

GENERAL READING  
MOUNT VESUVIUS IN FLAMES.

A visitor who ascended Mount Vesuvius during the recent eruption, has described the scene in a letter to the "Pall Mall Budget" in the following manner: "It is a weary climb up, though, through the loose ashes, and one is tempted to halt and admire the view pretty often before reaching the top. When we had reached it we could see nothing for the smoke and mist that filled the big crater, while, far beneath us we could hear the lava seething and frequent explosions from the new cone. We were advised at starting not to descend into the crater! but our guide assured us we could quite safely do it, so down we scrambled on to the lava. The floor of the crater has risen in the last few weeks from a considerable depth to within about twenty feet of a gap in the side of the crater wall, looking toward the old left-hand cone of Vesuvius, and is still raising. As we stood on the comparatively cool blocks of lava, the fresh, red-hot steam was slowly flowing out from cracks around us, moving on in a snake-like fascinating way, and breaking out in a fresh place as soon as the flow stepped elsewhere. Every crack showed the lava red-hot a foot or so beneath us, but the guides ran about on it, and we followed them, as if we were on the level Campagna. At the upper end of the old crater—that is, just underneath the highest point of the old cone—is the new cone, which has risen in the last week or so; a baby cone, about fifty feet in height, and perhaps 100 yards in circumference at the base, but a very noisy and fiery cone, sending out continual puffs of smoke rosy with the flames which frequently rise above its summit, and hurling into the air to a height of 100 feet or so lumps of red-hot stone and lava, which, falling down on to its sides, make them rise higher every day. The wind fortunately blew the smoke away from us, or otherwise we should have been almost, if not quite, suffocated where we stood, about thirty yards from the base of the cone; and we were able to enjoy the wonderful sight, which, as a man who followed us down said, one could stay all day to look at. Accompanying the bursts of flame were hollow reports—not loud, as I had expected, but smothered, stifled explosions—and as I climbed up the side of the crater, so as to be able to look more into the mouth of the new cone, I could see through the smoke a struggling confusion of flames, which found vent in the ejection of the burning liquid. The crater walls are brilliant with yellow and orange-colored sulphur, mixed with basalt and red lava and white salts, forming a bright contrast to the leaden-colored lava which forms the floor and the black cone with its own crown of smoke. The guide told us the floor had risen an extraordinary number of feet; but, judging of what we saw of lava flowing, it would take a month probably to reach the gap through which its flow seems indicated, unless it should burst out anywhere on the side of the mountain."

SPINSTERS.

"In the Saxon period the wives of all the kings and nobles used to spin wool, and this spinning continued to be performed by women till the commencement of the present century. From this employment of women we have the term "spinster," which is applied to young girls till the time of their marriage. Of the skill acquired by some in spinning, we need only quote one or two instances. It is said that a Norfolk woman, named Mary Pringle, spun a pound of wool into a yarn of 84,000 yards, or nearly forty-eight miles in length, and that a Miss Ives, of Spalding, Lincolnshire, spun the same weight of wool into a length of 168,000 yards, or ninety-five and a half miles. "Our ancestors were industrious, young folks! The wealthy ladies spent many hours in embroidering tapestries. You know they are long cloths into which pictures are worked or woven. Tapestry was used in olden times instead of wall paper. It was hung on frames at some distance from the walls. History often tells us of persons hiding behind the tapestry. "Several hundred years ago rooms in the first palaces were cold and bare. No plaster relieved their rough stone sides, and the wind blew freely through the chinks and cracks. So the wives of the barons employed the long winter evenings in making hangings for these walls. They embroidered all kinds of needle pictures, landscapes, figures of animals, scenes from history, and stories of heroes or hunters. Men were pictured sowing and reaping, at church, at home, and always true to life, so that we learn from the old tapestries that remain how our forefathers used to live. Their dresses, their weapons, their furniture, are all faithfully represented.

