Carleton Place Herald.

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SABBATH READING.

The Mystery of Life.

A thoughtful and graceful poem embodying reflections familiar to all, with a pure and high philosophy, realized by too few.

So many years I've seen the sun, [own
And called these eyes and hands my
A thousand little acts I've done,
And childhood felt and manhood known
Of what is life! and this dull round
To tread, why was a spirit bound!

So many airy draughts and lines,
And warm excursions of the mind,
Have filled my soul with great designs,
While practice groveled far behind:
O what is thought! and where withdraw
The glories which my fancy saw?

So many tender joys and woes
Have on my quivering soul had power;
Plain life with brightening passions rose,
The boast and burden of their hour:
O what is all we feel? why fled
These pains and pleasures o'er my head?

So many human souls divine,
So at one interview displayed,
Some oft and freely mixed with mine,
In lasting bonds my heart have laid;
O what is friendship? why impressed
On my weak, wretched, dying breast?

So many wonderous gleams of light,
And gentle ardors from above,
Have made me sit, like seraph bright,
Some moments on a throne of love:
O what is virtue?, why had I,
Who am so low, a taste so high?

Ere long, when sovereign wisdom wills,
My soul an unknown path shall tread,
And strangely leave who strangely fills,
This frame and waft me to the dead:
O what is death! 'tis life's last shore,
Where vanities are vain no more;
Where all pursuits their gold obtain,
And life is all retouched again;
Where in their bright result shall rise
Thoughts, virtues, friendships, and joys.

The Lost Hunter.

Several years ago, a hunter with his faithful dog went among the Adirondac mountains in northern New York, in pursuit of game. Days and weeks passed, and he did not return. At length the half-famished dog came back without his master. The winter spread its snows upon the summits and in the valleys, and no tidings reached the settlement from which he had started. When spring lifted the winding sheet of her burial from the earth, and the notes were again upon the lovely lakes, his skeleton form was found on the shore of one of these transparent waters, in sight of his humble dwelling. What a bitterness must the fact that he was so near home when he laid himself down to die, have given to his lonely death. And thus will it be with very many who are lost for eternity. Pursuing the objects of pleasures and ambition amid the wastes of time, they wander on from the warm centres of love and mercy, till, bewildered and disappointed in the chase, they perish with the refuge of the soul in full view. Then comes the burning tide of memories, and the pang of self-exile and ruin with the sight through the darkness and storm.

Oh, sinful hunter after a portion for the mocked and weary spirit, turn to that single oasis in the boundless desert in which stands the cross of Christ, around whose form is gathered the church of the living God.—*Am. Messanger.*

Little Andrew.

"If I only were back at grandpa's," said little Andrew as he stood in his mother's room pulling off coat and gloves. "There's no fun walking on these old pavements. If I only were back at grandpa's, wouldn't I climb that high hill near the house? Do you remember the day, mamma, when I almost tumbled all the way down?"

Andrew's mamma did not remember; so laying aside coat and gloves, the little boy commenced his story:

It was one of the warmest days in the whole summer, and climbing that steep hill was such warm work; but though the sun nearly roasted me, it couldn't make me give up. At last I reached the top, and then wasn't it beautiful to see away off ever so far? By and by, I started to come down very slowly. But no matter how hard I tried to come only a little way at a time my feet would slip. Then a branch I caught hold of broke, and I might have tumbled to the bottom if I hadn't rolled into a bush. But I picked myself up in a minute, an had grand fun the rest of the way. If we only had a high hill like that in our garden, mamma, it would be splendid."

"It must have been very warm work climbing up that warm day. I thought my little son disliked hard work," replied his mother.

No, mamma, I don't when there is something at the end.

"Well, then, I will tell you how you may climb far higher than you did at grandpa's, without even leaving this house, and reach the most beautiful of ends."

Andrew's great black eyes opened very wide, for he could not imagine what his mother meant.

"At grandpa's, could you have stood at the foot of the hill and jumped up to the top?" asked his mother.

"O no mamma," he replied laughing, "not even a great man, like papa could have done that. I had to take ever so many steps."

"Just so my little son will have to do if he wishes to reach the beautiful end I spoke of. But then he will not be obliged to struggle up hill alone. There is One waiting now to help him; One who would love to have my darling start to-day, and climb on bravely step by step, knowing that all the tiresome work would be more than repaid when he reached the end in heaven."

