

GENERAL READING.

VICTORY.

BY THE REV. SAMUEL W. DUFFIELD, D.D. 'He who wonders will reign, and he who reigns will rest.'—CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA. Open the heart of the world, Wonderful Lord of the light! Darkness to glory is hurried; Splendor is flying on night: At the touch of thy marvelous finger, Rays, as of Paradise, linger Over the sky of our night!

Thus as I wonder, I stand High above tempest and din, Facing the stretch of a land Lying far down in its sin: I the sole ruler of nations, Latest of long generations, Waiting for time to begin.

Hear me, ye surges and storms, Sweeping the waste of the sea! Hear me, ye mystical forms Of the Have-Be- and To-Be! Hear me, ye great desolations! Hear me, ye great devastations! Hearken, ye regions to me!

I, who must wonder and praise; I, who admire and who reign; I through their manifold ways Tracking all sorrow and pain— Come to my kingdom of gladness, Taught both in goodness and badness, Shunning the vile and the vain!

Less than the leaf or the cloud, Less than the crest of the sea, Why should I boast or be proud, Simply of this which I see? Only by giving I gather, Only I reach to the Father, Heeding his charge to be free.

Here, in the heart of the ages, Piled where saints have their rest One in the spirit with sages Peopling the realms of the blest; Here I am safe and forever! Here, in this calm, I shall never Part from the joy which is best!

SHAKESPEARE AND STRATFORD.

Happily the stroller in Stratford every association connected with him is gentle and tender. His image, as it rises there, is of smiling boyhood, or sedate and benignant maturity; always either joyous or serene, never passionate, or turbulent, or dark. The pilgrim thinks of him as a happy child at his father's fireside; as a wandering school-boy in the quiet, venerable close of the old Guild Chapel, were still the only sound that breaks the silence is the chirp of birds or the creaking of the church vane; as a handsome, dauntless youth, sporting by his beloved river or roaming through field and forest many miles about; as the bold, adventurous spirit, bent on frolic and mischief, and not averse to danger, leading, perhaps, the wild lads of his village in their poaching depredations on the park of Charlecote; as the lover, strolling through the green lanes of Shrottery, hand in hand with the darling of his first love, while round them the honeysuckle breathed out its fragrant heart upon the winds of night, and overhead the moonlight, streaming through rifts of elm and poplar, fell on their pathway in showers of shimmering silver; and, last of all, as the illustrious poet, rooted and secure in his massive and shining fame, loved by many, and venerated and mourned by all, born slowly through Stratford church-yard, while the golden bells were tolled in sorrow, and the mourning limetrees dropped their blossoms on his bier, to the place of his eternal rest. Through all the scenes incidental to this experience the worshipper of Shakespeare's genius may follow him every step of the way. The old foot-path across the fields to Shrottery remains unchanged. The wild flowers are blooming along its margin. The white blossoms of the chestnut hang over it. The green meadows through which it winds are thickly sprinkled with the gorgeous scarlet of the poppy. The hamlet of Shrottery is less than a mile from Stratford, stepping westward toward the sunset; and there, nestled beneath the elms and almost embowered in vines and roses, stands the cottage in which Anne Hathaway was wooed and won. It is even more antiquated in appearance than the cottage of Shakespeare, and more obviously a relic of the distant past. It is built of wood and plaster, ribbed with massive timbers, crossed and visible all along its front, and covered with a roof of thatch. It fronts eastward, presents its southern end to the road. Under its eaves, peeping through embrasures cut in the thatch, are four tiny casements, round which the ivy twines, and the roses wave softly in the wind of June. The northern end of the structure is higher than the southern, and the old building, originally divided into two tenements, is now divided into three. In front of it is a straggling terrace and a large garden. There is a comfortable air of wildness, yet not of neglect, in all its appointments and surroundings. The place is still the abode of labor and lowliness. Entering its parlor you see a stone floor, a wide fire-place, a broad, hospitable hearth, with cozy chimney-corners, and near this an old wooden settle, much decayed but still serviceable on which Shakespeare may often have sat, with Anne at his side.—WILLIAM WINTER, in Harper's Magazine for May.

THE ZULU ASSAGAI.

