

MARIE.

(Translated from French of Alfred de Musset.)

When some pale floweret of the spring
Uplifts her infant face,
At the first wave of Zephyr's wing
She smiles with timid grace.

Her stem, fresh, delicate, and coy,
At each new blossom's birth
Trembles with vague desire and joy
E'en in the breast of earth.

So, when Marie, devout and calm,
From lips half-parted pours a psalm,
And lifts her azure eyes,
Her soul in harmony and light
Seems from the world to take its flight,
Aspiring to the skies.

Montreal.

GEO. MURRAY.

LOOKING IN THE GLASS.

Most readers are no doubt acquainted with Buonaparte's superstition regarding the breaking of a looking-glass. During one of his campaigns in Italy he broke the glass over Josephine's portrait. So disturbed was he at this, as he thought ominous occurrence, that he never rested until the return of the courier, whom he had forthwith despatched to convince himself of her safety, so strong was the impression of her death upon his mind. In Cornwall, breaking a looking-glass is believed to ensure seven years of sorrow; and a Yorkshire proverb informs us that such an unfortunate occurrence entails "seven years' trouble but no want." In Scotland, to smash a looking-glass hanging against a wall is regarded as an infallible sign that a member of the family will shortly die. Grose, alluding to this superstition, says it foretells the speedy decease of the master of the house. It has been suggested that this popular fancy dates very many years back, and probably originated in the destruction of the reflected human image—an interesting illustration of how the association of ideas in the formation of superstition is often determined by mere analogy. Thus, a similar style of thinking underlies the mediæval necromancers practice of making a waxen image of his enemy, and shooting at it with arrows in order to bring about the enemy's death.

In the South of England it is regarded highly unlucky for a bride on her wedding day to look in the glass, when she is completely dressed, before starting for the church. Hence very great care is usually taken to put on a glove or some slight article of adornment, after the last lingering and reluctant look has been taken in the mirror. The idea, we are informed, is that any young lady who is too fond of the looking-glass will be unfortunate when married. This is not however the only way in which superstition interferes with the grown-up maiden's peeps in the looking-glass. Thus Swedish damsels are afraid of looking in the glass after dark, or by candlelight, lest by so doing they forfeit the goodwill of the other sex. On the other hand, in England, the looking-glass occasionally holds a prominent position in love divinations. In the northern countries a number of young men and women meet together on St. Agnes' Eve at midnight, and go, one by one, to a certain field, where they scatter some grain, after which they repeat the following rhyme;

Agnes sweet and Agnes fair,
Hither, hither, now repair;
Bonny Agnes, let me see
The lad who is to marry me.

On their return home it is believed that the shadow of the destined bride or bridegroom will be seen in the looking-glass on this very night. Hence, for many an hour together, the young inquirers sit up anxiously watching the looking-glass, before which they not unfrequently fall asleep, mistaking the visions that have appeared in their dreams for actual realities. Belgian girls who desire to see their husbands in a dream lay their garters crosswise at the foot of the bed and a looking-glass under their pillow; in this glass they believe the desired image will appear. The practice of covering or removing the looking-glass from the chamber of death still prevails in some parts of England—the notion, according to some, being that "all vanity, all care for earthly beauty, are over with the deceased." It has also been suggested that, as the invisible world trenches closely upon the visible one in the chamber of death a superstitious dread is felt of some spiritual being imaging himself forth in the blank surface of the mirror. Mr. Baring-Gould considers that the true reason for shrouding the looking-glass before a funeral was that given him in Warwickshire, where there is a popular notion that if a person looks into a mirror in the chamber of death he will see the corpse looking over his shoulder. A similar superstition prevails in some parts of Devonshire.

If the looking-glass is associated with marriage and death, so it is with infancy; for, according to a piece of Durham folk lore, a boy or girl should never be allowed to look in one until a year old. In days gone by toot appears to have been customary for both sexes to wear small looking-glasses—a fantastic fashion ridiculed by Ben Johnson and others of his time. Men even wore them in their hats. "Where is your page? Call for your casting bottle, and place your mirror in your hat as I told you." This we may suppose, was the very height of affectation, by the manner in which Ben Johnson introduces it; but there can be no doubt, to use the words of Mr. Gifford, that both men and women wore them publicly—the former as brooches or orna-

ments in their hats, and the latter at their girdles or in their breasts, nay, sometimes in the centres of their fans. As an illustration of the last custom he quotes Lovelace, who makes a lady say:

My lovely shade thou ever shalt retain
In thy inclosed feather-framed glass.

