

resolved to lay down a plan or study. As the days grew longer, he would have some hours in his own room. The daily chapter read in German out of Luther's version of the Bible piqued his curiosity. He knew there were dictionaries and grammars to help him. Fritz, in his hard, dry way, was not unfriendly, and by no means without intelligence. He would ask him now and then for help. This pursuit once entered on, there was no more time for impatience at the monotony of the life. By slow degrees he made progress. Something of interest, though it was more felt than defined, grew up between the youth and the two old men—master and servant—with whom his lot was cast. The laboratory, too, began to yield some of its secrets to the student; and Fritz's mechanical ingenuity interested Norman. Indeed the danger soon was, that he would neglect out-door exercise; but a short command from the Professor, "A locked library, or two hour's walk," was so alarming, that the walk was vigorously taken. And so Norman was earning his living and educating himself, though certainly on a diet, and with companions, more wholesome than pleasant.

(To be Continued.)

GUSHING.

A GOOD many of our actions may be described by metaphors taken from the habits of water. We—that is to say some, of us—boil and foam with passion, sometimes because our cash has "run out," and then "the tide" of success turns and there is an "influx" of fresh means. Oarsmen will often tell us how they are obliged to "spirt," and how under that pressure they are "pumped;" and Solomon, who must have seen a good deal of it in his large establishment, reminds us, with a fearfully graphic image, that a contentious wife is a continual dropping! We fear he must have found his ivory palace worse than the dropping-well at Knaresborough; but it was his own choice.

Then there is another word which must of necessity belong to the same class of metaphor, and that is the adjective which stands at the head of this paper—Gushing. It is undoubtedly a word of moral significance in the present day; indeed it is very unlikely that we shall ever have to use it in any other sense, unless we fall in love, and are driven to ease our woe in the gentle sonnet. Under those circumstances "gushing" may revert once more to its primary meaning, and will indeed be an invaluable rhyme to our "crushing" grief. In our lucid intervals we shall still use it of persons, and not of things. Now, is it used in a laudatory sense or the reverse? Rather the reverse, for it always implies a certain amount of weakness, and sometimes of qualities even less amiable. Perhaps the weakness is something of a disease; if so, unlike gout, it is more common with the fairer sex, but perhaps we shall see before we have done, that the lords of the creation are by no means so exempt from it, as they are wont to believe. But of course the ordinary combination of ideas is a "gushing young thing," the young thing being represented by a lady who should be the sunny side of twenty-two. If she is pretty and sprightly, this little infirmity may have for a while a sort of fascination, but when it becomes chronic it is simply a nuisance. These words sound so cynical and so sternly celibate that we may keep up the character, and try and describe the symptoms, as if discussing a real case of disease. What shall we call it? Hyper-trophy of the sentiments? or, a waste of moral tissue? Such a parody of medical jargon would not really be so very far from the truth. For our friends are "gushing" when, by a sort of reckless extravagance, they pour forth without reserve and upon inadequate occasions the most intense feelings and the most exaggerated language. And this is very often the case with "young things." Five minutes is sufficient to cement and to register an eternal friendship with the "sweetest girl" whose acquaintance has just been made;

another five minutes will give ample foundation and declaration of war *d'outrance* with some "most detestable creature," who has just given cause of offence. The eternal friendship is instantly followed by the most unbounded issue of confidences; and, after the declaration of war, the offender appears as a blot upon creation, without a redeeming trait or the possibility of so much as a good motive. Also a remarkable symptom is the contrast between the smallness of the occasion and the depth of feeling it stirs up. Thus it is that the most rickety babies are often noisily pronounced to be beautiful darlings and precious pets, and thus it is that the "Guards Waltz" is heavenly, and lemon-ice divine. And just in the same way as a whole household of measles is worse than an isolated case, so is it an aggravated nuisance to find oneself in the midst of a gushing family. They are for ever hanging in festoons about each other's necks; they kiss one another in season and out of season, they direct public attention to one another's exquisite beauty, and perform extravagant acts of homage to the family talent. Female members of such families should cautiously be avoided as ball-room partners, for it is depressing to be called off rudely from a partner's tenderest duties by the abrupt appeal, "Oh, Mr. Robinson, did you ever see anything so sweet as my sister Amy with the white camellia in her lovely hair? Don't you admire her immensely?" Unless the wary Robinson can say impressively that he does not feel sure that Amy is the one particular sister whom he conceives to be the model of girlish beauty, there is no further hope for him; he will be dragged from one dismal act of worship to another.

Most people, even those who are careless about what they say, are supposed to be shy of committing themselves on paper. Not so the gushing correspondent. Put a pen in her hand and she will outdo herself. Partly by an accumulation of dashes underlining every third word, and partly by a copious use of the fondest terms, she will contrive to gush like any artesian well. For instance, she will not say, "I want to hear something about you," but, "I am dying for news of your sweet self;" and where ordinary mortals would say, "I hope to hear from you soon," she writes, "I shall count the days till I see your dear handwriting once more." This would be very nice between Angelina and Edwin, but these gushing sentiments are addressed exclusively to young lady friends, and by no means necessarily imply a long or a close acquaintance.

