

*THE LITTLE WANDERER'S GRAVE.

The conquering hosts with torch and sword,
Spread ruin far and wide,
The cheerful home and friendly board,
Sink in the fiery tide.
The wife and child are forced to flee
Before the invader's breath,
The rich, the poor, the bond and free
Make their escape from death.

The murky sky is overcast,
The twilight gray is gone,
The heavy pine nods to the blast
That slowly howls along.
Beside the road in forest old,
With hearts and minds distressed,
These weary exiles, faint and cold,
Sink slowly down to rest.

The camp fire feebly dies away,
The faithful dog keeps watch,
Awaiting all 'till dawn of day,
Then to the tollsome march.
To one in this despairing throng
Sleep brings no rosy dream,
Sadly she hears the rippling song
That glides along the stream.

Her infant to her bosom pressed
Expres within her arms,
She shrieks, oh God! 'tis for the best,
'Tis free from war's alarms,
Far, far away from babe and wife,
Defending hearth and home,
Its father leads in mortal strife
On fields of bloody gloom.

Its tiny grave is quickly made
Beside an aged pine:
Low in the silent gloomy shade
Her babe forever sleeps
O'er the little mound she twines
An immortelle with care;
Its requiem, the sighing pines,
Its dirge, a mother's prayer.

VETERAN.

* See "The Southern Side," page 270, by R. Randolph Stevenson, M.D., on General Sherman's March through Georgia and South Carolina, in 1865.

[FOR THE CRITIC.]

TRIFLES—WISE AND OTHERWISE.

Not long ago, I read in some journal a note asking if there is an English parody of Longfellow's "Village Blacksmith." I have since learnt incidentally that "The Low Bohemian," which was published in *London Truth* the latter part of 1878, is such a parody. Its opening lines are:—

"Before the Cheshire Cheese's bar,
The quaint Bohemian stands;
A sallow, seedy man is he,
With ever-musty hands;
And there, as jolly as a tar,
He four of 'Cork' demands."

An amusing little anecdote is the following, found in Mr. Kirkpatrick's *Life of the Very Rev. Thomas N. Burke*: At a grand Vatican love for visitors, the Pope turned to "Thomas Nick" for information as to the antecedents of several persons present. "Thomas, my son, who may this stranger be?" "The Duchess of Leeds, your Holiness." "What a fine, but what a colossal figure." "Yes, Holy Father; faith moves mountains." Now, there are few, if any places in the world where a misapplication of Sacred Scripture appears more ludicrous than beneath the very roof of the Vatican. Mr. Kirkpatrick says: "We will not say that His Holiness laughed; but perhaps we may say that he could not fail to appreciate the aptness of the scriptural citation."

In "*Ocean: or, England and Her Colonies*," Mr. Froude (James A.) has given the public a book that embodies what he learnt in an eighteen months' tour around the world, but it is a work far above the ordinary book of travel. Now and then he goes beyond mere description and narration, and gives us his thoughts on recent and expected political events; and then he gives us much shrewd philosophy and sound common sense. Mr. Froude cannot long endure as an historian; either he is averse to the fullest independent research after facts, or he takes too much liberty with what he has ascertained to be facts. But let him state the facts accurately with respect to a recent event (in regard to which few men will, or can afford to, blunder) and he discourses upon them with admirable clearness and ability.

Mr. F. possesses the happy faculty of conveying a striking truth in one short and unpretending sentence. For instance: "Who knows what would be the status of our 'great' men if they had lived in other times and under other circumstances?" This is indeed suggestive. Put Darwin in Russia in 1830, and he will soon be hurried off to die in obscurity in Siberia. If George Washington had lived in England he probably would never have been anything more than a respectable squire. If a Louis Quatorze should arise in the France of to-day, a Parisian rabble would effectually nip him in his teens.

Again, Mr. F. says: "A nation's greatness, whether it be great or little, depends entirely on the sort of men and women that it is producing." Axiomatic though this may appear to many, to the despoliation of it may be traced some of the worst ills that have afflicted the body politic in various countries, more especially in erratic, unfortunate France. A sound nation is a nation that is composed of sound human beings, healthy in body, strong of limb, true in word and deed,—brave, sober, temperate, chaste, to whom

virtue is of more importance than wealth or knowledge—who: duty is first and the rights of man are second. All wise statesmen look first, in the ordering of their national affairs, to the effect which is being produced on character; and institutions, callings, occupations, habits, are measured and estimated first, and beyond every other consideration, by this test. The commonwealth is the common weal—common health—common wellness. No nation can prosper long which attaches to its *wealth* an other meaning; yet, as Aristotle observed long ago, in democracies this is always forgotten. They may not deny it in words, but they assume the political liberty once secured, all else that is good will follow of itself.