Stubbs speaks with coarse anger of this ridiculous practice, and in his "Anatomie of Abuses" says:—"They must have their looking-glasses carried with them wheresoever they go, and good reason, for else how could they see the devil in them?"

In Massinger's "City Madam" the Lady Rich, her daughter, and Millicent come in with looking-glasses at their girdles. Referring however to the superstitious uses to which mirrors were applied by our forefathers, it seems that they were supposed to be most effective agencies in divining secrets and bringing to light hidden mysteries. Thus, there is a tradition that the Gunpowder Plot was discovered by Dr. John Dee with his magic mirror. We find in a prayer book, printed by Baskett in 1837, an engraving which depicts the following quaint scene.—In the centre is a circular looking-glass on a stand, in which is the reflection of the House of Parliament by night and a person entering carrying a dark lantern. On the left side there are two men, in the costume of James' time, looking into the mirror, one evidently the king, the other probably Sir Kenelm Digby. On the right side, at the top, is the eye of Providence darting a ray on to the mirror, and below are some legs and hoofs, as if evil spirits were flying out of the picture. This plate, says a correspondence of *Notes and Queries*, would seem to represent the method by which, under Providence (as is evidenced by the eye) the discovery of the gunpowder plot was at that time seriously believed to have been effected. The tradition, moreover, must have been generally believed, or it never could have found its way into a prayer book printed by the kings printer. It may be noted however that, as the fame of Dee's magic mirror was at its zenith about the time of the gunpowder plot, this may have led to the mirror being adopted as a popular emblem of discovery, or "throwing light" upon a subject. Hence, it has been reasonably suggested, the mirror in the print may be simply a piece of artistic design, rather than evidence of its actual employment in the discovery.

Brand informs us, in his "Popular Antiquities" (1849, ii. 168), that looking-glasses were formerly used by magicians in "their superstitious and diabolical operations." He quotes an old authority who says: "Some magicians being curious to find out by the help of a looking-glass or a glass full of water, a thief that lies hidden, make choice of young maids to discern therein those images or sights which a person defiled cannot see." Potter tells us that, when divination by water was performed with a looking-glass, it was called "catopromancy." Sometimes our ancestors dipped a looking-glass into the water when they were anxious to ascertain what would become of a sick person. According as he looked well or ill in the glass, so they foretold whether he would recover or not. In the lists of superstitious practices preserved in the "Life and character of Harvey," the famous conjuror of Dublin (1728), with "fortune telling, dreams, visions, palmistry, physiognomy, etc.," there occur also "looking-glasses." It is curious to find this species of superstition existing among the Africans of the Guinea coast. They believe in a particularly hideous devil, but say that the only means of defence they require against his assaults is a looking-glass. If any one will only keep this preservative at all times beside him, the devil cannot help seeing himself in it, which causes him at once to rush away terrified at the sight of his own ugliness.

Another source of ill-luck consists in seeing the new moon reflected in a looking glass, or through a window pane; and Mr. Henderson, in his "Folklore of the Northern Counties" (1880, 114), relates the case of a maid-servant who was in the habit of shutting her eyes when closing the shutters, for fear she might unexpectedly catch a glimpse of it through the glass. Once more, it was once customary in Scotland on Allhallow Even to practice various kinds of devinations, among which Burns mentions the following:

Wee Jennie to her grannie says,
Will ye go wi me, grannie?
I'll eat the apple at the glass,
I gat frae uncle Johnnie.

The custom here alluded to was this:—The young woman took a candle and went alone to the looking glass, where she either ate an apple or combed her hair all the time she stood before it; meanwhile the face of her future partner was said to peer in the glass, as if peeping over her shoulder. It may not be inappropriate, while speaking on looking-glass superstitions, briefly to allude to the well-known tradition connected with the "Luck of Edenhall." From time immemorial there has been a current belief that any one who had the courage to rush upon a fairies' festival and snatch from them their drinking glass would find it prove to him a constant source of good fortune, supposing he could bear it across a running stream. A glass has been carefully preserved at Edenhall, Cumberland, which is supposed to have been a sacred chalice; but the legendary tale is that the butler one day, going to draw water, surprised a company of fairies who were amusing themselves on the grass near the well. He seized the glass which was standing upon its margin, which the fairies

tried to recover; but, after an ineffectual struggle, they vanished, crying:

If that glass do break or fall,
Farewell the luck of Edenhall.