The word assagai does not belong, says a contemporary, to the vernacular, but—like "Kafir" itself, the Arabic for infidel; "kaross," a cloak made of skins of beasts or birds; "kraal," a conglomeration of huts and cattle-pens which does duty for a town or village, and many other terms—is borrowed from a foreign tongue. The Zulu name for the weapon is "umkonto." The shaft, with an average length of nearly five feet, and a diameter equal to a man's little finger, is cut from the assagai tree (*Curtisia jaginea*), which is not unlike mahogany. The wood is brittle yet elastic, the latter quality giving the spear that peculiar vibratory motion on which its accuracy of flight so much depends. On account of the brittleness a novice will break many shafts before he learns to throw his assagai *sicundum artem*. Ineptly cast, the shaft, as soon as it reaches the ground, is liable to whip forward and break off short above the blade, a circumstance which was astutely taken advantage of, on one occasion, by a celebrated chief. Before joining battle he made his followers cut half way through the staff just above its junction with the metal head. The consequence was that when the spear went home into a human body, the shaft remained intact, but if it struck a shield, a tree, or the ground, it snapped and became useless to the enemy. The assagai heads are generally blade shaped, some consist of a mere spike, and a few are barbed. When the first shape is adopted, whether with or without the barb, there is invariably a raised ridge along the centre of the blade, which is concave on one side and convex on the other. The reasons assigned for this peculiarity of form are that this blade acts like the feathers of an arrow and that, as the heads are always made of soft iron, they can be more easily sharpened when blunted by use. By making the tang of the head red hot the former bores a passage for itself into the thickest end of the shaft, where it is secured by binding a narrow strip of raw and wet hide round the wood. The hide contracts on drying, and thus a simple band is made nearly as strong as if of iron. There are two principal kinds of assagais, the throwing and the stabbing, the latter with a long and straight blade. To a Kafir this weapon is literally the staff of life. With it he kills his enemy and his game, slaughters and cuts up his cattle, trims their horns, shaves his own or his neighbor's head, does his carpentry and furriery, and countless other jobs of various sorts. In its original form, the assagai was essentially a missile, but the renowned Chaka, among other military reforms, converted it into a shorter and heavier stabbing spear, unfit for throwing, and only to be used at close quarters. His soldiers were armed with a very large shield, and only one assagai, instead of the half dozen or even more with which they used to go into action. This necessitated a change in the old tactics. Thenceforward the men were taught to move swiftly on the enemy in a compact body, and after the hostile assagais were expended on their shields, to close. Prospects of reward, and the certainty of the fate that awaited them in case of failure, rendered them almost invincible when opposed to native tribes, and justified the adoption of the new weapon; but when, in the course of time, the Zulu came to encounter the Dutch Boers, new conditions of war arose, and the missile assagais and old style of fighting were restored to favor. Chaka's uncompromising weapon and tactics were found to be useless against horsemen who, after delivering fire, galloped away out of reach to reload. It would appear, however, from the description of the action at Isandula, that Cetewayo had reverted to the stabbing assagai of his uncle, while retaining the original missile, in addition to the firearms with which many of his soldiers are now armed. The true Kafir rejects the use of the bow and arrow, as unbecoming the dignity of a warrior, but he will slave cheerfully for a twelve-month or more to become the possessor of a rifle and ammunition. Notwithstanding the prohibitory laws about the importation of firearms into the South African Colonies, there is reason to believe that four hundred thousand guns of various kinds have passed into the hands of the natives. Cetewayo is known to have received several thousand rifles through St. Lucia and Delagoa Bays some of which went from Birmingham and some from Genoa at a time when war between this country and Russia was hanging in the balance.—English Paver

