

A Spring-Time Sonnet.

Welcome! Sweet nurse of opening buds and flowers
 Thy softening skies we hail; thy balmy breath
 A thousand happy fancies whispereth.
 We see the coming bloom in dropping showers,
 The swelling buds, our leafy summer bowers,
 And woods awakening from the seeming death;
 "Winter is past and gone," their fragrance saith.—
 All day the birds salute the sunny hours!

About our feet the shy sweet blossoms show
 Their tender tints, and cups of stainless white—
 The shed-bush wreathes the woods with living snow,
 The whip-poor-will prates late into the balmy night,
 O'er greening fields dart swallows, skimming low,
 And robins flute their carols of delight!

FIDELIS

Art Notes.

IN looking over an old volume of *Punch* I am reminded that in writing my notes on the illustrators of that periodical I omitted to mention a very clever ex-member of the staff who seems to have gone over to the ranks of the serious illustrated weeklies. I refer to Corbould. For a number of years he represented the sporting interests in *Punch*; and his pictures of the fox hunting fraternity were spirited, amusing, and true to life. He drew with accuracy and spirit both the man and the mount; and as a draughtsman of the latter he may be depended on to make a truthful likeness be it hack, hunter, or pony.

Fox-hunting has had its votaries in England and in Ireland for a number of years the exact limit of which I am unable to state, but my mind is inclined somehow to associate the life of the prince of sports with the growth of British ascendancy. Whyte Melville used to say that the hunting field was the best training school in the world for brain, nerve, and hand; and that the qualities of judgment, courage, and skill were as necessary in the hunting as in the battle field. And the number of military stars who have shone with equal resplendency in both would go far to prove the truth of the contention. But this is the serious aspect of the pastime; Corbould deals only with the humorous.

When Leech pictured the comedies of the chase he was inclined to caricature the horse and his rider; but Corbould seldom indulges in grotesque exaggeration. It is true that he often selects the comic types—the Cockney amateurs, the alderman in pink, the heavy swell, etc.; but each of these is delineated without malice; and more than justice is done to the horse, which, in Corbould's hands, can go for a fifteen mile run and look little the worse for it; and, as to his breeding, that is always beyond dispute. Corbould's cover-side pictures are very acceptable to the horse man; and I suspect that, like Orchardson, the artist rides to hounds himself—indeed, his intimate knowledge of equine matters would be impossible otherwise. His drawings trace the changes in the costume of the lady-riders; and, so far as it is subject to change, that of the men as well. He knows all about bits, saddles and other accoutrements: he understands the points in a hound; and he is versed in the etiquette of the meet and the field. He has immortalized the little boy, who, mounted on his fat Shetland, gives a lead over the fence for the encouragement of the timid squire.

But as a humorist Corbould cannot be said to have risen to great heights; and his jokes are not written on the memory like the good things by Keene. Corbould was useful mainly as a caterer to the sporting tastes of a section of the people who are made content by the picture of a good horse, or by the illustration of any incident of the hunting-field which will recall to the spectator's mind similar occurrences in his own experience, or which will serve him as a peg on which to hang a story of his own. This tendency to dilate on the glories of the field is stronger perhaps with the fox-hunter than with any other class of sportsmen. A company of golfers will devote a fairly large proportion of their talk to the discussion of the details of their game; and a couple of bicyclists will, verbally, out do the records of their cyclometer; but for undeviating loyalty to one topic give me fox-hunters. But their subject has a dramatic quality which is beyond that of perhaps any other sport; and I can forgive a man his minute attention to details of local topo-

graphy, weather, the scent, names of hounds, and perfections of his own mare if he gives me a graphic picture of the run.

E. WYLY GRIER.

Concerning Magnets.

ACCORDING to Plato, Socrates, his master, poked a good deal of quiet fun at the persons who came to converse with him. Such a person was Ion, the rhapsodist, who professed to know Homer better than any other man, living or dead. The latest translator of the dialogues of the head of the Academy thus renders the piece of ironical flattery he puts into Socrates' lips in connection with the professional reciter: "The gift which you possess of speaking excellently about Homer is not an art, but, as I was just saying, an inspiration; there is a divinity moving you, like that contained in the stone which Euripides calls a magnet, but which is commonly known as the stone of Heradea. This stone not only attracts iron rings, but also imparts to them a similar power of attracting other rings; and sometimes you may see a number of pieces of iron and rings suspended from one another so as to form quite a long chain: and all of them derive their power of suspension from the original stone." Tennyson and Browning, and even Longfellow and Whittier, have magnetized more worthy admirers than Homer had in poor, conceited Ion. Canada has not yet produced a poetic magnet of any great attractive power upon the minds of readers or upon the money in their pockets. But this essay, thank providence, is not concerning poets; its writer has sense enough to know where he is safe, and to stay there.

One of the ancient names of Baron Munchausen was Nicander, who, in the second century, B.C., combined physic with poetry, and dedicated his work to an Attalus, King of Pergamus in Asia Minor. He told the story that a certain shepherd belonging to Mount Ida, perhaps as far back in the past as CEnone, having strayed southwards, incautiously placed his hob-nailed shoes, with his feet inside them, on a black rock, to which they tenaciously adhered. When he essayed to pry himself loose with his iron-shod staff, that also became immovable. Whether he remains there to this day, or escaped by leaving shoes and staff behind, is not related; but his name was Magnes, and the stone, and the town which arose near it, were called "Magnet" and "Magnesia" in his honour. Another deposit of loadstone was also found in ancient days in the neighbourhood of Magnesia in Thessaly, but this second place of that name has no record of a shepherd with hob-nailed shoes. Early recollections of Magnesia invest it with no attractive properties, but the reverse, but then, in youthful days, one has not yet become a man of blood and iron suitable for attraction.

The omniscient Pliny, of course, has much to say concerning loadstones and magnets. To him it was a marvellous thing that a lifeless stone should be endowed with sense and hands, and that, at its bidding, hard iron should be invested with feet and intelligence; which is quite a poetical speech for Pliny. Yet he exhibits an utter lack of gallantry, such as would better have fitted Cato the Censor, in distinguishing magnets as of the two sexes, the female, he has the impudent audacity to say, having little power of attraction. He lived the life of a bachelor with his widowed sister and his nephew, Pliny the younger. The senior is also the authority for the story that the death of Ptolemy Philadelphus hindered Timochares the architect from completing a vaulted roof made of loadstone, in a temple of Alexandria dedicated to Ptolemy's sister and Queen, Arsinoe. The intention was that the lady's statue, having the iron head permanently attracted to the centre of the dome, should give her the appearance of being suspended in the air. By similar means it is fabled that Mahomet's coffin was hung between earth and heaven in Medina. The fair Arsinoe's attraction by the head is the reverse of that of Magnes who was enchained by the feet, showing that there is more than one way in which magnetic power may be exercised.

Long before the polarity of the magnet was discovered and applied in the East, whence, it is supposed, Arabian adventurers brought the compass into Europe in a rough form, loadstone and magnetized iron must have played an