The real error of the gushing system is in truth an error in economy; it is living very extravagantly upon one's capital, and the result in the end must be poverty. The case is clear. If I throw away all my strong cards at the beginning of the game, I may make three or four tricks, but before long I shall expose the nakedness of the land. If I bring forward all my reserves into the field at once; if I put out my best pace in the first half of the course; if I fire the whole of my volley at once upon an advancing foe, there is not much doubt what will be the ultimate result of my wastefulness. I shall be weighed in the balance and found wanting. So it is with all that is gushing. There is no reserve found to fall back upon. When the lemon-ice has been pronounced divine, what epithet remains for a sunset or a sonata of Beethoven? A tasteful sunset with mauve clouds, or a genteel sonata, will be the result, if all the legitimate adjectives are used up for little things. Again, if Angelina heaps such passion upon Matilda, what will she have left for Edwin, when she is affianced to him, except "dear sir?" And if she emphasizes nine-tenths of her words by underlining them, what is she to do when she really wants to give a particular emphasis? Perhaps her acquaintance with Edwin will do her good, and he may very likely object to underlining when she writes to him.

If a good radical cure for this infirmity be really wanted, there can hardly be a better one than to contemplate the same practice assumed and studied by a young lady of that age and of that way of thinking which retains the use of mint sauce long after the days of lambood. A middle-aged girl who shakes her ringlets and

calls herself a giddy thing, and is oh! so in love with that dear Tennyson, is a very humiliating spectacle indeed; but if this warning is insufficient to sober some gushing young things, let them turn back to their "Dombey and Son," and look at the dismal pictures of Mrs. Skewton—a gushing old lady—and read her outpourings, which are, as she herself would confess, "all soul." That picture ought to act like the celebrated penance of sitting with a skull upon your knee to remind you cheerfully, what you will come to. But we must be just to both sexes. The gushing man is by no means an extinct species. He is not unknown in the pulpit or on the platform, and his raptures are meat and drink to some portion of his hearers—or rather, they are meat and drink to himself, for it is difficult to conceive that any one could commit himself to such a system unless he found that it paid. And because this is an artificial form, and very likely is really despised by the very man who practices it, it need not be more closely examined.

But in spite of all artificial forms there is the genuine gusher still among men. One knows the type. He rushes up in the street, and, although we saw him only yesterday, yet he shakes our hand as if he had just come back after a perilous voyage from the antipodes. Breathlessly he tells us everything about himself; and the smallest detail is invested with the very highest importance. He slaps his friends on the back, causing the most exquisite pain; he pokes them in their ribs, redoubling their anguish; he laughs irrepressibly at the faintest joke that arises, and, in short, a little of him goes a very long way. And he labours under a still further disadvantage. If for an hour he is quiet or silent he is immediately thought to be out of temper, or at any rate to have something the matter with him—so that the mere physical exhaustion which must sometimes attend upon gushing, will most likely be interpreted as a fit of the sulks. Compare with this unkindly estimate by which he is tried the blessings which hover round the reserved and self-contained man. His wishes are tacitly consulted for fear he should make himself disagreeable, which he can do very satisfactorily in his quiet way. And supposing on any occasion that he thaws for awhile and behaves like an ordinary mortal, there is quite a buzz of excitement, about, and one whispers to another the joyful news, "How wonderfully agreeable Diogenes was to-night; I saw him talking to Jones for nearly half an hour." Think of the honour which this unworthy member of society receives in contrast to the contemptuous treatment to which the gushing man is condemned, however good and virtuous he may be. And if there is any truth in the pictures which have been drawn, they ought to convey most broadly that celebrated "Advice to those about to be gushing"—don't.

MY AUNT'S ADVICE.

MY Aunt Tabitha was one of the worthiest women in existence, but she was not easier to live with than sundry other folks. It is true that we had come by degrees, and through a long course of years, to understand one another tolerably, and to get on together admirably. I had the most boundless respect for my aunt's sterling worth, her dauntless energy, her strength, both of mind and body; respected her pursuits, too, though I declined to share them; and if I did not agree with her opinions, forbore to say so at least; not that I got any credit for my forbearance, or that the dear lady thought it worth while to imitate my charity, which indeed she would have regarded in herself as a base truckling to the follies and weakness of mankind. Far from that, my pursuit of natural science was the object of her unsparing contempt and reprobation.

I am not ashamed to own that it was with much intense quaking, and some outward nervousness and discomposure, that I prepared to acquaint my aunt with a charge that had been laid upon me, and that it seemed impossible for me to refuse; I had thought to find and seize