TRADITIONS OF WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

Dean Stanley lately entertained a party of workmen at Westminster Abbey, when he told them that the college hall was part of the old Abbots' House, and the chamber they were in was the old abbots' dining hall. It was in that hall that the widow of Edward IV took refuge with her two children against the plots of the Duke of Gloucester. In those stormy times it was thought to be necessary to have a certain place where persons in distress might take refuge. One of those was at Westminster Abbey; and that was the name by which the great open space in front of the venerable edifice was still known. The next room to the college hall was the abbot's parlor, and from very ancient times it had been called the Jerusalem chamber. The Henry IV of Shakespeare was seized with a violent illness, and he was taken to the nearest place where there was a fire, and that was in the abbot's parlor or Jerusalem chamber. He was laid on a couch before the fire. He put his crown upon the pillow, and there fell asleep. While he was asleep his eldest son, Prince Henry, described as "Madcap Hal," came into the room, and thinking that his father was dead, took away the crown. The king came to himself again, and hearing who had taken the crown, he thought it was a wild freak of his son. He sent for him, and administered warnings, which had such an effect upon the young man as entirely to change his manner of life. King Henry asked the name of the chamber, and said that he had been told he should die at "Jerusalem." He now perceived that it was not at Jerusalem in Palestine where his death should happen; and the last words put into his mouth by Shakespeare were, "In this Jerusalem shall Harry die." Accordingly, he died in the Jerusalem chamber.

THE PEDOMOTOR.

A cheap substitute for the bicycle is coming into use in the United States. The "Pedomotor," as it is called, is a modification of the parlour skate, with its frame fitted and strapped to the shoe, and four small rubber-tired wooden wheels coming up on either side instead of being kept under the shoe, as in the skate. The two forward wheels being half an inch smaller in diameter than the three inch rear ones give a slight pitch, which aids the forward impulse, and a metallic wheel at the heel helps the walker to guide and stop himself. The gain in speed is obtained by the forward motion still continuing while the feet are alternately raised, and it is stated that the walker can cover at least double the distance of ordinary striding without any appreciably great effort. Personal rapid transit, or "every man his own motor," is one of the great requirements of the present day, when life is almost too short, lengthened as it has been by sanitary science, to enable human beings to get through all that they

string, thus tightening it and raising its pitch, so as to give greater prominence to the melody. Mozart carried a clavichord as part of his baggage, and Bach—whose "well-tempered clavichord" is a familiar title—preferred it to the piano, which he did not live to see developed. One biographer says that "he found it the most convenient for the expression of his most refined thoughts."

Next came—immediately preceding the piano—the virginal, the spinet, and the harpsichord. They had brass strings, but the plectra were quills fastened in pieces of wood called jacks, this latter name being still retained in the piano "action." The quill was a nibbing off the string; it rose up past the string, freeing it, and there remained until taking the finger from the key allowed it to drop. The spinet differed little from the virginal. The harpsichord was of larger size, and sometimes had two key-boards. The name virginal is associated by some with hymns to the Virgin; by others it is supposed to have been given in compliment to Queen Elizabeth. At least the instrument was very popular in England. Henry VIII is thought to have played it. His daughters Mary and Elizabeth, as well as Mary of Scotland, were players of it, and means for repairing virginals and giving instruction on them appeared frequently in the memoranda of royal expenses. A book alleged to have been Elizabeth's virginal book, and an instrument alleged to have been her virginal, are still preserved. A poem descriptive of the public entry of Queen Anne, wife of James VI, into Edinburgh, May 19, 1590, mentions that "virginals and virginals were there." Spenser speaks of his beloved as "playing alone careless on her heavenly virginals;" and Shakespeare, in a sonnet, mentions "those jacks that nimble leap to kiss the tender inward of the hand," and of "those dancing chips for whom thy fingers walk with gentle gait."

In appearance the virginal resembled a very small piano; sometimes it was made without legs, and a few small specimens resemble a large music box.

The leading instrument in the last century was the harpsichord. Its compass was extended to five octaves. Its shape was almost exactly that of the grand piano. Many ingenious makers devoted themselves to it, adding sets of wires, sets of quills, duplicate key-boards, complicated devices for imitating orchestral instruments. It reached the utmost development possible, while missing the discovery of a better instrument than the harpsichord and jack. Frederick the Great had one made for him in London at a cost of two hundred guineas; its bridges, pedals, and frame were silver, its front was tortoise shell, and its case was mahogany. A harpsichord by Hans Ruckers—claimed to have been Handel's, although the claim is contested—is preserved in London. It is six feet eight inches long, three feet high, and three wide, with two manuals of about five octaves each; the case in deal, black and japanned, the sounding-board is unjangged, and the lid bears inscriptions in Latin on the under side.—Julius Wilcox, in Harper's Magazine for May.

A GRASS CUTTER.

