

Trees.

"Pleasant it was when woods were green,
And winds were soft and low,
To rest amid some sylvan scene,
Where the long, drooping boughs between
Shadows dark and sunlight sheen,
Alternate come and go."

To each who looks at the picture an individual memory comes of trees; trees in the old land or the new; trees under which we played or prayed, for Bryant says: "The woods were God's first temples;" also, "In the dark'ning woods, amid the cool and silence, he knelt down and offered to the mightiest solemn thanks and supplication." Yes, there were trees on which, in other days, our names were carved with those who have long since lain them down, and from whose ashes violets spring. Trees under which we lay and looked through the green leaves to the blue sky overhead and wondered over this strange mystery of life, when, in our childish imagination, the leaves spoke a language and kissed each other lovingly, with no anger or harshness or bitterness.

The trees are decked, year after year, with green; but we change with the years, and as we sit in the old places we find we are growing older, and wonder which spring will come when we shall see the fresh foliage no more.

A Reading Circle.

BY H. McDONALD.

In these days of advancement women's enterprises are receiving their share of consideration, and among these ventures might be mentioned "Women's Clubs," organized for mutual, social and mental development. Now, I hear some of my country sisters say, "What could we do toward anything of the kind, living so isolated, surrounded by those who have not a thought beyond the everyday routine of baking, washing, and that terribly narrowing employment of dishwashing. If we only lived in some live town, such a thing might be practicable, but here it is simply impossible." Now, it is just to convince such as these of their error that I write this article. How many of those to whom I write have had good educational advantages, but, after their school days were over, went back home, neglected their music and drawing, took up no regular course of reading, in fact, neglected to read at all, unless some trashy novel and the consequence is they find themselves in a few years degenerating and as rusty on many subjects as though they had never known them! These have not all reached this state intentionally, perhaps, as many could tell of the good resolutions to devote so much time each day to their music and mental improvement, but some little thing was always intervening, and they find that they gradually become careless, and, perhaps, about this time, many take on themselves the cares and responsibilities of married life, and become so wrapped up in them that their mental calibre becomes very light. And it is to make an effort to overcome this that we must be up and doing, and the result will surprise us. We know what women take hold of with a will they are sure to make a success of.

Now, as to women's clubs. They are becoming so popular with our American sisters that they are to establish "Isabella Study Clubs" in connection with the great Columbian Exposition. Spanish history in all its branches is to be the special line of study. A club that has proved a great success in a certain American rural district had its origin in three neighbors agreeing to read a certain number of chapters in a novel and then to meet and discuss the book characters instead of their neighbors. This succeeded so admirably they formed a simple constitution necessary to bind them together, give them a name and appoint a certain time for meeting. They had only two officers, a president and secretary. They met at each other's homes. There were no essays allowed, the meeting being entirely conversational. The last half hour was given to "current topics," each member taking their turn in presenting them. The first read was Dickens's "Tale of Two Cities," the leader deciding how many chapters should be read for a lesson and divided it among the members. Each member read the whole lesson, but made a special study of her own chapter. This she would recite, and go into details and ably expound each part. The reading of this one book

more system and intelligence into our work, by which means we would accomplish more, and thus add to the comfort and happiness of those that surround us—an end much to be desired.

How People Say Good-Bye.

When I am travelling I make a study of the manner in which different people bid their friends good-bye. A business man comes in the railway carriage with his wife, gets a seat for her, puts her bundles on the rack, presses her hand, and perchance gives her a matter-of-fact kiss, and is gone; and the whole has been done so quietly that no one has taken any notice of it.

A young lady accompanies her young lady friend to the train. After going from one end of the platform to the other and back again they find a seat that will answer. The young lady is going up the road ten miles and will be gone until the next day.

"Well, good-bye, Lil," says one.

"I do hate to say good-bye," says the other.

"I wish you were going with me."

"Oh, so do I!"

"Well, good-bye."

"Good-bye. Hope you'll have a nice trip."

"So do I."

"I shall belong to you some time, Lil," says one.

"What a pretty dress that lady at the end of the carriage has."

