

## Poetry.

## RAIN ON THE ROOF.

[If the following verses be not the production of the Poet-Laureate, they contain no small infusion of his quiet power.—ED. CHURCH.]

When the humid shadows hover  
Over all the starry spheres,  
And the melancholy darkness  
Gently weeps in rainy tears,  
'Tis a joy to press the pillow  
Of a cottage chamber bed,  
And listen to the patter  
Of the soft rain overhead.

Every tinkle on the shingles  
Has an echo in the heart,  
And a thousand dreamy fancies  
Into busy being start;  
And a thousand recollections  
Weave their bright hues into woof,  
As I listen to the patter  
Of the soft rain on the roof.

There in fancy comes my mother,  
As she used to, years ago,  
To survey her darling sleepers  
Ere she left them till the dawn.  
I can see her bending o'er me,  
As I list to the refrain  
Which is played upon the shingles  
By the patter of the rain.

Then my little seraph sister,  
With her wings and waving hair,  
And her bright-eyed cherub brother,  
A serene angelic pair,  
Glide around my wakeful pillow,  
With their praise or mild reproof,  
As I listen to the murmur  
Of the soft rain on the roof.

And another comes to thrill me  
With her eyes' delicious blue,  
And forget I, gazing on her,  
That her heart was all untrue;  
I remember but to love her  
With a rapture kin to pain,  
And my heart's quick pulses vibrate  
To the patter of the rain.

There is nought in Art's bravuras  
That can work with such a spell  
In the spirit's pure, deep fountains,  
Whence the holy passions well,  
As that melody of Nature,  
That subdued, subduing strain  
Which is played upon the shingles  
By the patter of the rain.

## Reviews.

A HISTORY OF GREECE, FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO THE DESTRUCTION OF CORINTH. By DR. LEONARD SCHMITZ, F.R.S.E., Rector of the High School of Edinburgh. New York: Harper and Brothers. Toronto: A. H. Armour, and Co. 1851.

As a text book for colleges and the higher grades of schools, this volume possesses claims of a very high order. Utility, rather than intellectual display, being the aim of Dr. Schmitz, he has avowedly drawn largely upon the labours of Bishop Thirlwall and Mr. Grote, those distinguished labourers in the mine of Grecian history, and the result has been a compilation which is destined, in our opinion, to supersede all its predecessors. The Doctor was well fitted for the task which he has so well executed. A ripe scholar, and an experienced teacher he brought to the undertaking the enthusiasm of one who had imbibed freely of the classic spirit of his theme, and a desire to render his knowledge available to the student. Though, well adapted for the class-room, the volume before us presents sufficient attractions to recommend it to the favour of the general reader. Its style, though concise, is far from being dry, and to the library of the man who cannot afford time to study the larger works before-mentioned, or the elegant pages of Milford, it will prove a desirable and satisfactory addition. It would give us pleasure to learn that this neatly got up, and moderately priced re-print, has been extensively adopted as an educational manual in British America.

ARGUMENTATIVE SERMONS, EXHIBITING THE TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY, IN A VIEW OF OUR LORD'S CONSISTENT LIFE AND METHOD OF TEACHING. By the Rev. W. GUISE TUCKER, M.A., St. Pet. Col. Cambridge, and Chaplain of the Royal Navy. London: Rivingtons.

The author of this little volume, who is now a Presbyterian of this Diocese, was, as above indicated, a chaplain in the Royal Navy, and most of the discourses which it contains were preached on ship-board. We have perused the series with much pleasure, and can cordially recommend the work as being thoughtful without intricacy, and argumentative without controversy.

The leading idea which Mr. Tucker seeks to enforce and illustrate, is thus expressed in his preface: "In sending His Son into the world, God felt that he was dealing with rational beings, gifted by Himself with a reason and a judgment—capable with the help of His Spirit, of understanding and appreciating the character of His Son, and of turning it to spiritual advantage. He therefore sent forth His Son, clothed from His own native heavens, with those graces which mankind most wanted and made them, at once the proof of His Divinity, and the means of human improvement."

Hoping that many of our readers will procure

and peruse for themselves this very acceptable addition to the theological literature of the day, we shall not enter into an analysis of its contents.—Though an argumentative, Mr. Tucker is eminently a practical writer, and these sermons delivered to mariners, will be read with pleasure and profit by many who have never gone down to the sea in ships, nor occupied their business in the great waters.