"In the town of Bayeux, in the north of France, there is kept what is called the Norman tapestry. It consists of a strip of linen two hundred feet long by twenty inches wide, worked in colored worsteds. All these girls who like bright wools would think it an old rag, not half so pretty as some of their own work. But every inch of this worn and faded embroidery has been studied with the greatest care by learned men. Why? Because it contains fifty-eight scenes from the life of William the Conqueror, worked by the ladies of his court. This tapestry is, therefore, you see, a picture book which has been preserved for eight hundred years. Its faded colors tell us better than words the minutest details in the manners and customs of the old Normans. Their weapons, dress, postures, and the battles which they fought are all accurately presented, while to each scene a Latin inscription is annexed. We are told that only seven colors were employed by Queen Matilda and her maids of honor in this work—dark and light blue, red, yellow, buff, and dark and light green.

"Ladies in convents spent much of their time in working tapestries to adorn the inner walls of churches. In course of time, large collections of tapestry were made, and a nobleman could cover the wall of any chamber with a hunting suit, or a religious suit, or a funny suit. A great cardinal once went to visit Henry IV. of France, and an awkward mistake happened; instead of a suit of sacred pictures, the chamberlain hung up one which made fun of the Pope. I hope they had time to change it before the cardinal arrived, or he would think the King a very rude man thus to insult him. Besides the uses already mentioned, tapestry had much to do in making the streets of a city gay when a royal visit was expected; in decorating the galleries when there was a tournament; in giving a gay appearance to houses and men.

"After a while the loom took the place of the ladies' fingers. Holland and Belgium seem to have been the first countries where men wore tapestry. Brussels, Antwerp and Bruges were cities specially celebrated for it; but a town in the north of France, named Arras, appears to have exceeded all others, for 'arras' became the word for the finest tapestry.

"The most famous name in connection with tapestry is Gobelins. Two brothers of this name went to Paris at the invitation of the French King, to teach the art of dyeing scarlet. The rival dyers of Paris laughed at them, and called their dye-house 'Gobelins' Polly' but they had soon to change their minds, and accuse the Gobelins of being in league with the devil. The tapestries made by the Gobelins are so carefully shaded that they look like fine paintings.

FAMILY READING.

THE THRILL OF LOVE.

BY JOHN WILLIAMS.

You are a father; you know what it is. You remember the first time your little babe threw her tiny arms around your neck, and, in the fullness of her innocent rapture, whispered in your ear: "Papa, I love you!" You remember what a thrill ran through your being when you realized that your child returned your love. On this side of the throne of God there is no experience like unto this, except its own repetition. Purity and innocence embracing impurity and sin, perhaps; and not only feeling no contamination by the contact, but whispering in the ear of the sinner, "I love you!" Do you wonder that such an experience, realized for the first time, sends a thrill of love through the soul, that is rarely, if ever forgotten?

In a goodly village of Long Island a mother lives who knows something of this thrill of love. Her prodigal boy went away years ago—where all prodigals go—into a far country, and did as all prodigals do—wasted his substance in riotous living. She prayed for him day after day and year after year; the remembrance of that prodigal never faded from her mind. The more she prayed for him and thought about him the farther off he seemed to wander. One day, suddenly he returned, during a series of revival meetings in the village M. E. church. He wore the habiliments of the prodigal—rags. But he was a son though a stranger. He knocked at the door of the homestead and timidly asked: "Is there room here for me?" The inquiry was answered in much the same way that printed Scripture parable answers it—with parental embrace and a joyous welcome, which afterward led to the prodigal's conversion. But without any verbal pledge of affection, mother and son alike felt the thrill of the tender passion, and lived, as it were, a lifetime in a moment.