Andrew's dark eyes looked downward; he was evidently thinking. And his mother continued:

If my little boy wishes to start, he must remember first of all, that he can never reach the top of the hill by trying to climb alone he must ask Jesus to help him be good; he must give his hand to Jesus, and ask him to guide his steps toward heaven. Then next, he must think of the little steps and not feel discouraged because he cannot be good all at once; for every time he speaks kindly when provoked, obeys cheerfully when he had rather do something else, or gives up to another what he wishes himself, a step up hill is taken. But when he hears himself saying, or even thinking, 'I don't care,' if reproved, or 'I don't want to,' do something, or acting unkindly in any way then he is surely slipping down. Perhaps he only intends to be a very little naughty; but it is not easy to go a little way down hill, is it, Andrew?"

"No, indeed, mamma; you run ever so far without meaning to."

"Then, what does my little boy mean to do? He must either be going toward heaven or far away. Jesus is waiting to help him to be good—to take his hand, and lead him step by step, till at last he should reach the beautiful end in heaven, on God's own 'holy hill.' Which way will my darling go?"

"With Jesus, mamma," said Andrew 'I want to climb up hill and I mean to begin taking those little steps to-day. I wont mind if it is hard work, for Jesus will help me."

So Andrew ask the Saviour to help him, and started that day toward heaven.

Jesus died that you might reach heaven, dear little reader and is waiting now to lead you there step by step. Will you not lay your little hand in his, by asking him to help you follow in his own blessed footsteps, by striving to be like Jesus. Then each day as it passes by, will find you growing more like that blessed Saviour, till at last, when your life's work shall be ended, and heaven, God's "holy hill," gained, you shall there reign with him in glory for ever and ever.—[Christian Times.

Parential Discipline.

"To teach the young idea how to shoot," and train little immortals for the skies is a work of such importance and magnitude that parents need much grace and wisdom from above to qualify them for it.

There is an evil I have observed in some families, and that is talking so freely before their children of the faults and sins of professors of religion. It is exceedingly pernicious to the young and tender mind. It has a tendency to cause them to doubt of the reality of religion altogether. We should speak as favorable of other denominations of Christians before our children as we can consistantly with truth.

In communicating the religious truth to them let it be done in the tenderest, sweetest manner possible, showing to them that we love the truth we are endeavoring to teach them. We should never foster pride in our children. It will grow fast enough without nursing it. To adorn them with gay clothing, and then tell them they look pretty, is just the way to ruin them, and nurse them for the wicked one and prepare them for the flames of perdition. Let us check and mortify this rising propensity of evil, and teach them the folly and wickedness of yielding to it.

Modesty and good manners are beautiful traits in the young, and we should assiduously labor to cultivate and promote them in our children. Teach them the impropriety of being pert or talkative when strangers are present, and to speak pleasantly and freely, when asked to, without embarrassment or looking another way.

Praising a child to his face should be done cautiously, and with judgment. Commend them sometimes for virtuous and good action, but guard against a habit of praising and flattering them for every act and piece of work they do, for this tends to make them vain and self-conceited.

As parents it is our duty to attend to the health of our children. The foundation of many diseases is laid in infancy and youth. Take care of the kind of food and drink they have. Pure water or milk is the best food unquestionably, for children. They should be taught not to be nice, particular or difficult about what they eat, but eat what is set before them, without asking any qustions, or complaining or grumbling about it. They should be taught while young that their happiness must not be sought altogether in the pleasures of the heart and mind, duly and properly cultivated then they will have happiness that will stay by them at all times. The pernicious habits of boys in smoking cigars and using tobacco should be discouraged by parents and prevented if possible it is a ruinous habit that has many serious habits attendant in it. Let the parent show the evil of the practice, morally and physically, and enforce his admonitions by his own example and he will generally succeed in his effort to prevent his boy from falling into a practice that is so difficult to leave off when once formed, and which in many cases in after life they regret exceedingly that they ever formed the habit.

The mind of the child is a blank at a certain age, and should be furnished with various kinds of knowledge. We should purchase good books for our children—those that entertain as well as instruct them; Encourage them to improve all their leisure time in reading and intellectual improvement are not formed all at once, but by degrees; and unless this love for reading and improvement are formed, in youth is exceedingly difficult to form it afterward, and is but seldom done. This is a dislike and distaste to sit down to reading and close thinking on any matter unless they have been previously accustomed to it in early life. All experience shows this.

