

"DEDICATED TO MRS. H. CRAWFORD BY THE AUTHOR,  
M. F.

"Three turkeys fair their last have breathed,  
And now this world forever leaved;  
Their father, and their mother too,  
They sigh and weep as well as you;  
Indeed, the rats their bones have crunched,  
Into eternity their launched.  
A direful death indeed they had,  
As wad put any parent mad;  
But she was more than usual calm,  
She did not care a single dam."

This last word is saved from all sin by its tender age, not to speak of the want of the *n*. We fear "she" is the abandoned mother, in spite of her previous sighs and tears.

"Isabella says when we pray we should pray fervently, and not rattle over a prayer—for that we are kneeling at the footstool of our Lord and Creator, who saves us from eternal damnation, and from unquestionable fire and brimston."

She has a long poem on Mary Queen of Scots:—

"Queen Mary was much loved by all,  
Both by the great and by the small,  
But hark! her soul to heaven doth rise!  
And I suppose she has gained a prize  
For I do think she would not go  
Into the awful place below:  
There is a thing that I must tell,  
Elizabeth went to fire and hell,  
He who would teach her to be civil,  
It must be her great friend the devil!"

She hits off Darnley well:—

"A noble's son, a handsome lad,  
By some queer way or other, had  
Got quite the better of her heart.  
With him she always talked apart;  
Silly he was, but very fair,  
A greater buck was not found there."

"By some queer way or other"; is not this the general case and the mystery, young ladies and gentlemen? Goethe's doctrine of "elective affinities" discovered by our Pet Maidie.

#### SONNET TO A MONKEY.

"O lively, O most charming pug  
Thy graceful air, and heavenly mug;  
The beauties of his mind do shine,  
And every bit is shaped and fine.  
Your teeth are whiter than the snow,  
Your a'great buck, your a'great beau;  
Your eyes are of so nice a shape,  
More like a Christian's than an ape;  
Your cheek is like the rose's blume,  
Your hair is like the raven's plume;  
His nose's cast is of the Roman,  
He is a very pretty woman.  
I could not get a rhyme for Roman,  
So was obliged to call him woman."

This last joke is good. She repeats it when writing of James the Second being killed at Roxburgh:—

"He was killed by a cannon splinter,  
Quite in the middle of the winter;  
Perhaps it was not at that time,  
But I can get no other rhyme!"

(To be continued.)

#### FORMOSA THE BEAUTIFUL.

There are few spots left in this matter-of-fact world which have so much of the ideal about them as Formosa. The land of Atlantis, the Garden of the Hesperides and the Island of Cicie have had their day; Cyprus is not the island it once was, and Capua is forgotten, but there still lingers some romance about Formosa—the Cyprus of the China Seas. It seems to be the one spot that struck the early discoverers by its beauty, and, if Dr. Bridges is to be believed, it is as beautiful as ever. There lies a vale in Ida, says Lord Tennyson, lovelier

"Than all the valleys of Ionian hills;  
The swimming vapour slopes athwart the glen,  
Puts forth her arm and creeps from pine to pine,  
And loiters, slowly drawn. On either hand  
The lawns and meadow ledges, midway down,  
Hang rich in flowers, and far below them roars  
The long brook falling through the cloven ravine,  
In cataract after cataract to the sea."

And this is Dr. Bridges' description of Formosa put into nobler language. As at Cyprus, too, there still remains the worship of the Goddess of Love, as it was carried on formerly in the pre-historic times of the Phœnicians. The tribes on the East coast are ruled by women, and their religion is in the hands of the priestesses of the Formosan Astarte. The west part of the Island is indeed in the hands of the unromantic Chinaman; but no Chinaman ventures to cross the mountain range that runs down the centre of the island and divides the Formosans from the foreign devils. For in Formosa the Chinamen are, oddly enough, the civilized element encroaching on the barbarous. Then there is, too, the romance of history attaching to Formosa. In the middle of the Seventeenth Century a tailor named Iguorn came to the Dutch settlement in Formosa and waxed extremely rich. His wealth increased so vastly that he owned 3,000 ships, and then he went and settled in Japan. There he became ambitious. He thirsted for empire and became a sort of Ralph the Rover of the China Sea. He served the province of Foh-lien and entered into negotiations with the Tartar dynasty for the purpose of being recognized as an independent sovereign; but they got him to Peking and put him in prison. His son, Coxinga, was equal to the situation, for, packing up his goods, he sailed to Formosa. In 1661 he expelled the Dutch and ignominiously defeated the squadron sent out from Holland to reinstate them, at a time when Dutch guns were heard in the Thames and Holland was mistress of the sea.

