

MY GUARDIAN ANGEL.

This poem on the loss of a child, is almost Wordsworthian in its simple beauty:—

There are more sights than eye can see,
More sounds than ear can hear,
Sweet phantoms of the memory,
Which greet us everywhere.

We meet them in the glare of day,
We hear them in the night;
And subtler than a fabled fay
They flit before our sight.

'Tis not a poet's dream, I know,
That pictures things divine;
All have their guardian sprites, I tro
I feel that I have mine.

With lamb-like look, the precious dear,
So fondly she will smile!
And then her pleading, how sincere,
How winsome is her wile!

Sometimes she leads me by the hand,
Where daisy-blossoms grow,
Then down upon the golden sand
I hear the maiden crow.

Around a hat and cloak she wears,
And shakes a mass of curls,
And then, with eyes suffused with tears,
I kiss all little girls.

At other seasons she will come
In pure celestial white,
Then Heaven is found within my home,
And faith gives place to sight.

ATS.

MR. Henry Melton, hatter by special appointment to the Royal Family of England, also to his Imperial Majesty of France, also to the king of Denmark, also to various other kings, princes, and nobles, has written a book upon hats. It is not a trade advertisement, it is not eighteenth pennyworth of puffing, but it is a shrewd, witty, intelligent, and valuable addition to the history and economy of costume. He tells us something of the derivation of the word *hat*, tracing it to the Saxon *haet*, and how from this parent stock the German gets his *huten*, the Swede his *hatt*, the Dane his *hødt*, and the Dutch his *hoeden*. Lastly, he shows us that *hat* is the participle of the same verb as *head* itself, and means, as *head* does, something heaved or raised, as the head upon the shoulders, the hat upon the head. Scattered through the book there is much of antiquarian lore, unostentatiously put forward, and quaint quotations illustrative of the esteem in which the hat has been held, the recondite gleanings being offered on the altar of hat worship. "Why, Brummell," it was asked, "does an Englishman always look better dressed than a Frenchman?" "Tis the hat," was the answer of the oracle of fashion.

As to what a hat should be, Mr. Melton sums the desiderata:—It should be light, although of substance sufficient to restrain its shape; it should be waterproof; it should be made so as to ensure comfort; the shaping, blocking and trimming being merely matters of the taste and fashion of the period. It has been very much the custom to rail at the hat as costly, frail, ugly and uncomfortable, but Mr. Melton denies all this. "It costs," he says, "in a year less than any other part of one's dress. Its frailty is quite a matter of option, and it can be made so light as to weigh only 2½ ounces, or pretty nearly as strong as oak. It does not let in the rain, it does keep the sun from the head, and when made a fair width in the brim protects the eyes from the sun. That it may attract the wind, I admit, but that is counterbalanced by the fact of its affording the means of effecting perfect ventilation, which hats of the present day can be arranged to do, so as to defy any fault-finding upon that important point. That it has not every requisite—such as to travel or sleep in—I admit. I am constantly asked, 'Why do you not introduce something new to replace the hat?' But when I have opened upon the subject, the inquirer has lost all argument, and admitted that he dislikes the hat because other persons have expressed similar objections. In no instance have I received anything like a sound suggestion for improvement."

With regard to ladies' hats, Mr. Melton was the first to introduce them in felt, and they were soon imitated in straw and velvet. "An endless variety of

feathers," he says, "became the rage, and every species of small birds, as well as the wings and tails and breasts of the larger ones, were eagerly sought after. Good, indeed, need the memory be to remember the various names, which required a well-schooled ornithologist's fluent and flexible tongue to pronounce properly. A troublesome customer went into my friend's shop for a hat. His whole establishment was just at that time pretty nearly distracted with the bustle of business, as it was then the height of the London season. On the lady expressing great surprise at the price, the rarity of the feathers became the happy medium of an amicable and willing payment in the following manner:—The young person who had to explain became rather confused by her questions. This was too much for my friend, who happens to be the most excitable and quick man I ever met with, and seeing the fix his young lady was in, he left his desk with the object of rescuing her, and at once ventured to explain the rarity of the particular feather, about which he was enlarging when the lady customer modestly desired the name of the great curiosity. My friend was hit, and hard too, for he knew not, but with the quickness peculiar to his very ready, clever, and imaginative brain, not abashed at his position, he pronounced it to be—the wing of a diving peacock! The customer was as delighted as she was astonished, and paid the bill cheerfully."

Towards the close of his amusing little book, Mr. Melton makes his best bow to the ladies. He lays claim to the introduction of the fancy hats, and to the toxophilite, he says, he was indebted for the idea. Some of his patrons having worn drab felt Spanish hats, the thought struck him of endeavouring to break through the old traditional gentleman's hat with the cock feather for riding. It was a hard and laborious effort, but at last the spell was broken by the Queen of Holland ordering a hawking-hat for her Majesty which gained great approbation, and soon became very generally adopted. "Not contented with the sweetly pretty French ideas, ladies adopted them generally for walking, and then, as usual, in coquettish rivalry (stimulated, doubtless, by that naughty boy Cupid), they ran riot in extravagance of style. "Not," says Mr. Melton, "that I would wish to say that many, very many, have not been truly bewitching, and have doubtless made conquests by catching many a stolid heart that would not have dared to peep under a bonnet."

If Mr. Melton, in his professional capacity, were a resident of Montreal, we fancy that the reply to the popular inquiry—"Who's your hatter?" would be an irregularly monotonous one.