We must find space for the following extract, not only as illustrative of the author's style, simple at once and correct, but as furnishing matter for serious reflection to all who may be tainted with the unscriptural dogma of *Universalism*. After an eloquent recapitulation of our Redeemer's works and labour of love, the writer proceeds to ask:—

"When after one of those numerous occasions of charity and mercy He suddenly assumed, as if in anticipation of what is one day coming, the stern aspect of the Judge of all men, and spoke of fire eternal, of unextinguishable, immitigable sufferings, was it to check and efface the happiness which a few minutes before he had been the means of giving? These are questions which the narrative of our Saviour's life is capable of answering. But if, as we believe they are answered by the narrative, they are answered in proof of our Lord's sincerity; on this ground alone is our Lord's character complete and uniform; on any other supposition, it is highly contradictory and unmeaning. Again, then, let me ask, what is the key to our Lord's conduct? What fact was that which brought him down from heaven? What explains even his benevolent actions? What explains his own upright conduct before the world? What explains his eager wish to fulfil the laws of God in the sight of men? And above all his final sacrifice? Need, I say, brethren, can any candid reader of His Testament fail to gather that it was one conviction, one truth—the certainty of ETERNAL PUNISHMENT. Take all our Lord's actions and discourses, and analyse them by this test, and you will see in them parts of the same whole—not unmeaning actions, the production at one time of an exalted charity, and at another of bitter hatred—but actions all of which tended to the same good and charitable end—the end for which he came into this world, namely, to save mankind from eternal fire. When in the place of high birth, and a station which the world deems honourable, he chose rather to appear amongst men from the family of a carpenter, and to be born in want and destitution, he taught us the first principle of that method by which God's favour and our own happiness were to be procured, the principle of self-sacrifice and an humble spirit. When he sat down with publicans and sinners, (wonderful condescension, from which in our own refinement we ourselves should shrink) one feeling alone prompted him, one conviction brought forth from his benevolent bosom the significant remark: *They that are whole need not the physician, but they that are sick.*"

Our Reverend brother, we hope often to meet in the walk of religious authorship which he is so well qualified to adorn.

GALLERY OF AMERICAN ART. No. 1: New York.

This is a series of engravings "for members of the American Art-union of 1850," and embraces five highly finished engravings. The pictures are all most creditable to the artists by whom they are painted, and the association which selected them for publication. In particular we would specify the "Dream of Arcadia," by Cole—and "Dover Plains" by Denard, two landscapes of great beauty, and indicating a thorough acquaintance with the higher principles of art. "The Image Breaker" from the pencil of Leutze, is a composition happily conceived, and successfully carried out. There is an energy in the attitude of the grim and ruthless Puritan Brigand which contrasts vividly with the shrinking maiden, whose sanctuary he has invaded. We regret that we cannot speak in terms equally high of Woodville's "Cardplayers" and "The New Scholar," by Edmonds. Both of these pictures, it is true, present many features deserving of commendation, but exhibit that ignorance of the essence of humour, which, as we have frequently observed, characterises the artists of the neighbouring Republic.

## LITERARY NOTICES.

Original and Selected.

To write simple sermons which shall be really useful, and stand the test of reading, is about as hard a task as a clergyman can set himself. Scarcely one or two eminent men have executed it with any success. Mr. Edmund's volume of *Sermons Preached for the most part in a Village Church of the Diocese of Durham*, are at least plain and unpretending, and were very likely very useful in the parish where they were preached.

Of Mr. Montague's *New Version of the Psalms* the less said the better. It has the homeliness without the spirit of the old version, and the commonplace character without the occasional felicity of the new. A metrical version has been pronounced, by high authority, an impossibility. Mr. Montague has certainly produced nothing to shake our belief in the truth of the dictum. The notes are the best part of the book, and contain much curious and valuable matter.

The *Collection of Secular Music for the Use of Schools*, edited by Mr. Tilleard, is a very cheap and useful volume. Almost all the airs are good and melodious, and the words have been well selected to suit them; those especially supplied from original sources are often very happily written. The distinguishing feature of the compilation is the introduction of a great many German airs with English words. This arises, says Mr. Tilleard, "from the deficiency of English music in short and simple airs and part songs, probably attributable to the neglect of the cultivation of vocal music among the poorer classes of this country. Our madrigals and glees are, for the most part, too long and difficult for any but trained singers. The best of the Scotch and Irish melodies, which might otherwise have been adopted, are inseparably wedded to the words written for them by Burns and Moore; German music presented an abundance of part songs and airs of

the requisite description; and it is chiefly from this source that the foreign pieces have been chosen."

