

I am sure, and here the four Hogarths. In the midst of these precious Lares and Penates would sit Mary—cannot you see her?—with her placid strong face. Nothing breaks the stillness but Charles's pen as it scratches over the rough paper, directing the sheets when finished to Mr. Moxon, for these were no days for Esquires among ordinary folk, a fact which would have pleased Matthew Arnold. Elia is smiling: what is he writing? Look over his shoulder and read; but our voices scare away these gentle ghosts, and the vision fades.

From the first moment of acquaintance, at which time may be only the delicate whimsical humour is tasted to the days when, as you know him better, you hear that cheerful heroic tone occasionally broken by a sigh—and to rightly understand and feel such pieces as "Dream Children" or "New Year's Eve," is to have an experience which, with all its sadness, one would not be without—Lamb becomes to his readers a dear and personal friend whom I think we never lose all our lives. He sits by our fireside when, tired and perplexed, we would admit no one else and speaks of all manner of everyday things. Just a journey to Margate in a hoy, or a day spent at Mackery End: youthful hours among the marble Emperors in the Blakesware hall; of Ann Simmons' yellow hair, Hester Savory's Quaker gown,—and as he talks he soothes and charms. He but describes an ordinary pleasure excursion, gives us a note or two of modest criticism, a sketch of an acquaintance, subjects any one might take, but true it is that "not our own our songs, but the way we sing them" (you will remember without help from me who said that), and the qualities which distinguished his work are essentially his own. We never weary of hearing of his literary affections, and of the friends he loved, whom in turn we care for, for his sake, disliking as heartily as I protest he must have done Godwin and the "Great Baby," and we like our essayist none the less for these signs of weakness which prove him akin to our noble selves.

Follow the windings of the New River, and in ten minutes you come to Canonbury Tower, built in the reign of Henry VIII. (says ever useful Mr. Thornbury) the only remaining part of the Priory of St. Bartholomew, and which still belongs to the descendants of that Sir John Spencer to whom it was sold when Elizabeth was Queen. It's a romantic rambling old house, possessing among other attractions two saloons lined with carved oak, and is interesting from the fact that Lamb used often to call on Goodman Symes—what a name for a melodrama!—when lodging here (the owners, not caring for the place, have let it since the beginning of the eighteenth century), and would roam about, up to the stairs to the roof, poking into all the cupboards and attics as I do to-day. Goldsmith was a lodger once they tell me, and wrote part of the *Vicar of Wakefield* in a dark panelled room which I was shown; and Washington Irving lived here some months (in the time of the *Sketch Book*), and Onslow the Speaker, and Woodfall who printed the Junius Letters, and is buried in Chelsea Church, and a host of others whose names I have forgotten. You would imagine that in this quiet old-world Islington house you would hear no news of later date than that of the Gordon Riots, yet the barcarole from *Les Surprises du Divorce* has penetrated as far as this, for I recognize the air as some one sings it through a closed door and in a parlour which once echoed with Queen Elizabeth's voice, and my companion insists on giving me here in the room where Goldsmith discussed with Newberry the terms for his "Natural History," a detailed account of the *Pompadour* at the Haymarket—a performance which he would have me know bored him horribly. "Elizabeth kept her sketching materials on this shelf when visiting the Spencers," says our guide, but I must confess I am more interested in hearing that sixteen thousand pictures have been sent for selection to the Academy, only about nineteen hundred of which can be kept; how many of these will be likely to prove a success? My companion, who is young and arrogant, will tell me exactly. Then as the various beauties of the oak carvings are pointed out to us, which have gained every one's admiration for the last 300 years, I hear of a certain entertainment given by a mutual artist friend, and the description of this entertainment drives all instruction connected with that panelling out of my head. For I am told all the visitors were presented as they entered the hall with great branches of flowering almond blossom, which they bore in their left hands: then from a darkened apartment through which they passed waves of wild wind music filled the air: and thus, environed with sweet sound and sweet scent, they were allowed slowly to enter the inner sanctum where on draped and decorated easels the artist's pictures ("intended for exhibition at the Royal Academy") were arranged. Not a word is spoken. Silently the almond branches are waved in ecstasy. Then in token of overpowering sensations of awe and appreciation, the audience after a time retire backwards from the studio, to the last keeping their eyes fixed on those faintly splashed canvases, those Impressions of Switzerland, let us say, which have stricken them dumb with admiration. And the music swells louder, louder into a grand Triumphal March and the perfume of the flowering blossoms hies like incense to the skies. . . . "After all every one of his things are kicked out," says my young friend in his peculiar vernacular. "So the conceited beggar will have to have a shot at the New Gallery."