While I write I have before me a Newark (N. J.) paper, sent to me by some unknown friend, which describes the return of a prodigal only a few days ago. "The father of the lost one found

is a venerable Christian man of eighty-eight years, a frequent if not a constant visitor at the Fulton Street prayer-meeting in this city; a well-to-do if not wealthy resident of Elizabeth. But his prodigal son went away and wasted his money and almost his manhood in those dens of the devil that crowd our cities—rum shops. But thank God! there are forces now organized and organizing against those dens that, I hope ere long will shut up every one of them. This New Jersey prodigal was thrown in contact with the Women's Christian Temperance Union and Reformed Club of Newark, by whom he was reclaimed from his cups and won to the Saviour, and on Thursday evening, Feb. 13, this noble band of Christian temperance men and women rode over to Elizabeth to present the prodigal to his praying and expectant father. One of the number made an appropriate presentation address, and then the report from which I quote adds that when he had closed his speech the venerable sire stepped forward leaning on a cane, toward the son who had returned home after years of dissipation, and, throwing his arms about his neck, exclaimed: "Welcome, my son to your father's heart and home!" It is needless to say that the scene was a thrilling one, as father and son wept tears of joy in each other's embrace; and the scene will never be forgotten by those who witnessed the welcome. Why should it be forgotten? When a soul feels the thrill of love it cannot forget it if it would, and I think it would not if it could.

Do you know of anything more depressing to the spirit of mortal than the consciousness of unrequited love? Do you know of anything more inspiring and divine than the knowledge of love returned? Two young persons stood before the altar of God the other day, and pledged their affection and honor to be true to each other until death shall part them. They know something of thrill of love. They remember when each felt for the first time that his or her love was returned. But the same day the body of a young woman floating on the river's tide, and a young man sent a bullet whizzing through his brain. Neither had felt this thrill of love. The tender passion had not been reciprocated.

A few evenings ago I attended a young people's prayer-meeting in a church near my home. A youth gave his "experience" soon after I entered, and, among other things, he said he thanked God that he "ever learned that Jesus loved him." The light and joy of that sentence broke like a flash upon my soul. Glad not merely that Jesus loved him, but that he had discovered the fact in his own consciousness. You know something about the thrill which the knowledge of that fact sends through the penitent soul when for the first time the Saviour whispered in your inner consciousness, "I love you." It was not the beginning of his love; but it was your first realization of that love. You have not forgotten that thrill; nor have I.

As I pondered over the words of the young Christian I asked myself: Does God—my God and your God, my Father and yours—know and feel anything akin to this thrill of love when the babe in Christ places his or her arms, as it were, around his neck and whispers in the parental ear, "I love Thee!" or when the prodigal child returns from his wanderings, confesses his sins and says, "I repent, I love!"—does the Divine heart feel this thrill? In other words, is the joy of the Lord personally increased, and does his nature feel a thrill every time that a sinful soul penitently responds to the manifestations of his love? I think so. And, moreover, it seems to me that it was the prospective joy of such a thrill that enabled the Lord Jesus Christ to endure the cross and despise its shame, that by that exhibition of divine love he might bring many sons unto glory. It was the sense of such a thrill that brooded up the great Apostle to the Gentiles so that he could endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. Is God affected in the same way that we are? Perhaps; I dare not say he is. And yet I know he feels all the tenderness of a father toward me. He is not a stoic. As I look in the face of his Son while he stands weeping over the impenitent city, that refused to receive him and preferred darkness rather than light, and death rather than life, I cannot help feeling that the Divine heart is stirred with emotions akin to my own, but more intense. Verily, if you and I are made in the image of God, and are so thrilled and moved, he who made us his image must be similarly stirred by the reciprocity of love.

Indeed, I believe it is this thrill of love, reaching out from the heart of the great Father himself and permeating the hosts of heaven, that causes joy in the presence of the angels over every sinner that repenteth. If men realized more clearly and fully than they do the effect upon themselves of love required or unrequited, it seems to me they would be more careful to return the Father's love. They would oftener show by word and deed that they had felt or were willing to feel the thrill of his pure passion. Well do I remember twenty years ago, when I first learned that Jesus loved me; and I am glad

that it has not been the only love thrill that I have received from the Saviour's heart. But

"'Tis worse than death my God to love And not my God alone."

