

doctor stood at Sep's bedside, wrestling valiantly with Death for the fair young life which the King of Terrors endeavoured to snatch from his grasp; and the sweet April morning light, trembling as with repentant tears for the work of the angry storm, fell on aunt Martha seated by a hastily-lighted fire, rocking in her arms a bundle of pink flannel, which contained the tiny form of Major Ashton's daughter.

"What do you think of her, sir?" inquired aunt Martha anxiously, resigning her infant charge to Sophie, and following Mr. Black to the door.

Very grave looked the young doctor as he replied—

"There is considerable cause for anxiety, Mrs. Damer—considerable cause. Mrs. Ashton is extremely weak and exhausted."

Mrs. Damer closed the door behind him, and stood in silent speechless agony as she heard Mr. Black's footsteps go "pat, pat" down the freshly-whitened steps. She had killed Sep, she said to herself; the child would die, and it would be her fault. How thin Sep had grown of late!

Old Damer was pacing in gloomy sorrow up and down the stone-floored kitchen. He had written to acquaint the family at Ashton Manor of the birth of Major Ashton's daughter.

"Bad business, bad business!" he muttered to himself, feeling that he was a most miserable man.

Aunt Martha busied herself with a tiny pan on the fire, stirring, stirring, as the hopeless tears rained down her cheeks.

Now had reached the old people in these spring days that their first-born lay sleeping beneath an alien sky. This knowledge had almost brought ease to the sore old hearts; but the ache and pain became deeper as the young life under their roof passed nearer to the dim eternal shores.

Suddenly over went the pan, and aunt Martha darted up the narrow stairs, with a rush that took away old Damer's breath.

Mrs. Willett, next door, the night that surely Mrs. Damer must be mad, as she saw her run out at the garden gate and seize by the coat a tall stately gentleman who chanced to be passing that way.

"My good woman," the gentleman said, as he endeavoured to release himself, "I think I have recognized Mrs. Damer. Very stern and cold grew his face. "Mrs. Damer," he said, "any interview between us would be but painful to both. Had I not been called to the death-bed of an old friend, I should scarcely have visited Beachley."

Major Ashton tried to pass on; but Martha Damer fairly pulled him within her gates.

"Oh, Major, Major," she cried, "it's all my fault—mine and my poor boy's that's dead now; and Sep's as true to you, sir, as the needle to the pole. And she's dying—dying, Major Ashton; and you've a little daughter, and you must see her. You've made a sad, sad mistake, sir; and you must set it right, you must!"

So, almost mechanically, Roland followed aunt Martha into the dismal back parlour.

"John—John!" she called; and the old man ponderously climbed the stairs.

"Glad to see you, Major," he began tremulously. "I'll just tell you how it was; and in his slow way the old gentleman told of the sin of his first-born and of Sep's truth and fidelity. "He—he had been taken," would have killed us old folk; and Sep knew it—Heaven bless her—and now she's dying!"

"I loved my wife dearly," said Roland Ashton; "and I thought—I thought—Oh, I could not bear it!"

Then Mrs. Damer led him to the chamber in which his wife lay.

"Very softly, please," urged aunt Martha as the fair-haired soldier bent over the form lying so still in the Valley of the Shadow.

Reverently and tenderly his kiss fell upon the marble brow, recalling Sep even from the arms of the grim king.

"Roland, my husband," she said, looking up at him, unutterable love in the fast-falling eyes, in the clinging arms stretched out to greet him. "Thank Heaven—oh, thank Heaven! You shouldn't have thought of it!"

"Darling, forgive me!" he pleaded, with soft caresses so sweet to Sep, famishing for the sound of his voice, the touch of his hand and lip.

"It was only aunt Martha's boy, Roland," she tried to say. "And, oh, how I have worried for your coming!"

"I was very hard with you, Sep. You must forgive me, and we will be happy again."

The girl lay silently drinking in his words, feasting on the beloved face. Aunt Martha brought the pink bundle and showed Major Ashton his little daughter. Sep's white face was radiant with joy; but she was very weak, so weak that the voices sounded afar off, and her eyes were dim.

The young doctor came again, bringing a tall elderly gentleman with him. They spoke softly to Sep, and, drawing Roland aside, whispered in his ear. Choking back the sobs that had not risen since he was a baby, Roland knelt beside the bed and pillowed the gold-brown head once more upon his breast.

"Roland, am I going to die?" she asked.

"No, darling—no," he said, faltering; but she saw the anguish in his eyes.

"Only a falling asleep, and you wake and the darkness is gone," she said to herself.

