

## A SNATCH.

For the tender beach and the sapling oak,  
That grow by the shadowy rill,  
You may cut down both at a single stroke,  
You may cut down which you will ;

But this you must know, that as long as they grow.  
Whatever change may be,  
You never can teach either oak or beech  
To be aught but a greenwood tree.

—THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK, in *Macmillan*.

## READINGS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE.

## AMIABILITY OF BEARS.

WHEN Bruin is pursuing anyone his attention is easily diverted, and many have escaped from his clutches by throwing a bundle or knapsack down when he is advancing upon them, for while he stops to examine it they gain time and distance. They play all sorts of antics ; an Indian traveller says that in one of his journeys some brown bears kept in front of his palanquin, tumbling about and playing as if expressly to afford him amusement. Climbing is a great delight to them, and one day one of them was seen ascending a scaffold for his own pleasure. At first he proceeded cautiously, examining the strength of all the joists ; at last he reached the top, which was 120 feet high. He seemed much pleased with his exploit, and after being applauded by the workmen he carefully descended in safety. The brown bear of Siberia may be considered the most good-natured of his tribe. Mr. Atkinson, who travelled in that country, relates that some peasants had one day lost two of their children, between four and six years of age. As soon as it was discovered that they had wandered far away, the disconsolate parents set off in search of them. Having proceeded some way through the wilds, they caught sight in the distance of a huge animal, which as they drew nearer they saw was a brown bear, and what was their horror to see within its clutches their dear lost ones. But their dismay was soon changed into amazement when they beheld the children running about, laughing round the bear, sometimes taking it by the paws, and sometimes pulling it by the tail. Bruin, apparently amused with their behaviour, treated them in the most affectionate manner. One of the children produced some fruit, with which he fed his shaggy playfellow, while the other climbed upon his back, and sat there urging the strange steed to move on. The parents gave way to cries of terror at seeing, as they thought, the danger to which their little ones were exposed. Whereupon the boy slipped off the bear's back, and the animal, hearing the sound of the parents' voices, left the children and quietly retreated into the forest.—*The Month*.

## AN INCIDENT OF WATERLOO.

The common story was that Cambronne, surrounded by the English cavalry and summoned to surrender, answered, "La Garde meurt mais ne se rend pas." The old General, to use his own language, said that was "d—d humbug!" The fact, as I remember the story, was this. It is well known that, at the end of the day, our Guards, with whom were brigaded some of the German legion, were lying down, half-concealed, only a few hundred yards from the French, before the last charge, when the Duke of Wellington, or, as some now affirm, Lord Seaton (then Sir John Colborne), said, "Up Guards, and at them." Cambronne was some way in front of his troops, reconnoitring on foot. Halkett determined to make a dash at him. He set spurs to his famous English hunter and made believe that he was run away with. One of our officers (I forget his name) had really been run away with, a short time before, right into the French cavalry lines, and had been taken prisoner. No doubt the enemy thought Halkett was run away with, for nobody shot at him. They thought they would have him safely without powder. The ruse succeeded. Halkett came up with Cambronne close to the French lines, seized him by the aiguillette, turned that side to the French, so that they dare not shoot for fear of hitting their General ; and so he brought his foe, at a round gallop—the grand general, who had the credit of saying, "La Garde meurt mais ne se rend pas"—puffing, and blowing, and shaking, as Halkett said, "with abject funk," back to his own lines, and delivered him to the provost-marshal.—REV. C. ALLIX WILKINSON : *Reminiscences of the Court and Times of King Ernest of Hanover*.

THERE is a drawing of the head of Charles I. in the library at St. John's College at Oxford, wholly composed of minute written characters, which at a small distance, resemble the lines of an engraving. The lines of the head and the ruff are said to contain the book of Psalms, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer.

REFERRING to the statement of the affairs of the Confederation Life Association, made at the annual meeting the other day, it will be seen that the death claims amounted to only \$83,000 against a premium income of \$380,000. This speaks most eloquently for the judgment shown in the vital part of the Company's business, the selection of risks. The whole statement is, however, evidence of good management. The assets have increased a quarter of a million dollars during the year ; and the general business, as shown by the net number of policies in force and the amount at risk, shows a steady increase.