How much more happy and useful a person is in after life when in youth he has stored away much useful information on various subjects. Love for the truth and the improvement of his mind became a habit so that he is gaining knowledge all his life. The garden of his heart and mind have both been cared for and properly cultivated, good seed properly sown and nursed, and much labor bestowed and pains taken to mature all his moral and intellectual faculties, till now in after years he is reaping the reward of his early labors. These intellectual and spiritual powers which God has given us and our children are designed by him to be used and improved aright, and not lay dormant, or desecrated to sinister or sinful purposes, which, if cultivated and earnestly exercised and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, would bring much glory to God and happiness to man! And then, in eternity, our reward will be commensurate with the improvement of our "talents" on earth. What a "weight of glory" will rest on the "good and faithful servant" in heaven!

Forgetting the Offence.

A person came to Mr. Longdon, of Sheffield, one day and said, "I have something against you, and I am come to tell you of it." "Do walk in sir," he replied; "you are my best friend if I could but engage my friends to be faithful with me I should be sure to prosper, But, if you please we will both pray in the first place, and ask the blessing of God upon our interview." After they rose from their knees and had been much blessed together, he said, "Now I wi'l thank you my brother, to tell me what you have against me." "Oh," said the man, "I really don't know what it is: it is all gone, I believe I was in the wrong."

MISCELLANEOUS.

Death of James Sheridan Knowles.

The steamship Scotia brings the intelligence of the death of James Sheridan Knowles, one of the greatest of modern dramatists, which occurred at Torquay, in Devonshire, early on the morning of Sunday, Nov. 29, at the age of 78 years.

Mr. Knowles was born in Cork in the year 1783, being the eldest son of Mr. Jas. Knowles, the author of a "Dictionary of the English Language," and a man of eminence both for talent and learning. He received the name of Sheridan in consequence of his connection with the family which has been rendered illustrious by the high and varied talents both of its male and female branches. The father of Mr. Knowles removed to London, as a more suitable field for the exercise of his profession as a teacher, in the year 1792. When only twelve years old Mr. Knowles' mind began to display its inherent inclination for that sort of literature in which he afterwads became so distinguished, having composed a play for a company of juvenile performers, of whom he was the leader. Soon afterwards he composed the libretto of an opera founded on the history of the Chevalier de Grillon. This play was handed by his father to the literary veteran Richardson, and by him mislaid and never recovered. At 44 years old he wrote the ballad of "Welsh Harper," the air of which was, if we are rightly informed, also of his own composition. This was his first publication.

He was soon after introduced to Mr. Wm. Hazlitt, whom he always mentioned with pleasure, and by whose advice and criticism he was aided in his earlier publications. By Hazlitt he was made acquainted with Charles Lamb, and through him made acquainted with the literary celebrities of the age. A commission was at one time obtained for him but home service seemed to be distasteful, and he soon after retired from the service. Mr. Knowles removed from London to Dublin, and made his first appearance as an actor on the boards of Crow street theatre in that city, at what time it is not ascertained. He was, however, not very successful at first, and afterwards appeared at Waterford, Swansea, and other places, at one time in company with Edmund Kean, for whom he wrote a tragedy entitled "Leo, or the Gipsy," but which has not been preserved.

Some years later, while assisting his father in the Belfast Academical Institution, his first efforts were submitted to a public ordeal and became successful. The "Wife" and the "Hunchback" especially are worthy of the pens of the greatest dramatists. In these plays Mr. Knowles himself appeared; in some of them he sustained the leading characters. He also delivered courses of lectures at various places on elocution and kindred subjects.

Mr. Knowles' health has declined for several months, and his sufferings were severe, yet borne with patience and fortitude. His last moments are said to have been happy and resigned, supported by the hopes which he had often labored to impart to other minds. According to an often expressed desire, his remains were interred in Glasgow cemetery.

FAILURE OF THE WHEAT CROPS IN THE WEST.—So much of the public thoughts has been engrossed by the war that few persons have had their attention drawn to the very important fact that the western wheat crop for this year has proved a failure. In ordinary times this vital occurrence, involving as it does the prosperity of some of the most important sections of the country and the business of some of our leading lines of railway, would have been thoroughly discussed in the press. But the war has overslaughed all minor topics. It is nevertheless very essential to bear in mind that the receipts of wheat at Chicago, up to 1st of December instant, were only 4,964,608 bushels, against 8,095,931 to same date in 1860. It is estimated at Chicago that about 3,500,000 bushels still remain on farms and will come forward before 1st September next, swelling the whole crop to about 8,500,000 bushels, against 16,864,384 bushels last year, and 20,231,548 bushels the year before. The failure has not been uniform at the west, or even in Illinois. The extreme northern counties of that state, most of Wisconsin and Minnesota, have enjoyed a fair average crop. But in the Southern counties of Illinois the crop has fallen below an average and in the centre of the state it has been almost a total failure. That railway traffic between the seaboard and the west should have continued active under these circumstances may seem singular. But it must be born in mind that the closing of the Mississippi river has thrown the whole export trade of the west upon the northern lines of railway. Over 1,600 steamers, besides other craft, have been deprived of employment by the blockade of the river. In January or February next the river will probably be reopened to trade, and there is reason to fear that our northern and western roads will then begin to feel the effects of the short wheat crop. Merchants doing business with the west should bear these facts in mind.—*N. Y. Herald.*

