

GARRETSON'S FIRST VISIT TO CLERMONT.

All received and treated him with the greatest kindness. Mrs. Livingston, of Clermont, then a widow, received her future son-in-law as an angel of God.

Catherine Livingston was born in the year 1752, and was the same age as Mr. Garretson. She was justly proud of her lineage, and particularly of her descent from that eminent minister of the Scottish Kirk, the Rev. John Livingston.

Charles ascended the throne, shamelessly broke his oath, persecuted him for non-conformity, and instrumentally sentenced him, under pain of death, to leave the kingdom in three months.

Robert Livingston gave thirteen thousand acres of land, on Ruloff Jansen's Kill, to his second son, Robert, in consideration of the important service rendered him in the detection and defeat of a plan formed, some say by Indians, and some say by negroes, to rob and murder the family.

Catherine Livingston was tall, beautiful, and remarkably graceful and attractive. Many suitors had sought her hand in marriage, but all had been refused. Like her mother, Margaret Beckman, she had been bred to the highest refinement and best culture possible on this side of the Atlantic in their time.

Returning home she mingled as formerly in gay and brilliant society, but her heart was not at rest. On the 13th of October, 1787, she spent the day alone with God in the solitude of her own chamber, and while on her knees repeating the solemn petition of the litany, "By thine agony and bloody sweat, good Lord deliver us," etc., regained the assurance of acceptance with God and preserved it to the end of her unusually long life.—National Repository for October.

JOHN H. BRYANT'S POETRY.

There is much genuine poetry in the little volume of Mr. Bryant's poems. In bulk it does not compare with the elder Bryant, but in its spirit are points of resemblance. Here are love of nature, with minuteness of detail, in unfolding her delicate half-secrets, together with strong human sympathy.

The range of Mr. Bryant's poetry is not great. He is a child of nature. He delights in her moods and phases; wind and stream, bird and flower, woodland and meadow, hill and vale, earth and sky inspire his muse. In them they "Waken wild and strong The spirit of unstudied song."

"A Brook Walk," "October," "A Day in Autumn," "Indian Summer," "Winter," "A Night Scene," "The Traveler's Return," and the "Blue-bird," constitute a class whose nature is in part indicated in their titles. William Cullen Bryant is praised for the faithfulness with which he pictures the seasons of our northern clime. The poem on "An Autumn Day," which follows, presents a true picture of a New England Indian Summer, and it entitles its author to at least a share in this praise.

"But these—these are thy charms: Mild airs, and tempered light upon the lea, And the year holds no time within his arms That doth resemble thee."

The sunny moon is thine, Soft golden, noiseless as the moon of night, And hues that in the flushed horizon shine At eve and early light.

The year's last, loveliest smile, Thou canst not fill with hope the human heart, And strength-nit to bear the storms awhile Till Winter's frowns depart.

Over the wide plains that lie A desolate scene the fires of Autumn spread, And on the blue walls of the starry sky A strange, wild glimmer shed.

Far in a sheltered nook I've met in these calm days a smiling flower, A lonely aster trembling by a brook At noon's warm, quiet hour.

And something told my mind That should old age to childhood call me back, Some sunny days and flowers I still might find Along life's weary track."

But, if Mr. Bryant is a child of Nature, he is also poet of the humanities. In much he has written is a broad sympathy for his suffering race. His poems of this class are mostly personal, referring to himself; as such they are retrospective and occasionally introspective. In addition to "My Native Village," "The Emigrant," "On Leaving the Place of My Nativity," "Lines Written on Visiting My Birthplace in 1866," betray unusual attachment for the childhood home. Their low, sad refrain is the voice of a true man brooding over his youth lost—not wasted, simply passed. The old homestead; surrounding stately hills, with intervening valleys, cool and quiet, through which hastens the ever-flowing brooklet; parents, brothers, and sisters; plays and playmates of boyhood,—these live again in his verse, animating its strain and rendering intelligible its humanity. These references, moreover, are so full, and so completely within the province of autobiography, that they furnish the amplest material for a sketch of his life and for a portraiture of his character. In early manhood he is the emigrant, gliding down the waters of the beautiful Ohio to become a citizen of a new state. He leaves behind him all his heart holds dear; scenes sacred to him through past associations, together with the associates themselves who rendered those scenes sacred.

