

A NOCTURNE.

BY CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS.

THE sifers of the amethystine fields,
 Whose far fine sound the night makes musical,
 Now while thou wak'st and longing would'st recall
 Joys that no rapture of remembrance yields,
 Voice to thy soul, lone-sitting deep within
 The still recesses of thine ecstasy,
 My love and my desire, that fain would fly
 With this far-silvering moon and fold thee in.

But not for us the touch, the clasp, the kiss,
 And for our restlessness no rest. In vain
 These aching lips, these hungering hearts that strain
 Toward the denied fruition of our bliss,
 Had love not learned of longing to devise
 Out of desire and dream our paradise.

Kingscroft, Windsor, N. S.

LABOUR.

BY REV. FRED. LLOYD.

IN these days of strikes, organizations and unions, there is a danger of losing sight of the true dignity of labour and of its otherwise vast importance to the human race. That all honest toil is ennobling is a position which cannot be broken, but there are few who will affirm that it is thus universally regarded. And yet the conditions of our lives have been so ordered by a benign Providence that nothing which may contribute to our happiness and general well-being can be procured without it. The soil must be tilled before it yields its increase, and even after the fruit of the field has been gathered in, through how many hands-must it pass before it is fit for use! "Manufactures, trade and agriculture," said Addison in the *Spectator*, "naturally employ more than nineteen parts of the species in twenty; and as for those who are not obliged to labour by the condition in which they were born, they are more miserable than the rest of mankind unless they indulge in that voluntary labour which goes by the name of exercise." The development of the latent powers of the human mind and body depends altogether upon the amount of labour to which they are severally devoted, which, if properly directed and duly performed cannot fail to produce the *mens sana in corpore sano*.

In addressing a body of English workmen on the dignity of labour, the late Charles Kingsley, himself an indefatigable worker, said:—"Thank God there is no need for me to persuade you to work; for you are all Englishmen, and it has pleased God to put into the hearts of Englishmen a love of work, and a power of work which has helped to make this little island one of the greatest nations upon earth. What

I ask you to do is to look upon your work as an honourable calling, and as a blessing to yourselves, not merely as a hard necessity, a burden which must be borne to keep you from starvation. It is far more than that. All trade, manufacture, tillage is honourable, because all is of use; all helping forward more or less the well-being of God's human creatures and of the whole world." All hard work is a blessing both to the soul and character of him who works, and produces temperance, self-control, diligence, strength of will, cheerfulness, contentment and a hundred other virtues which the idle man will never know. In regard to the braggart idlers who flourish with so much abundance in the present day a recent elegant essayist writes:—"Civilisation, which has placed everything in the hands of certain people, has freed them from the necessity of working, and they have become do-nothing classes in the worst sense. Nowadays many people are proud of doing nothing, and inflate themselves with the wicked vanity, holding a prescriptive right of being indolent. There has grown up among us a party which brags and vaunts that it does nothing, that it lives at the expense of others, and is yet superior to others". Of this class he rightly adds: "It is not the highest in the truest sense, for among the highest we find ceaseless workers." In olden times it used to be said of the monks that an idle monk's soul was lost; and how true was the legend! Though those good men gave up a large portion of their time to prayer and to worship, yet they found they could not pray aright without work. It is to the work, not to the prayers of the monks of the Middle Ages that English art and literature are so largely indebted.

Regarding the effect of work on the human body and mind the great master of eighteenth century prose, already quoted, says:—"The general idea of a human body, without considering it in the niceties of anatomy, lets us see how absolutely necessary labour is for the right preservation of it. There must be frequent motions and agitations to mix, digest and separate the juices contained in it, as well as to clear and cleanse that infinitude of pipes and strainers of which it is composed, and to give their solid parts a more firm and lasting tone. It keeps the understanding clear," he continues, "the imagination untroubled and refines those spirits that are necessary for the proper exertion of our intellectual faculties during the present laws of union between soul and body". Concluding, he humourously adds:—"It is to a neglect in this particular that we must ascribe the spleen which is so frequent in men of studious and sedentary tempers, as well as the vapours to which those of the other sex are so often subject". "Work is another inevitable condition of human happiness; first the intellectual labour that one is free to choose and loves; secondly, the exercise of physical power that brings a good appetite and tranquil and profound sleep", says Tolstoi, the famous Russian novelist. "All the prosperous people of the world", he continues, "the men of dignity and