If I were preacher, I have thought how much I could make out of such a text as this. But if *The Methodist* will lend me its wings I will send this humble lay sermon perhaps to some heart or home where the thrill of the Saviour's love has never yet returned. And mayhap the Holy Spirit will use it for their salvation and his own glory.—*The Methodist*.

BE CONTENTED.

There is a false kind of contentment, and we should call it by its right name—stupid indifference. Diogenes declared that he was contented, and he wished no other dwelling than his tub; and the only favour that he asked of Alexander the Great was that he would not stand between him and the sun. We are bold to say that this ragged philosopher is not a man to admire or imitate. He should have gone to work and have bettered his condition. He should not have spent his life like a dog in a kennel, growling his surly sentences at every passer-by.

We do not believe in the philosophy of the cynics. Yet we fear that it has some advocates even in these modern times. There are men who, like Rousseau, are sick of the shows and shams of social life, and sigh for "a lodge in some vast wilderness," and envy the savage, whose wants are few and easy to be supplied. Decrease your desires we hear it said over and over, rather than add to your possessions, and thus you will be rich indeed. Go through the workshops of the world and congratulate yourself that there are so many things which you do not want. Be content with what is barely essential to life. Such teachers quote with an air of triumph: Having food and raiment let us therewith be content." The quotation is good enough, but the application which is made of it is absurd. We are not to reduce our desires until we sink to the level of a savage. The educated man is he who has many wants to be supplied. He is not contented with a hat and bear skin and a slice of half-cooked venison steak. He likes books and pictures, a well furnished house, instruments of music, a pleasant garden and a thousand other things which the imagination of a negro on the sunny banks of the Congo River could not conceive of. In the effort to supply these wants the earth is subdued, nations are civilized, government is established, and blessings come to the race. Of course, there are evils in civilization; but a greater evil would follow if we were to abolish it altogether.

Contentment then, is not indifference to the comforts or even the luxuries of life. It is rather that which leads us to cheerfully accept the situation in which one is placed. A good man will improve his condition if he can; but if he cannot he will neither murmur nor repine. He values earthly things, but he does not place a false value on them and hence he does not seek them by wrong methods. He can hold them as a trust from Heaven, or he can be happy without them.

Improve your condition if you can. Be contented but as soon as you find a better situation make haste to seize it. Do not be so contented that you will idly wait for your prospects to improve but go to work and help them to improve day by day. Paul was so happy in the dungeon that he sung praises to God so loud that all the prisoners heard him; but when the doors were flung open and the chains fell off he was very willing to exchange the dungeon for the comforts of the jailor's house.

Religion does not decrease desires; but increases them. The Christian has desires for both worlds; but religion leads him to place a true estimate on all good things. It does not forbid an earthly crown to him who can rightly gain it; but shows him an heavenly crown, and makes him feel that all else is of little worth compared with that.—*The Methodist*.

THE SPARE BED.

Almost every family has a spare bed. It is generally in a spare room, remote from the living room, where it would never feel the influence of any fire that would usually be kindled; or in a chamber with no arrangement for warming it in winter. Into this spare room and spare bed company are put, frequently without the least thought that there is the slightest danger of injuring their guests. This is done with the kindest intentions, out of respect for their friends, who they wish might enjoy the best they have. Strong, healthy persons, in the vigor of life, might not experience any serious inconvenience. Not the feeble or old-aged. Many under these circumstances have taken a cold that has brought on severe cough, sometimes congestion of the lungs and even death itself.

It ought to be known that an unoccupied bed in a cold room in winter not only becomes cold, but also gathers moisture, and is dangerous to the most

robust and healthy, but especially so to the aged and infirm. None are more exposed to this danger than the ministers who preach with two or more churches alternately. Sometimes they arrive at the house where they intend to spend the night late in the day, thoroughly fatigued and chilled; or at the close of the labors of the Sabbath are completely prostrated. In either case the system requires rest and comfort, and is in a poor condition to be taxed with an extra effort to keep up animal heat in a cold, damp bed, and the result is a sleepless night, cold and hoarseness in the morning, protracted cough, congestion or consumption and death.

