

FROM ONE TO ANOTHER.

BY E. E.

Far overhead

An amber heaven fades to faintest gray.
Sky stoops to sea, sea rises gray to sky,
Wave rolls on wave, for ever, sigh on sigh—
The death of day.

II.

Art thou too dead?

The sea that rolls between, is that death's sea?
May no hands touch, no solemn echoes fall,
None answering cry if one to other call,
From land or sea?

III.

Canst thou forget?

Wanderer! for ever on some unknown shore,
Living or dead, oblivious or most blest—
Perchance thy feet at last have found a rest
For evermore?

IV.

Living or dead.

Star-eyed and pale thy face seems ever near:
Remembering, Love, to life one hour, one day,
Call once from "at the dark, then turn away—"
One heart may hear.

V.

Hast thou not heard

Passionate moan of waves that break in tears,
Break on, and die, and still may not forget
The infinite perfection of regret—
These weary years?

COUNTRY-HOUSE LIFE IN ENGLAND.

BY REGINALD WYNFORD.

The love for country life is, if possible, stronger in England now than at any previous period in her history. There is no other country where this taste has prevailed to the same extent. It arose originally from causes mainly political. In France a similar condition of things existed down to the sixteenth century, and was mainly brought to an end by the policy of ministers, who dreaded the increasing power of petty princes in remote provinces becoming in combination formidable to the central power. It was especially the object of Richelieu and Mazarin to check this sort of baronial *impertum in imperio*, and it became in the time of Louis XIV. the keystone of that monarch's domestic policy. This tended to encourage the "hanging on" of *grands seigneurs* about the court, where many of the chief of them, after having exhausted their resources in gambling or riotous living, became dependent for place or pension on the Crown, and were in fact the creatures of the king and his minister. Of course this did not apply to all. Here and there in the broad area of France were to be found magnificent chateaux—a few of which, especially in Central France, still survive—where the marquis or count reigned over his people an almost absolute monarch.

There is a passage in one of Horace Walpole's letters in which that virtuous expresses his regret, after a visit to the ancestral "hotels" of Paris, whose contents had afforded him such lawless gratification, that the nobility of England, like that of France, had not concentrated their treasures of art, etc., in London houses. Had he lived a few years longer he would probably have altered his views, which were such as his sagacious and many father, who dearly loved his Norfolk home, Houghton, would never have held.

In England, from the time that anything like social life, as we understand the phrase, became known, the power of the Crown was so well established that no necessity for resorting to a policy such as Richelieu's for diminishing the influence of the noblesse existed.

In fact, a course distinctly the reverse came to be adopted from the time of Elizabeth down to even a later period than the reign of Charles II.

In the reign of Elizabeth an act was passed, which is to this hour probably on the statute-book, restricting building in or near the metropolis. James I. appears to have been in a chronic panic on this subject, and never lost an opportunity of dilating upon it. In one of his proclamations he refers to those swarms of gentry, "who, through the insatiation of their wives, or to new model and fashion their daughters—who, if they were unmarried, married their reputations, and if married, lost them—did neglect their country hospitality and cumber the city, a general nuisance to the kingdom." He desired the "Star Chamber" to regulate the exorbitancy of the new buildings about the city, which were but a shelter for those who, when they had spent their estates in coaches, lacquies and fine clothes like Frenchmen, lived miserably in their houses like Italians; but the honor of the English nobility and gentry is to be hospitable among their tenants.

"Gentlemen resident on their estates," said he, very sensibly, "were like ships in port: their value and magnitude were felt and acknowledged; but when at a distance, as their size seemed insignificant, so their worth and importance were not duly estimated."

Charles I., with characteristic arbitrariness, carried matters with a still higher hand. His Star Chamber caused buildings to be actually razed, and fined tenants heavily. One case which is reported displays the grim and costly humor of the illegal tribunal which dealt with

such cases. Poor Mr. Palmer, of Sussex, a gay bachelor, being called upon to show cause why he had been residing in London, pleaded in extenuation that he had no house, his mansion having been destroyed by fire two years before. This, however, was held rather an aggravation of the offence, inasmuch as he had failed to rebuild it; and Mr. Palmer paid a penalty of one thousand pounds—equivalent to at least twenty thousand dollars now.

