' me not to darken his door again?" soliloquised the young gentleman. "Promised him I wouldn't, but didn't say nothing about winders. Winders is just as good as doors, if their ain't no nails to tear your trousers onto. Wonder of Sally will come down? The critter promised me. It's cold enough to freeze a Polish bear. Oh, here comes Sally."

The beautiful maiden then descended with a pleasant smile, a tallow candle, and a box of lucifer matches. After receiving a rapturous greeting she made a rousing fire in the cooking stove, and the happy couple sat down to enjoy the sweet interchanges of hopes and vows, when they were startled by the old deacon, Sally's father, shouting from his chamber door—

"Sally, what are you getting up in the middle of the night for?"

"Tell him it is almost morning," whispered Joe.

"I cannot tell a fib," replied Sally. "I'll make it the truth, then," said Joe, and running to the large old-fashioned clock, he set it at five.

"Tell me what time it is," cried the old gentleman.

"It's five by the clock," replied Sally, and, immediately corroborating her words, the clock struck five.

The lovers sat down again and resumed their conversation. Suddenly the staircase began to creak.

"Good gracious! father's coming down," said Sally.

"The deacon," cried Joe. "Hide me, Sally."

"Where can I hide you?" cried the distracted girl.

"Oh, I know," said he. "I'll squeeze into the clock case."

And, without a word, he concealed himself in the case, and then closed the door.

The deacon was dressed, and, seating himself, pulled out his pipe, lighted it, and began to smoke.

"Five o'clock, eh," said he. "Well, I shall have time to smoke a few pipes and then I'll feed the critters."

"Hadn't you better feed the critters first?" suggested the doubtful Sally.

"No, smokin' clears my head and wakes me up," replied the deacon, not a whit disposed to hurry.

Bur-r-r, whiz, ding! ding! ding! went the old clock.

"Well," exclaimed the deacon, starting up and laying his pipe on the stove, "what on 'arth is that?"

"It's only the clock striking five," replied Sally tremulously.

"Whiz, ding! ding! went the old clock furiously.

"Powers of creation!" cried the deacon, "striking five, eh! It has struck over one hundred already."

"Deacon Barber," cried the deacon's better half, who had hastily robed herself, and now came plunging down the staircase in the wildest state of alarm. "what in the universe is the matter with that clock?"

"Goodness only knows!" replied the old man. "It's been a hundred years in the family and never acted so before."

Whiz! ding! ding! whiz! went the old clock again.

"It'll burst itself," cried the deacon, who retained a leaven of good old New England superstition in his nature.

"And now," said he after a pause, advancing towards the clock, "I'll see what is going on in it."

"Oh, don't!" cried his daughter, seizing one of his coat tails, while his wife clung to the other.

"Don't," chorused both the women.

"Let go my raiment," shouted the deacon.

"I ain't afraid of the powers of darkness."

But the women wouldn't let go, so the deacon slipped out of his coat; and while, from the sudden cessation of resistance, they fell heavily to the floor, he pitched forward and grabbed the knob of the door. But no human power could open it, for Joe was holding it from the inside with a d ad grip.

The old deacon began to be dreadfully frightened. He gave one more tug, when an unearthly yell, as of a fiend in distress, burst from the inside; then the clock-case pitched head foremost at the deacon, fell headlong on the floor, smashed its face, and wrecked its fair proportions,

The current of air extinguished the candle. The deacon, the old lady, and Sally fled upstairs, and Joe Mayweed extricated himself from the clock, and effected his escape by the way he entered.

The next day all Appleton was alive with the story that Dean Barber's clock had been bewitched, and while many believed this version, yet some, especially Joe Mayweed affected to discredit the whole affair, and stated that the deacon had tried the experiment of tasting an early dram, and that the vagaries of the clock only existed in his imagination. However, the interdict being taken off, Joe was allowed to resume his courting, and won the assent of the old people to his union with Sally, by repairing the old clock, till it went as well as ever it did.