"From whom he parted with regret, but firm In the strong purposes that build the world."

He is, at length, under the maples in his prairie home, having glided unobtrusively down life's stream to quiet old age, whose stealthy approach he has described in a touching poem. His visits to his native home have been occasions of poems, in which are noted changes that have taken place—the death of parents and of others of the household, marriages, removals, and events of like nature, in all of which is manifest a growing desire to return. Just before his visit of 1866, the homestead had fallen into the hands of his brother, William Cullen, who had modernized it for his summer residence. There is a tender pathos in the lines

that commemorate this visit. They admit one in their sincerity into the inner sanctuary of their author's heart.

"The bleeding dove Flies to her native vale, and nestles there To die amid the quiet grove, where first She tried her tender plume."

This sentiment, common to all mankind, finds expression in the following poem, already referred to:

"When death shall come, oh let me die Where these wild steeps around me rise; Where the green slopes and valleys lie Beneath these bright blue mountain skies."

For this is my dear native home; This low-roofed dwelling once was ours; This orchard bright with scented bloom, These pastures gay with vernal flowers.

Here, when the land was rent with strife, And on the coast the war-cloud hung, These veins first felt the pulse of life, These lips first lisped the English tongue.

Brothers and sisters nestled here Beneath the kind parental way; And here through many a passing year Love, peace, and joy were round my way.

Now threescore years of life are past, The hair is silvered on my brow; And shadows o'er my way are cast— Life's evening shadows even now.

What though, beneath a milder sky, Broad fields of waving wheat were mine, And tasseled maize and bearded rye, And steeds and flocks and herds of kine;

Or what if mine were princely state And lofty towers and airy halls, Or marble piles with mounted gate, And gilded dome and pictured walls?

These could not compensate the heart For childhood's joys and home of rest— No solace to the soul impart To fill the void within my breast.

For still my spirit fondly clings To these loved hills, though wild and stern; And every passing season brings A deeper yearning to return.

And when life's few quiet years are gone, I would my dim and fading eye Might cast its last sad look upon My native home my native sky."

National Repository for October.

ABOUT CULTURE.

Culture needs definition. Its claims are large for its papers. In a world where, for the most part, life is to be lived earnestly and death met rationally, where there is, as old Samuel Johnson finely said, little to be known and much to be done, the voice that gets itself heard and followed for good, must be clear, direct and of power. Of that which with certain sad presumption calls itself the culture of our age, the "sweetness" is not food, the "light" is not warmth, the "reasonableness" is not conviction. A vast vagueness envelops it all, a poetic perfume and subtle incertitude permeates it, and a very dim religious light illumines it. It has, indeed, many beautiful things to tell us, and many of its ways are ways of pleasantness, if all its paths are not peace. It is the servant of mental and aesthetic desires; but it cannot satisfy religious needs. Goethe charms it, John Wesley shocks it. To its reflection the nude beauty of art and the amours of the gods of pagan poetry are as pleasing as the blunt, vulgar notions of hell and judgment are revolting. It will not tolerate a religious conviction that offends against good taste or aesthetic harmony. It prefers a beautiful myth before an unpleasant, though important, fact. It has an ear for the voice of refined ennui playing its story of luxurious discontent and unsatisfied affinities or asking, "Is life worth living?" in faultless magazine verses; but it does not understand the cry, "What shall I do to saved?" of a soul staggering under the burden that the penitent, publican carried into the temple and left there. It has wine for the connoisseur, but no bread for the hungry and starving. Its hyper-refinement puts it beyond many of the realities of life—realities none the less solemn that they are hard and unlovely.

