

## Life's Gates.

By Mary Houston.

I linger and wait  
By the rocky-bound gate.  
The open gate of the sea—  
And the billows roll in  
With a thundering din,  
But bring not a message to me.

Oh, roll bounding wave!  
O'er the deep, briny grave  
Of treasures that hide in the sea.  
Roll back and unfold  
The pearls and the gold  
That guard all their gleamings from me.

Expand and disclose  
The crimson and rose  
Of light in the caverns that ring  
Where soft ripples flow,  
And sweet blossoms grow,  
Round the palace of mermaid and king.

I linger and wait  
By the barrier gate,  
The gate of Life's mystic bond  
And I long for the light  
And the dawning so bright  
Of Eternity's gleam beyond.

Oh, heavenly portals  
The hope of poor mortals,  
Fling open and show us the light—  
Let a gleam of the day  
Illuminate our way  
And lead us from darkness and night.

## THE BARD OF DIMBOVITZA.

## Roumanian Folk-Songs.

From Arcadia.

As many readers perhaps are not aware what the Dimbovitza is, and the translators of these Folk Songs do not give them any information on the point, we may say that the Dimbovitza is a river on which Bucharest, the capital of Roumania, is situated. Roumania itself derives its name from the fact that it was settled by Roman colonists in the later period of the Empire. It is for the most part a lowland plain, bounded on the north by the Carpathian mountains, and on the south by the Danube. Though the climate, like that of Canada, is extreme both in summer and in winter, the soil is fertile and productive. Fruits are abundant, but the wealth of the country consists chiefly of cattle, horses and sheep. The language that the inhabitants speak is the Wallachian, derived from, and resembling, the ancient Latin. Roumania was formerly tributary to, and a part of, the Turkish Empire, but was made independent by the Treaty of Berlin in 1878. In March, 1881, it was declared a kingdom, and on May 22nd of the same year, the Princess Pauline Elizabeth Ottilie Louis, who had married Prince Charles of Roumania in 1869, was crowned Queen. Under the name of "Carmen Sylva" she has published several volumes of stories and poems, with many translations of Roumanian poetry into German, English, etc. Some of her most affecting verses were written on the death of her only child, Marie, who died of diphtheria in 1874 at the age of four. "Carmen Sylva" is called the "mother of her people," and has always taken the keenest interest in the welfare of her subjects, while her remarkable talents, her great personal beauty and her rare powers of sympathy have endeared her to all who have the happiness of knowing her.

In her preface to the present hand-volume, the royal translator says:—"The strange and beautiful songs, of which the following are a selection, seem to me a real treasure trove—a valuable addition to the literature of the world. . . . The young poetess to whom we owe the discovery of these songs spent four years in collecting them with great difficulty among the peasants on her father's estates. . . . They are worthy to rank with the best national songs that India, Arabia, and the far North have given us; and are truly noble in their childlike purity, and simple treatment of, and sympathy with, every phase of natural

human experience." She adds that the drama, entitled "Autumn," at the end of the volume, "was found in a very ancient MS. hidden in the vaults under the ancestral home of the Vacaraseo family."

We can add but little to the Queen's description of these strange and characteristic poems; and, as our space is limited, will select some specimens for our readers, rather than attempt any criticism. Here is a rhythmical, but unrhymed short poem, entitled, "At a Grave":—

"To yonder grave there oft-times came a woman,  
And said to it: 'Hast thou forgiven me?'  
'Avaunt!' the grave made answer,  
Then weeping she would go her way, but when  
She over plucked a flower from the sward,  
Yet still the grave would grant her no forgiveness.  
Then said the woman: 'Take, at least, my tears.'  
'Avaunt!' the grave made answer,  
But as she weeping turned away and went,  
Behold, the grave-stone would uplift itself,  
And the dead man gaze forth,  
Send a long look after her, that woman  
Who weeping went her way."

It seems to us that there is something very weird and original about these few verses. Here is a poem called "The Soldier's Tent," in rhyme:

"The soldier lay smiling peacefully  
Asleep in his tent on the sward.  
The moon crept in and said: 'Look at me,  
A glance from thy sweetheart am I, for thee.'  
But he answered: 'I have my sword.'  
Then the rustling wind drew softly near,  
Played round him with whispers light:  
'I am the sighs of thy mother dear,  
The sighs of thy mother am I, dost hear?'  
But he answered: 'I have the light.'  
Then night sank down from the darkening sky  
Round the sleeper, and murmured: 'Rest,  
Thy sweetheart's veil o'er thy face doth lie.'  
But he answered: 'No need of it have I,  
For the banner doth cover me best.'

By his tent the river, clear and wide,  
Rolled onward its silver flood.  
And said: 'I am water the cleansing tide  
More blessed than aught in the world beside.'  
But he answered: 'I have my blood.'  
Then Sleep drew near to his tent, and low  
She whispered with soothing breath:  
'I am Sleep, the healer of every woe,  
The dearest treasure of man below.'  
But the soldier replied: 'I have Death.'

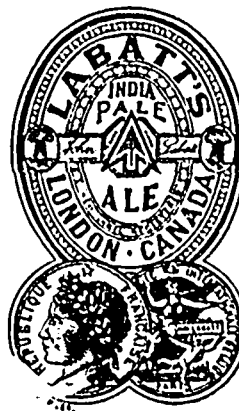
## Gladstone's Great Speech.

The impression of physical and mental power which Mr Gladstone gave to the crowded House of Commons when he made his great speech on Home Rule the other day is indicated by the following extract from a report in a London journal: "The clock marks one hour and a half of continuous speech and continuous development of a scheme as complex as a demonstration in advanced mathematics—from the period of his opening phrase. He is to go on for three quarters of an hour more. When he successfully achieves his peroration I come away with the thought that I have witnessed an extraordinary display of human faculty which no age that comes after me will be able to surpass." The speech seems to have been the crowning triumph of an old man's long life of triumphs. By it, says the New York World, Mr. Gladstone answered the sneers of his foes about "senility" and "decrepitude" as effectually as Sophocles convinced the Athenian court of his sanity, when past 80, by reading before his accusers scenes from his latest and greatest play.

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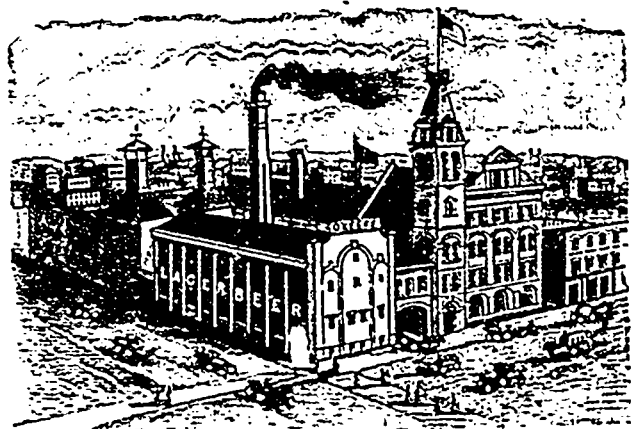
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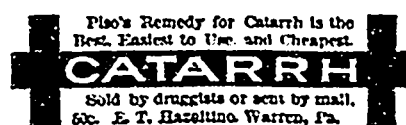
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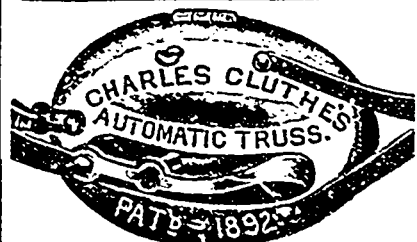
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