The *Book of Almanacs*, by which the Almanack may be found for every year, whether in Old Style or New, from any Epoch, up to A. D. 2000, compiled by Augustus DeMorgan (Taylor, Walton, and Co.), is an exceedingly convenient, well-arranged, and very clearly printed volume of tables, by which not only the days of the week, but also the moveable and immovable Fast and Festivals are shewn for every year.

## SCENES IN OUR PARISH.

NO. VI.

## THE DORCAS MEETING.\*

"Give wings to fancy, and among us come,  
Tis near the hour, and we must soon attend;  
I'll introduce you: 'Gentlemen! my friend!'"

By this time I fear you are beginning to think me a very dull companion, and indeed when I review the scenes which I have exhibited to you, I am almost disposed to plead guilty. Come, then, I will introduce you to a little of the gaiety of our parish—to the "belle assemblée" of our Dorcas Association. It is just the right time too, for the moon is at the full, and we, like the faries, choose that pleasant hour for our nightly meetings: not so much, however, for the romance, as for the safety and comfort of the thing. It is quite time to go, for it is long past four: show no city airs, if you please, at our early hours, and Thomas has been waiting and grumbling between the back door and the stable this quarter of an hour; and the little horse is harnessed, and the carriage is ready. You are astonished I see, but we do keep a carriage; only an open cart: but there is no time now for rude remarks, and we must make haste to clamber in: the easiest plan is to mount the leaping stock against which the vehicle is drawn as closely as the horse will permit, and so step over the side into it. There are no seats, but you will find yourself wonderfully comfortable on the bundles of straw which to do him justice, Thomas takes great pains in arranging on these occasions. He covers the bottom of the cart with hay, so that our feet are in no danger of becoming cold, especially as by the time we are all in, we shall be pretty closely packed.

Having so convenient an equipage, we always consider it a point of politeness to offer a seat to our near neighbours, and now we are stopping for the purpose. "You are very full to night," says our friend; "Susan shall go another time." "O no, no," say half a dozen voices at once; "dear little Susan must not be disappointed." "I can put her in the pocket of my plaid," said one: "We can pack Susan in the hay at the bottom," said another. So the little girl, who was beginning to look rather grave, was lifted in amongst us, I cannot exactly tell where. We were crowded to be sure, but on these occasions "the more the merrier." Thomas banged the tail-board into its place, and in answer to one, who, I shrewdly suspect, had no intention of exercising such self-denial, offered to walk, as the horse had so heavy a burden, replied in that deep sepulchral tone, seldom heard indeed, but which those who have heard can scarcely forget and which others can hardly fancy, "the horse can go well enough;" and then, with a sort of sneer at our want of taste, "you may ride if you please; I'd rather walk by half myself." Then he got up in front, and away we drove over the new stones and through the old ruts, at a rate that shook us closely packed as we were. Some kept their seats on the sloping sides of the cart, from which the bundles of straw soon slip down, pretty well. Others slid down after them, making vain and repeated efforts to settle it and themselves as they were before; and the wiser part remembering that those who are on the ground can go no lower, fairly seated themselves on the hay at the bottom. All called to Thomas to go more slowly, but he made a slight mistake in our entreaty, and went faster and faster: and we were every moment more and more shaken, and jolted, and tumbled.

But we are going to an evening party, and you are wondering how we manage with regard to our dress. I will tell you a secret; if you wear no finery, you have none to spoil; if you deck yourself in no jewelry, you can lose none; and if you carefully pin up your clean gown, and put a responsible cloak over it, you may ride in the rain a long way, in a jolting cart, and yet get it neither soiled nor torn. We were very merry, and rather noisy, I am afraid, when we first set out, don't you observe, we are getting grave, and really, strange to say, almost silent. It is beginning to rain a little, so we wrap up more closely and sit more steadily, for I have observed ladies can, on most occasions, be more or less shaken as they please; and now we beg Thomas, whose horse has slackened his pace, to go faster, as just now we desired him to go more slowly, and we long to be set down.—I can forgive our driver his apparent sullenness, for really he has very contradictory orders to obey, and a numerous and somewhat unreasonable set of requests to comply with; and the road is very heavy here, so the horse and his very dissatisfied burden founder on, from one rut to another, in singular style.

