

On Talkers.

A gentleman well known in literary circles for his inexhaustible flow of words was one day lamenting the decay of good conversationalists, when a very clever lady remarked that what she most regretted in the present day was the decay of good listeners. We fear the decay of good listeners is a sad and momentous fact, and proves the demoralized state of mind of the men and women of the present generation. It is not easy to be a good listener, it requires certain high moral qualities. A man to listen well must be unselfish, he must be both willing to give and take. He must have powers of self-control, for he must be ready to give his mind for a moment into another man's custody. He must have a certain amount of deference and humility which the man who accompanies your words with a running commentary of protest or contradiction does not possess. The person who lets his eyes wander while you are talking to him shows that he is deficient in the first element of good breeding, courtesy. The eye of the good listener is one of the eyes which the poet and novelist have not remembered to extol. It is always serene, patient and intelligent. It is sad to think how few persons will take the trouble of learning the art of attention in its simplest form. The majority who will not listen, however, do not hesitate in constantly demanding of their neighbors what Mark Anthony asked as a favour of his countrymen, to "lend him their ears." When you have gratified their request they do not hesitate to inflict the greatest injury on those sensitive and much abused organs. The sermons of Mr. Carlyle, preached in innumerable large volumes, on the text, "Silence is golden," have borne but little fruit. It is said of the elder Matthews that he suffered from a painful disease of the tongue, from having talked so much and so fast; we have often wondered that the disease is not more prevalent in the present day. No doubt, if the majority of people were more silent, life might possibly become a little more dull, but it would be prolonged. The companion who is ever talking is no better than a murderer, and in a healthy state of society he would be hanged. The saddest part of the matter is that most men talk, not because they have anything to say, but because they have a dread that the world will discover that they have no great wit. If they would only read a book much despised in this clever age, but which contains many wise sayings, they would find it there stated that "even a fool when he holdeth his tongue is counted wise." How many a man has gained a reputation for having a great deal in him by the simple process of holding his tongue. It is, however, now rare to meet with any one who ever thinks of ruling that member. But still, although talking goes on in the world without intermission, conversation in its proper sense is fast dying out. Our talking, like our writing, is serious and dull, and is unrelieved by wit and brilliancy. There is no greater nuisance than when a company at dinner is forced to listen to two literary lions, who try to be clever and smart. No doubt it is pleasing to them, and to them only, but it is not conversation, because all present do not share in it. Nothing is more annoying than to find two men interrupting the easy flow of talk by a hot argumentation. As De Quincey says, "More good sense is sufficient, without any experience at all of high life to point out the intolerable absurdity of allowing two angry champions to look up and sequester, as it were, the whole social enjoyment of a large party, and compel them to sit in sad civility, witnesses of a contest which can interest the majority neither by its final object nor its management." There are a small class of men who mistake declamation for conversation. Coleridge was a good talker, but he spoilt it by too much declamation. The declamation of Coleridge was, however, instructive and brilliant, but the declamation of the modern litterateur can hardly, by any stretch of the imagination, be considered one or the other. No conversation was ever so delightful as that of Reynolds, Goldsmith, Burke, and Johnson. But then the famous club was composed of clever men who conversed freely on every subject, and who had steeped their minds in literature. In the present day most men limit their reading to their own writings. There are men whose sole conversation consists in putting forth the one idea they have borrowed from the leading article in the morning. But they are not nearly so disagreeable as the pretentious talker who talks his own article in a loud authoritative voice. The leader writers talk as a rule consists in making pungent and exaggerated remarks on most topics. He carries his professional art into social life. It is not conversation, but it is amusing if not carried too far, and it is useful at times. The writer of social articles is a man who earns a miserable pittance by making bricks without straw, and he acquires the painful art of going on talking for any length of time about absolutely nothing. He is horribly rapid on nearly every subject, but he prattles to his unfortunate listeners like a giant rejoicing to run his course. Among young ladies in the country he can, however, generally ensure both attention and applause. The most egotistic kind of talker is the middle-aged college don who has spent his vacation on the continent, and who steals his new views and interpretations from foreign magazines. This is a very easy road to a reputation for sound learning in one of our universities. The most affected talker is the young college don who solves the enigma of free-will and constructs a philosophy of being in twenty minutes. He is fond of parading his small knowledge of Hegel and Herbert Spencer, and he is always expressing his deep regret that the university does not allow him a large endowment for the purposes of research. He is a man whom only an esoteric audience can appreciate or bring out to his best. To the common vulgar herd he is only a bore. He does not converse, but he expresses his opinions in a serene, confident voice. If you speak to him of Shakespeare he gives a sickly smile, and asks you if you have read Rossetti. He informs you that works of art can only be "appreciated by loving and reverent criticism," and that

