

From the American Monthly Magazine.

THE LITTLE BLIND BOY.

Oh, tell me the form of the soft summer air,
That tosses so gently the curls of my hair,
It breathes on my lips, and it fans my warm cheek,
But gives me no answer, though often I speak.
I feel it play o'er me, refreshing and light,
And yet I cannot touch it, because I've no sight.

And music—what is it? and where does it dwell?
I sink and I mount with its cadence and swell,
While thrilled to my heart with the deep-going strain,
Till pleasure excessive seems turning to pain.
Now what the bright colors of music may be,
Will any one tell me? for I cannot see.

The odors of flowers that are hovering nigh,
What are they? on what kind of wings do they fly?
Are these shining angels that come to delight
A poor little child that knows nothing of sight?
The face of the sun never comes to my mind,
Oh! tell me what light is, because I am blind!

H. F. G.

SAVAGES IN FRANCE.

A recent French scientific journal presents a curious detail of the habits and manners of a set of men, natives of France, whom the writer calls, properly enough *demi-savages*; and he remarks on the curiosity which leads Europeans to journey to great distances, in order to study extraordinary races of mankind while at home they have in the midst of their own civilized communities, classes of men equally extraordinary, whose peculiarities are wholly unknown. The author of the account is of opinion that France is not the only country in Europe possessing such savages within her borders, and is convinced that her neighbours might find in their more remote corners, many bodies of men equally wild in their habits. This appears somewhat doubtful, at least with regard to this country; we will say nothing of Italy or Germany, but we think it would be difficult to find in any part of England a set of men so wholly uncultivated as those described by him.

These half savages live in the south eastern extremity of France, near to the Italian frontier, more than half surrounded by the Mediterranean. There is little traffic through their country, the only large road in the department, which leads from Marseilles to Antibes, passing northward of the tract inhabited by them, and having no branches of any magnitude through it. Their only occupation, beyond that of cultivating a little ground or keeping goats, is charcoal-burning, a trade which seems on the continent to be almost entirely abandoned to the more uncivilized portion of the community.

The huts of these people are built of either mud or stones; the construction is as coarse and clumsy as can be imagined, and they have only one apartment. There is, however, a semblance of division; the floor is marked off into three distinct compartments, one of which may be termed the parlour, another the bed-room, and the third is the stable. The parlour is provided with a couple of stones, which serve as a fire-place; three or four larger stones are the seats of the inhabitants, and in a few huts, better furnished, logs of wood are found serving them for this purpose. There is no chimney, but only a hole in the roof to let out the smoke. The middle division of the floor is the bed-room; it is strewed with straw or dried leaves, which are very rarely changed; and upon this couch the whole family, father, mother, and children, sleep promiscuously. But the luxury of a roof is enjoyed only in the winter; during summer all the population sleep without any covering; and to very many the bed-room is wholly superfluous, as they invariably sleep in the open air, whatever may be the degree of cold, or inclemency of the weather. The third division is appropriated to the asses, who are under sufficient discipline not to cross over the line of demarcation, which divides their apartment from that of their masters.

These people are as unaccustomed to cleanliness as they

are to luxury; their dwellings, as well as their persons, are disgustingly dirty; their ragged hair hangs in thick masses over their shoulders, and their beards are never touched until their length becomes inconvenient, when a knife or other cutting instrument is employed to remove the superfluity. Their dress is of coarse stuff, fashioned with little care. "I saw," says the writer, "one of these men on a market-day at Frejus, go to the stall of a cloth merchant, and purchase a piece of coarse stuff; he then with a knife which hung at his girdle made two great holes in it through which he thrust his arms and then fastened this grotesque tunic by the help of two large wooden skewers."

During the summer these people generally take their rest in the daytime; they may be occasionally seen on the top of a frowning rock, supported by a great stick, covered up with skins, and perfectly immovable. Their nights are passed in the woods among the rocks, guarding their goats from the attacks of wolves, which are numerous in these forests; their shrill and savage cries frequently terrify the timid stranger who may have occasion to pass through this wild country.

They appear to have but few ideas, as might be expected from men utterly without any sort of education. When addressed by strangers at fairs or other places where their necessities compel them to resort, their reply is yes or no, or still more frequently a gesture expressive of impatience, or else an idiot stare. Among themselves they rarely converse; a gloomy silence prevails in their dwellings and in their forests, interrupted only by the sharp cries and howlings in which they seem to take delight.

