GENERAL READING.

FAVORITE BOOKS.

The old books remain while every thing else passes away. The chances and changes of this mortal life do not touch them. The fields in which we picked wild flowers and played cricket when we were boys are covered with dreary streets. The houses in which we lived have been pulled down, and there are unfamiliar buildings on the site of our old homes. The churches in which we worshipped have been enlarged or rebuilt. The preachers to whom we listened are dead; and the faces we remember so well are no longer seen in the old pews; or, if they are there still, they are greatly changed. The brilliant and romantic lads of our youth have become hard and prosy men: the bright, wild girls have become very uninteresting matrons; the aged people, whose sorrows and loneliness we pitied, or whose sanctity we reverenced, have all passed away. We ourselves are conscious, as the years drift by, that our strength is not what it once was; that there is less elasticity in our step; that we are more easily tried; that our sight is at times a little dim, and our hearing a little But we open our books and the vanished years return. Time has run back and fetched the age of gold. The fancy of Jeremy Taylor is as free and as fresh, and the wit of South is as keen, and the fervor of Baxter is as intense, as when we first heard them Charles James Fox is still speaking with undiminished energy and fire on the Westminster scrutiny. We knew old Lear when we were boys; he is no older now. Most of the young men and maidens whose love-passages entertained us when we ourselves were young are old married people, and occasionally wrangle over the expenses of housekeeping; but Romeo and Juliet from the very harmonious whole.

Forever he will love, and she be fair.

What books you will choose as your intimate friends will depend upon your humor and taste, Dr. Guthrie's choice seemed to be charming. He told me that he read through four books every year-the Bible, The Pilgrim's Progress, four of Sir Walter Scott's novelswhich he reckoned as one book-and a fourth book which I have forgotten, but I think it was Robinson Crusoe. You will choose some books because they soothe and quiet you; some because they are invigorating as mountain air ; some because they amuse you by the shrewdness of their humor: some because they give wings to their fancy; some because they kindle your imagination.-Dr. Dale, in Lectures on Preach-

THE RECENT SOLAR ECLIPSE.

The great point to be decided by the late solar eclipse was as to the nature of the corona or silvery light which bursts out all around the sun the moment the sun's disk is wholly covered by the moon. Is this corona self-luminous, or does it shine by reflected light? If self-luminous, is it composed of one or several constituents, and are these solid or gaseous Now, in deciding these questions everything depends upon the revelations of the spectroscope. In that instrument a self-luminous solid or liquid body gives a streak of rainbow-colored light, running from red to violet, unbroken by lines of any kind. This is known as a simply continuous spectrum. A self-luminous metallic vapor or gas gives a spectrum composed of only a few bright lines. If the light from a solid or liquid substance passes through a layer of gaseous matter before reaching us, some of it is absorbed, and the spectrum is composed of only a few lines. The ordinary spectrum of sunlight belongs to this class. It is a con-tinuous spectrum crossed by dark or Fraunhofer lines, as they are called after the name of their discoverer; and this compound spectrum shows that the light of the sun comes from an incandescent solid or liquid, shining through a layer or envelop of metallic vapor or gas. The spectrum of reflected sun-light is of precisely the same nature—a continuous spectrum crossed by dark lines. These elementary principles furnish a simple key to explain the meaning of the recent eclipse observations. No observer—with a single exception—saw any dark lines in the coronal spectrum, and the bulk of the testimony therefore is altogether against the theory that the corona shines by reflected sunlight. But Dr. Draper would seem to have discovered these lines. His photographs of the corona, it is claimed. give not merely a simple continuous spectrum, as telegraphed at first, but a continuous spectrum crossed by the usual Fraunhofer lines. It is further claimed that Professor Draper saw no bright lines in the spectrum. These facts, if fully established, are important, since they

ply a reflected sunlight. Assuming it as probable, then, that the corona shines by reflection, what an interesting field of speculation opens before us! What is there in the corona to reflect the sun's light? Is it cosmic dust, a single particle of which in a cubic mile of space would according to Professor Newcomb, shine ntensely when exposed to such a flood of light as the sun pours out on everybody in his neighborhood? Or is the sun surrounded by clouds of minute meteors ever revolving about it? Or are streams of meteors, similar to those we see occasionally in our own atmosphere, constantly rushing into the sun from all parts of the solar system? Is the sun's heat kept up by these meteoric showers? These are some of the interesting questions which naturally spring from Dr. Draper's photographs. Perhaps before another total eclipse comes round science may be able to give definite answers to these speculations."-N. Y. Tribune.