Put the Right Man in the Right Place.

A young man, whose bluntness was such that every effort to turn him to account in a linen-drapery establishment was found unavailing, received from his employer the customary notice that he would not suit, and must go. "But I'm good for something," remonstrated the poor wretch, loth to be turned into the street. "You are good for nothing as a salesman, anyhow," retorted the principal, regarding him from his own selfish point of view. "I am sure I can be useful," repeated the young man. "How? tell me how." "I don't know, sir; I don't know," "Nor do I;" and the principal laughed as he saw the eagerness the lad displayed. "Only don't put me away, sir; don't put me away. Try me at something else besides selling; I cannot sell, I know I cannot sell." "I know that too; that is what is wrong." "But I can make myself useful somehow; I know I can." The blunt boy, who could not be turned into a salesman, and whose manner was so little captivating that he was nearly sent about his business, was accordingly tried at something else. He was placed in the counting-house, where his aptitude for figures soon showed itself, and in a few years he became not only cashier in the concern, but eminent as an accountant throughout the country.—*Marmillan's Magazine.*

Mr. Jacob Walton, formerly of Owen Sound, was drowned in Colpoys Bay on Tuesday last.

Business Rules.

1. Do not undertake a business with which you are not perfectly acquainted, any sooner than you would attempt, if blind, to survey a city. First thoroughly understand what you propose to do. Serve an apprenticeship—do anything—before taking a single step involving risk.

2. Never attempt a business for which you have no taste or tact. Seek to do that for which you have a natural faculty and relish. Dont aspire to be a merchant, when you should be a farmer, a mechanic, or a day laborer.

3. Never connect yourself in partnership with those in whom you have not perfect confidence—with those to whom you would not be willing, sick or well, at home or abroad, living or dead, to intrust all your business affairs.

4. Never attempt to do more business than you can safely do on your capital.

5. Avoid taking the extraordinary risks of long credits, no matter what profits are in prospect.

6. Give no credit whatever to any one who does not possess a good moral character.

7. Supervise carefully your own business, (not your neighbor's) and look after your clerks, and see that they are faithful in the performance of all their duties.

8. Let all those with whom you have dealings or intercourse understand distinctly that you will not lend yourself, for the sake of trade, to do any mean thing—anything which your conscience will not approve of.

9 Never lend your name by endorsement or otherwise, except under most extraordinary circumstances, and then let the act be guarded with every possible security.

10. Never allow yourself, or your partners, to draw a dollar from the concern, to invest in any of the "outside operations whatever."

11. In forming a co-partnership, insist that a limited *fixed* sum only shall be drawn by each partner for personal purposes.

12. Under no circumstances whatever deal in stocks. Don't believe any one of the thousand tales of a fortune in that direction. They are a trap and a lie.

13. Keep all your accumulated profits in your business so long as you owe a dollar.—When you have more property than you can use, then it will be proper to invest it outside.

14. Borrow never if it can be avoided. If temporary assistance is needed, seek it from a tried friend or from a sound banking institution, and then return the loan, on the day fixed, with the most rigid punctuality.

15. Have an eye on the condition of the country, its crops and the general prospects for business, and look out sharp for the movements of politicians, who, in nine cases out of ten, care more for a re-election than for our commercial interests or our national prosperity.

There are other and most important matters which should not be forgotten. Keep good company. Value integrity more than money. Live within your means. Eschew wine, lewd women and fast horses. Use no profane language. Never quarrel with a partner. Be kind, considerate and generous to clerks, and also to your unfortunate debtors. Cultivate the friendship of all. Do your proper share in promoting the public weal. Be a man, a gentleman and a Christian; and you will make sure of an inheritance in this life, and of untold riches in the life to come.

The Draft in Baldwinsville.