These people are not accused of ferocity, nor do they appear to molest in any way their civilized neighbours, or the strangers whom chance may bring amongst them; they are merely ignorant, and that not only of such culture as is imparted by instruction, but as a consequence of their position, of even such information as the most uneducated man must acquire who lives amongst those who are more fortunate. But these men have had the advantage of neither precept nor example. The only ideas they retain of anything beyond their immediate wants, are a belief of a number of ridiculous omens, such as a few centuries ago were almost universally received, but which are now worn out everywhere except among those who have receded from civilization.

The account from which we draw our information, states that some little moral improvement is taking place amongst these men, from the benevolent exertions of the neighbouring curates; a chapel or two has sprung up here and there on the borders and some few are induced to attend to the instruction communicated in them; by such means, on a more extended scale, aided by the formation of roads through the country, these people may probably be soon brought to a state of civilization, and France will throw off the reproach of possessing inhabitants so much depressed below the general standard of European cultivation.

NOBLE HEARTED ABOLITIONISTS OF AMERICA

I think the abolitionists of the United States the most reasonable set of people that I ever knew to be united together for one object. Among them may be enjoyed the high and rare luxury of having a reason rendered for every act performed, and every opinion maintained. The treatment they have met with compels them to be more thoroughly informed, and more completely assured on every point on which they commit themselves, than is commonly considered necessary on the right side of a question, where there is the strength of a mighty principle to repose upon. The commonest charge against them is that they are fanatical. I think them, generally speaking, the most clear-headed, right-minded class I ever had intercourse with. Their accuracy about dates, numbers, and all such matters of fact, is as remarkable as their clear perception of the principles on which they proceed. They are, however, remarkably deficient in policy—in

party-address. They are artless to a fault; and probably, no party, religious, political or benevolent, in their country, ever was formed and conducted with so little dexterity, shrewdness, and concert. Noble and imperishable as their object is, it would probably from this cause, have slipped through their fingers for the present, if it had not been for some other qualities common among them. It is needless to say much of their heroism; of the strength of soul with which they await and endure the inflictions with which they are visited, day by day. Their position indicates all this. Animating as it is to witness, it is less touching than the qualities to which they owe the success which would otherwise have been forfeited through their want of address and party organization. A spirit of meekness, of mutual forbearance, of mutual reverence, runs through the whole body; and by this are selfish considerations put aside, differences composed, and distrust obviated, to a degree which I never hoped to witness among a society as various as the sects, parties, and opinions which are the elements of the whole community. With the gaiety of heart belonging to those who have cast aside every weight; with the strength of soul proper to those who walk by faith; with the child-like unconsciousness of the innocent; living from hour to hour in the light of that greatest of all purposes—to achieve a distant object by the fulfilment of the nearest duty—and therefore rooting out from among themselves all aristocratic tendencies and usages, rarely speaking of their own sufferings and sacrifices, but in honour preferring one another, how can they fail to win over the heart of society—that great heart, sympathising with all that is lofty and true?—Miss Martineau.

ROMAN WOMEN.—There are many admirable traits in the general character of the women of ancient Rome, which in this age of refinement are truly worthy of imitation. Without encroaching upon the privileges, or hardy occupations of man, they were restrained by no affectation of delicacy from pursuing even the most laborious employments within the domestic sphere. A well regulated household was their highest ambition, and no woman was accounted worthy of the title of wife who was ignorant of the duties of her station. The next object of importance was their strict and unremitting attention to the health and instruction of their offspring, promoting the former by exercise and temperate diet, and the latter by examples of morality and enforcing a constant application either to study or some useful employment, whereby both their mental and physical powers acquired strength. Children of both sexes were alike committed to the mother's care, and the boy, on discarding the *toys* of childhood, was submitted to the still more rigid discipline of his father, with a mind prepared to profit by the councils of the hero or the sage, and with a frame fitted to encounter toil and danger. The Roman women were ardent in friendship, sincere in love, and chaste from principle.

FEMALE FRIENDSHIP.

BY MISS MITFORD.

Joy cannot claim a purer bliss
Nor grief a dew from stain more clear,
Than female friendship's meowing kiss,
Than female friendship's parting tear.
How sweet the heart's full bliss to pour
To her, whose smile must crown the store!
How sweeter still to tell of woes
To her, whose faithful breast would share
In every grief, in every care,
Whose sigh can lull them to repose!
Oh! blessed sigh! there is no sorrow;
But from thy breath can sweetness borrow;
E'en to the pale and drooping flower
That fades in love's neglected hour;
E'en with her woes can friendship's power
One happier feeling blend;
'Tis from her restless bed to creep,
And sink like wearied babe to sleep,
On the soft couch her sorrow steep,
The bosom of a friend.