## THE RIGHT MAN BUT THE WRONG MURDER.

Gilles Menage, who became distinguished as a man of letters, was born in the year 1613, at Angiers, where his father was king's advocate. In the early part of his life he practised as a lawyer; but he left the profession of the law in order to devote himself the more entirely to literary pursuits, and entered the Church. Whilst practising at the bar he was engaged as counsel in the following curious trial: A country priest, of a notoriously bad character, had a dispute about money-matters with the tax-collector of the district, who soon afterwards disappeared, when a strong suspicion arose that the priest had murdered him. About the same time, a man was executed for highway robbery, and his body was gibbeted in chains by the roadside, as was then the custom. The friends of the highwayman came one night and took his body down, so that they might bury it; but, being disturbed whilst engaged in their unpleasant task, threw the body into a pond near the priest's residence. Shortly after, some men in dragging the pond for fish, brought up the body in their nets, and it was immediately said to be the body of the tax-collector, and the finger of suspicion was pointed at the priest, who was arrested, tried and condemned. He most solemnly protested his innocence, but when the day of the execution arrived, he admitted that he had murdered the missing man. "But, nevertheless," said he, "I am unjustly condemned, for the tax-collector's body, with that of his dog, still lies buried in my garden, where I killed them both." Search was immediately made, when the bodies of the man and dog were found in the place described; and inquiries brought to light the secret of the body found in the pond.

## A SHARP YOUNG LADY.

During the last administration of Mr. Gladstone a clever Conservative composed the following acrostic:

G was the great man, mountain of mind;  
L a logician, expert and refined;  
A was an adept in rhetoric's art;  
D was the dark spot he had in his heart;  
S was the sophistry led him astray;  
T was the truth that he bartered away;  
O was the opher his conscience became;  
N the new light that enlightened the same;  
E was the Evil One, shouting for joy;  
At it, and down with it, Gladstone, my boy!"

This acrostic was repeated in a drawing-room in the presence of a young lady of Liberal principles, and the daughter of a well-known Liberal member of Parliament, who, without leaving the room, went to a table and wrote this answer to it:—

G is the genius that governs the nation;  
L are the lords who require education;  
A is the animus raised by the great;  
D are the donkeys who fear for the State;  
S is the standard that Liberals raise;  
T are the Tories who howl in dispraise;  
O's opposition, wanting a head;  
N is the nation, not driven, but led;  
E is Old England, shouting for joy;  
Stick to the Government, Gladstone, my boy!"

## THE AESTHETIC CARNIVAL.

The children's carnival at the Victoria Rink on Friday last was more successful than "aesthetic," the aesthetes, correctly speaking, being really in a minority. Still there were many charming costumes of the Kate Greenaway type, and "Patience," of course, found material for arraying several of the characters. On the whole, it must be confessed, the Philistines had the best of it, though the line is perhaps a little hard to draw, and some of the best costumes were on the border land "between here and yonder." The decorations were very tasteful, and thanks are due to the members of the ladies' committee who had spent so much labour upon them, and may be congratulated upon the highly satisfactory result. The names of the ladies were as follows: Mesdames F. W. Henshaw, Cross, C. G. Geddes, H. R. Ives, H. C. Scott, S. Bethune, Wheeler, Buckland, C. P. Davidson, Frank Bond, E. S. Clouston, P. S. Stevenson, Milburn, Sise. Misses Scott, Angus, Ives, A. Abbott, MacDougall, Wheeler, Rhynas, F. Ferrier, Millar, Amy Hamilton, Gillespie, Muir.

In the directors' gallery the aesthetic spirit was prevalent, and the sunflower badges and Turkish rugs made up the element of too-tooness, which was in a sense deficient below. It is satisfactory to learn that the financial aspect of the affair was most satisfactory, the receipts being many times those of last year.

## EFFECTS OF ADVERTISING.

"I can't see it," said Buffer. "Nobody reads all these little advertisements: It's preposterous to think it."

"But," said the editor, "you read what interests you?" And Buffer said "Yes."

"And if there's anything that you particularly want, you look for it!"

"Certainly!"

