

hardly the same poem now that it was when it first thrilled the world in the reading.

Mrs. Browning is given to similar post-publication alterations, and nothing could be more provoking. When people have come to know a poem or a line, it becomes in a sense their own property, and any alteration, even though it works improvement, seems a sort of wrong to the reader, forever spoiling the poets' gift to him.

Woodsworth made his poetry during his long morning walks, and upon returning would go to bed, and dictate to an amanuensis while he ate his simple breakfast.

Mr. Dickens once said to a friend that he always arranged the catastrophe of a story in his mind before thinking of any other part of it, and that the events leading to it were made solely for that purpose. To this, however, the 'Pickwick Papers' was clearly an exception, as every reader would discover, even without the history of that work which Mr. Dickens had himself given us. From the fact that at his death no memoranda of any importance with regard to his unfinished 'Mystery of Edwin Drood' were found among his papers, it seems probable that Mr. Dickens worked almost entirely without notes. Sheridan, on the other hand, made copious memoranda; and not only so, but he carefully wrought out his ideas in his note books, altering and improving them from time to time until finally they were ready to be transferred from their nursery to his books or his speeches. His note-books thus became quite as interesting as any of his published works. We find in them not only the germs of his most brilliant witticisms, but also the witticisms themselves in every stage of their growth, from the first crude conception to the finished epigram. He made notes, too, of the various characters he intended to introduce into his dramas, and these also underwent many changes while yet in the note-book stage of their existence.

Sir Walter Scott never found composition so easy as when children were playing in the room with him; while Bulwer, on the other hand, thought absolute solitude necessary to successful literary work.

Gems of Thought.—Don't worry yourself about another man's business. A little unselfishness is sometimes commendable. Don't attempt to punish all your enemies at once. You can't do a large business with a small capital. Don't imagine you can correct all the evils in the world. A grain of sand is not prominent in a desert. Wives and mothers should always strive to make home happy, so that it may be a place of pleasure for the husband and father. It has been remembered that "no statue which the rich man places ostentatiously in his windows is to be compared to the little expectant faces pressed against the windowpanes watching for father, when his day's occupation is done." How much is contained in that one word "happiness!" How much more happiness there would be if we thought of the happiness of others rather than of our own? But, instead, we are often so selfish in looking out for our own pleasures, that there is not much room left in our hearts to think of anybody else. It is a good and safe rule to sojourn in every place as if you meant to spend your life there, never omitting an opportunity of doing a kindness, or speaking a true word, or making a friend. Seeds thus sown by the wayside often bring forth abundant harvests.

"Mother."—It is the cry of the infant, just from the cradle; it is the only balm that will heal the wounded heart in youthful days. 'Mother, I'm hurt;' 'Mother, I'm tired,' 'Mother sing to me, rock me tell me stories.' It is always 'Mother,' with the child and the lad. No one like mother. No hand that falls on the fevered brow so softly as hers; no words so sympathetic as those that pass her lips. The house would be a grave without her. Life would be a dreary, thorny road without her warning voice and guiding hand. A father may be kind, may love none less, but the wearied child wants the mother's arms, her lullaby songs; the caresses of her gentle hand. All childhood is a mixture of tears and joys. A kind word brings a smile, a harsh word a sigh, a fall is pain, a toss, a joy. The first footsteps weak and trembling grow stronger by the guidance of a mother's love. The little wounds, the torn clothes, the headaches, and heartaches, the trials, all vanish at the words of a mother, and there is built up in the heart of every man an edifice of love and respect that no crime can topple down—no dungeon can effect. And a lad grows to be a man only to find that mother is the same. If he errs, she weeps; if he is good and manly she rejoices. Hers is the only

love that lasts—endures forever. The wolf of starvation may enter the door, but her love is only tried to shine the brighter. All the world may call her son a criminal, but the mother only believes it not. Trial may beset you, storms gather over you, vexations come, ruin drags you down, but there is one who ever stands firm in your cause, who will never leave you. The criminal on the scaffold has suffered in feeling because his bad deeds would cause a pang to his mother's heart. The low and wretched dying in some dark abode of sin, have died with that name on their lips. There is no praise like her praise there are no sad tears that pain us so much as hers.

Weather Proverbs.—Throughout the northern countries of Europe July is always regarded as the hottest month of the year, although the sun has already commenced its downward course. As is well known, the so called Dog-Days begin on the 3d of July and continue into August, during which time great heat unfrequently prevails. The husbandman looks for calm and bright weather diversified by mild showers of rain to bring on his crop in due season,

"July, God send the calm and fayre,
That happy harvest we may see,
With quiet tyme and hearthsome ayer,
And man to God may thankful bee."

"A shower of rain in July, when the corn begins to fill,
Is worth a plough of oxen and all belongs there till.

"No tempest, good July,
Lest corn come off blue by (mildew)."

There is a general belief that during July a spell of fine or wet weather may be expected—the former if the spring has been wet, the latter if dry. This is the result of accurate observation, and cannot be gainsayed; but unfortunately the proverbs embodying this idea have been attached to particular days, which in themselves cannot, of course have any effect on the succeeding weather. The special days are July 13th, 15th, and 27th, the latter of which is 'Old' Saint Swithin's Day. They all point out to the particular weather on those days as heralding a duration of summer weather.

"If the first of July be rainy weather,
It will rain more or less for four weeks together.
"If Billion's Day be dry there will be a good harvest."
"If the deer rise dry and lie down dry on Billion's Day,
There will be a good harvest.

The last special day is sacred to St. Swithin on whom great reliance is placed by the common people. Observations during several years prove, as might be expected, that this confidence is not warranted so far as the particular day is concerned, but that a spell of dry or wet weather is very common about this time. Consequently, if the proverbs connected with this day are transferred to the three or four days collectively on each side of it, the general weather experienced throughout that week is no bad index to that of the future.

"St. Swithin's Day, if thou dost rain,
For forty days it will remain;
St. Swithin's Day, if thou be fair,
For forty days 'twill rain nae mair.

"If Swithin greets, the proverb says,
The weather will be foul for forty days."

"In this month is St. Swithin's Day,
On which if that it rain, they say,
Full forty days after it will
One more or less some rain distill."

The same day belongs to two other saints, Processus and St. Martin; and a Latin proverb tells us that 'it suffocates the corn if it rains on the feast of St. Processus and St. Martin.' The homely saying, 'St. Swithin is christening the apples, applied to rain on that day is a fitting conclusion to the proverbs of this month.—*Leisure Hour for July.*