An Indian story. A grass cutter, with a net bag under his arm, who was going to cut grass in a field with his sickle, meeting with a few men seated by the road side engaged in earnest conversation, and hearing them mention, "That the man who trusts in God never fails to receive his share of food daily," thought in his own mind that there was no longer any necessity for him to go and cut grass. So, abandoning his work, he sat quietly for two days in the expectation that God would send him his food. But though he did not find that his trust in God was rewarded, he was not discouraged, but made up his mind to continue in that place, and sat expectant for a few days longer, believing that what he had heard from the lips of several honest men could not be wholly false, but that many of them must have experienced the truth of it in their own lives. While he was thus seated, silently meditating, an angel was seen to descend and ask him what he was doing there?

"I am trying if what I heard be true or not. I have heard that God sends food to those who place their trust in him."

"I am commissioned to inquire what you want?"

"I want nothing more than a loaf and a cup of water."

The angel requested him to suspend his net and sickle to the branch of a tree under which he was seated, promising to supply him with his requirements; and the bread and water was found ready, placed for him regularly as each day revolved in its course. A "Badsha" (king), who had gone out for an evening promenade, seeing a dead camel lying in his path, asked the men who surrounded him, "Why it was lying so helplessly?" They answered, "It was dead." When the "Badsha" asked, Why it did not move and go about? they told him that the life which had animated the animal and caused his movements and actions had departed, hence the body was brought to that state of helplessness. The "Badsha" reflected that if this was the condition to which life was finally reduced, his wealth and kingdom were not worth keeping. With this idea he dressed himself as a fakir, and went away from his country, wandering about in sadness and recklessness. Approaching the spot where the grass-cutter was seated beneath a tree, from the branch of which his net and sickle were suspended, the "Badsha" thought of resting himself for a while; but the grass-cutter, seeing a stranger approaching him just at the hour when he was expecting his loaf and water, looked on him with displeasure. He requested that the stranger would go to a distance, and rest himself under the next tree, as the one to which he had come was previously occupied. The "Badsha," not willing to dispute such small matters with a person who lacked courtesy and did not possess a grain of sense, quitted it as he was bid. When the supernatural visitor came, who had brought the grass-cutter his usual diet, he furnished the "Badsha" with rich and varied viands. Witnessing this distinction made between them, the grass-cutter murmured, saying to him-

self, "I have trusted in God so long and am receiving only a loaf and a cup of water, while that fellow, who has for the first day commenced to place his confidence in him, is treated so sumptuously." The angel, being acquainted with his thoughts, observed that the "Badsha" had abdicated his throne, wealth and kingdom for the service of God, and having made such large sacrifices, was treated according to his position in life. There was no injustice done to him, for what he had asked he received, and he was not more sparingly fed than he was before in his former position in the world. There was no reason, the angel added, for his murmuring and envying the prosperity of others. If he were dissatisfied with his position, all he had to do was to take down his net and sickle from the tree and resume his former labor.—By the Rev. Mrs. J. D. Brown.

FAMILY READING THE BREATH OF SPRING.

BY MARY A. LATHBURY. The Spring is here! The Spring is here! The bluebird's notes are in my ear, The hills stand wrapped in golden dreams The budding willows kiss the streams.

Whence came the spring so early sought, So lately found? Who listening caught Her first faint foot-fall in the land? Who felt the first touch of her hand?

I know where first the young Spring stood, 'T was at the border of a wood, Where sunward sloping fields beneath First felt the warm touch of her breath.

Old winter saw her there, and crept With faltering feet away and wept; The icy scepter in his hand Was yielding to the willow wand.

He heard amid-fields where he stood A clear voice thrilling through the wood: 'Blow, breath of Spring! sweet south wind, blow! Spring cometh with the melting snow.'

Tuan turned the dying king and cast His life into one breath—the last. But throngs of bright-winged zephyrs rolled Its frosts away in mists of gold.

His dim eye sees the flash of wings, In his dull ear the bluebird sings; All nature feels a quickening breath, And life is singing over Death.

A WHITE SQUALL.