"I think the stripe is too narrow."

"Well, I suppose the train is starting, so good-bye." They kiss each other.

"Good-bye."

And thus they go on as long as the train will wait for them.

Then there is the lovers' good-bye. It is very different from any other. In many good-byes there is much more said than is meant, but the lovers mean more than they say.

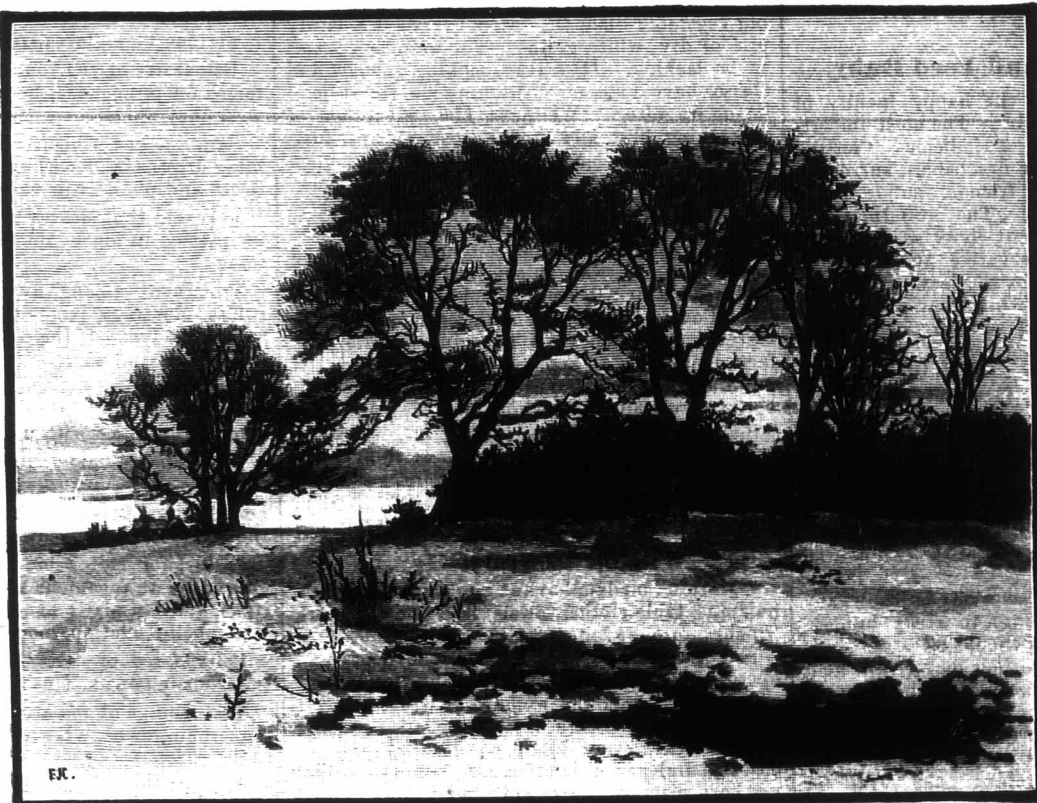
The sly look that flashes from eye to eye has a whole world of meaning in it for them. And the good-bye clasp of their hands telegraphs whole volumes of affection from heart to heart. And when they kiss—well, there isn't a person in the carriage but would like to steal a taste of their bliss.

And sometimes there are amusing things occur in the hurry attending the good-bye salutations. A train I was on stopped at a little country station one day, and an honest country couple entered the station. Their appearance and manner indicated that they were unaccustomed to travel.

The wife was provided with a seat, and the husband, who was to be left alone, stood outside and talked through the open window to her. She was giving him detailed instructions how to look after the household during her absence.

The engine began blowing off steam, and it was necessary for her to speak very loud to make her husband hear. The noise suddenly ceased just when she was in the middle of one of her sentences, but she did not seem to be aware of it, and the passengers all smiled as she shouted on the still air, "And don't forget to change your underclothes every Sunday."

I don't know of anything more mixed with tears and smiles than are good-byes spoken at the railway station.



E.R.