Apart, however, from its romance, Formosa has many solid advantages. There is coal at Kelung, worked in European fashion since 1877, with a shaft 300 feet deep, and this in itself ought to render Formosa worth having, when one thinks that coal is sent from Cardiff to supply the vessels at Singapore and Java. There is sulphur in abundance, and in Formosa are found gigantic laurels whose wood is distilled for camphor, though Formosan camphor is run close by that of Japan and Borneo, and also by the artificial camphor now produced so easily by passing chlorine gas through turpentine. There is rice, too, in abundance, for Formosa is the granary of China, while the tea of the island is traded extensively to America. The island is progressing fast. The capital, Tanisui, has 100,000 inhabitants, and the second capital some 80,000, and the whole west side is populated as thickly as China or Belgium. There are roads and a telegraph, and even some talk of a railway, for the late Governor Ting was very enlightened.

#### LIFE IN ST. PETERSBURG.

People here all arm themselves for the winter. There can be no question as to its severity. Indeed, one would be inclined to imagine it were almost welcomed as a friend, for keen disappointment is expressed when the snow is tardy in falling. After the heavy rains which fall in the late Autumn snow roads are almost a necessity of existence. If frost suddenly sets in before they are made it is under great difficulties that the country people bring supplies to the metropolis; the price of provisions rises in proportion, and distress ensues. Double windows are universal; they are an absolute necessity. For the admission of fresh air one pane in each window is left so that it may be opened at pleasure. The rest of the window is so thoroughly secured that not a breath of the keen air can enter. This process accomplished, the difference of the temperature within doors is sensibly perceptible, and heating by means of stoves may then be delayed for some time. The interior of a Russian house is not familiar to all, so, under favour of the Lares and Penates, we will enter the sacred domicile, first premising that a well-kept house in St. Petersburg or Moscow is exceedingly comfortable. A tall, portly *suisse* (house porter) admits you, when a footman ushers you up a mostly spacious, handsome staircase, often of marble, and after passing through the usual double doors you are introduced into an anteroom where you leave your inevitable garment—your fur cloak. The reception rooms are then entered, and these often seem interminable; eight or nine in number in the houses on the Palace or English Quays are not uncommon, generally opening into one another. The inland parquets of the rooms are often very beautiful—the floor polisher is an important institution in Russia; of course, some rooms are richly carpeted and do justice to the looms of Turkey and Persia. The silk or damask curtains, wall hangings, and coverings for the ottomans are superb. All is luxurious; vases of lapis-lazuli, porphyry, and malachite, pictures and objects of art in general are in profusion. The Russians are very fond of promenading through their suites of apartments, and ample space is left for this purpose. The winter being so long, every conceivable means is used to shed around the charms of warmer climates; trellises, along which various creepers are trained, are introduced; pretty baskets of plants (tulips, hyacinths, and camellias in full bloom, while winter is still raging outside,) the constant warm temperature indoors being favourable to their cultivation. The Continental fashion of living in flats much prevails here. Sleeping rooms are not invariably numerous in proportion to the reception rooms; but this state of things naturally improves with the increase of civilization.—*Temple Bar*.

#### HINDU AND CHINESE CIVILIZATION.

Never did opposing qualities and defects establish a wider gulf between two races. During the 4,000 or 5,000 years which make up her history China offers us the unique spectacle, as it seems to me, of a society founded upon a purely human basis—without Prophet, without Messiah, without Revealer, without mythology; of a society calculated for temporal well-being and the good organization of this world, and for nothing else. India, on the other hand, shows us a not less surprising spectacle of a race exclusively speculative, living by the ideal, building its religion and its literature in the clouds, without any intermingling elements drawn from history or reality. The characteristic feature of the Chinese mind is a negation of the supernatural; what it cannot understand does not exist for it. India, on the contrary, absorbed in the contemplation of the infinite, has exhausted her activity in the creation of an exuberant mythology, and of innumerable systems of metaphysics. Nor has the study of nature, of man, or of history, ever seemed to her worthy to check her thought for an instant. China is indisputably, of all countries, that which possesses the best ordered and the most abundant archives. Since the twelfth century before the Christian era she has stored up dynasty by dynasty, and almost year by year, the official documents of her history, the decrees of her sovereigns, the rules of her administration. India, so prodigiously fruitful in everything else, has not a line of history. She has reached modern times without believing that the real is ever worth writing down. This present life is for the Chinese the only aim of human activity. For the Indian it is but an episode in a series of existences, a passage between two eternities. On one side you have a bourgeois and reasonable race, narrow as common sense is narrow; on the other a race devoted to the infinite—dreamy, absorbed, and lost in its own imaginations. Nor are the physical characteristics of both less strikingly contrasted. The bright oblique eye, the flat nose, the short neck, the cunning look of the Chinese indicate the man of common sense, well trained in the affairs of this world; the noble outline of the Indian, his slim figure, his broad, calm brow, his deep, tranquil eye, show us a race made for meditation, and destined even by its very errors, to provide us with a measure of the speculative power of humanity.—*Macmillan's Magazine*.