THE POET GRAY.

Distinguished as he was as an author he was yet more highly regarded as a scholar. Scholars were his chosen companions, and among his intimate friends he was said to have been delightful, though quiet and reserved in general society. In authorship, the critics who chided him for not doing more, yet marvelled at the excellence of his work. Its subtle criticism, its humor, its research, its intense, if not very fertile imagination, its delicacy of feeling, combined to create a quality that more than compensated for lack of quantity. His letters, acknowledged to be among the most charming ever printed, had all the refined beauty of style of the most picturesque English writers. His Latin poems surpassed those of any of his contemporaries in elegance and grace. He was considered the most learned man of his day; but great regret has often been expressed that he was not a more industrious and productive author. His friends seem to forget that such a poem as his "Elegy in Country Church-yard," which is said to have lain unfinished for fully seven years, might well have been sufficient work for a life-time. So elevated and poetic in thought, so pure and perfect in diction that it is no marvel that each line seems to have an individuality and an immortality of its own, even apart tle processes of mental crystallization, analogous to those in nature, where the most perfect crystalline beauty depends upon long seasons of silent and dark assimilation and arrangement. How long and how often he brooded and dreamed in Stoke Pogis church-yard, while in his brain and heart the poem grew, we shall never know. What sudden flashes of inspiration gave some stanzas shape, what strange insight in to the "short and simple annals of the poor," brought others forth; what mystical union of emotion and thought fin-

The poem was popular from the first, and ran through four editions at once. The original manuscript, translated into almost every known tongue, was purchased some years ago by the late Mr. Granville Penn. for one hundred pounds: it is said, however, since that time, to have fallen into the possession of the British Museum.-National Repository for September.

ally wrought it out,—all lies beyond our

DICKENS'S CHILD CHARACTERS.

Much of Dickens's art in painting child characters generally lies in this mingling the threads of their fate with the schemes of heartless and villainous people. Oliver Twist may be cited as another example. He, too, is the helpless, innocent child, exciting one's sympathies because he is constantly subjected to heartless and cruel treatment. Mrs. Corney, Bumble, Noah Claypole, Fagin, and Sykes are his tormentors and tempters,-the black shades which by contrast make him appear good and virtuous. Like Little Nell, while he is made the sport of harsh circumstances, he is himself passively, instinctively virtuous. Though the central figure of the story, he too, is only sketched in outline, while the characters which darken his destiny are fully and dramatically wrought out. In some of his later works the novelist delineates his children with greater fulness; nevertheless, in the main, they are all made to impress one less by the fulness of their portraiture than by what one perceives of the creature who threatens to make their lives wretched. As in Turner's celebrated picture, the slave-ship occupies but a slight proportion of the canvas, which is mainly filled with the mad waves of the sea, so the children of Dickens are small aerial figures floating amid masses of black cloud paint. ed in to give brilliancy to their whiteness. -National Repository for September.

THE POETRY OF ACTION.

Poetry is the act or art of putting the ideal into realistic form. It has vari- koff. eties and gradations, as all of nature or all of life. Like the atmosphere, it rests with invisible universality. It draws its light and heat from the imagination, the formative or creative faculty of the mind. Whether idylic, erotic, dramatic, or epic, in all poetry would show that the corona's light is sim- worthy of the name, there is some at- Russia.