Another version of these lines is

Whene'er this cup shall break or fall,
Farewell the luck of Edenhall.

The good fortune, however, of this ancient house was never so much endangered as by the Duke of Wharton, who on one occasion, having drunk the contents of this magic glass, inadvertently dropped it, and here most certainly would forever have terminated the luck of Edenhall, if the butler, who stood at his elbow to receive the glass, had not happily caught it in his napkin. It was a popular superstition in former years that fine glass, such as that of Venice, the only crystal glass originally made, would break if poison were put into it. To this peculiar notion Massinger gracefully alludes:

Here crystal glasses—this pure metal
So innocent is, and faithful to the mistress,
Or master, that possesses it, that rather
Than hold one drop that's venomous, of itself
It flies in pieces, and deludes the traitor.

This is among the errors noticed by Sir Thomas Browne, who says:—"And though it be said that poison will break a Venice glass, yet have we not met with any of that nature. Were there a truth herein, it were the best preservative for princes and persons exalted to such fears; and surely far better than divers now in use."

T. F. THISTLETON DYER.

JACK AND THE MOUNTAIN PINK.

BY SHERWOOD BONNER.

Young Selden was bored. Who was not bored among the men? It was the tense summer of '78. A forlorn band of refugees from the plague crowded a Nashville hotel. There was nothing for the men to do but to read the fever bulletins, play billiards in an insensate sort of way, and keep out of the way of the women crying over the papers.

Young Selden felt that another month of this sort of thing would leave him melancholy mad. So he jammed some things into a light bag and started off for a tramp over Cumberland Mountain.

"I envy you," said a decrepit old gentleman, with whom he was shaking hands in good-by. "I was brought up in the mountain country fifty years ago. Gay young buck I was! Go in, my boy, and make love to a mountain pink! Ah, those jolly, barefooted, melting girls! No corsets, no back hair, no bangs, by Heaven!" It was the afternoon of a hot September day. Young Selden had started that morning from Bloomington Springs in the direction of the Window Cliff—a ridge of rocks from which he had been told a very fine view could be obtained. The road grew rougher and wilder, seeming to lose itself in hills, stumps, and fields, and was as hard to trace out as a *Bazaar* pattern. He finally struck a foot-path leading to a log-cabin, where a very brown woman sat peacefully smoking in the doorway.

"Good-day," he said, taking off his hat. The brown woman nodded in a friendly manner—the little short meaning nod of the mountaineers, that serves, so to speak, as the pro-word of these silent folk. Young Selden inquired the way to Window Cliff.

"You can't git thar 's the crow flies," she drawled, slowly; "but I reckon my daughter k'n g'long with yer."

"Ah!" thought Selden—"a mountain pink!"

"Take a cheer," said the mother, rising and going within. He seated himself on the steps, and made friends with a dog or two.

A young girl soon appeared, tying on a sun-bonnet. She greeted him with a nod, the reproduction of her mother's, and drawled in the same tone, "Reckin you couldn't git tu Winder Cliff 'thout somebody to show you the way."

"And you will be my guide?"

"F co'se."

They started off, young Selden talking airily. He soon felt, however, that he shouldn't make love to this mountain pink. To begin with, there was no pink about her. She was brown, like her mother.

"Coffee!" thought Selden, with a grim remembrance of a black muddy liquid he had drunk a few nights before at a log-cabin, over which the very babies smacked their lips.

Her eyes had the melancholy of a cow's, without the ruminative expression that gives sufficient intellectualty to a cow's sad gaze. To put it tersely, they looked stupid. Her mouth curled down a little at each corner. Her hair was not visible under her pea-green sun-bonnet. Her dress of whitish linsey was skimpy in its cut, and she wriggled in it as if it were a loose skin she was trying to get out of.

She was not a talker. She looked at Selden with big eyes, and listened impassively. He elicited from her that her name was Sincerity Hicks; and that her mother was the widder Hicks, and there were no others in the family; that she had never been to school, but could read, only she had no books.

"Should you like some?"

"Dunno. 'Pears 's if thar's too much to do 't fool over books."