My townsmen were sort of demoralized. There was an evident desire to evade the Draft as I observed with sorrer and patrism was below Par and Mar too. [A jew desprit.] I had'nt no soon sot down on the piazzy of the tavern, than I see sixteen hossmen ridin four abreast wendin their way up the street.

'What's them? Is it cavalry?'

'That,' said the landlord, 'is the stage. Sixteen able bodied citizens has lately bought the stage line between here and Strottsburg. That's them. They're stage drivers. Stage drivers is exempt.'

I saw that each stage driver carried a letter in his left hand.

'The mail is heavy to day,' said the landlord.

'Ginerally they don't have more'n than half a dozen letters 'tween them. To-day they've one apiece!'

'And the passengers?'

'There ain't any skarcely, now a-days,' said the landlord, 'and what few there is, very much prefer to walk, the road is so rough.'

'And how is it with you?' I enquired of the editor of the 'Bugle Horn of Liberty,' who sat near me.

'I can't go,' he said, shaking his head in a wise way. 'Ordinarily I should prefer to wade in gore, but my bleeding country bids me stay at home. It is imperative that I remain here for the purpose of announcing, from week to week, that our government is about to take vigorous measures to put down the rebellion.'—*Artemus Ward.*

Musical Hints.

If the piano forte be the instrument of use, bring it out from the wall, so that a free space be before you when you sing or play. Never sing up against a wall if you can help it, or subject your friends to this sore trial. Moreover, never lumber a piano with music and books; it is inartistic. Above all keep your piano in tune. If an instrument is worth having, it is worth being kept in good order. You cannot have a piano long out of tune, and, if a singer, your voice. The Erard grand pianos of New York are all kept in order by one accomplished tuner. For twelve dollars a year he tunes once a month or oftener if necessary. Such an arrangement should be made for pianoes of every make It improves them, and they last the longer for it. A very awkward accompaniment for the piano-forte is the piano stool. It is clumsy and heavy to move; has a special facility for upsetting; The screw is often in a crippled state; and, at best, it is but an insecure, uncomfortable, and shaky contrivance. A seat of far greater convenience and elegance at the piano, particularly with the present flowing style of ladies' dresses is an ottoman shaped seat, somewhat long, like an organ-bench, but tastefully modelled, It might be upholstered, though it were better not. It should, of course, be made for the purpose, and of the right height. The most comfortable, off-hand, or improvised seat is a cane chair; and, by the way, let us suggest to gentlemen never to sit on a piano stool. The dignity of but few men is equal to the situation of a perch on such a tripod, with the coat tails hanging down behind a chair, by all means!"—*Once a Month.*

The Paper Dearth.

Speaking of the enormous rise of paper the Troy *Times*, makes the following judicious remarks:—There is, however, this hope for the future, though it may not relieve present necessities:—The paper manufacturers must have a market for their production. The demand will become less and less under the present oppressive rates; and so, whatever of injustice they may be in the operation of monopoly, time will, in a few months, correct, and the articles will fall to a reasonable price. Meantime, by a little care and effort, all may contribute to this desirable result, and so cheapen journalism and serve themselves. Every bit of paper about the household or in the counting room should be carefully saved, thus adding to the required stock for manufacture. Old newspapers, letter sheets that have been used, useless documents, pamphlets and white paper generally, printed or not, brings in this market six cents a pound. Manilla waste paper is in demand at five cents a pound. Scarcely a family but may turn out from twenty-five to a hundred pounds of his stock. This, in itself, would operate materially to relieve the paper famine, and at the same time prove a source of considerable profit—sufficient at least to pay the advance in the price of newspapers for a year or more. We say, therefore, to our readers, save and sell all the old paper. Waste none of it. Use shavings instead of paper for kindlings. Every family may in this way serve themselves, and save journalism from an oppression that may soon reach all newspaper subscribers in a still farther advance in terms. The rates of newspapers have not yet advanced to anything like a fair proportion to the increased price of paper, and they must go up to a much higher figure if it is not soon reduced. The crisis, unless relieved in some way, must result in monopolizing the publishing business, and finally imposing a large and onerous tax upon the reading community. But let the rags and old paper be poured into the mills from every household, and prices will come down; competition will continue to afford the people cheap newspapers and books, and the cause of education for the masses will be upheld in the midst of every other evil and calamity of war.

Swindling in Buffalo.