"Roland, Roland, don't cry so! I'm not frightened with you here; and Heaven knows best. I'm so glad you are here!"

Close to his breast then he pressed the dying girl. Soon there was a shudder through the slight frame. He sent up frantic cries to Heaven for aid; but, with the loving hands stretched out to him, he saw with unspeakable sorrow "a light upon those brows which is the daylight only." The motherless babe broke into sad wailing, and Mrs. Damer led the mourner from the room.

Seven years have passed. Once again Roland Ashton—Sir Roland now—visits Beachley. A blithe little maiden trips at his side, chattering gaily to "papa." They stroll amid the daisies in the old churchyard. Roland stops before a cross of white marble, thinking of his cruel mistake.

"Is there never a chink in the world above? Where they listen to words from below?"

he repeats, placing some fair golden daffodils on the grave where Persephone is sleeping.

"Was mamma here like mamma at home?" asks the child.

"No, Sep," he says, thinking of the laughing genial lady who is fond of him after her fashion, but to whom he is not, and never has been, "the first and only love." "Mamma was just like you, dear. Her eyes were just like yours."

He plucks a few leaves from the trailing ivy at the foot of the cross; and, leaving Persephone to her slumber, the two pass out at the iron gates in the spring sunshine. G. F. W.

#### ANCIENT ART.

We may consider the Art of any period or country, as a reflection of the conditions of life existing at such time or place, and although the object of the artist may have been merely to express his ideas of beauty or to embody in concrete form the symbols of a religious system, there will always be an unconscious impression of local and contemporaneous conditions.

It is possible, therefore, to arrive at a approximately correct conception of the life of the ancient Egyptians by a careful study of their sculpture and frescoes.

How thankful we should be that we were born in another and more comfortable age. Think of the dreary lives led by those Ancient Egyptians, forever marching nowhere in single file procession, in a state of chronic profile, glaring hideously out of one wall-eye, placed in the sides of the head.

We never see but one side of an Ancient Egyptian. They were made "rights-and-lefts," like shoes; but we shudder to think what the old side must have looked like.

They affected a style of hair-dressing which must have been exceedingly disagreeable to the wearers; it consisted of star-hung or gluing the hair on both head and face and then running it through a fluting machine.

But worst of all, was their rigid, unalterable stiffness, nowhere do we see an Ancient Egyptian "limbered-up," their joints seem to have been mere hinges, working in one line only; and each individual possessed but four hinges.

When the Ancient Egyptian lay down, which he occasionally did to vary the monotony of his one-sided existence, he did so with the sensuous grace of an iron poker, merely exchanging a miserable perpendicularity for an equally wretched horizontality; and the picture, or statue of an Ancient Egyptian reclining, has merely to be turned half-round, to represent most accurately an Ancient Egyptian standing erect.

Generalizing from the data we possess, we may sum up the character of the Ancient Egyptian as having been one of imperfect development, one-sided doubtless in character as in person, but we may also conclude that they were upright and straightforward in their dealings.

Personal jealousy must have been unknown among them, as every one was the exact counterpart of every one else, and fathers had to label their boys or stamp numbers on them to prevent their being mistaken for their own grandfathers, and thus causing confusion and bad feeling in the family.

The Ancient Greeks were a most afflicted people, they were built all right, to be sure; in fact, they had a decided advantage in that respect over modern men and women; but their own foolish customs made their lives wretched in the extreme.

The Ancient Greek lived entirely on his marble front door-steps, and when he had any writing to do he had to work with one hand while the other was kept busy holding on to several dozen yards of sheeting, in a vain endeavour to keep himself decently covered. We cannot justly blame these poor people for the seemingly indecorous fashion so common among them of leaving off their garments altogether at times, for their hands became fatigued grabbing at festoons all day, especially in windy weather, and when a gust happened to take a fellow's white goods, and whirling it through the air, leave it dangling to a telegraph wire, he would not make a fuss about it, or chase it down, or send a small boy up the pole to fetch it, but making some careless remark about the mildness of the weather, and the bad quality of the lost dry-goods, would walk off leaving his drapery as a legacy of kite tail, for the small boy of the period; occurrences of this kind were so common that the streets of Athens on a windy afternoon, had the appearance of a free swimming-bath.

It some of the alleged musicians of that time and time had left off twanging on their three-stringed harps, and penny whistles, from which

it must have been impossible to extract any music of a higher order than "Shoo fly;" and devoted a little of their spare time to making reefing-jackets, and ulsters for their naked countrymen they would have deserved eternal gratitude.

