

CHOICE LITERATURE.

SPEAK NAE ILL.

Other people have their faults,
And so have ye as well,
But all ye chance to see or hear,
Ye have nae right to tell.

If ye canna speak o' good,
Take care, and see, and feel,
Earth has all too much o' woe,
And not enough o' weal.

Be careful that ye make nae strife
Wi' meddling tongue and brain,
For ye will find enough to do
If ye but look at hame.

If ye canna speak o' good
O! dinna speak at all,
For there is grief and woe enough
On this terrestrial ball.

If ye should feel like picking flaws,
Ye better go, I ween,
And read the Book that tells ye all
About the mote and beam.

Dinna lend a ready ear
To gossip or to strife,
Or, perhaps, 'twill make for ye
Nae funny thing of life.

O! dinna add to others' woe,
Nor mock it with your mirth,
But give ye kindly sympathy
To suffering ones of earth.

THE DRUMMER BOY.

One cold December morning about eighty years ago, a party of tourists were crossing the Alps—and a pretty large party, too, for there were several thousands of them together. Some were riding, some walking, and most of them had knapsacks on their shoulders, like many Alpine tourists now-a-days. But instead of walking sticks they carried muskets and bayonets, and dragged along with them fifty or sixty cannon.

In fact, these tourists were nothing less than a French army; and a very hard time of it they seemed to be having. Trying work certainly, even for the strongest man, to wade for miles through knee-deep snow in this bitter frost and biting wind, along these narrow, slippery mountain-paths; with precipices hundreds of feet deep all round. The soldiers looked thin and heavy-eyed for want of food and sleep, and the poor horses that were dragging the heavy guns stumbled at every step.

But there was one among them who seemed quite to enjoy the rough marching, and tramped along through the deep snow and cold, gray mist—through which the great mountain peaks overhead loomed like shadowy giants—as merrily as if he were going to a picnic. This was a little drummer-boy of ten years old, whose fresh, rosy face looked very bright and pretty among the grim, scarred visages of the old soldiers. When the cutting wind whirled a shower of snow in his face he dashed it away with a cheery laugh, and awoke all the echoes with the lively rattling of his drum, till it seemed as if the huge black rocks around were all singing in chorus.

"Bravo, Petit Tambour!" (little drummer) cried a tall man in a shabby gray cloak, who was marching at the head of the line, with a long pole in his hand, and striking it into the snow every now and then, to see how deep it was. "Bravo, Pierre, my boy. With such music as that one could march all the way to Moscow."

The boy smiled, and raised his hand to his cap in salute, for this rough-looking man was no other than the general himself, "Fighting Macdonald," one of the bravest soldiers in France, of whom his men used to say that one sight of his face in battle was worth a whole regiment.

"Long live our general," shouted a hoarse voice, and the cheer, flying from mouth to mouth, rolled along the silent mountains like a peal of distant thunder.

But its echo had hardly died away when the silence was again broken by another sound of a very different kind—a strange, uncanny sort of whispering far away up the great white side. Moment by moment it grew louder and harsher, till at length it swelled into a deep, hoarse roar.

"On your faces, lads!" roared the general; "it's an avalanche!"

But, before his men had time to obey, the ruin was upon them. Down thundered the great mass of snow, sweeping the narrow ledge path like a waterfall, and crashing down along with it came heaps of stones and gravel and loose earth, and uprooted bushes, and great blocks of cold blue ice. For a moment all was dark as night; and when the rush had passed, many of the brave fellows who had been standing on the path were nowhere to be seen. They had been carried down over the precipice, and either killed or buried alive in the snow.

But the first thought of their comrades was not for them. When it was seen what had happened one cry arose from every mouth:

"Where's our Pierre? Where's our little drummer?"
Where, indeed? Look which way they would, nothing was to be seen of their poor little favourite, and when they shouted his name there was no answer. Then there broke forth a terrible cry of grief, and many a hard old soldier, who had looked without flinching at a line of levelled muskets, felt the tears start that that face would never be seen among them again.

But all at once, far below them, out of the shadows of the black unknown gulf that lay between those tremendous

rocks, arose the faint roll of a drum, beating the charge. The soldiers started and bent eagerly forward to listen; then up went a shout that shook the air.

"He's alive, comrades! our Pierre's alive after all!"
"And beating his drum still, like a brave lad! He wanted to have the old music to the last!"

"But we must save him, lads, or he'll freeze to death down there. He must be saved!"

