

the whole family of Adam, till the wise old serpent, who, after having caused the destruction of the world, had snugly placed himself in the ark, came to him, and promised to help him out of his mishap, if he would undertake to supply human flesh for his daily food when the flood had abated. The patriarch, urged on by dire necessity and the fear of being engulfed in the raging billows, made the unholy promise, whereupon the serpent coiling himself up, drove his body into the fracture, and stopped the leak. When, at length, the ark rested on dry land, and all were going out of the dark ship into the pleasant sunshine, the serpent, wearied and worn, crawled out of the hole, and demanded of Noah the fulfilment of his promise; but the Antediluvian, by the advice of the Archangel Gabriel, refused to fulfill the pledge to his benefactor, and seizing him, committed him ruthlessly to the flames, and afterwards scattered his ashes in the air; but heaven, being unwilling that the serpent should be thus deprived of his promised reward, immediately caused to arise from these ashes flies, fleas, lice, bugs, and all such vermin as feed upon the flesh of living man.

My friend, are you satisfied with this answer to your question? If you are not, you must go elsewhere; I know no better. Speaking of what the serpent wished to eat, and of what insects feed on man, leads me very naturally to speak of some of the insects that man,

Of half that live the butcher and the tomb,

devours; and this may truly be considered a topic of practical interest, now that the rinderpest is carrying off the cattle by hundreds and thousands, and pigs are forbidden our Canadian cities, and to supply the wants of the people is becoming a matter of serious consideration, and of such considerable difficulty that the Parisian butchers are getting bears weekly from Siberia for the hungry frog-eating Frenchmen. The sluggard is told to go to the ant, but the gourmand goes to her of his own free-will, for this industrious little creature is eaten in many countries. In Brazil, the largest species are prepared in a way known only to the Soyers of that empire, with a most delicious (that is, to those who like such things) sauce of resin; in Africa they are stewed with butter; while in the East, they are caught in pits, carefully roasted like coffee, and eaten by the natives with as much gusto and relish as Parisian belles devour bon-bons. Smeathman says, "I have eaten them several times, dressed in this way, and I think them delicate, nourishing, and wholesome. They are something sweeter, though not so fat and clogging, as the caterpillars and maggots of the palm-tree snout beetle, which is served up at the luxurious tables of West Indian epicures as the greatest dainty of the western world." A curry of ant's eggs is an extremely costly luxury in Siam, and perhaps is not much worse than the soup made out of Chinese bird's nests. The Ceylonese, ungrateful wretches, and disgusting creatures, never having read Æsop's fable of the countryman who was a greater goose than his goose who laid golden eggs, eat the bees after robbing them of their honey.

The African bushmen devour all the caterpillars they find, and so do the Australians. What an acquisition a few little live bushmen would be to a market gardener's cabbage field? Would it not be well for the Bureau of Immigration to draw the attention of the Imperial Government to the fact that these subjects of Queen Victoria could live well and grow fat in Canada very cheaply; so that when there is a scarcity of food and the natives are troublesome at the Cape or at the diggings, they might be sent over here. I am sure farmers and gardeners would find it a much less expensive as well as a much surer and more philanthropic way to destroy the grubs and maggots in their fruit and other trees, by turning in a few young bushmen or Australian aborigines, than by using the various newspaper remedies which generally are more efficacious in destroying the trees than the caterpillars. But I must cease from these reflections in political economy, and return to facts.

The inhabitants of the Celestial Empire, im-

pelled by that spirit of economy which ever actuates them, eat the chrysalis of the silk-worm after they have wound off the silk from the cocoon; doubtless this would be very good (for everything in this world, is good or bad but by comparison,) when eaten with ivory chop-sticks after a cup of bird-nest soup, a slice of a carefully fattened and delicately cooked rat, and a ragout of green, viscous and slippery sea-snails, or a dish of shark's fins mixed with slices of fat pork. Locusts, which the Arabs describe as having the head of a horse, the eye of the elephant, the neck of the ox, the breast of the lion, the body of the scorpion, the hips of the camel, the legs of the stork, the wings of the eagle and the tail of the dragon—are very much used as an article of food in those eastern countries where they abound; the natives gather them in bags, roast them and grind them into flour, of which they make bread. Dr. Shaw says, that when locusts are sprinkled with salt and fried they are not unlike fresh water cray-fish in taste. The mode of preparing these creatures for the table varies in different countries. The Arabs salt them down and eat them as a delicacy; the Bedouins roast them alive on coals; the inhabitants of Morocco dry them on the roofs and terraces of their houses, and eat them either smoked or broiled—they esteem them so highly that the price of provisions falls when the locusts visit the neighbourhood. The markets and shops in many places are supplied with them. The Calmucks not only eat them themselves, but feed their sheep, antelopes and other animals with them, and pigs eat them eagerly and become unusually fat upon them. This is a very old article of food; indeed Moses, when telling the Israelites what animals it was lawful for them to eat, and what they were to refrain from eating, says, "These may ye eat of every flying creeping thing that goeth upon all four, which have legs above their feet, to leap withal upon the earth: even these of them ye may eat; the locust after his kind, and the bald locust after his kind, and the beetle after his kind, and the grasshopper after his kind." Many learned commentators (among whom are Job Ludolph, Bishop Patrick and Schencher) are of the opinion that the animal food by which the children of Israel were twice fed in their journeying through the wilderness, were not quails but locusts, and that the original word *silavin* ought to be so translated. John the Baptist, also, during his ministry, lived on locusts and wild honey.