The custom of sitting around on cold door-steps in all kinds of weather, engendered pulmonary complaints to a terrible extent, and the "hot-toddy," and "rye-and-rock" taken to cure these troubles established habits of intoxication which sometimes led to terrible results. This phase of life is truthfully but painfully illustrated in a statue, known as "L. A. O.-Oon and Sons." It was done to order for an Athenian temperance guild, and represents a whole family, consisting of Papa and an indefinite number of sons struggling with imaginary snakes, in a dreadful fit of delirium-tremens.

It is interesting to note the changes which have occurred in the fauna and flora, the laws of gravitation and mechanics generally, and even in the human form itself, in England, since early times.

The birds then were nearly as large as the trees they roosted upon, and the average man was larger than the oak of that day. Chairs and tables, and all sorts of objects could be left sticking in the air with no consideration as to the angle of inclination or the centre of weight.

The hands of the people then possessed a sort of magnetic attraction which enabled them to hold any tool or utensil by merely placing the outstretched hand flat against it. Fire at that time was governed by different laws than at present. This is shown in all old English pictures, whenever flames are introduced, either from a fire or burning torch, they are represented not mounting upwards as with us, but spread out like a bundle of tobacco leaves.

They had no living quadrupeds then, but contented themselves with wooden ones, made in rough imitation of the wild and domestic animals of other lands.

Many pictures remain representing kings and warriors, and ladies of high degree riding upon hobby-horses, which seems to have been a favorite sport with the early English.

The human form, however, shows the most remarkable change of all.

Hands and feet in those early days were worn several sizes larger than the present fashion. Human joints don't appear to have worked well. In fact, the people of early England seem to have been a dislocated, lop-sided, angular set, and it is truly wonderful that the present existing race and the modern condition of affairs, could ever have been evolved out of that represented by early English pictorial art. But, so it is, and we can only feel thankful for the great changes that the passage of time has wrought in the comfort, symmetry and propriety of our race, and its surroundings, and pity for the imperfect state of the world and its inhabitants in ancient times.

GEORGE KYLE.

#### INSIDE THE MINT.

There is not much to see inside the Mint, but what there is, is well worth that stinky half-hour allowed to any innocents abroad—four at a time only—who may wish to "presp" it. I was one of those four last week. A bland gentleman received me in a side room. I wrote my name in a book—then the three other names. I was given to understand that I was responsible for the whole party. I eyed them suspiciously from that moment, and morally turned my own pockets inside out. A genial sort of foreman soon arrived. He did his work well from beginning to end; there was no nonsense about him, and I may add no delay. We turned at once into a sort of factory-room, in which very little was going on, but that little was of an excitingly costly nature. I watched a small furnace, out of which kept pouring, like a stream of white barley sugar, the molten silver, which was then passed under a roller and flattened into strips, and the strips were soon chopped into bars and piled. The noise was considerable, but nothing to the skam and jingle of the next room, where the bars were further flattened into very thin strips like laths, to about the thickness of the half-crown. They were coining nothing but half-crowns that day. There was a strange fascination about every detail of the process. We had not nearly reached the half-crown yet. The flat strips were cut up into lengths of about three feet; each had now to be "adjusted," or passed between more rollers, which exactly tested the even thickness.

In the next room we saw rounds cut out of these strips. These soon accumulated, 300 being punched out in a minute; then 80 a minute, were shot through a hole, which trimmed the edges; and then they had to be fire-softened, and washed and dried in sawdust, before they were fit to receive the final "die" with the milling and the QUEEN'S head. Even then, all was not over. The weighing-machine was certainly the prettiest thing I saw; each coin fell in a ledge, which according to its exact weight, dropped the coin into one of three boxes beneath; if it were a shade too heavy it went into a box on the left, if too light it went into a box on the right, and if exact in weight it fell into a middle-box. The middle-box coins were ready for circulation; the light and heavy ones were taken away to be melted up again. This machine has been in use since 1852, and is the invention of a bank director named Mr. CORROX. I saw on a table hard by, in the measuring room, some goodly bags. "What are these?" I asked. "Each," said my guide, "weighs 720 oz., and contains

£200 in half-crowns." The propensity to handle the silver was irresistible, and was duly recognized by my official friend, who, however, would let us touch nothing except what he himself handed to us. He handed a blank, and a new half-crown; but I was not allowed to touch the beautifully-symmetrical perforated sheets of silver that lay piled in ornamental patterns ready for re-melting. Silver chips and shavings lay all about, but the least (involuntary of course) propensity to stoop was checked by the gentle admonition that time was short, and another detachment of would-be burglars were waiting in the ante-room to be "personally conducted."