Perhaps because he had talked so much, young Selden began to get out of breath. They had crossed a field, climbed a fence, and were descending a great hill, breaking a path as they

walked. He panted, and could hardly keep up with Sincerity, though she seemed not to walk fast. But she shot over the ground with a light-footed agility that aroused his envy. It looked easy, but since he could not emulate her, he concluded that long practice had trained her walk to its perfection. He noticed, too, that she walked parrot-footed, placing each new track in the impression of the other. Imitating this, awkwardly enough, he got on better.

Reaching the clear level at the bottom of the hill, he saw at a glance that he had penetrated to a wild and virginal heart of beauty. Like a rough water-fall melting into a silver-flowing river, the vexatious and shaggy hill sloped to a dreaming village. Streams ran about, quietly as thoughts, over pale rocks. Calceanthus bushes, speckled with their ugly little red blooms, filled the air with a fragrance like that of crushed strawberries. Uprising from this low level of prettiness rose the glory of the valley—the lordly, the magnificent birch-trees. The topmost boughs brushed against the cliffs that shut in the valley on the opposite side. How fine these cliffs were! They rose up almost perpendicularly, and freed half way of their height from the thick growth of underbrush, stood out in bare, bold picturesqueness. Window Cliffs! Ah! these were the windows. Two wide spaces, square and clean-blown, framing always a picture—now a bit of hard blue sky; other times pink flushes of sunrise, or the voluptuous moon and peeping eyes of stars.

"Want ter go 't the top?" inquired Sincerity.

"I—dunno," rejoined Selden, lazily. Truth was, he did not wish to move. He liked the vast shadows, the cool deeps, the singing tones of the valley. Then he was sure he had a blister on his heel. Still, to come so far—"How long a walk is it?"

"Oh, jest a little piece—'bout a quarter."

"Up and away, then!" cried young Selden.

A long "quarter" he found that walk. They crossed the valley, climbed a fence, and dropped into a corn field to be hobbled over. Up and down those hideous little furrows—it was as sickening as tossing on a chopping sea. Selden stopped to rest. Sincerity, not a feather the worse, looked over him with mild patience.

"Lemme tote yo' haversack," she said.

"No, no," said the young man, with an honest blush. But he was reminded of a flask of brandy in his knapsack, of which he took a grateful swig.

"Now," said his guide, as the corn fields crossed, they emerged into the forest—"now we begin to climb the mountain."

Selden groaned. He had thought himself nearly on a level with the Window Cliff. To this day that climb is an excruciating memory to young Selden. He thought of

"Johnny Schnapps,
Who bust his straps."

and wondered if the disaster was not suffered in going up a mountain. He felt himself melting away with heat. He knew that his face was blazing like a Christmas pudding, and dripping like a roast on a spit. He resigned the attempt to keep up with Sincerity. When they started on this excruciating tramp, the droop of her pea-green sun-bonnet had seemed to him abject; now, he knew that it expressed only contempt—contempt for the weakling and the stranger.

But one gets to the top of most things by trying hard enough, and they gained at last the rough crags that commanded the valley.

Ah! the fair grand State! There was a spot for a blind man to receive sight! The young man drew a long breath as he gazed over the bewitching expanse. All so fresh, so unbreathed, the only hints of human life the log-cas'ins perched about, harmonious as bird's nests amid their surroundings.

Sincerity Hicks stood fanning herself with the green sun-bonnet. There was something pretty about her, now that this disfigurement was removed. But a mountain pink—what a pretty implication in the name!—no.

"So this is Window Cliff?" he said. "And is there any particular name for that ledge yonder?"

"'Tis called Devil's Chimney, 'nd the cut between is Long Hungry Gap."

"Long Hungry Gap?—where have I heard that famished name? Oh yes, some of Peter's scouts. You know Peter?"

"Yass, I've heard tell o' Jim Peters."

Sincerity's drawl was not quickened, but Selden was surprised to see a light leap into her eyes as suddenly as a witch through a key-hole.

"These fellows had a room next to mine at the Bloomington Hotel," Selden went on, "and the walls are like paper, so I heard all they said."

"And what d'they say?"

"Well that the Captain was up the country on a moonshine raid; but that they were on the track of something better—had heard of a 'powerful big still' up in Long Hungry Gap—and would smash it up as soon as the Captain got back."

"D'they say when Peters was expected?"

"The next day."

Sincerity tied on her bonnet.

"Guess you kin find the way back," she remarked.

"Hello! what does this mean?"

"I've got somethin' 't attend to across the mounting."

"I'll go with you."

Sincerity stopped, and turned a serious face.

"Likely's not, you'll git hurt."