\* It may perhaps be necessary to explain, that the "Dorcas Meeting" here referred to, is the meeting of a Society established for the purpose of working for the poor, and supported by the subscriptions and assistance of a small circle of female friends, who meet by turns at each other's houses, on one evening in every month. After this explanation, the reason of the name will be obvious. Vid. Acts of the Apostles, ix. 39.

It rains faster, and begins to be dark and uncomfortable. I am glad we are at our journey's end; we shall find nothing dark or uncomfortable here. There is a hearty welcome, and our damp things are soon taken off, and we are settled in a room with a blazing fire, round a table on which are plenty of candles and the great basket of work. Some are already employed there, but kind eyes look up as we enter, and kind hands are extended, and we feel that we are amongst friends. Then we apply diligently to business, and I must say, for the credit of our little party, it is not only nominally a working society. It is a point of courtesy to leave the flannel articles to be made by the elder ladies; I beg pardon, the ladies who wear spectacles: not that we doubt their ability to do the more delicate work as neatly as the most bright-eyed amongst us, but they profess to like this best; and of one thing I am sure, that if the younger members of our Association can in any way consult their comfort, it must be their pleasure to do so, for they know how highly they are honoured by the company of such elders, and they do indeed feel grateful for it. We are all settled quietly at work at a little after five, and though sometimes debates run rather high, and one could not help allowing that if we ladies talked only three at a time, we might be better understood, yet we were getting on with our various articles of dress, when the tea came in at half-six.

We lose no time, because we do not remove our work, but go on with it between the acts, and there are very often pleasant private conversations carried on between those who happen to sit next each other; many kind feelings expressed, and sometimes words of consolation or advice exchanged.—I hope we do, and I am sure we ought to feel something more than the regard of mere acquaintance to the members of our Dorcas Society; to me, certainly, that evening is one of the most agreeable week-day evenings in the whole month, and that party the pleasantest I ever attend. After tea there is generally a proposal made for reading, and I always observe, the more interesting the book may be, the more rapidly the work goes on. In selecting books for reading on such occasions, it is well to remember that "the time is short," and that whilst the ostensible purpose of our meeting is to provide for the temporal wants of our poor neighbours, any opportunity for our own improvement is to be thankfully embraced. But the reading never lasts all the evening, and sometimes little Susan varies our amusement by repeating the beautiful hymns which she has learnt so perfectly, and repeats with such wonderful propriety. Little dear! may she always have as deep a feeling of what is right as she now appears to possess, and may she always be as little ashamed of expressing it.

But you are glancing round at our circle and you think that amongst so many young ladies there must be frequent changes. Not very frequent; though indeed the flower of our party left us soon after we first assembled. Now there are rumours of speedy changes, but we must not listen lightly to reports. To be sure we cannot help observing how, for a long time, one who is, as she well deserves to be, a general favorite, has been fetched home in the evening by some kind invisible. "The person"—how lucky that the word is common gender—always preferring to wait outside. It would be better, we thought, to come in, but Kate never seemed to think at all about it, and, of course, it was no business of ours. She was never one moment putting on her things, and whilst others were folding up their work, or taking leave, she was dressed and gone. But the very last time, by some mischance or other—either because the dogs in the yard would not bear a stranger there, or that the servant was particularly stupid, or particularly determined—"the person" was prevailed upon to go into the little parlor, where we had left our bonnets. Our pretty friend rushed out of the room where we were sitting, perhaps to send him back again; but it was too late; we were all on the point of going. I thought it would have been kinder to have given her two minutes the start of us; and really it was not so much curiosity, as love of adventure, that made me run down with the rest. And there, in the farthest corner of the room, stood "the person"—a handsome looking youth, wrapped in a picturesque furred cloak—the very person we might have expected to see, yet to whose name, when any one has been rude enough to question her about him, she has invariably answered with the most enviable self-possession. O poor Kate! how very great and how ashamed she looked; what a very great hurry she was in, and how she trembled when one of the more staid of the party kindly detained her, to give her a pin for her shawl, and to advise her to tie her bonnet. She need not have been in such a fright; she was with friends: I am sure if they all felt as I did, they were glad to see her in such good company, and sincerely wished the young couple joy. But it is almost time to leave off work; the more nimble have accomplished theirs, and the others are tired, and must take their unfinished portions home; and here comes the neat servant maid, with refreshments. It is not printed in our reported rules, indeed, but one of our by-laws provides that in order to prevent any thing like emulation or extravagance in our entertain-