

POETRY.

THE YOUNG SUICIDE.

BY ISAAC C. PRAY, JR.

A SUMMER AIR—the sun of heaven
Far mid the golden clouds of even,
While twilight lingers there.
A quiet lake across whose face
The sun is softly beaming,
Seeming within the depths to place
A fire-pillar, gloaming.
A boy is musing on the sight
Whose heart is sad with its delight—
Delight and yet despair!
The sun is set—each golden cloud
Is purpled with the Evening's shroud,
That gathers in the sky.
The boy is thinking of the sun,
How sweet its light departed,
How richly through its course was run,
The emblem it imparted—
So like the life he'd have his own
The opening, path and final throne—
O does he wish to die!
The lake is stirred. Successive flow
New ripples, lessening as they go
On to the mossy shore.
The boy has plunged within the grave,
The moon's light downward spreading.
No thing upon the lake doth float
Save an unanchored, drifting boat—
The boy?—his fate deplore!

[FOR THE BEE.]

POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS.—No. 3.

WITCHCRAFT.

MR DAWSON. Sir,—To those whose minds are shaken clear of the trammels of superstition, it may seem waste of time to say any thing upon the subject; but a recital of a circumstance that happened lately at no great distance, may convince the most sceptical that there is yet much to do;—the truth of the following narration may be depended on

In the dry part of the summer 1835, when pastures were bare and water scarce, the cows in the settlement of —, ceased to give the quantity of milk they were wont to do under more favorable circumstances, when an old woman was accused of depriving the cows of their milk, and the cream of its butter. After repeatedly denying the charge, without satisfying her accusers, at last she said she was willing to swear to her innocency upon the bible, before a Justice of the peace; and for this purpose, went to a magistrate, who strove to point out to her, and those who accused her, the impropriety of their conduct, and sent them away for the time, without administering the oath; but it was not long when she returned, begging of the magistrate to take the oath, and clear herself of guilt before her accusers, as she could have no peace of conscience night or day until she did so. From this and other considerations, the probability of doing good I think worth a trial.

I am aware that the strong holds of satan are not easily invaded, but I am likewise convinced that they are not impregnable, and that they must come down until the knowledge of the Lord enlighten the world. Those who believe in witchcraft say they have the sanction of the scriptures, for my part I cannot see that they have. True, it is said under the Mosaic dispensation, "Thou shalt not suffer witches to live;" and witchcraft makes part of a catalogue of prevailing sins by an Apostle; but none of these, or any other part of scripture with which I am acquainted, has any connection with the popular belief, agreeably to the now common acceptation of the phrase, it now seems to be chiefly confined to the dairy, depriving cows of their milk, and preventing cream being made into butter, with now and then a person being crossed in love, or deprived of health for a time.

I do not pretend to have any knowledge of the languages in which the scriptures were originally written, but Sir W. Scott says that Witch there means a dealer in poisonous herbs, or drugs, and that it is connected with idolatry, and that it conveys nothing like the meaning attached to it. It seems likewise to have undergone a considerable change in crossing the Atlantic. In Scotland they had the art of metamorphosing themselves into the likeness of a hare, and that when so changed it was no use to try to shoot them in the ordinary way; as lead would take no effect upon them; but if there was coin in the gun it was rare for them to escape. They could also ride through the air on a broom stick, or sail over the sea in an egg-shell with the greatest safety and expedition.

There was a roped witch in the neighborhood of where I resided, that people asserted could draw milk from a straw rope drawn through an avus bore, i. e. a hole in a piece of wood, out of which a knot had been taken, and that when she did, some of her neighbors' cows would cease to give her milk, or at least a part of it. I have heard of some dairy women who kept a frog in the vessel where the cream was kept, to prevent its being witched.

As it would tend but little to edification to give more instances, I shall conclude with giving the substance of a conversation I lately had with a man of otherwise good sense, but who is deeply tainted with superstition. He said that a neighbor of his was lately making butter, but who, after churning a whole day without success, at last suspected it of being witched, and in wrath threw a handful of salt into the churn, when it immediately became butter and gathered in a lump about the salt: he knew of another who when preparing the cream for churning, a suspected witch came and looked into the churn, when upon trial it was found to be witched; to counteract the effect of which she looked for a horse shoe, but failing to find one, she tried the iron heel of a man's shoe with the happiest effect; and he said he was once three days wind-bound beside Cape John, when the master of the vessel becoming impatient, heated a horse shoe red hot and nailed it to the mast, when lo! they had a fine fair wind.