We hear of a financial transaction at Buffalo which has not yet appeared in print, which evinces an amount of coolness we have never known equalled. As the story goes, a rough looking man, dressed like a farmer, appeared a few mornings since at a banking office in Buffalo, and stated that he had been over in Canada to purchase a lot of cattle, but found the price so high he concluded not to buy. He had a lot of Canada currency, and he heard that there was eight or ten per cent premium on Canada money in Buffalo. If such was the case he would like to dispose of what he had by him. The banker said there was a *slight* premium on Canada currency, and he would pay 12 per cent for what the cattle buyer had. The buyer replied that he was biting rather sharp for his money, and he 'guessed' he had better go out and see if he could not sell his money at better rates. The banker said, as he was going, that he might look around but he would pay him as much as any one, and the unsophisticated countryman departed. He soon returned, and stated that he had been offered fifteen per cent premium on his pile of $8,000, but as he had offered it to him first, he brought it back.

'Well,' says the banker, 'I will give you sixteen per cent advance on your money.' The bargain was concluded, and the banker counted $9280 for the $8000, which appeared to be a new issue on an interior Canadian bank. The pretended drover, who was a sharper in disguise, left with his 'pile' and the unfortunate banker soon found that he had been duped, and that the whole $8000 were in neatly executed counterfeits, and that he had been the victim of a huge swindle.

OUR CHIEF CITIES.—An American paper says the eighth census of the United States shows that the ten chief cities of the country rank in the following order:

Cities.	Pop. 1860.	Increase p. ct
New York	805,651	56.27
Philadelphia	562,529	65.43
Brooklyn	267,601	175.47
Baltimore	212,418	25.65
Boston	177,812	29.90
New Orleans	168,075	44.94
Cincinnati	161,044	39.51
St. Louis	160,773	106.49
Chicago	109,260	261.65
Newark, N. J.	71,914	34.89

[From this it appears that Montreal is the tenth largest city on the North American continent.

TAX ON BACHELORS.—A petition numerously signed by spinsters of "uncertain ages"—between 30 and 60—resident in the Niagara District has been entrusted, very appropriately, to a jolly young bachelor connected with that locality, praying that a graduated tax upon bachelors between 25 and 50, to commence from Valentine's day, 1863, should form part of the financial scheme of the present session. We ourselves paid this tax many years in the old country, but, at last, to our infinite comfort and happiness, got rid of the reproach of having a big B after our name in the tax-paper.—*Old Countryman.*

THE MEMORY OF A MOTHER.—When temptation appears and we are almost persuaded to do wrong, how often a mother's warning word calls to mind vows that are rarely broken. Yes, the memory of a mother has saved many a poor, miserable wretch from going astray. Tall grass may be growing over the hallowed spot where all her remains repose; the dying leaves of autumn may be whirled over it, or the white mantel of winter may cover it from sight; yet the spirit of her when he walks in the right path appears, and gently, mournfully calls to him when wandering into the paths of error.

The Manchester Guardian is informed, on the best authority, "that the marriage of the Prince of Wales is to take place in March, not April, as has been stated. We understand that the Queen regrets very much, and is desirous that her people should be aware that she regrets, that it should be so; but we hear that there are reasons of state which make it most desirable that it should be no longer delayed. The Queen will take care, however, that it is not during the most solemn part of the season."

Forty-eight persons, mostly children, in one school district in town of Jackson, Pa., have died from diphteria. That is more terrible than the ravages of war.

The Pillage and Destruction of Fredridericksburg.

(*From the Special correspondent of the New York Tribune*).

Fredericksburg, Dec. 12, 1862.