#### BRITISH AND FOREIGN ITEMS.

PRUSSIA consumes about three million gallons of wine annually.

THE island of Guernsey has closed the public-houses during the whole of Sunday.

THE bishop of Chichester, Dr. Durnford, although in his eighty-first year, is still fully equal to all his episcopal duties.

A POLITICAL meeting has been held in Old Knox church, Dunedin, and some people are insisting that the presbytery should take action on the subject.

It is said that Bismark will suggest to the cabinets at Paris and London that a conference be held to determine the boundaries on the West Coast of Africa.

THE Rev. Thomas Spurgeon has been lecturing in Britain on New Zealand. Collections were made on behalf of the fund for building his tabernacle at Auckland.

A PROPOSITION to give the present Lord Mayor of London a second term was promptly snuffed out by that high functionary, who seems to have had quite enough of it.

MUCH sympathy is felt for the lord primate of Ireland in a family affliction. His daughter has committed suicide in a period of temporary insanity. She was fifty years of age.

THE two islands in the Straits of Sunda, Steers and Calmeyer, which sprang up last year at the time of the Krakatoa eruption, have again been swallowed up by the sea.

A CAPTAIN of a United States revenue cutter reports that a new volcano has been discovered at Four Mountains, near Seventy-two Pass, Alaska. The Kowak River has been fully explored.

GENERAL Alexander, M. P., was severely censured at the franchise demonstration at Kilmarnock for having spoken of Principal Rainy and Dr. Hutton of Paisley as "two turbulent priests."

AT a bazaar in aid of the funds of a Congregational chapel opened by the mayor of Birmingham, five and ten pound notes were raffled. The offence was reported to the police, and on hearing of it the mayor immediately ordered it to be discontinued.

THE Abbé Glorieux, Principal of St. Michael's College, Portland, Oregon, has been appointed Apostolic Vicar for Idaho, which includes all of Idaho and part of Montana lying west of the Rocky Mountains.

IN the MSS. of the dramatized form of "Never Too Late to Mend," the late Charles Reade penned a marginal note to one passage: "If the audience fails to weep here the passage has not been properly acted."

THERE is said to be no truth in the report which was a few days ago telegraphed from St. Petersburg and Copenhagen to London to the effect that the Russian Government contemplate fitting out a great north polar expedition.

A CARRIAGE is being built for Emperor William, the whole upper portion of which is to be constructed of glass, and which is to enable the monarch to attend manoeuvres, parades, and other public occasions in unfavourable weather.

AT a recent conference between Prince Bismarck and a number of merchants of Hamburg it was agreed that Germany should simply establish a protectorate over Angora Pequena, but that the Cameroons district should be annexed outright.

THE Rev. Thomas Spurgeon will publish in a volume the sermons preached by him at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, while filling his father's place. These sermons produced a very deep impression on the audience, and the volume is eagerly looked for.

THE story that Mgr. Lachat, the Bishop of Basle, will be made a Cardinal at the coming consistory, which will be held on the last day of the month if Rome remains free from cholera, if true, records the first Swiss Cardinal since Mathias Schinner's time—1510.

THE Rev. Philip Browne, vicar of St. James', Edgbaston, Birmingham, during the past thirty-two years, was found dead in his bed a short time since. He officiated the previous Sabbath forenoon. Mr. Browne was one of the oldest ministers in Birmingham.

M. LEON SAY presided at the monthly banquet of the *Société des Economistes*. Speeches were delivered denunciatory of French protection tendencies, and claiming that the only remedy for the agricultural distress of the country is liberty and the reduction of all duties upon food.

A NEW volume of sermons by Dr. Alex. McLaren, of Manchester has been published. The sermons have been carefully revised by the author since their first appearance in a popular periodical. Dr. McLaren purposes to continue the publication of his sermons in similar half-yearly volumes.

Two of the Scottish Episcopal day schools, one at Airdrie and a large school at Christ church, Glasgow, have been abandoned. In the latter case the buildings were reported upon as unsatisfactory by the Government inspector, and though an appeal was made for funds the response was not such as to render it possible to provide new buildings.

THE Paris city authorities desiring to take possession of the Church of St. Nicholas des Champs, on account of the widening of the street upon which it stood, a delegate from the prefecture was sent for that purpose. The curé refused to deliver the keys, when a crowd invaded the church and sang the "Marseillaise," and committed other improprieties.

THERE has been a terrible outbreak of typhoid fever at Kidderminster, in England. Between 600 and 700 attacks have altogether been reported, the majority being upon young persons, among whom the principal mortality has occurred, but many adults are also victims of the outbreak. The fever is due to the source of the water supply being from a well in the middle of the sewage pumping works.