"Well, among the thousands upon thousands who help to make up this busy world of ours, everything that is printed is read. Sneer as you please, I do assure you that printer's ink is the 'Open sesame' to all business success."

And still Buffer did not see it. He didn't believe that one-half of those crowded advertisements were ever read.

"Suppose you try the experiment," said the editor. "Just slip in an advertisement of the want of one of the commonest things in the world. For the sake of the test I will give it two insertions free. Two will be enough, and you may have it jammed into any out-of-the-way nook of my paper you shall select. Two insertions of only two lines. Will you try it?"

Buffer said of course he would try it, and he selected the place where he would have it published, crowded in under the head of "Wants," and he waited and saw the proof of his advertisement, which appeared as follows: "Wanted, a good House Dog.—Apply to J. Buffer, 575 Towzer Street, between the hours of 6 and 9 p.m." Buffer went away smiling and nodding. On the following morning he opened his paper, and, after a deal of hunting, he found his advertisement. At first it did not seem at all conspicuous. Certainly so insignificant a paragraph, buried in such a wilderness of paragraphs, could not attract notice. After a time, however, it began to look more noticeable to him. The more he looked at it the plainer it grew, finally it glared at him from the closely-printed page. But that was because he was the person particularly interested—of course it would appear conspicuous to him; but it would not be so with others. That evening Mr. Buffer was just sitting down to tea (Buffer was a plain old-fashioned man, and took tea at six), when the door-bell was rung. The servant announced that a man was at the door with a dog to sell.

"Tell him I don't want one."

Six times Buffer was interrupted while taking tea by men with dogs to sell. Buffer was a man who would not lie. He had put his foot into it, and he must take it out manfully. The twenty-third applicant was a small boy with a girl in company, who had a ragged poodle for sale. Buffer bought the poodle off the boy, and immediately presented it to the girl, and then sent them off. To the next applicant he was able truthfully to say, "Don't want any more. I've bought one." The stream of callers continued until nearly ten o'clock, at which hour Buffer locked up and turned off the gas. On the following evening, as Buffer approached his house, he found a crowd assembled. He counted 39 men and boys. There were dogs of every grade, size, and colour, and growl and howl. Buffer addressed the motley multitude, telling them that he had bought a dog.

"Then what d'yer advertise for?"

And Buffer got his hat knocked over his eyes before he reached the sanctuary of his home. Never mind about the trials and tribulations of that night. Buffer had no idea that there were so many dogs in existence. With the aid of three policemen he got through alive. On the next morning he visited his friend the editor, and acknowledged the corn. The advertisement "Wanted" was taken out, and in the most conspicuous place, and in glaring type, he advertised that he did not want any more dogs. And for this advertisement he paid. Then he went home, and pasted upon the door, "Gone into the country." Then he hired a special policeman to guard his property. From that day J. Buffer has never been heard to express doubts concerning the efficacy of printer's ink, neither has he asked "Who reads advertisements?"

## HEARTH AND HOME.

KNOW THY WORK.—Blessed is the man who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness. Know thy work and do it; and work at it like Hercules. One monster there is in the world—the idle man.

OLD AGE.—We would not have old age otherwise than old-fashioned. We are unwilling to take issue with our aged friend on a punctilio of dress or economy. He may write with a quill pen, and cling to his dress coat for morning wear, as well as his stock and the old style shirt collar. We will find him none the less charming in antiquated dress, and with manners that re the fruit and incense of a past generation. In this ripe old age, when the fire has gone out of the heart, though the head is frosted over, its happy possessor "with useful fancy re-inspired,"

"May hold converse with all forms  
Of the many-sided mind,"

and be the youngest person at the fireside. But an old age which prefers its Hoyle to its Bible, and is ever chasing folly and seeking the vortex of pleasure, is a more fitting subject for tears than for laughter. Of all fops the old fop is the one for whom the world shows the least tolerance. When a man in his dotage depends on an enfeebled wit and his tailor to trick out his mind and person, he unwittingly lays open the lamentable poverty of each in attempting to conceal it.