A document which especially serves to show the manner of life of the ancient noblesse is the Earl of Northumberland's "Household Book" in the early part of the sixteenth century. By this we see the great magnificence of the old nobility, who, seated in their castles, lived in a state of splendor scarcely inferior to that of the court. As the king had his privy council, so the earl of Northumberland had his council, composed of his principal officers, by whose advice and assistance he established his code of economic laws. As the king had his lords and grooms of the chamber, who waited in their respective turns, so the earl was attended by the constables of his several castles, who entered into waiting in regular succession. Among other instances of magnificence it may be remarked that not fewer than eleven priests were kept in the household, presided over by a doctor or bachelor of divinity as dean of the chapel.

An account of how the earl of Worcester lived at Ragland Castle before the civil wars which began in 1641 also exhibits his manner of life in great detail: "At eleven o'clock the Castle Gates were shut and the tables laid: two in the dining-room; three in the hall; one in Mrs. Watson's apartment, where the chaplains eat; two in the housekeeper's room for my lady's women. The Earl came into the dining-room attended by his gentlemen. As soon as he was seated, Sir Ralph Blackstone, Steward of the House, retired. The Comptroller, Mr. Holland, attended with his staff; as did the Sewer, Mr. Blackburn, and the daily waiters with many gentlemen's sons, from two to seven hundred pounds a year, bred up in the Castle; my lady's Gentleman Usher, Mr. Harcourt; my lord's Gentlemen of the Chamber, Mr. Morgan and Mr. Fox.

"At the first table sat the noble family and such of the nobility as came there. At the second table in the Dining-room sat knights and honorable gentlemen attended by footmen.

"In the hall at the first table sat Sir R. Blackstone, Steward, the Comptroller, Secretary, Master of the Horse, Master of the Fishponds, my Lord Herbert's Preceptor, with such gentlemen as came there under the degree of knight, attended by footmen and plentifully served with wine.

"At the third table in the hall sat the Clerk of the Kitchen, with the Yeomen, officers of the House, two Grooms of the Chamber, etc.

"Other officers of the Household were the Chief Auditor, Clerk of Accounts, Parveyer of the Castle, Usher of the Hall, Closet Keeper, Gentleman of the Chapel, Keeper of the Records, Master of the Wardrobe, Master of the Armory, Master Groom of the Stable for the 19 War-horses, Master of the Hounds, Master Falconer, Porter and his men, two Butchers, two Keepers of the Home Park, two Keepers of the Red Deer Park, Footmen, Grooms and other Menial Servants to the number of 150. Some of the footmen were Brewers and Bakers.

"Our officers.—Steward of Ragland, Governor of Chepstow Castle, Housekeeper of Worcester House in London, thirteen Bailiffs, two Counsel for the Bailiffs—who looked after the estate—to have recourse to, and a Solicitor."

In a delicious old volume, now rarely to be met with, called *The Otio*, published eighty years ago, Francis Grose the antiquary thus describes certain characters typical of the country life of the earlier half of the seventeenth century: "When I was a young man there existed in the families of most unmarried men or widowers of the rank of gentlemen, resident in the country, a certain antiquated female, either maiden or widow, commonly an aunt or cousin.

Her dress I have now before me: it consisted of a stiff starched cap and hood, a little hoop, a rich silk damask gown with large flowers. She leant on an ivory-headed crutch-cane, and was followed by a fat phibistic dog of the pug kind, who commonly reposed on a cushion and enjoyed the privilege of snarling at the servants, and occasionally biting their heels, with impunity. By the side of this old lady jingled a bucket of keys, securing in different closets and cupboards all sorts of condiment waters, cherry and raspberry brandy, washes for the complexion, daffy's elixir, a rich seed-cake, a number of pats of currant jelly and raspberry jam, with a range of gallipots and phials and purges for the use of poorer neighbors. The daily business of this good lady was to scold the maids, collect eggs, feed the turkeys and assist in all tings—to that happened within the parish. Alas! this being is no more seen, and the race is, like that of her pug dog and the black rat, totally extinct.

