

The rain began to abate on Sunday, the 24th. On Monday, the 25th, we had a few drops—and many were fearing we should have more. "If we get more rain," said one "all the garden stuff will be destroyed." "What nonsense," cries Mrs. —, who has a fine garden behind her hotel "the cabbages in my garden have got twice the size since Monday." Some went so far as to say more rain would injure the grain. So hard is it to satisfy the grumbling bosom.

I took the train for Pense. On Monday morning up betimes, ordered the team, took an early breakfast and away for Two Rivers school-house. How the horses went! How fresh the breeze! How beautiful the flower-enamelled prairie! At the end of thirteen miles we reach Beacon Hill, and my friend Mr. J. W. Cafferata, sec. 24, tp. 18, r. 24, in Scotch bonnet and blouse, working suit, was at the door of his house to welcome us. Another friend at once undertook to ride round and tell the settlement we should have a meeting on the morrow in Two Rivers school-house.

Mr. Cafferata is an English gentleman—educated—who studied medicine—but disliking the pill and saw-bone business, determined to come out to this North-West to be a farmer. Dozens of young English gentlemen have done the same—with a difference—to wit—they did not buckle down to work as this wise man has done, and—fatallest of mistakes!—they did not marry. Mr. Cafferata has married a lady of refinement, education, and well connected and just the woman for the North-West.

Entering the house, what a difference between this house, and the house of the bachelor farmer. The present writer has never been blind to the many excellencies and multitudinous attractions of lovely woman but she is at her best as the tasteful, plucky, cheerful, energetic, independent, wife of a North-West farmer. Mrs. Cafferata could not have higher spirits or happier smiles if she was mistress of a baronial hall.

Beacon Hill farm is on a rolling prairie. About one hundred and fifty yards from the house, which stands on an eminence and commands a magnificent view, are the stables and outhouses. Sixty-five acres are under crop, and as the eye rises from the deep green of the wheat and crosses the prairie beyond, it takes in the blue backs of the Dirt Hills. Cattle, and horses, and pigs, and hens, and chickens are among the possessions of Beacon Hill farm, where bread, butter, eggs, brawn, bacon, pork, are manufactured, and life is very independent of the outside world. Before supper we walked over rich pastures and sunny hills, drinking in the prairie lark's song, inhaling the perfume of the flowers, watching the butterflies, and discussing the farmer's life and prospects. I found mine host confident in the future. After supper, which was served with simplicity and elegance, the napkins white as snow, the tiger lily, rose, anemone, crocus mingling their grateful perfume with the aroma of the tea urn, and at which I assisted with the relish of a North-West appetite, we again sauntered into the meadows and saw prairie, brown tilth, and wheat field in evening glory,—a scene filled with all that was grateful to soul and senses,—the hen with her chickens, the calves graceful as fallow deer lying down in the grass, the birds singing, the grasses and flowers sending up their odours to a blue sky flecked with clouds of grey and shining fleece, not a house nearer than four miles in this beautiful fruitful land, a boundless scene of lonely beauty that would have been lonesome but for the signs of a vigorous pioneer couple near, and the little fair-haired girl of a year and a half that toddles down towards the stables, and looks back and smiles, conscious she is going on to forbidden ground. Even the attentions of a stray mosquito could not mar the sense of peace and beauty, the ideas of hope and happiness which were borne into the mind. Meanwhile Mr. Cafferata has been at his work. Returned to the house we smoked a cigarette and then at Mrs. Cafferata's suggestion we adjourned to the small drawing-room where we discussed Dickens and Thackeray, and a couple of visitors having come from the valley, played a game of whist and kept Mr. Cafferata up until eleven, two hours later than his usual time for retiring.

In the morning, which was a fit promise of such a day as was desirable after the rain—a morning cloudy-warm,—I took in the wide sea of rolling green, and inhaled the perfumed breeze, whose sough sounded like music across those downs, watched and listened to the prairie lark rising a few yards in the air, and singing his few but deliciously sweet notes; went to the stables and saw the cows milked; visited the pigs which I had helped to feed yesterday after supper; exercised myself at the pump, and at sawing wood, until seven o'clock, when the breakfast bell rang—the breakfast which one assailed with a board-of-ship gusto.

Mr. Cafferata donned his working suit, and pegged away until it was time to drive me to the meeting. Back again in the evening. Again he puts on his working clothes, and applies himself to his noble toil. He is his own boy and man, attends to his horses, cattle, pigs. He has ploughed and cultivated all that land himself, and if I take down from a shelf in his library our old friend Horace, and turn to the first Satire of the First Book, I find no character to match my friend. He does not cry, "O, fortunati Mercatores!" nor yet "Militia est potior." On the contrary, he feels he has chosen wisely and well, is content with his lot, is sure of independence, and has a chance of affluence.