SANTOR-RESANTUS, JR.

OUR BOSTON LETTER.

Boston, Mass., April 26, 1886.—The talk of the hour is the labor question. All other matters of national, state or municipal importance are overshadowed by this, not even excepting the fishery question, which, in New England at least, is one of pretty large proportions. Not only in Boston, but all over the country the present mighty conflict between labor and capital is having its effect. In this city, while the battle between the workers and the capitalists has been of sufficient magnitude to paralyze a city of smaller dimensions and fewer resources, it has been as nothing at all compared with the serious aspect it has assumed in various other parts of the country, as the telegraph has of course kept you informed. The time has never been when the workmen of the United States were so well and powerfully organized as they are at the present time, and the question what the present revolution is to eventually bring forth is a nut that is too hard for even the most prophetic souls to crack. One thing is very certain, and that is, the future will without doubt witness fewer men grow up with hundreds of millions of dollars under their control than are at present in the country. When insinuations are openly made in the House of Congress, the highest tribunal in the land, that it would be better that Jay Gould should hang from a lamp-post than that the country should be torn up incessantly by such demoralizing labor troubles, it would seem that we were on the eve of a new order of things. Whether it will be a healthier one or not is a matter of opinion. In these modern days uneasy lies the head whose owner is the sole and exclusive proprietor of millions. This present labor incubus is the only thing that stands in the way of a season of general prosperity. The business boom is ready to roll and has been ready for some time, but its wheels are clogged by the stumbling-block of Strike. This isn't going to interfere with the summer carnival at Halifax next year, however.

All the local papers, or at any rate the greater portion of them, comment editorially on the present anti-union movement in the land of the Bluecross. They seem to have "caught on" to the gravity of the situation and understand the important, though indirect, bearing it has to the interests of this part of the country. Like Ko-Ko in the "Mikado," they are inclined to exclaim, "Here's a state of things!"

Easter Sunday was observed here with even more than usual ceremony, and flowers and music made all the churches very Paradises on earth. Thousands of dollars are annually spent on Easter decorations for the churches of this city, and it must be admitted, that, judging from the beautiful effect produced, the money is well spent.

The Easter bonnets, I noticed, were no less gorgeous than the flowers in the different places of worship. I have not had time to make a computation of what they cost.

The annual Spring influx from the Provinces is again seen in the land, and round-eyed Nova Scotian and Prince Edward Island maidens will ere long once more be seen in the streets of the Hub, gazing with awe and admiration at its many wonders.

If the signs of the times are not very much misleading, Massachusetts is soon again to be a prohibition State. The temperance sentiment is growing apace all through the country towns and villages, and even some of the large cities in the interior have this year voted against licensing the liquor traffic. Of course it is entirely unnecessary for me to state that Boston has not voted this way; but the other communities will overrule it one of these days. And not a very distant day, either.

The weather is spring-like, and the cherry trees are in blossom.

T. F. A.

[FOR THE CRITIC.]

SENSITIVENESS OF PHOTOGRAPHIC PLATES.

The following experiments have been made with commercial dry plates by various makers. My object in the first instance was to obtain a comparison between the sensitiveness of the eye and the sensitiveness of the photographic film, for detecting small differences of illumination. With the eye a difference of one-sixtieth in the intensity of the illumination of two adjacent fields can be detected when the illumination is not too brilliant or too faint, and when the illuminated areas are of sufficient extent.

Fechner has shown that there is a physiological connection between the brightness of the illuminated fields and the difference of illumination which can be detected. He estimated that under the most favorable conditions a difference of one per cent. of illumination could be detected. And from the experiments of Helmholtz and others, there is no doubt that a difference of one-sixtieth can be recognized with certainty.

In order to make such a comparison, successive exposures of equal duration may be made on adjacent parts of the same plate, and the source of light removed through a measured distance between the exposures; or, if a connection can be established between the density of the photographic trace impressed upon the plate and the duration of the exposure, different