Limelight falls on the statue of Lord Beaconsfield as we pass this evening—limelight succeeding a great shower of primroses: which of the two would the Prime Minister have appreciated the most? An odd sight, truly, is this immense pressing crowd: in the midst, the bronze statue heaped with wreaths and nosegays of every size: above the rays of the lantern lighting yellow flowers, restless, living faces, and the bronze Sphinx-like countenance of D'Israeli. There is something ludicrous to me in the performance, for which I think the shifting sham glare is mainly responsible, but the multitude see no absurdity, and as they cling about the railings they say to each other, that the statesman lights up almost as well as did the fountains in the Colonial Exhibition, and would prove as effective if treated with the same varying shades of colour.

WALTER POWELL.

CYMBELINE.

I HAVE just re-read this charming play, one of the last productions of the genius of our mighty bard. Grouped by Professor Dowden, with the plays *Pericles*, *The Tempest*, and *The Winter's Tale*, under the head of "Romances,"—"In all of them," he truly says, "there is a beautiful romantic back-ground of sea and mountain." All are characterised "by a grand beauty, a sweet serenity." My pleasure in this last reading of *Cymbeline* was no doubt greatly enhanced from the fact that I took it up while still fresh from the pages of Lady Martin's (Helena Faucit) exquisite and appreciative sketch of "the divine Imogen," the heroine of the drama, and the special favourite, moreover, with her of all Shakespeare's heroines, noble, pure, and charming as many of the others doubtless are. In passing, may I venture to commend Lady Martin's delightful and artistic volume to all your readers, but more particularly to your female readers, who are not already acquainted with it.

My object, however, in this paper, is not to call attention to Lady Martin's exquisite cameos of some of Shakespeare's female characters, but to refer to a passage in *Cymbeline* which has hitherto baffled the ingenuity of commentators and emendators, but of which I venture to hope I have solved the difficulty by a very trifling textual emendation.

The passage occurs in the sixth scene of the third act, when the banished Lord Belarius and the two stolen princely boys, Guiderius and Arviragus (brothers of Imogen, but the supposed sons of Belarius), returning to their cave are amazed to find it occupied by a creature so lowly and so unearthly that Belarius on beholding it exclaims:

But that it eats our victuals, I should think
Here were a fairy.

The "fairy" apparition is Imogen, who, disguised in boy's clothes, has fled from her father's court in hopes of finding her beloved Posthumus to whom she had been so lately wedded.

Surprised at his father's word, Guiderius enquires:

What's the matter?

when Belarius replies:

By Jupiter an angel; or, if not,
An earthly paragon!—Behold divineness
No elder than a boy!

After an interchange of courteous greetings between the frightened Imogen and the three surprised tenants of the cave, Belarius calls upon his sons to bid the stranger welcome, when Guiderius thus accosts Imogen:

Were you a woman, youth,
I should woo hard, but be your groom. In honesty;
I bid for you as I'd buy.

The last line of this passage reads in the old text:

I bid for you as I do buy,

which being hopelessly unintelligible Tyrwhitt suggested the other reading which has been generally followed, although confessedly it does not render the meaning of the speech a whit more clear. All commentators agree that the passage is corrupt, but—with the exception of Tyrwhitt's very unsatisfactory emendation—no attempt has been made, so far as I can find, to restore the true text.

I venture to think that the passage was written by Shakespeare as follows:

Were you a woman, youth,
I should woo hard, but be your groom. In honesty,
I bid for you as a boy.

Charmed like Belarius with the womanly beauty of the apparition, Guiderius says in effect, "Were you a woman I would woo and wed you, but alas! you are not, I must only love you as a boy." Emended as I suggest, Guiderius' speech is perfectly natural and intelligible, the antithesis between the parts of the sentence clear, and the remark of his brother, Arviragus, which immediately follows, becomes specially fitting. Arviragus says:

I'll make it my comfort,
He is a man. I'll love him as my brother.

As though he said to Guiderius, "You are distressed that the lovely stranger is a boy, while I take 'comfort' in the fact and am ready to love him as a brother."

It may be remarked, too, that, thus altered, Guiderius' speech harmonizes with the key note struck by Belarius when, on first seeing Imogen, he exclaims:

Behold divineness
No elder than a boy.

Before concluding I venture to suggest a slight emendation in another passage in the same play. At the close of the fourth scene of the second act, when the too credulous Posthumus, believing in the guilt of Imogen, rushes off the stage with the words:

I'll do something—

Philario says to Iachimo, who has apparently triumphed in his villany:

Quite beside
The government of patience. You have won.
Let's follow him and pervert the present wrath
He hath against himself.

I confess myself unable to understand the meaning of "pervert" in this passage, and am strongly disposed to believe that Shakespeare wrote "prevent," which makes the meaning quite clear. E. A. MEREDITH.