## EASTER OFFERINGS.

EASTER DAY in the afternoon, and the bell of St. Stephen's Church, on College Street, is ringing a cordial welcome to "one and all, both great and small," but particularly to the small, for at half-past three o'clock the children's service is to begin, and although parents are invited to attend, the children are the heroes (and heroines) of the day. This, the little ones seem to comprehend, for they come flocking from all sides, and even when the pretty church is nearly full, the cry is still, "They come." Very pretty indeed the church looks ; the Font is decorated with flowers, and there are flowers on the Altar, while a spirit of fragrance seems to pervade the whole building. What a large assembly of children, and how happy they appear ! Surely St. Stephen's must be a favoured parish, or the church must be a favourite, to have so many youthful members in attendance. From the sedate lassie of fifteen, down to the toddling youngster of three, they are all there ; all eager to take part in the service, and to lay their Easter offerings upon the plate, when the time for the collection comes round. A large gathering of happy children must always form a pretty picture, but when, as on this occasion, they have assembled in God's house for prayer, there is a greater charm about them than usual. Some of the very little ones, perhaps, hardly know why they are there, but are nevertheless perfectly contented to be there, and to watch the movements of the older children, who are more experienced than they. One tiny mite stands on the seat of a pew with her thumb in her mouth and surveys the congregation, with large blue eyes in which wonder and approval are sweetly blended. Every now and then the chinking of money is heard, for the "mission boxes" are all being brought in to-day, and the children are vastly proud of the wealth they have accumulated for the benefit of the heathen. Well they may be, for many little acts of self-denial have been practised by them, to help swell the funds in their possession : pleasure trips given up, toys dispensed with, candies forgotten ; all that the money thus saved might go in the mission box. One little girl actually went without sugar during the whole season of Lent ; not that there was any necessity for her doing so, but because she said she could then feel that the price of the sugar was her very own to give, which feeling would never have been hers had she merely put in the box whatever was given her for that purpose by her elders. Think of that, children ! For forty whole days, to have no sugar in your tea, no sugar with your porridge ! And think of it, parents too ! How many of us are there who would care to deny ourselves as that child did ? The sounds of the bell have ceased, the rich tones of the organ vibrate through the church, and all are quiet as the Bishop and the Rector enter, and move to their places. Soon the clear voices of the children are raised in the glad Easter hymn, "Jesus Christ is Risen To-day," and then the service proceeds as usual. The collection is the great event of the day, for, although every child has not a mission box, each one is possessed of at least one cent, which is to be given as an Easter offering. When I say each one, I must except the few who have been unlucky enough to drop their money, and to see it roll away out of reach. There are always some among the junior members of a congregation who do this, though it is difficult to understand why it should be so. The adventurous spirits who are to take up the collection now commence to hand round the plates, and the chinking of money begins in real earnest. Mission boxes are piled one on the top of another, and soon both hands are needed to support their weight. The little child with the useful thumb, who has been tightly holding a penny in her disengaged hand during the whole service, is so overcome by the sight of the piles of boxes, that she forgets to lay her coin upon the plate, though it has long been the desire of her heart to do so. At length the collection is finished, and the plate bearers, staggering under the weight of their burdens, march up the aisle together. The Bishop commences his discourse ; he reminds the children of Whose resurrection they are celebrating this day, and tells them that, though it is hard for them to realize that the dead can rise again, they may see all around them, in the simplest growths of nature, how life springs out of death. The children are attentive, and endeavour to answer the questions put to them from time to time. Some of those at the bottom of the church, however, have their attention distracted a little by a small boy, who, tired of sitting still in his pew, has worked his way out to the aisle, and now stands looking about him. He is evidently considering what to do next, when his hand is seized by an elder sister, who hurries him from the church. Almost immediately they both return, when the small boy is ignominiously hustled into a back seat, where, under the awful supervision of the bell-ringer, he sits in fear and trembling. The discourse ended, another hymn is sung ; then some disperse to their homes, while others remain to take part in the baptismal service, which is to be the concluding feature of the afternoon.

V. F. M. B.