"He shall be!" broke in a deep voice from behind, and the general himself was seen standing on the brink of the precipice, throwing off his cloak.

"No, no, general!" cried the grenadiers with one voice; "you mustn't run such a risk as that. Let one of us go instead; your life is worth more than all of ours put together."

"My soldiers are my children," answered Macdonald quietly, "and no father grudges his own life to save his son."

The soldiers knew better than to make any more objections. They obeyed in silence, and the general was swinging in mid air, down, down, down, till he vanished at last into the darkness of the cold, black depth below.

Then every man drew a long breath, and all eyes were strained to watch for the first sign of his appearing, for they knew well that he would never come back without the boy, and that the chances were terribly against him.

Meanwhile Macdonald, having landed safely at the foot of the precipice, was looking anxiously around in search of Pierre; but the beating of the drum had ceased, and he had nothing to guide him.

"Pierre!" shouted he, at the top of his voice, "where are you, my boy?"

"Here, general!" answered a weak voice, so faint that he could hardly distinguish it.

And there, sure enough was the little fellow's curly head, half buried in a huge mound of snow, which alone had saved him from being dashed to pieces against the rocks as he fell. Macdonald made for him at once; and although he sank waist deep at every step, reached the spot at last.

"All right now, my brave boy, said the general, cheerily, "put your arms around my neck and hold tight; we'll have you out of this in a minute."

The child tried to obey, but his stiffened fingers had lost all their strength; and even when Macdonald himself clasped the tiny arms around his neck their hold gave way directly.

What was to be done? A few minutes more, and the numbing cold of that dismal place would make the rescuer as powerless as him whom he came to rescue. But General Macdonald was not the man to be so easily beaten. Tearing off his sash and knotting one end of it to the rope, he bound Pierre and himself firmly together with the other, and then gave the signal to haul up.

And when the two came swinging into the daylight once more, and the soldiers saw their pet still alive and unhurt, cheer upon cheer rang out, rolling far back along the line, till the very mountains themselves seemed to be rejoicing.

"We've been under fire and snow together," said Macdonald, chafing the boy's cold hands tenderly, "and nothing shall part us two after this, so long as we both live."

And the general kept his word. Years later, when the great wars were all over, there might be seen walking in the garden of a quiet country house in the south of France a stooping, white-haired old man, who had once been the famous Marshal Macdonald; and he leaned for support upon the arm of a tall, black-moustached, soldier-like fellow, who had once been little Pierre, the drummer. — *Western Catholic.*

Deeds are powerful; mere words are weak,
Bat'ring at high Heaven's door.
Let thy love by actions speak;
Wipe the tears from sorrow's cheek;
Clothe the poor.

THE STRUGGLE FOR GENTILITY.

In all our great cities the rush for mental labour and sedentary pursuits, with the view to avoid manual toil, is tremendous. At whatever cost of self-abasement, the glittering bauble of gentility is sought for by American-born young men, so that it may not be said, "He is only a mechanic!" They forget, or have never been taught, that the greatest men of the age have sprung from the working men. Eventually success in early life is a question of brains, not position. Let those in search of clerkships and other similar situations remember this great truth. Why should the badge of serfdom be assumed by those who choose to work where they are not really needed, in preference to where they are? By such a course nobility of soul is sacrificed and a recompense at starvation rates is accepted, in order that the snivelling mendicant may have the world say that he is engaged in a respectable vocation—one that exempts him from manual labour. Shame on such a false standard of public opinion!

The trouble is that more persons insist upon living by commercial pursuits, literature, or in some other way that involves but little manual effort, than can possibly find employment. They can only find it by taking it from some one else. Many succumb to the worst forms of vice under the pressure of absolute want. They run into temptation, and make that temptation an excuse for pauperism and crime. Let the young men of this land get an education if they possibly can, but by all means let them learn a trade.

AN English Bible in 1274 cost £33 6s. 8d., and in 1832, 1s. 4d.

THE Rev. Dr. Fisch, of Paris, says that four million copies of the Scriptures have been sold in France; that all the young men in the army have been taught to read the gospel of John, and that 500,000 young men know that gospel by heart; and that 100,000 soldiers driven into Protestant Switzerland during the late war have returned to France, each with a New Testament and various religious tracts.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN ITEMS.

INVITATIONS have been sent out for a Socialist Congress in 1881, in Zurich.

THE expulsion of French Jesuits from Alsace-Lorraine has been ordered.

GREAT poverty in the interior of Russia is reported in the St. Petersburg journals.