tempt to portray action. For this reason it may be assumed that the poetry of action is chief, first, and in itself grand beyond aught else. When the Psalmist describes the heavens with their plenitude of stars, he exclaims "are they not all the work of Thy fingers?" Behind the splendor of constellations then there is a sublime work -the poetry of action. Examine the Hymnology of the Church, and you will find that the life, the work of the Christ, is the chief theme that has been versified. Doctrine is not disparaged but poetry of the higher sort draws its inspirations from acts done, from deeds wrought, in short from the heroic in conduct. The great epics of Homer, Virgil, Dante, Tasso, Milton are supreme in their lofty places, simply for the reason that they recite things done In these later years, when materialism is gaining ground, it is said that poetry is dying. We hope it is true as to the sentimental, the sensualistic, and the artificial forms of verse, and writers innumerable of jingle and rhyme, but the poets who hold sway are after all those and those only who can lift their songs to the highest phases of human action. Therefore it is safe to say that the highest life is the highest poem. Genuine nobility of conduct is a fountain of inspiration. A great character is a great poem. However ready some may be to find fault with Carlyle, because he worships force, yet it must be plain to those who reflect, that force only is worthy of worship. What are we doing when we adore the Supreme Being? What means our faith in Christ? We do homage to trustful strength. We idealize power. We put into some form the highest poetry of action, that it may return upon us in showers of blessing. Were we not consciously weak in motive and purpose, the poetry of action would possess for us but little charm. The heroic in others would arouse small enthusiasm, were we their equals. must have been the result of some sub- But knowing that we must stimulate our energies, we sing the praises of those who in the great battle have conquered. When fore we include that the highest poetry nust be found in the highest style of action.—Intelligencer.

THE FAITHFUL SENTINEL.

Peter the Great was a tyrant : but on the whole his tyranny did good service for his Russian subjects. Arbitrary, as all despots must be, he was not without rude notions of justice and a certain consideration for those who merited encouragement. One day a young recruit was standing guard before the door of the entrance to Peter's private chambers in the palace of St. Petersburgh. He had received orders to admit no one. As he was passing slowly up and down before the door, Prince Mentchikoff the favorite Minister of the Czar, approaching, attempting to enter. He was stopped by the recruit. The Prince, who had the fullest liberty of calling upon his master at any time, sought to push the guard and pass him, The young soldier would not move, but ordered his highness to stand back.

"You fool!" shouted the Prince;

don't vou know me?" The recruit smiled and said: "Very well your highness; but my orders are Emotions and experiences are watched peremptory to let no one pass."

The Prince, exasperated at the low fellow's impudence, struck him a blow in the face with his riding-whip.

"Strike away your highness," said the soldier; "but I cannot let you go in." Peter, hearing the noise, opened the door and inquired what it meant, and the Prince told him. The Czar was amused but said nothing at the time. In the evening, however, he sent for the prince and

the soldier, saying-"That man strnck you this morning: now you must return the blow with my

The Prince was amazed. "Your Ma-

iesty." he said. "this common soldier is to strike me?" "I make him a captain!" said Peter.

"But I'm an officer of your Majesty's household," objected the Prince. "I make him a colonel of my Life

Guards, and an officer of the household !"

said Peter again. " My rank, your Majesty knows, is that

"Then I make him a General! So that the beating you may get may come from a man of your rank,"

The Prince got a sound thrashing in the presence of the Czar. The recruit was duly commissioned General, with the title of Count Oroinoff, and was the founder

FAMILY READING.

ARM, SOLDIERS, ARM! BY WM. A. ARMSTRONG.

N. Y. City. Arm, soldiers for the fight, Satan is massing Foes on our left and right. Arm, soldiers, arm! Surely our Leader's might Gives strength surpassing He calls from heaven's height. Arm soldiers arm! CHORUS-Clasp on the breastplate.

Seize the trusty sword, Take up the shield of faith, Call upon the Lord : Go forth and bravely fight, Face the wily foe, " Faithfulness" the watchword. Arm. soldiers arm !

What tho' our souls be worn, Night fast advancing; What the our plumes be torn, Bravely we'll fight! Where'er our flag be borne, Prospects enhancing, There wait we till the morn, Watch through the night! CHORUS-Clasp on the breastplate, etc. Full soon the sun will rise.

Victory bringing Loud shouts will fill the skies, Glad praises ring; March we to take the prize, Hozannas singing; Bright realms will greet our eyes. Christ reign our King! CHORUS-Clasp on the breastplate, etc. -From the Sunday School Army.

THE CLOSET.