"Another character, now worn out and gone, was the country squire: I mean the little, independent country gentleman of three hundred pounds a year, who commonly appeared in a plain drab or plush coat, large silver buttons, a jockey cap, and rarely without boots. His travels never exceeded the distance to the county town, and that only at assize and session time, or to attend an election. Once a week he commonly dined at the next market town with the attorneys and justices. This man went to church regularly, read the weekly journal, settled the parochial disputes between the parish officers at the vestry, and afterward adjourned to the neighboring ale-

house, where he usually got drunk for the good of his country. He never played at cards but at Christmas, when a family pack was produced from the mantelpiece. He was commonly followed by a couple of greyhounds and a pointer, and announced his arrival at a friend's house by cracking his whip or giving the vlow-halloo. His drink was generally ale, except on Christmas, the Fifth of November or some other gala-day, when he would make a bowl of strong brandy punch, garnished with a toast and nutmeg. A journey to London was by one of these men reckoned as great an undertaking as is at present a voyage to the East Indies, and undertaken with scarcely less precaution and preparation. The mansion of one of these squires was of plaster striped with timber, not unaptly called callimanco-work, or of red brick; large casemented bow-windows, a porch with seats in it, and over it a study, the eaves of the house well inhabited by swallows, and the court set round with hollyhocks. The hall was furnished with fitches of bacon, and the mantel-piece with guns and fishing-rods of different dimensions, accompanied by the broadsword, partisan and dagger borne by his ancestors in the Civil Wars. The vacant spaces were occupied by stage horns. Against the wall was posted King Charles's Golden Rules, Vincent Wing's Almanack and a portrait of the Duke of Marlborough; in his window lay Baker's Chronicle, Fox's Book of Martyrs, Glanvil on Apparitions, Quincey's Dispensatory, the Complete Justice and a Book of Farriery. In the corner, by the fireplace, stood a large wooden two-armed chair with a cushion; and within the chimney corner were a couple of seats. Here, at Christmas, he entertained his tenants assembled round a glowing fire made of the roots of trees and other great logs, and told and heard the traditional tales of the village respecting ghosts and witches till fear made them afraid to move. In the meantime the forum of ale was in continual circulation. The best parlor, which was never opened but on particular occasions, was furnished with Turk-worked chairs, and hung round with portraits of his ancestors—the men, some in the character of shepherds with their crooks, dressed in full suits and huge full-bottomed perukes, and others in complete armor or buff-coats; the females, likewise as shepherdesses with the lamb and crook, all habited in high heads and flowing robes. Alas! these men and these houses are no more! Two luxury of the times has obliged them to quit the country and become humble dependents on great men, to rack their tenants and draw their rents before due. The venerable mansion is in the meantime suffered to tumble down or is partly upheld as a farm-house, till after a few years the estate is conveyed to the steward of the neighboring lord, or else to some rabid, contractor or limb of the law."

It is unquestionably owing to the love of country life amongst the higher classes that England so early attained in many respects what may be termed an even civilization. In almost all other countries the traveler beyond the confines of a few great cities finds himself in a region of comparative semi-barbarism. But no one familiar with English country life can say that this is the case in the rural districts of England, while it is most unquestionably so in Ireland, simply because she has through absenteeism been deprived of those influences which have done so much for her wealthy sister. Go where you will in England to-day, and you will find within five miles of you a good turnpike road, leading to an inn hard by, where you may get a clean and comfortable though simple dinner, good bread, good butter, and a carriage—"fly," is the term now, as in the days of Mr. Jonathan Oldbuck—to convey you where you will. And this was the case long before railways came into vogue.

The influence of the great house has very wide ramifications, and extends far beyond the radius of park, village and estate. It greatly affects the prosperity of the country and county towns. Go late Essex or Shrewsbury on a market-day in the autumn months, and you will find the streets crowded with carriages. If a local hero (be with you, he will tell you all about their owners by glancing at the liveries and panels. They belong, half of them, to the old county gentry, who have shopped here—always at the same shops, according as their proprietors are Whigs or Tories—for generations. It may well be imagined what a difference the custom of twenty gentlemen spending on an average twenty five thousand dollars a year makes to a grocer or a draper. Besides, this class of customer demands a first-rate article, and consequently it is worth while to keep it in stock. The fishmonger knows that twenty great houses within ten miles require their handsome dish of fish for dinner as regularly as their bread and butter. It becomes worth his while, therefore, to secure a steady supply. In this way smaller people profit, and country life becomes pleasant to them too, inasmuch as the demands of the rich contribute to the comfort of those in moderate circumstances.

Let us pass to the daily routine of an affluent country home. The breakfast hour is from nine to eleven, except where hunting-men or enthusiasts in shooting are concerned. The former are often in the saddle before six, and young partridge-slayers may, during the first fortnight of September—after that their ardor abates a bit—be found in the stables at any hour after sunrise.