THE Chilians captured Chimbote, in Peru, on the 10th ult., no resistance being offered.

IT is believed that the number of Christians in India, Ceylon, and Burmah increased 200,000 last year.

THE parliamentary opposition party in Greece is supporting the national armament. Forty thousand men are now under arms.

A PROCLAMATION has been issued in Ireland offering £1,000 reward for the apprehension of the murderers of Lord Mountmorris.

THIRTY feet of the masonry and an immense mass of rock has fallen in the St. Gothard tunnel. Four men were killed and many wounded.

THE Prussian Government is becoming alarmed about the Socialists, and warns the Saxon Government and Hamburg to take measures to secure peace.

THE Spanish Government has resolved to proceed against all priests who introduce politics into their sermons, and to dismiss all mayors who are notorious Carlists.

By an accident on the Pennsylvania Railroad, at Pittsburgh, on the evening of the 9th inst., twenty-eight persons were killed and twenty more are without hopes of recovery.

GENERAL ROBERTS, the hero of Afghanistan, is a staunch teetotaler, and almost every English regiment serving in the Afghan campaign has a Good Templar Lodge attached to it.

THE Italian Premier, Cairoli, has written to General Garibaldi in order to allay his resentment; but at the same time extra forces have been ordered to Genoa, where Garibaldi is now.

IT is reported that Great Britain has proposed that the allied fleet take Lemnos and Mitylene Islands in the Aegean Sea, and hold them as a pledge for the fulfilment of the Porte's note.

THE director of the Mint estimates that about \$28,000,000 in silver was coined during the last fiscal year, and that the production of silver will amount to about \$38,000,000, or \$2,000,000 less than the previous year.

DURING the sixty-four years of its existence the American Bible Society has issued 37,408,208 copies of the Holy Scriptures. During the last year, its issues were 1,366,133, of which all but 226,961 were circulated in America. The New Testament has been translated into Japanese, and part of the Old.

THE work of God in the city of Paris, of which we hear many satisfactory reports, is confronted by a work of Satan, which is as energetically carried on. It is said that six atheistic newspapers have been started this summer, and that one-half of the Parisians read no other kind of literature. This is the chief peril of the Republic.

BEHM & WAGNER, in their sixth issue of the "Population of the Earth," which recently appeared, estimate the total population at 1,455,923,450. Two years ago the estimate was about 1,439,000,000. Europe is assigned 315,929,000; Asia, 834,707,000; Africa, 205,679,000; Australia and Polynesia, 4,031,300; the Polar Regions, 82,000; the United States, 48,000,000.

THE Archbishop of Canterbury, in his charge at Maidstone, said it was important that candidates for the Church should have university training, and the clergymen should be preachers able to touch the heart. Young men who could not afford to pay the cost of university education should be rendered assistance. Increased attention should be devoted to the instruction of the young.

VERY cheering news has been received by the Established Church of Scotland from its Oriental Missions among the Jews. At Smyrna the missionary, the Rev. W. Charteris, writes that he has baptized a whole Jewish family, consisting of father and mother and two children and two young men. There are, he says, some inquirers eager for baptism, and the bonds of Rabbism appear to be loosening.

THE Synod of the Waldensian Church called "the Table" met at La Tour, in the valleys, on the 6th ult. About eighty members were present, and the opening sermon was preached by Pastor Gay, of Prarustin. On the second day of meeting the President introduced the Rev. Dr. Stewart, of Leghorn, as deputy from the Free Church of Scotland; and Mr. Boulnois, from the Presbyterian Church of England, who addressed the meeting.

THE question of legalizing marriages with a deceased wife's sister has been placed outside the arena of discussion by the Colony of New Zealand, Parliament, at its late session, having passed a bill making such marriages legal. It had several times passed the Lower House in previous sessions, but had always been rejected in the Upper by large majorities. This year it was introduced into the Upper House and carried by a fair majority, after which it passed without difficulty through the Lower.

DR. HANDCOCK, the well-known statistician, has given the crowning testimony to the working of the Sunday closing Act in Ireland. In analyzing the Criminal Returns, as far as relates to drunkenness, he shows that there has been a decrease for 1879 of no less than 8,702 in the number of arrests as compared with 1878; and in that year, when the Act had only been in force three months, there was a decrease, as against 1877, of 3,180. No wonder we look back with kindly memories to the late Professor Smyth, M.P., to whose talent, tact, and character the success of that measure was so largely due.