As a convincing proof that I have no belief in the witching art, I challenge all the witches in Nova Scotia to try their art upon any, or all of my cows, provided they lay no hands upon them, if they can, they will know who gives the challenge.

If the time which is now spent in detecting witches, and speaking of their wonderful feats, were devoted to the investigation of the matter in a reasonable way, the result would be disbelief in the whole affair; and this disbelief would banish every witch out of the country,—and that this may be the means of leading to that desirable end, is the hearty wish of
Yours, &c. AMICUS VERITATIS.

[OMITTED LAST WEEK.]

The committee of the House of Assembly of Upper Canada, to whom was referred the report of the committee of conference with the Legislative Council on the subject of the resolution adopted respecting the Clergy Reserves, have reported a series of resolutions for the concurrence of the House, recommending that the proceeds of the Reserves be apportioned among the following Churches or bodies of christians, to wit.—the Church of England; the Synod of the Presbyterian Church in Canada in connexion with the Church of Scotland, and United Synod of Upper Canada, the Roman Catholics; the British and Canadian Wesleyan Methodists; and the Baptists.

Whether the above arrangement will be concurred in by the several branches of the Legislature, is not yet certain. Altogether, the scheme is one huge crime, and if agreed to will, we foresee, terminate in detaching the minds of their respective flocks from the several churches amongst which it is now proposed to distribute the spoils. History, the record of the experience of ages, proves that nothing is more fatal to the prosperity of a church, than an alliance with the state.—*Vindicator.*

A NOVELTY.—We publish today a portion of the debates in the Legislative Council on the Civil List Bill, and shall endeavour to give the remainder next week. This is something new in this Province—and places us some distance in advance of our elder sister—Nova-Scotia—in the march of reform.—*St. John, N. B. Courier.*

MISCELLANY.

INGENIOUS CONTRIVANCE.—A mechanical genius in Boston has succeeded in inventing a "new thing under the sun." It is called "Patent Intelligent Door Plate," and is so contrived that when a gentleman or lady wishes to go from home, a servant has only to move a slide inside the door, and the Intelligence door plate exhibits to the visitor the words "not at home." This is certainly vastly convenient and as it will save a great deal of wear and tear, both of conscience and shoe leather, it will doubtless come into general use.—*St. John Chronicle.*

BAR WIT.—"I have heard you often complain of poverty," said W. to B. who had just torn the skirts off his coat—"I hope you will complain no longer, as you appear to have an abundance of rents." "True," replied B., looking ruefully at the injured garment, "but don't you perceive my rents are all *en arriere*?"

A HINT.—Dr Franklin used to say that a really benevolent man may be known in the winter season by the pains he takes to scatter ashes along slippery sidewalks, thus saving the risk of broken legs.

MUSICAL MICE.—One evening in the month of December, as a few officers on board a British Man-of-war, in the harbor of Portsmouth, were seated round the fire, one of them began to play a plaintive air on the violin. He had scarcely performed ten minutes, when a mouse apparently frantic, made its appearance in the centre of the floor. The strange gestures of the little animal strongly excited the attention of the officers, who with one consent, resolved to suffer it to continue its singular actions unmolested. Its exertions now appeared to be greater every moment; it shook its head, leaped about the table, and exhibited signs of the most ecstatic delight. It was observed, that in proportion to the gradation of the tones to the soft point, the feelings of the animal appeared to be increased, and vice versa. After performing actions which an animal so diminutive would, at first sight, seem incapable of, the little creature, to the astonishment of the spectators, suddenly ceased to move, fell down, and expired, without evincing any degree of pain.—*Brown's Anecdotes of Quadrupeds.*

SHIPWRECKS.—The Boston Post states, that during the year 1836, there were lost on the coast of the U. States, 56 ships and barques—37 brigs, 121 schooners, 12 sloops, 30 boats, and 826 lives!

GEOGRAPHICAL ANECDOTE.—Gen. Knyphausen who commanded the Hessian mercenaries in 1776 on his voyage to America, was in the ship of Lord Howe. The passage was unusually long, and the officer, a rigid martinet knew nothing of sea and little of geography. After several uncomfortable and wreny weeks, he began to think there must be some error in reckoning, and addressed the admiral with,— "My lord, I know it is the duty of a soldier to be submissive at sea, but being entrusted with the care of the troops of his Serene Highness, my master, I feel it my duty just to inquire if it be not possible that during some of the dark nights we have lately had we may have sailed past America."

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