

How eagerly he felt the little pulse and chafed the little hands! He stopped the child's mouth with a kiss whenever he attempted to speak.

He was so occupied with his newly-recovered treasure, that he did not notice what a deep silence had fallen on the assembled group on his entrance; but now he turned to one of the maids, and asked how the accident had happened. "And, by the way," he added, "where is Master Humphrey?"

No one answered.

"Where is Master Humphrey?" repeated the baronet.

"They told me not to say," began little Miles; but his father was looking directly at one of the gardeners, and the man was obliged to answer.

"If you please, Sir Everard, we carried Master Duncombe in there," pointing to the drawing-room.

"In there!" said the baronet, amazed.

"If you please, Sir Everard, it was the first room we came to; and the only one where there was a sofa."

Before he had done speaking, Sir Everard was in the room. A shutter had been opened, and there was just light enough for him to see Virginia bending over the sofa, round which was a group of people.

The doctor came forward from among them, but Sir Everard pushed past him, and advanced to the side of the sofa.

And there, under his mother's picture, colourless, motionless, and to all appearance lifeless, lay the boy for whom "no punishment could be severe enough," and whose disobedience he had felt he never could forgive!

(To be continued.)

NORWEGIAN HOSPITALITY.

In no land is hospitality more openhanded and more unaffected than in Norway, and though these features are naturally becoming blunted along the beaten lines of travel, the genuine goodness of heart, fine "gentlemanly" feeling, and entire absence of that sordidness which is so often seen even in primitive regions, cannot fail to strike the unprejudiced observer. Nor is etiquette ignored by even the rudest of the people. In the cities the stranger is apt to make many blunders. In the country, however, this is not less marked, though perhaps the visitor will be less conscious of its presence. One of the peculiarities of the Norwegian farmer is that, when visiting a friend, he must ignore all the preparations made for the entertainment. He will see the coffee roasted, and the cups set out, and then, just when the good wife is about to offer him her hospitality, he gets up, bids the family good-bye, and is only persuaded to remain after some resistance. Every cup must be filled to overflowing, otherwise the host would be thought stingy. When milk, brandy or beer is offered, the guest invariably begs that it will not "be wasted on him," and then, after emptying the cup, declares that "it is too much"—going through the same formalities, it may be, three or four times. In the farmhouses, or upland "saeters," the guest is left to eat alone, silver forks and spoons being often substituted for the carved wooden ones used by the family, and a fine white cloth for the bare boards which serve well enough on ordinary occasions. To a punctilious guest this may not be a drawback, for at the family table, as, indeed, among the peasants in Scandinavia everywhere, the different individuals dip their spoons into the same dishes of "grod" and sour milk; but for any one desirous of studying a people a load of foreign prejudice is a grievous burden to carry about. When a child is born the wife of every neighbour cooks a dish of "fodegrod" (porridge made with cream instead of milk), and brings it to the convalescent, there being a good deal of rivalry among the matrons to outdo each other in the quality and size of the dish. When any one has taken food in a Scandinavian house he shakes hands with the host and hostess in rising from the table, and says: "Tak for mad" ("Thanks for food"), to which they reply: "Vell bekomme" ("May it agree with you"). In many parts of Scandinavia all the guests shake hands with each other and repeat the latter formula; and in Norway, at least, it is the fashion for a guest to call on the hostess a few days later, and when she appears to gravely say: "Tak for sidst" ("Thanks for last time"), great gravity on this formal visit being a mark of good breeding.—*Peoples of the World.*

THE COSSACKS.

A few weeks' sojourn with the Cossacks, eating, sleeping, marching and plundering with them, gave me an entirely new idea of their character. I had unconsciously formed my estimation of them from the tradition regarding them common to this day all over continental Europe. They are always alluded to as the bugbears of the human race, and their name, the symbol of all that is cruel, is used as a potent terror to keep runaway children at home, and to frighten them into obedience. I expected to find them, not child-eaters, to be sure, as they have been popularly reported in the nurseries, but at least barbarous, unwarrantably cruel, and distinctly uncivilized in tastes and habits. To my great surprise, they developed on acquaintance a close similarity in various traits of character to western frontiersmen. This is not so remarkable a fact as it would at first appear, for parallel experiences and kindred interests and occupations are naturally accountable for the same characteristics which distinguish the pioneer of the great West and the Cossack of the great East. Unlike the common Russians, they are independent in spirit, self-reliant, and full of resource. They know little of the cringing servility that brands the ordinary Slav as an inferior order of human being. Their pride of race and of position is unbounded, their faithfulness and loyalty almost phenomenal. Accustomed to communistic government, they are thoroughly republican in their notions, and know how to obey as well as to command. They are both prudent and brave—prudent because they are acquainted with danger, brave, because bravery is part of their creed. "The army may sleep in safety when Cossacks are at the outposts" is the common saying, for they are believed to scent danger afar off, and to