I have several times described what Fredericksburg *was*; what Fredericksburg *is* you have also learned by telegraph in advance of the mail. The city has not only been in part burned but ruined beyond almost all hope of recovery. All who passed through the village of Sharpsburgh two days after the battle of Antietam, though it would be almost impossible to make a town look more desolate and forsaken, but the appearance of sharpsburg as compared with that of Fredericksburg is comely and pleasant. After the severe cannonading of yesterday, it seems to have been generally understood that the city would have been given up to pillage on the occupation of our troops. The leading citizens have long been known as the most bitter and malignant Rebels in the State, and to have had much to do in carrying Virginia out of the Union, in spite of an honest and overwhelming vote to the contrary. The ladies of Fredericksburg, especially, were spiteful and venomous to such a degree that one almost forgot to recognize them as women. Our soldiers last Spring were subjected to considerable insults. In several instances they were poisoned, or at least made dangerously sick, by the water they drank and the food they obtained of the citizens. They were called hirelings, and thieves, State Prison birds, and low-bred Yankees, to their faces. In no city in Virginia were our soldiers treated with such indignities. It is not strange, therefore, that there was a disposition on the part of our soldiers to treat the city somewhat more harshly than had been their wont in occupying the towns of Virginia. It was well known, too, that upon the approach of Burnside at the head of the Army of the Potomac the leading ladies besought Gen. Lee on their knees not to surrender the city for the low-lived Yankees, and preferred that it should be shelled, sacked, and burned rather than it should fall into their hands. But notwithstanding all their insults our Generals, simply for the preservation of discipline among the troops, would not have countenanced pillage had not the leading mansions been occupied by rebel sharpshooters, who shot down our soldiers without giving them an opportunity to return the fire. Strange indeed would it have been if we had allowed these brick and stone fortresses to remain standing monuments over the graves of our brave soldiers. But to-day these fine mansions are not standing. A heap of smouldering earth is all that remains of them. Others less ostentatious in their style of architecture, are riddled and torn with shot and shell; the bedding ripped and stripped, taken into the streets and trodden under foot; elegant chinaware and cutlery, choice libraries of books, rare works of art, are heaped together in the streets, and are scrambled for as trophies, The old mansion of Douglass Gordon—perhaps the wealthiest citizen in the valley—is now used as the headquarters of Gen. Howard, but before he occupied it, every room had been torn with shot, and then all the elegant furniture and works on art smashed by the soldiers, who burst into the house after driving the rebel sharpshooters from behind it. When I entered it early this morning, before its occupation by Gen Howard, I found the soldiers of his fine division diverting themselves with the rich dresses found in the wardrobes; some had on bonnets of the fashion of last year, and were surveying themselves before mirrors, which an hour or two afterward were pitched out of the window and smashed to pieces on the pavement; others had elegant scarfs bound around their heads in the form of turbans, and shawls around their waists after the fashion of the Turks. What I saw in this mansion was repeated in nearly every one which the flames had not destroyed. It is but truth to say that the stealthy citizens of Fredericksburg possessed something more than wealth, and of much greater moral culture. I doubt if there is a village in New England which possesses more choice private libraries than did Fredericksburg the day before the bombardment. You can see that the old orthodox religious settlement enters into nearly every one of them. Said a soldier to me to-day raking among a magnificent private library, half covered with mud in the streets, "How intensely religious these d—d rebels are." Not only solid works upon religion and philosophy are found among the libraries, but books in nearly all the modern languages, which looked as if they had been well read and appreciated. We destroyed by fire yesterday nearly two whole squares of buildings, chiefly used for business purposes, together with the fine residence of O. McDowell, Dr. Smith, J. H. Kelly, A. S. Cott, Wm. Slaughter, and many other small dwellings. Every store I think without exception, was pillaged of every valuable article. A fine drug store which would not have looked badly on Broadway, was literally one mass of broken glass and jars. Strange to say, that during all this great destruction of property but one citizen is known to have been killed.

A steady rise in the value of Canadian railway shares has taken place in England. The advance in Grand Trunk has been marked, a more hopeful impression having seemingly arisen with regard to the future prospects of the undertaking.

The colored people of London have held an indignation meeting and denounced the persons concerned in getting up and supporting a report recently presented to the local school board in favour of separate school houses for colored children.

It is a popular opinion with mothers that washing children in cold water makes them hardy. This a grave mistake. The feeble circulation of some children requires the aid and assistance of warm water and warm clothing. The greatest medical man who ever lived—John Hunter—recommended three rules for the management of children, and they express the substance of a volume; he says "Give them plenty of milk, plenty of sleep, and plenty of flannel."

The following cold-blooded expressions are from the New York Independent, edited by the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, a professed minister of the Almighty and All-merciful:

"After a well-fought battle, although we have failed to gain what we aimed at, we have lost nothing—nothing beyond a host of doubly precious lives, which were nobly devoted and bravely given for the deliverance of their country. Let us thank God we have them to give, and we have plenty more in reserve to give if needed."

Letter from Fredericksburg by a Canadian Surgeon.

