

OUR TABLE.

REVERIES OF A BACHELOR, OR A BOOK OF THE HEART,—BY I. K. MARVEL, NEW YORK: BAKER & SCRIBNER, 1851. pp. 298.

The book before us consists of four reveries; the first *over a wood fire* in the country; the second *by a city grate*; the third *over his cigar*; and the fourth *under the oaks*, upon one of the first warm days of May. The author in a very modest preface, describes the nature of his work. "This book," he says, "is neither more nor less than it pretends to be; it is a collection of those floating reveries which have, from time to time, drifted across my brain. I never met with a bachelor who had not his share of just such floating visions; and the only difference between us lies in the fact, that I have tossed them from me in the shape of a book." We suspect, I. K. Marvel, that there is a much wider difference between you and the majority of bachelor-dom than you so modestly suppose. While you have tossed your reveries from you in the form of a delightful book, the rest are mostly but poor dumb creatures; conscious that something is wanting, but without any very distinct idea what it is.

We do not think it too great praise to say, that if all bachelors could have met in conclave, and chosen one of their number as an exponent, they could not have selected a better than the author of this little volume. He is evidently one of those rare souls, who are not content with the vanities of this world; not willing to look on the surface of things, but constrained to taste the realities of life. The author calls his work "a Book of the Heart;" and he has done well so to name it. Not in vain, in his quiet reveries, has he looked upon that mystery, the human heart. He has sketched it under the influence of the tenderest passions, hope, love, grief; and most truthful pictures has he drawn. There is no exaggeration, no false sentimentality, no straining for effect, but all is natural and therefore beautiful.

It would be impossible to give, in our limited space, any extracts that would do justice to the book; if we began to quote its passages of quiet and touching beauty, we should hardly know where to end. We hope the few extracts we shall give, as specimens of the author's style may induce

our readers to read this charming little volume for themselves. We have taken them almost at random, and given them titles to suit our own fancy. As the first reverie has already appeared in some of the magazines, we confine our quotations to the others.

THE BACHELOR'S IDEAL OF A HOME-ANGEL.

"There she sits, by the corner of the fire, in a neat home-dress of sober, yet most adorning colour. A little bit of lace ruffle is gathered about the neck by a blue ribbon; and the ends of the ribbon are crossed under the dimpling chin, and are fastened neatly by a simple unpretending brooch—your gift. The arm, a pretty taper arm, lies over the carved elbow of the oaken chair; the hand, white and delicate, sustains a little home volume that hangs from her fingers. The forefinger is between the leaves, the others lie in relief upon the dark embossed cover. She repeats in a silver voice, a line that has attracted her fancy; and you listen—or at any rate seem to listen—with your eyes now on the lips, now on the forehead, and now on the finger, where glitters like a star, the marriage ring—little gold band, at which she does not chafe, that tells you, she is yours!"

WEALTH.

"But wealth is a great means of refinement; and it is a security for gentleness, since it removes disturbing anxieties; and it is a pretty promoter of intelligence, since it multiplies the avenues for its reception; and it is a good basis for a generous habit of life; it even equips beauty, neither hardening its hand with toil, nor tempting the wrinkles to come early. But whether it provokes greatly that returning passion,—that abnegation of soul,—that sweet trustfulness, and abiding affection, which are to clothe your heart with joy, is far more doubtful. Wealth, while it gives so much, asks much in return; and the soul that is grateful to *mammon* is not over ready to be grateful for intensity of love. It is hard to gratify those who have nothing left to gratify."

PAST AND PRESENT.

"The noon is short; the sun never loiters on the meridian, nor does the shadow on the old dial by