In Vienna, the ladies, dear delicate creatures! make sweet-meat out of cockroaches, by encasing them in white sugar; while in America quantities of these insects are put into the wine manufactured there to give it a body and a flavour. The African bushman and the savages of New Caledonia are particularly fond of roasted spiders, and this singular taste is not unknown even in civilized Europe, for Reamur tells of a young lady, who when walking in her garden would eat all the unfortunate spiders she could lay her hands upon; Lalande, the famous French astronomer, was equally fond of them, and a German, immortalized by Rosel, used to spread them on bread instead of butter. But this list of horrors is quite long enough, to shew that what is one man's meat, is another man's poison; and notwithstanding the delicacy of these various insects and the great gusto with which they are devoured by some, I for one, most devoutly hope that dire necessity and cruel poverty will never compel me to partake of any of them, but that there will always be some roast beef and plum pudding for me.

But perhaps we ought not to be too particular with regard to what we eat or drink, nor yet too vain of our place in the scale of creation, especially when we consider and ponder well the lines of the poet who says,

"We are all creeping worms of earth,  
Some are silk-worms, great by birth;  
Glow-worms some that shine by night;  
Slow-worms others, apt to bite;  
Some are muck-worms, slaves to wealth;  
Maw-worms some that wrong the health;  
Some to the world, no good willers,  
Canker-worms and caterpillars,  
Found about the earth we're crawling,  
And for a sorry life we're sprawling;  
Putrid stuff we suck which fills us,  
Death then sets his foot and kill us."

V.

## LITERARY GOSSIP.

MRS. HENRY WOOD has a prolific pen, and is about to publish a new novel, entitled, "St. Martin's Eve."

MR. JAMES GREENWOOD—the Lambeth Amateur "Casual"—is about to contribute a series of "Starlight Readings" to the *Evening Star*; descriptions of queer spots and strange phases of life in the dark places of London.

IN the whole of Great Britain and Ireland there are only seventy-eight daily papers issued for the supply of some thirty millions of readers. This small number is claimed as a great advance on the numbers ten years ago, under the old stamp law, when, in 1856, only thirty-two daily papers were in existence. The list now is divided thus: of dailies fifty-two are published in England, one in Wales, twelve in Scotland, twelve in Ireland, and one in the Channel Islands. The total number of newspapers for the United Kingdom of every kind is twelve hundred and fifty-seven. Of magazines the number and variety is comparatively much larger, as, including the quarterly reviews, they amount to two hundred and thirty-seven; of these, one hundred and ninety-six are of decidedly religious character, representing the views of almost every shade of denominational peculiarity.

THE third report from Capt. Wilson (who, our readers will remember, was sent out at the head of a party to make explorations in Palestine) adds to the evidence in favour of Tel Hum being the actual site of Capernaum. The White Synagogue has been dug about, and its plan and ornaments have been copied: there is scarcely any doubt that this edifice is the identical Greek synagogue built by the Roman officer. If so, it is one of the structures in which Christ actually prayed and taught—the only one now to be traced. The interest attaching to it is therefore of the most solemn kind. Khan Minyeh proves to be a modern mound.

THE Bishop of St. Andrew's, Scotland, a nephew of Wordsworth the poet, has furnished the following new and interesting contribution to literary history: "When Scott was on the point of setting out as an invalid for the Continent in 1831, he was anxious that Wordsworth should pay him a farewell visit, which he did; and as I happened to be staying at Rydal Mount at the time, I had the honour of accompanying my uncle to Abbotsford. After remaining there three days—a son of Burns, by-the-bye, had left the house only a day or two before we arrived, and had expressed his regret that he could not wait to meet my uncle—on the morning of our departure (which, if I remember rightly, was the same on which our host himself also started for Italy), he was so good-natured as to compose and write in the album of my cousin (afterwards Mrs. Quilnam) four original stanzas, which were, I believe—as he himself said at the time they probably would be—the last verses he ever wrote. I do not think they have ever been published. The first stanza, I recollect, was as follows:

'Tis well the gifted eye which saw  
The first faint sparks of fancy burn,  
Should mark its latest beam with awe,  
Low glimmering from the funeral urn!

A touching record not only of the satisfaction felt by Sir Walter at Wordsworth's coming to see him at such a time, but of the fact that the MSS. of Scott's earliest poetry were submitted to my uncle's criticism, a fact of which I am otherwise assured, and received, as I believe, his warm encouragement."

WE have received from the authoress, a small volume, entitled "Household Receipts, or Domestic Cookery, by a Montreal Lady." From the Preface, we learn, that these receipts, nearly three hundred in number, have been urgently commended by many ladies in the fashionable circles of Montreal. The authoress, in preparing this little work for the press, has endeavoured to supply a want which has been long experienced by Canadian Housekeepers, and we have no doubt, her efforts will be appreciated by the public.