A country-house breakfast in the house of a gentleman with from three thousand a year upward, when several guests are in the house, is a very attractive meal. Of course the excel-

from attic to kitchen, that if he has been guilty of the monstrous absurdity of allowing another man to rob him with his eyes open he must bear the consequences; but it may be said that the victim does not so commit himself with his eyes open. A man's liabilities are not generally at their keepest and coolest at the moment when he is about to receive the amount he has experienced so much difficulty in borrowing, and for the use of which his dire necessity makes him in such red-hot haste; and then again, it should be borne in mind, that loan-offices as a rule are little dingy, ill-lighted dens, and when a borrower is requested; "just to pop his name down here—for the more forms of the thing," he has no reason to assume that he is dealing with rogues and rascals. And, after all, a man who attaches his signature to a paper he has not first carefully perused, or one that is folded over so that part is invisible, is certainly no greater simpleton than the one who is led by a skittle-sharper to stake all his money, and then to go and pawn his watch to raise more with the certainty of losing it; but although the magistrate is apt to toll a grocerhorn of this class that he has no pity for him, he sentences the skittle-sharper to a few months at the treadmill. It makes no difference what are the implements of "hocus-pocus" used: a rogue will naturally apply himself to such tools as he can exercise with most dexterity, and it seems quite clear that the man who by conjuration, peculiar to the line of business he has adopted, makes it appear that another man has signed away goods of the value of thirty pounds, when at the time of signing he was led to believe that he was pledging himself only to ten or fifteen pounds, is as crafty a swindler as he who inveigles you to trust him to take a short walk away from you with your purse in his possession, as a test of your faith in his honesty, and who walks off with it altogether.

It is quite time the law stepped in to enforce the better regulation of petty loan-offices. It interferes with sufficient stringency, as regards other of the poor man's facilities for borrowing. No one may carry on a pawnbroker's business without first obtaining a licence, and giving very substantial guarantee for his respectability. He is not at liberty to make the best terms he can with his client. He may do business on only one system, and according to certain rules fixed by the legislature. What is sufficient interest for the capital he invests in the pawning department is arranged for him, and he must abide by the said arrangement or suffer the consequences. Should he overcharge so little as a penny on a pledge, the aggrieved may rely on having prompt justice at the nearest police court. He is debarred the exercise of his free will to be honest, and is compelled to be so by Act of Parliament. The petty loan-monger, however, is hampered by no such restrictions. He may charge what interest he pleases, and make his own terms as to repayment. For a loan of ten pounds it is his common practice to obtain as security, in addition to a note of hand, a bill of sale for at least twenty-five, that not only the amount still unpaid of the advanced money, but also the "attendant expenses" may be covered, and attendant expenses means just anything that the rapacious creditor may please to name. Besides, it is impossible to hold a more potent screw over a poor fellow than authority to break up and destroy his home. The old law that enabled a creditor to lay hands on a small debtor and carry him away to prison was suggested as barbarous, and repealed accordingly, but to wreck and desolate his home is even more cruel. At all events, and although a prisoner, he was only so until such time as his family could raise money for his ransom, and with his ransom his domestic affairs resumed their peaceful and comfortable course, but the breaking-up of a home is very often irrevocable. In the first place there is the enormous loss the debtor sustains by the sale of his goods by auction. Such sales are invariably "without reserve," and any one at all conversant with the subject is aware of what that means. Nothing more or less than the banding together of half-a-dozen unprincipled brokers, who take care not to bid against the one who is deputed to secure at his own price every lot that is put up, the whole gang dividing the spoil afterwards. By means of this arrangement it is not at all uncommon for house furniture, worth say forty pounds, to realize not more than seven or eight pounds; and if the auctioneer is "in the swim," of course the matter is much amplified. There can be no doubt that the misery arising from this source is wide-spread and increasing. As already has been mentioned in this paper, the patronage of three loan-offices is enough to occupy the time and attention of one auctioneer who has extensive warehouse room. The ordinary rate of business at this last-mentioned establishment is four hundred "lots" per week. One from three loan-offices! It may be safely assumed that in and about London there are at least a hundred of these petty money-mongers; and if they are all equally active with the bill-of-sale dodge, it requires but an easy exercise of calculation to discover the amount of domestic devastation worked by them every week of their lives.

Texas law requires that all persons under fifteen shall attend school a certain portion of the time. A married lady in Houston, who has not yet reached the age that would entitle her to exemption, attends school regularly, and carries her baby with her.

Thalberg's body has been embalmed for his widow.