

and leading it to a thankful consecration to the "Author and Giver of all good."

"Happy who walk with Him, whom what he fuds
In nature, from the broad majestic oak
To the green blade that twinkles in the sun,
Prompts with remembrance of a present God."

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To discover beauty and utility where we least expect to find them, is one of those pleasant surprises which we value most—an interesting instance of which lately fell under my own observation. I happened to be walking with some friends along one of our suburban roads; and observing some beautiful patches of *Lichen* on the surface of some stones in the wall, by the side of which our walk lay, I took out a small pocket-lens to examine them closely. All walked forward but one young lady, lately arrived in Ireland, from one of the great manufacturing towns in Yorkshire. She seemed highly amused at my inspection of the wall, and after looking at me for some time, she playfully inquired if I could "see farther into the stone wall than any one else." I asked her if she saw nothing peculiar in the aspect of the stones? to which she replied—"no—nothing!" "I see they are stones of different shades, and that's all." I now drew her attention to the broad circular stains of various colours; some brown, some of a whitish mealy green: some of a blackish brown, so thinly spread, so close and hard as to have almost the appearance of party-coloured stone. Handing her the glass, she soon discovered that they were minute vegetable incrustations, with beautiful little golden cups or discs, which stood out under the microscope distinctly from the surface upon which they grew. My young friends can well understand the surprise and delight of this discovery! As we walked along, every fresh patch of *Lichen* was carefully examined; and the wall, which but a few minutes before was wholly uninteresting to her, now seemed redolent of beauty.

Reader, what do you know about *Lichens*? You can scarcely ever take a walk without meeting with them, either upon the sunny side of the wall, upon the rugged stones beside the upland path, on the stems of trees, or on the apple-trees in your garden. Their aspects are as varied as their situations, but there is a certain peculiarity about all which convinces you that they belong to a separate group in the vegetable kingdom. The "beard moss" of the apple-tree, with its tufts of glaucous green, the mealy or pulverulent *Lichens*, staining the surface of the stones in beautiful ramifications, and the delicate greenish-white arborescent masses of the Reindeer Moss, found among the heath-stools on the moor, and the hoary "cup moss," with its bright scarlet rims—all belong to this interesting family.

Who would suppose that these humble denizens of rocks and wastes were nature's most industrious labourers in the preparation of the sterile rock for the reception of plants, and the great forerunners of all vegetation? Yet so it is. Linnæus, with his usual felicity, terms them *vernaculi*, or *bond-slaves*, from their being chained to the rock; and a little consideration will show how well they perform their duty in their humble sphere of labour.

Most of those which grow upon rocks generate a considerable amount of oxalic acid, which acts chemically upon the surface of the stone, and thus forming little cups or hollows that retain the moisture which gradually finds its way into the crevices of the rock. The frosts of winter rend the moistened surface into minute fragments, by their expansion, and thus a thin film of soil is added yearly. Successive generations of these "bond-slaves" indefatigably perform their duties, until at length, as the result of their accumulated toil, the barren rock—the pumice or lava of the volcano—become converted into fruitful fields. "When Flora has once planted her standard she never relinquishes her hold. Her storming party keeps possession of the breach until her reserves come up in order—mosses, and ferns, and grasses, and trees, and flowers, successively establish themselves on the acquired territory, and the conquest is complete."—*J. B. D. (Sandymount), in the Irish Evangelist.*

VII. Miscellaneous.

1. THE GREEN MOSS.

Delicate thing is the green, green moss
That clings to the crumbling wall;
Its mother's the damp from the cold, cold earth,
The air we its sire may call;
For it is fed by the breeze with the tiny dust,
And drinks of the eve's soft tears,
And daintily spreads forth its emerald crust
O'er the stone it had nursed for years;
And living on the rich man's loss,
A tale is told by the green, green moss.

It creeps o'er the tomb of the bold and brave,
That crumble to dust alone;
And spreadeth a shroud o'er the poor man's grave
Which not e'en a friend will own;
It silently telleth how pride decays,
And how vain that pride has been,
And the mouldering towers of ancient days
It loveth to mantle and green:
Glorying in the rich man's loss,
A tale is told of the green, green moss.

A carpet it spreads o'er the marshy bed
Where the forests imbedded rest,
And mildly it raiseth the delicate head
From the mouldering princely crest;
And the fair green moss on the old church spire
Tells how bright a life may be,
When age rings the curfew to quench youth's fire,
If the heart from guilt be free:
Rising on the ruined gill,
How true a tale tells the green, green moss!

2. THE YOUNG QUEEN—A BEAUTIFUL INCIDENT.

William IV. expired about midnight, at Windsor Palace. The Archbishop of Canterbury, with other peers and high functionaries of the kingdom were in attendance. As soon as the "sceptre had departed" with the last breath of the King, the Archbishop quitted Windsor Castle, and made his way, with all possible speed to Kensington Palace, the residence at the time of the Princess—already by the law of succession, Queen Victoria. He arrived long before daylight, announced himself and requested an immediate interview with the Princess. She hastily attired herself and met the venerable prelate in her ante-room. He informed her of the demise of King William IV. and formally announced to her that she was, in law and right, successor to the deceased monarch. "The sovereignty of the most powerful nation of the earth lay at the feet of a girl of eighteen." She was, *de jure* queen of the only realm, in fact of history, "on which the sun never sets." She was deeply agitated at the "formidable words, so fraught with blessings or calamity." The first words she was able to utter were these, "I ask your prayers in my behalf." They knelt down together; and Victoria inaugurated her reign, like the young King of Israel in the olden time, by asking from the Most High, who ruleth in the kingdoms of men, "an understanding heart to judge so great a people, who could not be numbered nor counted for multitude." The sequel of her reign has been worthy of such a beginning. Every throne of Europe has tottered since that day. Most of them have for a time overturned. That of England was never so firmly seated in the loyalty and love of the people as at this hour. Queen Victoria enjoys a personal influence, too—the heartfelt homage as a wife, a mother, a friend and benefactor to the poor, a Christian woman—incomparably wiser and greater than any monarch now reigning. She is loved at home and admired abroad. In America there exists a more profound and abiding respect for Victoria than perhaps for any other living person. Being a practical people, we recognize and appreciate the value of her example to rulers and the ruled.

3. THE QUEEN AND HER CHILDREN—PRINCE ALFRED'S RESPECT FOR THE SABBATH.

The *Star of the East*, a paper published at Athens, Greece, speaks in high praise of a beautiful letter written by Queen Victoria to Amelia, Queen of Greece, to thank her for the kindness she exhibited to her son, Prince Alfred, during his late visit to that classic land. The warm heart of the Englishwoman has not been chilled by the conventionalities and forms surrounding the monarch of a great nation; and a mother's love had, undoubtedly, quite as much to do with the dictating of the epistle as a wise regard to policy. And here we may as well mention a pleasing incident connected with the stay of Prince Alfred at Athens. It may allay any fears that have been entertained, lest the young Prince should prove to have been injured by his tour through Europe, and spoiled by the adulation he has received everywhere, and not least of all in the "Eternal City." The celebration of the Olympic Games, (revived in December last, for the first time since the days of their suppression through the influence of Christianity,) happened to be under way at the very moment when the Prince reached Athens. Hearing of his expected arrival, the committee of management deferred the horse-race in the hippodrome—one of the most important parts of the festive occasion—from Monday until the succeeding Sunday, so that he might grace it with his presence. "But the son of the Queen of England