What is needed most in order to the world's conversion, we judge, is holiness, or consecration to the service of Christ. In the first place, we need a consecrated ministry, like that of Paul, who counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, and who taught from house to house, and warned men and women day and night with tears. Then, we need a holy consecrated membership in our churches, who will realize fully that they are not their own, but that they are bought with a price, and will glorify God in their bodies and spirits which are his-consecrate all to his service. Give us enough of such ministers and churches, and, by the grace of God, we will turn the world upside down.

The Lord's Supper is the most spiritual ordinance ever instituted ; here we have more immediately to do with Christ. In prayer we draw near through him, but in this ordinance we become one with him : in the word preached we hear of Christ, but in the Supper we feed upon him. - Watson.

It is they who glorify who shall enjoy Him: they who deny themselves who shall not be denied; they who labor on earth who shall rest in heaven: they who bear the cross, who shall wear the crown: they who seek to bless others. who shall be blessed.—Guthrie.

"LOOKING UNTO JESUS."

I find among Christian people two classes of characters; in the one se lf predominates-I mean, of course, comparatively-and in the other, Christ. Among the former class there is a chronic tendency to watch the feelings and state of mind: to look within-i.e., "think about thinking," and to "feel about feeling." and weighed. The I is in the fore front it is an intense spiritual egotism which is pernicious to the last degree, and fruitful of all morbid despondencies and glooms and discouragements. I remember being in the sick room years ago, as a pastor, when the physician, a brusque man, but sensible, came in and found the patient feeling his own pulse; instantly the doctor said, "You must never do that; it will kill you!" That is a good, wholesome lesson. Christians who are feeling their own pulse will always have a bad pulsefeeble, fitful, or feverish.

The other style of Christian character is described best by that clause of the it is the instinctive outbreathing of the text which is under consideration, "Lookunto Jesus." Self is surrendered : Christ is recognized as the only hope, the only It is the renewed soul's unfashioned, perhelp, the only motive, the only end; the source of comfort, of light, of joy, of peace. The soul turns its gaze away from itself to behold the beauty of the Lord St. Paul wrote to the Colossians these very significant words; "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord. so walk ye in him." Brethren, you received Christ Jesus the Lord by looking away from self, and beholding him as the "the Lamb of God which taketh away holy aspirations for the outpourings of the sins of the world," then why not "so of General!" again protested Mentchi- walk in him?" In despair of self help, you looked away from self to look unto him; therefore, the only true method of Christian living for you is that outliving of your soul which is expressed, " Looking unto Jesus." The continuance of the Christian life must correspond thus with its beginning. This is the only consistency, and this is the only gospel method. Self surrendered and Christ supreme, of a powerful family, whose descendants | Christ filling the horizon of the soul, that are still high in the Imperial service of is true evangelical piety.-T. S. Hasting, D. D.

" NOT KNOWING."

I know not what will befall me! God hangs a mist o'er my eyes, And o'er each step of my onward path, He makes hard scenes to rise. And every joy He sends me, comes as a glad,

I see a step before me, as I tread the days of The past is still in God's keeping, the future His mercy shall clear,
And what looks dark, in the distance, may brighten as I draw near.

For perhaps the dreaded future has less bitterness than I think. The Lord may sweeten the water before I stop to drink. Or, if Marah must be Marah, He will stand

beside the brink. It may be there is waiting for the coming of my feet, Some gift of such rare blessedness, some joy so strangely sweet

so strangely sweet That my lips can only tremble, with the joy they cannot speak. O restful, blissful ignorance! 'tis blessed not to know.

It keeps me quiet in those arms that will not And hushes my soul to rest, on the bosom that loves me so.

So I go on not knowing! I would not if I I would rather walk in the dark with God. than go alone in the light;
I would rather walk with Him by faith, than

go alone by sight. My heart shrinks back from trials, which the future may disclose. Yet I never had a sorrow but what the dear

Lord chose To send the coming tears back, with the whispered words—" He knows."

A FEW PROVERBS.