Being attached for the time to Headquarters, with nothing to do but watch the progress of the fight from the gallery of the Phillip's Mansion, which commands a view of nearly the whole field operations on the other side of the river, I had as good a sight of the battle after the fog lifted about noon as from a box seat of a theatre. At intervals the clouds of smoke obscured the scene, but again they rolled off, and a grand panorama of the fight was exhibited. The battle on our side was a carnival of cowardice. Whatever the newspapers say, the highest officers here do not pretend to conceal that the Union troops never fought so badly. After they had got within point blank range of the enemy's fire, nothing could induce them to advance. Fredericksburg was filled with stragglers in thousands before the engagement had begun, and this went on all day, until before night more than half the army had disbanded, and were skulking and plundering about the town. Including the reserves which went into action late in the afternoon, the Union force engaged was not less than 200,000. I do not think from all that I can learn, the killed and wounded will reach 6,000, and should not be surprised to learn they are not more than 4,000. The position of the enemy, although good, was not exceedingly strong, and so wide-spread that it was liable to be cut in half. It was not to be compared to that held by the Russians at Alma, which the Allies forced with so little difficulty; and I am satisfied that a European army of one-fourth the Federal force would have carried it with a single rush. But our men would not fight; when the columns were got within range, they halted, began firing, every man on his own hook, became confused, and fell back in a perfect mob to be re formed. Seen from a distance, the attacking columns looked like so many street mobs, on which the police had made a sudden attack; a convulsion seemed to shake each in its turn, it opened out apparently with a desperate resolve to form line and advance, and then came a regular *sauve qui peut*, and every man run for cover to the rear, as though the devil was after him, then the jeering yells of the Confederates would ring out above the dull booming of the cannon and the pattering of musketry and spring up from behind fences and rifle pits, the dark, grey line would advance at a run, and pour crushing volleys into the flying rout. I dont believe, on the Confederate left and centre, that our troops got within a hundred and fifty yards of the advanced defences; and it is certain that very few of our wounded were too near to the enemy's line to be carried off. On the right, the fighting is said to have been better. The greater part of the loss on our side was among the skulkers in the streets of Fredericksburg. We now took and lost some prisoners on our left, but on no other part of the field were the two armies sufficiently near to each other to make captives. The greater part of our dead have been left where they fell, but arrangements have been made by a flag of truce, to bury them. It is whispered, however, that it has been resolved to retire the army to this side of the river, General Burnside being satisfied it is useless to make another attack on the Confederate position with such troops. The material of the army is worse now than it ever was: a battle is the signal for "skedaddle" among the conscripts, substitutes and bounty volunteers, and a disaster in any other position would lead to dissolution. But for the guards at the bridge-heads yesterday, tens of thousands of skulkers would be by this time well on their way to Washington. Nothing is known of the enemy's loss beyond the statement of one of Lee's officers, who came in with a flag and permission for us to bury our dead in front of his lines, that it is very small. This would naturally be the case from his troops being under cover of rifle pits, earthworks and woods, and the rolling nature of their position allowing them to be concealed, where neither cannon nor rifle could reach them. The weather is as cold as November with you; ice forms every night and does not appear during the day: the roads are very bad, and in consequence the distribution of provisions is irregular. There is a general talk of winter quarters, and a general hope that the campaign is ended until spring. All day long the cars have been bringing up ammunition for the batteries on this side, from Acquia Landing, the firing last week having exhausted the magazines. A good many of the wounded have been brought across the river, and the hospital arrangements being bad as usual, arrangements are being made to forward all that can be moved to Washington.

BARNUM ON ADVERTISING.—P. T. Barnum delivered a successful lecture at Troy, on Friday evening. Among other good points noted by the *Times* is his advice to business men in relation to the benefits of advertising. He did not believe in stinted advertising, nor the mere insertion of a notice in the papers once in six months, but he did believe in a constant, systematic, and startling determination to attract the attention of the public. He cited his own case as an instance of the success that attends the art of advertising.

A pretty sinner may chance to be more attractive than an ugly saint, and parsons sometimes find it out. A good story is told af a Yankee divine, of an advanced age, who married for his second wife, a damsel young and handsome. When the elders of the church came to him to inquire if the lady was a suitable person to make a useful figure as a parson's wife, he answered frankly that he did'nt think she was. "But," added the irrepressible doctor, although I don't pretend she is a saint, she is a very pretty little sinner, and *I love her.* And the twain became one flesh.

FEDERAL DESERTERS.—The Belleville Chronicle says:—The train from Toronto which reached this station on the morning of the 22nd inst. carried four deserters from the Federal army. They were in full uniform, carrying everything with them except their arms and knapsacks. In their flight they did not even leave behind them their greatcoats. Two got off at the Belleville station to join their friends, who live in this part of the Province, and two continued on eastward. It is reported that the Western cities and towns are full of deserters, and from the above circumstance we are induced to believe the report.

It is extraordinary how many defects you can discern in a friend after you have quarrelled with him. The same remark applies to a woman who has rejected you.