be thus secure against surprises. They have the keen sense of the Indian fighter, and a touch of the stoicism of the Indian himself. A prominent trait of their character, and one which seems unaccountable in conjunction with their independence and self-reliance, is their superstitious faith in the observance of all sorts of religious ceremonies, and in all manner of signs and omens. The most trivial act is often prefaced by a brief prayer, or appeal for divine aid, and by the sign of the cross. They never eat without first standing erect, uncovering the head, and repeating a few words of grace. In their list of signs and omens there are almost as many items as were noted by the augurs in old Roman times. In actual warfare they are the eyes, the ears and the mouth-piece of the army. They do the larger part of the scouting service and of cavalry outpost duty, carry orders and despatches—there is no signal corps in the Russian army—act as orderlies to the officers, and perform all kinds of useful services. Whenever a man is needed for anything outside the common camp duties, a Cossack is sure to be summoned; whenever the army moves, the wiry little horses with their jaunty riders are seen scampering in all directions; wherever the advance guard of infantry penetrates, it is sure to find that the Cossacks have already left their mark, for they have the activity and the enterprise of true pioneers, and all the restlessness of savages.

While they form one of the largest departments of the Russian army in time of peace and in time of war, they are entirely distinct from any other branch of the service. Even among the Russians the exact relations of the Cossacks to the Government are not distinctly understood, and they are often looked upon more as allies than as subjects of the Czar. Like most existing institutions of that country, they are regarded as part of an order of things which knows no change.—*Harper's Magazine for January.*

NEW YEAR'S RESOLVE.

As the dead year is clasped by a dead December,
So let your dead sins with your dead days lie.
A new life is yours, and a new hope! Remember
We build our own ladders to climb to the sky.
Stand out in the sunlight of promise, forgetting
Whatever your past held of sorrow or wrong;
We waste half our strength in useless regretting;
We sit by old tombs in the dark too long.

Have you missed in your aim? Well, the mark is still
shining;
Did you faint in the race? well take breath for the next;
Did the clouds drive you back? but see yonder their
lining;
Were you tempted and fell? let it serve for a text.
As each year hurries by, let it join that procession
Of skeleton shapes that march down to the past;
While you take your place in the line of progression,
With your eyes on the heavens, your face to the blast.

I tell you the future can hold no terrors
For any sad soul while the stars revolve,
If he will but stand firm on the grave of his errors
And instead of regretting, resolve, resolve!
It is never too late to begin rebuilding,
Though all into ruins your life seems hurled;
For look! how the light of the new year is gilding
The worn, wan face of the bruised old world!

—*Ella Wheeler Wilcox.*

LORD ELGIN AND THE PARTHENON.

Lord Elgin is made accountable for the vanishment of some of the friezework of the Wingless Victory. Without doubt Lord Elgin is a badly used man. There is no nation that calls itself civilized but loves to cast a stone at his lordship. Even his fellow-countrymen, who have had all the profit of his depredations (to give them a hard name) do not spare him. And yet, if a man is to be judged by his motives, Lord Elgin deserves rather to be crowned with an olive wreath. Who could foresee the emancipation of Greece in Lord Elgin's time? And who, knowing with what scant esteem the Moslems looked upon the sublimest of human achievements, could aver that the Parthenon itself might not any day be blown pell-mell to the four quarters of the winds? The Turks, during Lord Elgin's residence in Athens, were accustomed to forage among the statuary of the city for the whitest bits of marble, sculptured or otherwise; these they would reduce to powder and serve up as mortar in their own building work. They were also wont to trundle columns and statues and capitals, and throw them indiscriminately among the dust and brick ends of their own building material: a mixture of all these together would surely make a good substantial wall, quoth the Turks; while, worst of all, it was a custom with them, when their hands were idle, to scale this or that pillar or statue larger than themselves, and amuse themselves by knocking off noses and chiselled excrescences until they were tired. At other times they would use the statuary as a target. Under such circumstances Lord Elgin moved for permission to take casts and drawings of those antiquities which still remained in Athens. It was granted him by the Sultan, and for three years six eminent artists and modellers were at work under his superintendence in the great task. A little later he took the more mature step of trying to rescue from what seemed to him inevitable destruction certain of the ornaments of the Parthenon. The Sultan had no objection. All the marble treasures of the East were little to him save as valuable equivalents of gold and silver. And thus it was the friezes and other valuables which adorn our British Museum come to be transported from Athens to England. The Parthenon was at one time used as a powder magazine—a fact to be remembered when Lord Elgin is held up to scorn and execration.—*Cornhill Magazine.*

BREADALBANE Free Presbytery has unanimously adopted the overture asking the Assembly to consider whether Aberdeen College ought not to be discontinued.

