

## THE VICTORIA CROSS.

Thus said the Queen! "For him who gave  
His life as nothing in the fight;  
So he from Russian wrong might save  
My crown, my people and my right:  
Let there be made a cross of bronze,  
And grave thereon my queenly crest,  
Write VALOUR on its haughty scroll,  
And hang it on his breast."

Thus saith the Land! "He who shall bear  
Victoria's cross upon his breast,  
In token that he did not fear  
To die, had need been, for her rest;  
For the dear sake of her who gives,  
And the brave deeds of him who wears,  
Shall, high or low, all honour have  
From all, through all his years."

## CORRESPONDENCE.

MONTREAL, Tuesday, March 9th., 1869.

DEAR MR. DIOGENES:

I am only a small school-boy, and Dr. Irvine is, I know, a great scholar and preacher; but as I have lately been reading the IVth. Book of old Virgil's *Æneid*, and (luckily for him, as some of it is awfully hard) he has'nt, I think that he is wrong in something that he said about Virgil a few days ago. Now, I want to set him right, and that's the reason I write to you. There was a tremendously long lecture of his (not Virgil's but Dr. Irvine's) printed last Friday in the *Daily News*. Perhaps you heard it, or read it. It was on "*Woman*," and I have cut out of the *Daily News* the passage in which, I think, he made a mistake. Here it is. He is speaking of Dido, and says:

"Her story as given by Virgil, is one of great energy and enterprise, coupled with the highest matrimonial fidelity and integrity of character, ending in suicide on a funeral pile, built by her own hands, rather than violate her matrimonial vow."

I don't think that the syntax of the last words *rather than violate her matrimonial vow*, is quite O. K., according to what we are taught at our school; but let that *pass*. It won't quite *parse* in another sense, though it isn't a thing to joke about in a letter like this; but what I want to say is this, that Dr. Irvine is not correct in buttering up Queen Dido's *matrimonial fidelity*, on the authority of the "Mantuan Bard" as old Anthon calls him. Virgil does'nt praise it up, as far as I can find out. His story is as follows:—While the principal Trojans and Tyrians are out on a hunting expedition, a big storm of thunder and hail and rain comes on. They all rush about to find shelter wherever they can, and as ill luck would have it,

"The Dardan Chief and Dido meet  
Both driven to the same retreat."

Virgil then tells us that lightnings &c. flashed on their marriage in the cave, and continues thus at v. 169:

"Ille dies primus lethi, primusque malorum  
Causa fuit: neque enim specie famæ movetur,  
Nec jam furtivum Dido meditatur amorem.  
Conjugium vocat—hoc pretextit nomine culpam."

Or, as Mr. Conington, M. A., translates it:

"That day she first began to die;  
That day first taught her to defy  
The public tongue, the public eye.  
No secret love is Dido's aim;  
She calls it marriage now: such name  
She chooses to conceal her shame."

I, for one, don't believe that this is exactly what Dr. Irvine

means by the *highest matrimonial fidelity*. If it is, our master, and all the fellows in my form didn't understand it so at all.

But this is not all, MR. DIOGENES. The "pious Æneas," after having made Dido awfully spooney on him, runs away from her, like a beastly sneak as he was; and when the Queen finds out that his ships are all ready to sail, she goes right to him, for she has lots of pluck, and pitches into him tremendously. Of course, I don't mean, with her fists, though he deserved a good hammering, but with her tongue. Among other things she says:

"For you I angered Libyan hordes,  
"Woke jealous hate in Nomad lords,  
"Lost Tyrian hearts: *for you, the same,*  
"I trampled on my own good name,  
"That wisely honor, which alone  
"Had placed me on a starry throne."

I have underlined Mr. Conington's verses which seem to translate the Latin so well:

"Te propter eundem  
"Extinctus pudor, et, quæ solâ sidera adibam,  
Fama prior."

And I think that Dr. Irvine cannot deny that Dido admits having "violated her matrimonial vow."

Once more. On the night that Æneas sets sail, Dido cannot sleep in her bed, but keeps speechifying to herself all the time, being doubtful what she ought to do. As my letter is getting long, I will quote only the last line of her speech:

"Non servata fides, cineri promissa Sichæo:"

or in English:

"I have not kept the faith I vowed  
"To my Sichæus' funeral shroud!"

The real fact is, MR. DIOGENES, and all school boys know it, that Dido in the *Æneid* kills herself on the funeral pile, because Æneas *would* run away without marrying her in a respectable manner. I should like Dr. Irvine to know this, as he has probably forgotten all his Virgil, now that he is a grown up man; just as when I am a man, I mean to forget my Virgil too. If you use my letter, do not print my real name but just call me,

"A THIRD FORM BOY."

P.S.—I showed this letter to my big brother, Tom, who is a lawyer, and he says that Dr. Irvine is not right when he says in this same lecture on "*Woman*," that "It is a dogma of the Koran that woman has no soul." Of course I don't know what "a dogma of the Koran" means; but Tom says it is a popular error to suppose that the Koran denies that women have souls. Tom says that, on the contrary, the Koran, in its III and IVth. chapters, promises Paradise to all those women who believe and act rightly. I think the Koran (whatever it is) is right if it says so, and I don't see why Dr. Irvine should have spoken so of the Koran if my brother Tom is right, as I think he is. But of course, MR. DIOGENES, you know all about this, and the Virgil question too.

\*\* Tom is right: though the Paradise of women is supposed to be different from that of men.—ED.

## "THE RIGHT MAN IN THE RIGHT PLACE."

There are some funny announcements occasionally in American journals. For instance: A wag in Cincinnati advertises for a situation, saying at the same time that "work is not so much an object as fair wages."

If this candid gentleman will come to Montreal, the Cynic will exert his influence to get him appointed night policeman on the Great St. James' street beat. The situation would suit him admirably.