These dangers are easily remedied. The least trouble, perhaps, where it can be done, is to kindle a fire in the room or in the adjoining room, and open the bed room door an hour or two before it is occupied; or it may be warmed by a hot soapstone, bottles of hot water or the old-fashioned "warming-pan," or by applying heat in any way that a thoughtful woman can find out. Extra quilts and comforters will afford no protection. The cold and dampness and dangers are in the bed.—*Morning Star*.

A BEAUTIFUL STORY.

Coleridge relates a story to this effect: Alexander, during his march into Africa, came to a people dwelling in peaceful huts, who knew neither war nor conquest. Gold being offered him, he refused it, saying that his sole object was to learn the manners and customs of the inhabitants. "Stay with us," said the chief, "as long as it pleaseth thee."

During this interview with the African chief, two of his subjects brought a case before him for judgment. The dispute was this: The one had bought a piece of ground, which, after the purchase, was found to contain a treasure, for which he felt himself bound to pay. The other refused to receive any thing, stating that he had sold the ground with what it might be found to contain apparent or concealed.

Said the chief, looking at the one, "You have a son," and to the other, "You have a daughter;" let them be married, and the treasure given them as a dowry."

Alexander was astonished. "And what," said the chief, "would have been the decision in your country?"

"We should have dismissed the parties, and seized the treasure for the King's use."

"And does the sun shine in your country?" said the chief; "does the rain fall there? Are there any cattle there which feed upon herbs and green grass?"

"Certainly," said Alexander. "Ah," said the chief, "it is for the sake of those innocent cattle that the great Being permits the sun to shine, the rain to fall, and the grass to grow in your country!"

MODEL PASTOR IN THE PULPIT.

Contemplate the model pastor in his pulpit. His sermons are solid rather than fanciful, instructive rather than eloquent, awakening interest in the subjects discussed rather than inspiring admiration of the preacher. Those who hear him are more likely to meditate on what he says than to praise his manner of saying it. His hearers not unfrequently retire to read the Scriptures, pray and weep over their sins. He is no rider of hobbies. His ministrations are not confined to a few favorite themes, but take a wide range over the field of theology. His sermons are equally doctrinal, experimental and practical; excepting perhaps that practical subjects, touching so many of the interests and pursuits of life, and naturally connected with all other topics, may occupy a wider space in his addresses. He always preaches as if he believes what he says. Solemnity, earnestness, dignity, with great naturalness, simplicity, and tenderness characterize his discourses. He resorts to no tricks to attract his hearers, and no jests or startling statements to gain attention, but of Divine truth, to interest and profit his hearers. He is no professional polemic, no pulpit gladiator; but he does not exclude from the pulpit subjects because they are unpopular. At suitable times, and under proper circumstances, he discusses controverted points; but always clearly, candidly and in a courteous manner, aiming to convince, and not to offend his hearers. Persons with a docile spirit rarely hear him preach without profit. His sermons usually contain something adapted to every capacity and every necessity among his hearers. Under his ministrations, inquirers are guided, mourners are comforted, believers are edified, backsliders are reclaimed and the ungodly are pricked in their consciences. Greatly favored are his hearers! The church under his pastorate increases in membership, grows in knowledge and grace, becomes more solid, fruitful and efficient, and is as a city set on a hill.

IS THAT THE

This is a question by a leading young minister the morning before last: "I think I know," and then passed the first There is a great in every man, out and utilize counting-room one can do much if they only make a salesman; he of goods, will ever \$100,000. a banker, who a friend on sufficient way is a book never balance month. Up stairs columns show less. What worth doing no matter whether afternoon's work morning's. The ed the young through life. ers in his audi which interest clergymen, ye farmers, unless to grow rusty commercial thirty young are chosen for who has deter work will ex his salary dou fidential cler est partner in fiddle and f Their work is ternous, and to better men, they neglected are our tramp who makes a it to rights be siders, faces fool passes on

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SEEMING

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