I am not speaking against culture. Wisdom forbid! I know its high uses. I yield to none in love of its classic groves, its rich pantheons, its imperishable marble and canvas, its deathless songs, its lifting ideals, its high aspirations, its noble utterances of truth. Allowing for difference of capacity, I feast as fully and joyously on "the best that has been thought and said," as Matthew Arnold himself. But I will not take culture for religion, any more than I would take a supremely beautiful statue of Venus for a wife. I will not let the Zeist Geist overshadow the Christ Geist. I will not worship a "stream of tendency," nor a power that "maketh for righteousness," unless I know it not only is "not ourselves," but is itself Himself. I will not hate nor denounce the old truths of Christianity, which have blossomed and fruited in the finest types of conduct and the noblest symmetry of life of which we have record just because they are called dogmas. I will not subordinate conscience to taste-ethics to aesthetics, Christianity to culture. There is no quarrel with culture as such. The man is to be pitied who does not hunger and thirst for it.

But it is a means, and we must not mistake it for an all-sufficient end.

The trouble comes from expecting too much of culture, and under wrong guidance letting it usurp a place that it cannot fill—from making it the summum bonum. Real culture does nourish and develop the mind and contribute largely, in the broad sense of the world, to spiritual growth, just as good food performs a like service for the body. But it ought not to be run into epicureanism, as it too commonly is.

There must, then, be a true and a false culture, or rather true or false uses of the same thing. I call that a true use of culture which first of all does not abuse it; which sees in it, not an epicure's feast, with dainty dishes and light wines for the fortunate few, but the bountiful table provided by the good and great of the ages, whereat all men can eat and grow strong; which assimilates the best that is in it to the development of the robust moral manhood; which keeps the heart fresh and sweet, gives zest and earnestness to life, and makes one love one's fellows and burn to be of use to them—more, which does actually make one of use to his kind.

I call that a false use of culture which makes one intellectually vain and spiritually selfish; which sucks out of it the sweets for more personal gratification, and goes melancholy mad with mere learning, which claims an exclusive property in it, and seeks to establish a culture caste; which catches from it nothing better than a refined pessimism, that, as Mr. Mallock has put it, not being modest enough to despair of itself, despairs of its age; which reduces the bone and sinew of life to speculative generalizations and refined ideals; and which, in common with various schools of modern thought, makes the impossible attempt to substitute knowledge for belief in matters of religion, refuses credence to all that is undemonstrable under the laws of exact, formulated proof, and seeks to drag the high phenomena and realities of spiritual life down to a physical basis, or to spirit them away into a region of pure imagination too rare for reality to live in.

Admitting the breadth and fineness of modern culture—and no one glories in it more than I—I think it is fairly chargeable in certain high quarters with selfishness and weakness. It lives too much in its own "bitterly select" circle. It is out of sympathy with the practical pressing wants of men. It nurses its own troubles to excess, and especially hugs the wretchedness of doubt as if it were a disguised good instead of a calamitous evil. It is half-hearted. Able to do much and useful work, it dawdles life away in brooding over what cannot be known on the one hand, and what cannot be helped on the other.—Wesleyan Advocate.

THE CHILDREN AT BEDTIME.

Every parent who has been in the habit of reading or talking to the little ones after they are safely tucked in bed will bear witness to the value of this mode of influence. With the laying off of the clothes, the angers, worries and discontents of the day subside. With the brief season of prayer, they still fly further into the background. And when the little form rests in its bed they seem to vanish out of sight. The body is at rest. The heart is plastic to the touch of a loving father or mother.

Now is the time to exert a moulding power. At this hour the little ones listen with rapt attention to what is read to them. Hymns, the Scriptures, Bible stories are heard with close attention, until the reader's voice is stilled or the hearers sink into gentle sleep. Or, conversation may take the place of reading. The will that was in a state of resistance an hour ago is now relaxed. The anger that blinded moral discernment has passed away. With open heart the child utters its confessions and gladly receives the forgiving kiss.

Plans for the morrow can be discussed and duty can be made to put on an attractive form. Irritations can be looked at quietly, and admonitions to watchfulness may be dropped with soothing efficacy into the listening ear. And then how delightful the embrace with which the young arms clasp your neck, the intense, "dear mother," with which the "good night" is said. Parents, if you have not thus parted from your birdlings at the evening hour, you have something yet to learn of hopeful instruction—to experience of love's delights.—The Gem.

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