

Of wretched death, such as men travelled tell :
To crews adventurous it oft befel—
How being becalmed, gaunt famine slew them all,
Leaving their wreck to wander and appal
Whose path it crossed—driv'n at the tempests will,
An awful erring tomb—all voiceless—still.

Yet never hope within their captain died—
He still believed, and gaunt and eager-eyed
With his long watchings, oft would climb the mast
And gaze,—being certain of success at last,
And joy! one day he saw upon the waves
Fresh sea-weed—fresh from wat'ry caves
Of some near shore! and then in wide-winged flight,
The sea birds gleaming in the sunny light,
And hov'ring lightly o'er the plunging blue;
All signs that quickly to some land they drew.
'Twas reached at length; the glorious cross they
rear;

The men who erst had murmured now in fear
Tremblingly owned their fault. His end was gained,
His triumph wrought—henceforward to be famed
As he who first Spain's banner had unfurled
O'er the broad empire of a new-found world.

R. T. Nichol.

LAZINESS.

There is no accusation oftener levelled against people than this of laziness—none so often unjustly. It is one of those taunts that rouses a man as effectually to give utterance to an indignant protest as the charge of being asleep in the day time arouses a woman. It is from the fair sex too that the charge generally emanates. Is a man unwilling to be made a social slave, to be exhibited as a captive in the train of his lady friends, his disinclination is put down with a prompt generalization characteristic of the female mind—to laziness. It matters not that he may perchance prefer the chains of study the quiet reading of some new book to being socially victimized: the fact of his unwillingness stamps him as lazy. A woman seems quite unable to comprehend that a large portion of the world's work is done by men who use no active exertion; with them there is no *via mediā*, if one be not actively engaged in some occupation involving the use of one's limbs, the chances are that idleness is promptly laid to one's charge. Women, themselves, have, as a rule, but little of the quality of repose. Their peculiar, nervous organization seems to preclude their enjoying the luxury of thought unless they have some manual occupation. Hence the invention of the purely mechanical devices, such as knitting, &c., which give the semblance of an occupation without the labour of thought—leaves the mind free to wander. The majority of women can see little distinction between Sir Isaac Newton sitting in motionless abstraction, pondering on the mysteries of the universe, and the ploughboy basking in the sun in pure animal enjoyment, and that this is not a totally unfounded charge is I think proved ~~Rebelaisian motto: "Fay ce que tu voudras," with the~~

by the story of the reputation for general idleness acquired by James Watt in his family circle through his musings over the possible utilization of the power of steam. How recent is the period within which the artistic professions were scorned and contemned by the Philistines and classified under the general stigma of idleness with, in many instances, the suspicion of vice added. It required no small courage in those days for a man who felt within him the divine afflatus to give utterance to his thoughts, or to re-produce nature in all her beauty. Fortunately those days when the name of author or artist was almost synonymous with vagabond have passed. never, even in the palmiest days of the queen of the Adriatic have art and literature received more honor and emolument than they do now, but I will venture to say that if the inmost hearts of a large number of the solidly respectable class of British typified by Dickens in the character of Podsnap, styled generally by people of culture Philistines, were explored, the feeling that authors and artists alike were disciples of idleness would be found firmly rooted. Thus far I have spoken of the misconceptions of idleness, but let us suppose that the charge is true, and say, madam, have you never heard the proverb that the bow ever bent soon loses its elasticity? When you see a man (I specify man particularly because I don't believe a woman was ever seen totally unoccupied) sitting calmly, pipe in mouth, watching the blue wreaths of smoke as they curl upwards, does it not strike you that perhaps his thoughts, idle as they are, may be tinged with the rainbow hues of some beautiful idea; an idea that may grow in his brain till it becomes a creature of his own creation, and is embalmed in verse or re-produced in all the tints of heaven. How have all the great pictures of the world been produced, how and by whom? By men who allowed no external cares to worry them, and who in meditation and study elaborated their grand ideas. Fra Angelico of world-wide renown, for the exquisite purity of his conceptions, spent days in meditation and prayer before undertaking a picture, and on a lower plan the idle thoughts and imaginations of Isaak Walton have charmed thousands. If Charles Lamb had not been of the lazy temperament we should never have had the *Essays of Elia*, with all their tender pathos and sympathy. Of course this dreaminess and abstraction of thought may be carried to excess, and the result is generally a tendency to run into subtle metaphysical discussion as De Quincey did, and the modern German does; metaphysics being the general results of much combined metaphysics and talk.

It is to be regretted that none, so far as I know, has written of the pleasures of idleness. Thomson, in his *Castle of Indolence*, indulges in moralizing anent the evils of idleness; yet what more enchanting than the description of life in the castle:

Here freedom reigns without the least alloy,
Nor gossips tale nor ancient maiden's gall,
Nor saintly spleen durst murmur at our joy,
And with evenomed tongues our pleasure pall:
For why? There was but one great rule for all,
To wit: that each should work his own desire,
And eat, drink, study, sleep, as it may fall,
Or melt the time in love or wake the lyre
And carol, what, unbid, the muses might desire.

There, you see, is the perfection of existence, the old *Rebelaisian motto: "Fay ce que tu voudras," with the*