

a glass of beer." Oedipus is dead ; the clouds are hurled away from his tomb, and everything is sweet and serene.

I have known a man to nail up on his door a placard something to this purpose : " Office hours in the evening from 9.30 till 11, at all other times engaged." But it was no manner of use. At any hour of the night you might enter and most probably find the proprietor seated at his table in a prettily furnished, soft carpeted, well pictured and carded room before a delicious fire—with his books in front of him, to be sure, but then—a fragrant cup of cocoa in one hand and a glorious, thin, crumbling, iced and chocolated slab of Greek-routing cake in the other ; no more of the grave wisdom of learning in his eyes than there is in the face of the funny-man of a Yankee newspaper in the midst of the composition of his most mirthful article. Around him you will find his friends basking in the wide sunlight of chocolate cake, or cooled by the enticing shade of the steaming cocoa. Through the cocoa fragrance oozes that other omnipotent steam, streaming from a yard of clay in a distant corner supported by one hand, while the other grasps a pewter brim-filled from the never-failing casks of the regions haunted by the gods below. Here are cooling draughts, delicious morsels, old yarns, everlasting songs—Oedipus will do very well for to-morrow morning after breakfast.

But months go by ; the snow vanishes like the smoke dreams that had no touch of reality, the hot months come with the swarm of teasing insects from the cool, moonlit ravine and the drunken, crazy pinch-bug butting the window-pane or flinging himself recklessly round the gaslit room. Still for a while these ever-gushing, genial, too-lovable mortals do little, spending the long, golden afternoons chatting under the shades of the wide oaks, dotting the grounds, or rambling through the jingling summer town, or up the ravine walks, shaded from heat and sound, or westward to the lake, the park and the Humber. The evenings go by much as before, minus the coal heaps ; but the face of Oedipus grows very little clearer—till at length the day of trial comes, and wet towels turban the careless heads, and the drink now is strong tea to keep your poor Greek-weary eyes wide open, you know, and give you a slight chance of giving some barely acceptable account of Oedipus in the day of examinations. The day is past ; a slim, shrivelled list is pasted up and down the fatal board, telling a grand total tale of vanished plugs and dead beer-bottles, and so on to the end. Mr. Z. scans the board with an unchanging face, and smiles in deathless imperturbable good humour, makes a joke and says something about doing better next time. I believe he hardly cares, great-hearted soul ; his humour is too wide and sweet to let him disturb himself with a paltry pluck in some trifling subject ; and yet, during some of those glorious summer evenings, when the streets are jingling with the calmed flow of life, and the music and sound of the dance are stealing through

his windows, old age-worn Oedipus will be before him still, blank and frowning like fate, it seems to him for ever and ever. Moral—When you grind light no fire or little, a meagre smoky one perhaps that shall not tempt you ; sit with your back to it ; keep the tobacco jar fast locked in the cupboard, have no odorous beer bottles about, answer no knocks, but keep tight hold of your hair with both hands.

(To be Continued.)

HYACINTHUS.

Brightly on the walls of Sparta,
Streamed the rays of Phœbus' wain ;
From the briny baths of Ocean,
Clomb his steeds of ruddy mane.

And Eurotas sparkling, darkling,
Poured his rocky bed along,
Choirng many a Doric herd,
In a rugged Doric song.

But the reeds that waved beside him—
As the breeze began to move—
Seemed to rustle and to murmur,
Whisp'ring melting notes of love.

And no wonder, for beside them,
All the balmy spring-tide night,
Jolly Pan and all his satyrs,
Revelled 'neath the fair moonlight.

And the music of their pipings,
Tangled in the listless reeds,
Waited but the breath of morning,
To be wasted o'er the meads.

Now, from out the ancient gateway,
Poured along a laughing crowd—
Sons of Lacedæmon's heroes—
Chanting Phœbus' praises loud.

'Twas an ancient, healthful custom,
Handed from their sires of old.
That when morning brushed the hill-tops
With his waving plume of gold,

All the youth of mighty Sparta,
Should, beneath its frowning towers,
Lave them in the cold Eurotas
Bubbling 'mid its rocks and flowers.

Of these youths was one most lovely—
Laughing, rippling, sunny hair—
Eyes as blue as Jove's own heaven—
Skin as Indian ivory fair.

Cheeks that bloomed with Venus' rose,—
Graceful lips of equal glow—
Where Dan Cupid oft reposes,
Whence, 'tis said, he shaped his bow.