ANECDOTE OF LORD AYLMER.

WHEN Lord Aylmer was Governor General, he once went on an excursion to Gaspé. Amongst others who flocked there to welcome the representative of royalty, was a party of Micmac Indians numbering some five or six hundred. When his Excellency landed with a brilliant staff he was met by this respectable deputation of the aboriginal race. The chief, a fine powerful man surrounded by his principal warriors at once commenced a long oration delivered in the usual solemn, sing-song tone accompanied with frequent bowing of the head. It happened that a vessel had been wrecked some months previously in the Gulf, and the Indians, proving themselves ready and adroit wreckers had profited largely by the windfall. Among other ornaments which they had seized was a box full of labels for decanters, marked, in conspicuous characters, "Rum," "Gin," "Brandy," &c., &c. The chief had his head liberally encircled with tin ornaments of the usual kind, and, on this occasion, had dexterously affixed to his ears and nose some of the captured labels. At the beginning of the interview, these were not particularly discernible amid the novelty of the spectacle; and it was only while listening to the lengthened harangue of the savage chief that His Excellency began to scrutinize his appearance and dress; and then his eyes alighted on the appendages hanging from his ears and nose with the labels inscribed "Brandy," "Gin," "Rum," &c. Glancing towards his staff, he could no longer maintain his gravity, and was joined in a hearty but indecorous burst of unrestrained laughter. The indignant chief, with his followers, immediately withdrew, and would neither be pacified nor persuaded to return although the cause of his Excellency's ill-timed merriment was explained to him.

SUICIDE OF A HORSE.

A CORRESPONDENT writes:—A few days ago a poor creature, worn to skin and bone, put an end to his existence in a very extraordinary manner. His pedigree is unknown, as he was quite a stranger. A very worthy gentleman here met him in a public market, and thinking he could find employment for him, put him to work, but it was soon discovered that work was not his forte; in fact, he could do anything save work and do errands. His great delight was to roam about the fields and do mischief. People passing him used to ejaculate, "Ugh you ugly brute," when they saw the scowl which was continually on his face. His master tried to win him by kindness. He remembered the old song, "If I had a donkey that wouldn't go, do you think I'd wallop him? Oh no, no." The kindness was lost upon him. He next tried the whip, then the cudgel, but all in vain. Work he would not. And as a last resort the punishment of Nebuchadnezzar of old was tried. He was turned out of house and home to eat grass with the oxen. With hungry belly and broken heart, he wended his lonely way down by the shore, passed—turned the Moor's Point, and still held on his lonely way, regardless of the wondering gaze of the fishermen. At length he arrived at a point opposite the lighthouse, where he stood still; and while the curiosity of the fishermen was wound to the highest pitch as to what was to follow, he, neighing loudly and tossing his old tail, rushed madly into the foaming deep, got beyond his depth, held his head under the water, and soon ceased to be. The fishermen conveyed the true, although strange and startling tidings, to the respected owner, that his horse had committed suicide.

HOTTER THAN A RED HOT POKER.

A CORRESPONDENT of an English paper writes as follows:—"By the courtesy of my friend, the vicar of L—, I was enabled to accompany him over one of the extensive plate-glass works near the town; no, not over; I had purposed to see over the entire works, but I went not only to see, but to learn; and I was so enchanted almost at the very entrance, that I could get no further, and left my guide to proceed with the two young ladies who accompanied us. They went through the establishment, I remained at the entrance. Why did I remain behind? To try an experiment—a fearful one to the uninitiated; to plunge my hand, or rather the fore-finger of my left hand, into a mass, some twenty-five pounds, of molten glass; not red hot glass, but liquid metal glass at a white-glowing heat. I inquired of the score of hard—ing, intelligent men around me, and of the gentlemanly manager, if they dared venture on the experiment; they replied, "No." The vicar and the ladies were sent for, when, in their presence, as well as that of the men, I deliberately plunged my finger into the liquid fire, somewhat rapidly, but with no very great haste: it came out unscathed. The enterprising fellows around soon followed it up; some just dipping into the glowing mass; some, braver, plunging the hand right to the bottom of the ladle or small cauldron that held it; and none were burnt. How came this? I will explain the reason. Water constitutes the great bulk of our bodies. Mr. Frank Buckland merrily says we are merely some forty-five parts of charcoal mixed up with four or five parts of water. On plunging the hand into the heated mass, the intense heat converts the moisture of the skin into steam—thus forming a sort of halo round it—and prevents contact with the metallic fire. Let the mass be at but a dull-red heat, steam will not be generated, and on withdrawing the finger, a thimble will be the result; the glass will adhere to the fingers, with a terrible burn, and you'll feel peccari. This playing with fire is not new to me. I have tried the experiment with molten lead, and have not been injured. M. Boutigny was, I believe the first to call attention to the matter some time ago; he tried his finger in molten iron, I followed it up in lead. Soon afterwards Boutigny paid a visit to this country, and at some iron works in Norwich a caldron of iron in glowing fusion was prepared for him: he quietly divested himself of his coat, drew up his shirt-sleeve, removed the rings from his finger, and having plunged his hand and arm in cold water, coolly and calmly inserted them in the molten mass, and drew them steadily through it, and then out without the least injury. Directly I saw the liquid glass, the experiment flashed upon me, and I was desirous to try it with that material. The result was as I have narrated above.