Some years ago two large ships met in mid ocean, one heading for Australia and the other homeward bound. The day was fair, and the wind dying away, the vessels were becalmed close together. The passengers at once busied themselves to write letters home, and officers and crew became occupied in the interchanges of courtesies. The placidity of the weather led to a feeling of careless security that can never be safely indulged in at sea. All the canvass was set, idly flapping against the masts, when a terrific squall struck both ships and passed off in a few moments.

When the confusion and excitement resulting from it was over, and the crew of one of these vessels was able to relax the attention demanded for their own safety they looked to see what damage the other vessel had received, but they looked in vain. She had gone down with all on board, and not a vestige of her was to be seen anywhere on the wide sea, which looked serene and beautiful as if nothing had happened.—S. G. W. Benjamin, in Multitudinous Seas.

THE LOGIC OF A HOLY LIFE.

Some years ago a young man, who gave clear evidence that he was truly a subject of the regenerating grace of God, was asked what had led to the change in him, as he had been wild and thoughtless. Was it any sermon or book that had impressed him? He promptly answered "No!" "What was it, then?" Did any one speak to you specially on the subject of religion?" The same response was given "Will you then state what first led you to think of your soul's eternal welfare?" The reply was: "I live in the same boarding-house, and eat at the same table with J— Y—." "Well, did he ever talk to you about your soul?" "No, never till I sought an interview with him," was the reply. "But," he continued, "there was a sweetness in his disposition, a heavenly-mindedness, a holy aroma about his whole life and demeanor, that made one feel that he had a source of comfort and peace and happiness to which I was a stranger. There was a daily beauty in his life that made me ugly. I became more and more dissatisfied with my self every time I saw him; and though as I said, he never spoke to me on the subject of personal religion till I myself sought the interview, yet his whole life was a constant sermon to me. He was a living epistle, speaking by action so clearly that I could resist no longer; and accordingly I went and sought an interview with him. We held repeated conversations with each other. Then he pointed me to Jesus Christ, prayed with me, counseled me, watched over me."—Chris. Ad.

A CHILD SAVED.

Some years ago a Pacific steamer took fire. The burning vessel was headed for the shore, which was not far distant. The only thought of the passengers was self-preservation. One man was returning home from California with a treasure of gold, the result of years of toil and sacrifice, had just buckled his belt containing his gold around him, and was preparing to leap into the water and swim to the shore, when he was addressed by a little girl: "Sir can you swim?" said she. "Yes my child," responded the man. "And won't you please, sir, save me?" The request sent a thrill to his heart. He knew he could not save the child and his gold too. One or both must be lost. It was a question to be decided in a moment—a question which involved the saving of a life or the loss of the savings of his life. It was an instantaneous but mighty struggle. Yet manhood, humanity, self-sacrifice, conquered. He unbuckled his belt. He cast his gold aside. He took the little child in his arms and plunged into the water. A child was saved but the gold was lost.

BIBLE

SECOND QUARTER

B. C. 710. LEV. KINGDOM. Micah 4. 1.

EXPLANATION

Verse 1. But the chapter and where they are, this prophecy, ally, "at the close of the per-gospel dispensation, is the God's grace. times which days." Mount including the ordinate hill of ple was standing Church of Christ over all the "a thing established and per- The cause of liated fact, not by men." To head of the m beholds Mount enlarged to lea Jerusalem, a pe cate the coming of God's cause stands in prom the lands of ea The prophet's throning hosts church pouring the order of n the rivers were the heights of God.

2. Many nations the Gospel dist to one race, bu of the world." picture is not territory by co tary desire of 6. "So the ch; those who choo and enjoy its pr would be taught him." He wi clauses should may teach us that we may w should drink at God's ways from needful not on God, but also law shall go for Zion, and Z "Christ's Church and truth to all

3. He shall judge between prophet looks God's word, and shall be evoked cos of nations, bloody wars of template the in Europe, it will must still be fa comprision of 1 —1. That was ancient times, the normal c peace was only nite time, while in relation be war is only oc tion at present out at least not in its cause. arbitration is ne tions in the s; bke strong na way among the compliance an steady protest doing. Swor plow of Orie wood, and tipp such a shap transformed i and back aga peace. Prun ed to long han grapevines. N childhood of t nations were its intelligent avoided throu the principles shall they learn vances, the pr less and less. population an are less than diers, and the to keep order dians.

4, 5. Under tree are seen every Oriach which much of A time of q