The next day we visited Mr. Joseph Young, once an Ontario farmer, now wedded to the North-West. He has five sons, three of them men, tall, stalwart fellows, each with fifty acres of crop on his homestead. Mr. Young himself has sixty acres of some of the finest wheat I ever saw, and forty acres broken. At dinner at his house we ate pork raised by himself which would have given fresh inspiration to Charles Lamb writing an essay on Roast Pig, and dilating on the delicious crackling. Here, too, we saw the advantage of a wife—Mrs. Young, a Scotch lady, placing a table before you that would have created an appetite if the drive had not already made me so hungry I could have eaten an anchor.

In a second article I may give your readers some idea of the North-

West bachelor farmer, a brave fellow too, as will be seen. Here let me close by saying:

The man of energy who loves Independence, and knows she cannot be won without toil and will—let him come to the North-West; but you who are bent on making a rapid fortune, who sigh for those happy isles of the Roman bard, where the earth yields her harvests and the trees their fruits, unbidden; where honey drops from the oak and the streams leap babbling from the hills; where the cows come undriven to the milk pail, and the flock is unhurt by pestilence or heat, or wild beasts—those shores destined by Jove for the pious when the golden age had passed away—you, I say, who want a country where pigeons can be shot ready roasted for your breakfast, I pray you come not near this land which welcomes to her breast only brave, strong, self-reliant men.

NICHOLAS FLOOD DAVIN.

June 30.

SONNET.

UNSEEN, unknown, unguessed by all around,
The lonely myst'ry of the inner life,
Making no sign, and giving out no sound.
Deep hidden; far from all the outward strife
Of sight and speech and formulative thought,
(Which, in the sounding, weakly loses force:)
Nebulous, vague, yet with most meaning fraught
For here all thought, all action, has its source.

This fount to keep pure, clean, and free from taint
Of selfish, weak, or hard'ning influence,
Our skill, our waking strength, must never faint,
But even after failure, yet commence.
Then, though to others, what we build, seem frail,
In our own hearts we shall not feel to fail.

AMY BROWNING.

THE MORAL ELEMENT IN THE "ANCIENT MARINER."

Two years ago, in the Inter-Universities Matriculation Examination, I asked the eighty candidates, "What is the moral purpose of the *Ancient Mariner*?" and therefore the revival of the subject by Louisa Murray and M. Middleton in *THE WEEK* has for me a peculiar interest. As I expected, I received some very funny answers. One candidate told me that the only moral purpose was to raise a little money to keep the pot boiling. Another who wrote for Victoria, and was presumably a Methodist, said that it was to illustrate the value of the class meeting, for as soon as the *Ancient Mariner* had confessed his sin he obtained relief. A third, who wrote for Queen's replied that it was to teach the doctrine of predestination, and quoted in support of his opinion:—

Forthwith this frame of mine was wrenched
With a woeful agony,
Which forced me to begin my tale;
And then it left me free.

Nearly all the rest, with many variations, concurred in the opinion that it was to teach the great lesson of love:—

He prayeth best who loveth best
All things, both great and small;
For the dear God who loveth us
He made and loveth all.

I do not at all agree with M. Middleton, but think, on the contrary, that Miss Murray has beautifully expressed a very evident truth when she says: "In the *Ancient Mariner* we have a symbol of man's soul alienated from God, and leading a blind and selfish existence, destitute of sympathy and love;" nor can I see why he should desire to combat the idea of the poem being anything more than a fairy tale written by Coleridge to fulfil his agreement with Wordsworth, to supply some poems of a supernatural type to help to fill up their new volume of *Lyrical Ballads*. Both the bent of the poet's mind and his habit of life are against M. Middleton's theory, for Coleridge was always intensely philosophical, both in his writings and conversation, and, at this time, when he was living at Stowey, in the Quantock Hills, he made a regular practice of preaching in Unitarian chapels.

William Hazlitt, who, on one occasion, walked ten miles to hear the poet-preacher, gives us this graphic description of his style: "He then launched into his subject like an eagle dallying with the wind. The sermon was upon Peace and War—upon Church and State—not their alliance, but their separation; on the spirit of the World and the spirit of Christianity, not as the same but as opposed to one another. He talked of those who had inscribed the Cross of Christ upon banners dripping with human gore! He made a poetical and pastoral excursion; and to show the fatal effects of war, drew a striking contrast between the simple shepherd boy driving his teams afield, or sitting under the hawthorn, piping to his flock, as though he should never be old, and the same poor lad crimped, kidnapped, brought into town, made drunk at an ale-house, turned into a wretched drummer-boy, with his hair sticking on end with powder and pomatum, a long queue at his back, and tricked out in the finery of the profession of blood."

Although his text was "He departed again into a mountain Himself alone," Coleridge could not help drifting into the subject of peace and good will in opposition to war and cruelty. His was a loving and lovable nature, and a nature which gave vent to its opinions on every possible