Everywhere ropes prevented us going too near the scene of action; none of the machines could be easily approached, and we were all kept well in hand together, I felt grateful for this, for a man does not find himself every day on such a Tom Tiddler's ground; and temptation always makes my knees very weak, and my fingers twitched several times most unaccountably.

However, we got safe into the coin-room, where all was under glass, and I grew more calm, and asked several intelligent questions—such as, why we had seen no gold or copper? None was being coined. They had coined no gold at the English Mint for twelve months, so I infer that there are no sovereigns with 1881 on them, except, perhaps, a few from the Colonial Mint. These have all a tiny M for Melbourne or S for Sydney on them.

The interesting collection of coins and medals I was hurried through. I saw silver pennies from A.D. 550 to the present day; a gold "noble," value 13s. 8d. (EDWARD III.); a very flat sovereign of HENRY VII.; and guineas which came in with CHARLES II. A large piece, called a petition crown, of CHARLES II. has now a fancy value of £275, the actual price fetched by one three months ago. A noble twenty-shilling-piece in silver of CHARLES the First's reign suggested an enormous pouch; it might just fit into the brim of a common tea-cup.

I hereabouts became decidedly communicative, and began to ask a few historical countrivances, but this was soon put a stop to by my guide, who observed that the British Museum, and not the Mint, was the place for that. The time was up. I hope my half-hour has not been wasted.—*London Truth.*

#### LITERARY AND ARTISTIC.

THE commission appointed in Germany to revise Luther's translation of the Bible has held its last sitting and brought its work to a close.

PRINCE RUDOLPH, the heir to the throne of Francis Joseph, has published at the imperial printing office in Vienna a two-volume description of his Eastern wanderings.—*Ein Orientreise.*

THERE is a great "boom" in Longfellow literature, in preparation for the poet's seventy-fifth birthday, which occurs on February 27th, and which is to be celebrated in thousands of schools.

DR. HOLLAND's family and editorial associates authorize a positive contradiction of the statement that he was the author of the long poem, "Geraldine," which was published anonymously not long ago.

THE second "baby elephant" of this country, and other features of Barnum's menagerie, as it appears in winter quarters at Bridgeport, Connecticut, are illustrated in the current issue of *Harper's Weekly*.

THE Cathedral at Seville is to be restored upon a comprehensive scale. The *Impartial* states that the Spanish Minister of Public Works has just granted sixty thousand *pesetas*, the sum required to commence operations.

TWENTY years ago, J. P. Mahaffy, M.A., was one of the hardest hitters at cricket in Trinity College, Dublin. He is today one of the best living authorities on the literature and history of Greece. His latest volume, now in the press of Harper & Brothers, treats of "The Old Greek Education."

It has long been known that M. Alexandre Dumas had in preparation a complete edition of his plays. But M. Dumas has resolved that the public shall not be admitted behind the scenes at any price. The edition will be limited to exactly ninety-nine copies, for presentation only to personal friends and to the actors and actresses who created the parts.

ADVICES from all quarters assure us that a successful warfare against lung and throat disease is being waged with Northrop & Lyman's Emulsion of Cod Liver Oil and Hypophosphites of Lime and Soda. By this renovant of strength and pulmonary health, premature lung decay is arrested, asthmatic breathing is rendered clear and deep, bronchial irritation is subdued and the blood enriched and freed from a scrofulous taint. Rarely have the people had more reason to congratulate themselves on the development of a remedy for that class of diseases which in a rigorous climate are peculiarly rife, and never has a medicine more clearly vindicated its claims to be considered a genuine specific than this sterling preparation. To escape imposition, purchasers should be careful to notice that the wrappers and glass of the bottles bear the firm's name. Sold by all druggists. Prepared only by Northrop & Lyman, Toronto.

PEOPLE who suffer from Lung, Throat, or Kidney diseases, and have tried all kinds of medicine with little or no benefit, and who despair of ever being cured, have still a resource left in Electricity, which is fast taking the place of almost all other methods of treatment, being mild, potent and harmless; it is the safest system known to man, and the most thoroughly scientific curative power ever discovered. As time advances, greater discoveries are made in the method of applying this electric fluid; among the most recent an best modes of using electricity is by wearing one of Norman's Electric Curative Belts, manufactured by Mr. A. Norman, 4 Queen Street East, Toronto, Ont.