British and Foreign.

DR. JAMES BROWN, of Paisley, was present at the Unionists' banquet in London.

THE *Protestant Ensign* is the name of a new weekly journal about to be started in Dunedin.

IN Spain the Irish Presbyterian Church has a college for native pastors, conducted by the Rev. Mr. Moore.

SOUTHLAND Presbytery, New Zealand, is proposing to relieve deacons from subscribing the Westminster Confession.

To the disgrace of Sydney, the Fisk jubilee singers had difficulty in securing quarters in the city owing to their colour.

THE Rev. John M'Queen, M.A., of Campbeltown, was the preacher at the jubilee of Greenock Total Abstinence Society.

THE Rev. Dr. Marshall Lang, of the Barony, preached the anniversary sermons in Dr. Hugh Macmillan's pulpit at Greenock.

THERE are, it is said, 131 parish churches in Bangor diocese and not one penny is contributed by them to any missionary society.

ACCORDING to Mr. William Archer the eyebrows of Darwin were developed into their formidable length and bushiness by his continual concentration over his microscope.

ANGLICANS in Australia are beginning to think that, instead of importing bishops from England, a work of great difficulty, it would be better to grow them in the colonies.

IT is proposed to form a World's Day of Rest league, and a conference of representative Jews is suggested to endeavour to secure the transfer of the Jewish Sabbath to the first day of the week.

SHEIK SELIM HISHMEH, from Jerusalem, who was Stanley's interpreter in his successful journey in search of Dr. Livingstone, lectured in Livingstone memorial Church, Blantyre, recently, on Palestine.

THE Rev. J. Lindsay, B.D., B.Sc., of St. Andrew's, Kilmarnock, reported at the annual soiree that during the past year nearly 200 had been added to the roll, 136 as new members and about sixty as seat-holders.

TWO unauthorized editions of Dr. William M. Taylor's latest work having been issued in Britain, Messrs. Sampson, Low, Marston & Co., the doctor's publishers in the Old Country, have begun legal proceedings to protect their copyright.

AT Dundee a conference has been held between representatives of the three Presbyterian denominations, with a view to arranging for the half-yearly communion being observed simultaneously. A committee was elected to consider and report.

NIVA FOU, a small island of the Tongan group, with a native population of 1,200, has been visited by a volcanic eruption which suddenly overwhelmed the villages and plantations. A number of lives were lost, and not a green leaf nor a bird has been left on the island.

THE Rev. J. A. Campbell, Troqueer, having offered on behalf of his session to raise \$5,000 toward the cost of alterations, the heritors have agreed to contribute \$1,250, for which they would have been liable for repairs. A new peal of bells is to be supplied by one of the members.

THE acclimatization society of Otago having issued licences to fish on the Sabbath, the settlers on the banks of the trout streams have held an indignation meeting, at which they determined to prosecute every fisher trespassing on their grounds till the society rescinds its impious resolution.

THE Rev. J. V. M'Nair, late of West Free Church, Port Glasgow, has been inducted to Chalmers Church, Melbourne. Mr. M'Nair was sent out by the colonial committee to West Australia on a mission of enquiry, and, after visiting three colonies, resolved to settle in Victoria.

PROFESSOR M'KENDRICK says he has never seen a student the worse for drink within the walls of the new university at Glasgow. This he attributes to the absence of public houses in the vicinity. But at Edinburgh University, around which there are many, he has known a large number of fine young fellows ruined by drink.

THE Rev. J. Bain, Duthill, has been presented with a purse of sovereigns, as a token of sympathy and respect. In acknowledging it he said he had dared to rebuke and expose tyranny and oppression in high places, and had thereby incurred displeasure. He would continue to do so in future, as he desire, equal justice to be meted out alike to rich and poor.

MR. J. G. WEIR, of Hampstead, has been pointing out to leading ministers of the denomination that it is not fair to probationers that vacancies in large congregations are invariably filled by ministers from Ireland, Scotland or America. The reply he has received is that they prefer pastors who have proved themselves by efficient service in a less responsible position.

BISHOP WILLIAM TAYLOR, who is throwing out his picket lines on the Congo, has arrived in England, and will remain until January to supervise the building of a steamer for the use of the mission. Last year, in settling his people in Angola, he walked over 600 miles. This year he walked to Stanley pool and back, 460 miles. While at Stanley Pool he worked vigorously with spade and axe six days in the week.

MR. JOHN SKELTON, speaking in his latest essay, of the Reformation, says that in Germany it was in great measure the fruit of a profound spiritual excitement; in England it was mainly due to the political indignation which the corruptions of the monastic orders had roused; in Scotland both forces worked with nearly equal energy. But these subjective national peculiarities did not, he thinks, affect the vital unity of the movement.