Better go round than fall in the ditch. Better go alone than in bad company, Be slow to promise, but quick to per-

Better go to bed supperless than get up Cut your coat according to your cloth. Catch the hare before you sell the skin. Charity begins at home, but does not

end there. Do not rip old sores. Doing nothing is doing ill. Diligence commands success. Debt is the worst kind of poverty. Dependence is a poor trade to follow. Deeds are fruits; words are but leaves, Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

Every couple is not a pair. Everything is good in its season. Everybody's business is nobody's busi-

False friends are worse than open ene mies.
Fortune knocks at least once at every man's door.

Fire and water are good servants, but are bad masters.

Great barkers are not biters. Great gain and little pain makes a man Give a rogue rope enough and he will hang himself.

THE SPIRIT OF PRAYER.

With the eyes of the spiritual understanding enlightened to see God as he is displayed in Christ, the soul is raised into a condition of living, of apprehending and trusting faith. God is recognized in his true character, and in his relations and dispensations towards redeemed sinners. as he is declared in the Gospel, but never apprehended by merely natural reason. And standing thus in the recognized presence of the great, the holy, the loving and redeeming One, the soul becomes possessed by the spirit of prayer; and its spontaneous impulses put themselves forth in forms corresponding with the spirit of the prayer taught by our Lord to his disciples. Foremost of all is recognized the divine Fatherhood,-gracious, and bringing salvation to lost sinners. Here the vision of faith passes into a holy confidence and comfortable assurance, in which the soul perpetually proclaims its new relationship, crying, Abba, Father! But in all this the awful majesty of the divine person is still clearly seen, and in deepest humiliation and profoundest reverence the glory of him that dwelleth in heaven, exalted above all things, is confessed. And now is seen the first and the perpetual expression of the soul's desire before this ineffably glorious One, HAL-LOWED BE THY NAME. This is more than a thought conceived or a wish expressed: soul renewed by the Spirit and brought into its appropriate attitude before God. petual worship, its spontaneous prayer. Then, too, the soul's impulses are drawn to and united with God's; and his zeal for the advent and establishment of his kingdom among men pervades also the quickened soul, which now flames its first petition for the setting up of Messiah's kingdom. And this sacred sympathy with the great Redeemer, in all the after stages of the life of faith, is breathed forth in the Divine Spirit and the salvation of souls. The revealed holiness of the sacred person operates also as a convicting power,

discovering sin, and driving the soul to

deprecations and pleadings for pardon,

while the complete fitness of the divine

purposes appears so absolutely sufficient

that all prayer resolves itself into an un-

reserved surrender of personal wishes apart from God, and "Thy will be done"

comprehends the whole. Towards that all

the aspirations of the soul are drawn, and

when our prayer is deepest our petitions are fewest.—National Rep. for Sept.

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DEAR reminded once in a girls will by Sister I for you to " We are And the We know And try

"Upon ou That tel We have s And mea

" Believing And that For life we And to t " Hurrah!

They bin Against th Our batt

Now, litt verses from against Ki gain an en sends his s way. Kee clothes he begun to we rum. Be i iness, boys; Great Capt

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If ever E be her ruin ever that no is the nation there are r ask the unb know; ask of the Engl tional exper ask the ung English pre answer woul the unanimo ful man ir national sin ness; the nat drink. I find no r rors as I fin

dents of ordi

mon news, ha to-day; happ nineteenth ce pening in Ch ing in Liver gow, in Man under your n tian men ar wonder that c in us when city-whole c been its ma given to drin ference cease half-ruined h legislature Sooner or lat land must per loss—strike scale place and adultera the very best other side p and grain end grapes that n cent delight scale, for you fair-load wit and murder, such as no h tongue tell; widows' and o will not strike day strike it f Christian mer will you, as lo lovers of you High God and the other? upon your he

things ought I stop at is not told! that throughou pendencies, v flag dominate empire the su ever winds bl girdled, are gi zone of drunk of it-as I thi but deep, mu by races which mated, and or to shudder, as the stern in "These thing held my peac wickedly that self; but I w before thee th done;" and doom. "Shall things? saith soul be avenge this ?"

> But, oh! wi before it is too of Israel there and of agony out from the gun;" and, qu priest Aaron fire thereon fro into the midst put on incense living and the was styed.