if you wish to understand an author you must get behind his soul. He will not discuss anything so vulgar as politics; but on green paper and china plates he can be eloquent. His language is nicely chosen, but it would be inconsistent with his genius to call things by the same names as are used by inferior men. There is only one thing of which he is ignorant. He is not aware that display of vanity is one of the most annoying of the minor social sins. A large view of life, however, ought to teach all of us to be tolerant of all things—even of the young Oxford don and his talk.—From the Examiner.

P. E. Island for Consumptives.

It is almost wholly dissimilar to any land that lies adjacent. Its soil is especially favorable to ordinary products, and it may be called the granary of the north-east. The climate is somewhat wonderful, being neither so cold in winter nor so hot in summer as Lower Canada, while it is entirely free from the innumerable fogs which slip over Cape Breton and Nova Scotia. It is said that the inhabitants very frequently reach 100 years of age without ever suffering from serious illness. The air is dry and bracing, and no better project could be set on foot than to empty the hospitals of the world on these generous shores. The fell diseases with which we of the eastern coast are so afflicted, as consumption for example, and intermittent fevers, are never known, while nonagenarians and centenarians, who are still able to do a fair day's work on the farm, are met with at every turn. Indeed, it is an ideal spot for the invalid; and the time is not far distant when that ghastly crowd that yearly goes to Florida to die will change their course and go to Prince Edward Island to live. I have often wondered at this American folly which prompts one who is in the last stages of consumption, or who has a serious difficulty with throat or lungs, to leave a comfortable home that he may roost on the branches of the Florida coast, at a cost of five or six dollars a day, and nothing to eat.

I sometimes suspect that it is all a ruse of the doctors, who do not care to have a patient die on their hands, and who, therefore, advise a trip to the sunny South, which sounds well enough, and which is in reality a trip to the graveyard. Florida is Moloch, and must be dethroned. He has an insatiable appetite, and is everlastingly demanding more; and more he will have so long as fashion holds control over life and death as now. When we wake from our delusion, we shall find that the dry, bracing, life-giving atmosphere of some favored spot like Prince Edward Island is worth far more than the subtle poison of Florida, even if the camellias do blossom there in February, and the sun coaxes the mercury up to 75. I do not care to sit in judgment on the opinion of the physician, but if I had a cross-grained uncle who was worth a million, and who had made a will in my favor; and if the aforesaid relation was coughing about the house all day, giving me as it were an anticipatory view of his fortune; and if, furthermore, I was possessed of a diabolical thirst of gain, I should coax him to go to Florida, and, taking his exact measure in feet and inches, should confide it to a neighboring undertaker before he started. But if, on the other hand, I wished to retain him a little longer amid these sublimity spheres, free from bronchitis and tubercles, I should pack him off for some such secluded spot as Prince Edward Island. The refreshing air and equal temperature would rebuild his shattered constitution.

I would like nothing better than to land at St. Peter's Bay, and with a couple of ponies raised from good English stock, for which the island has become famous, start on a trip over the entire island, hunting in its woods, fishing in its rivers, and stopping at the always hospitable farm houses at night. With sweet bread, fresh milk and eggs, and rich cream, I could manage to survive for a month or two at least.—Dr. Hepworth in Starboard and Port.

Eastern Marriage.

The nuptial rites and observances of modern India do not materially vary from those of ancient Palestine. The missionary Ward gives the following description of what he himself witnessed: "All things for the procession being prepared beforehand, the whole company wait for the coming of the bridegroom. At a marriage which I saw some years ago, the bridegroom came from a distance, and the bride lived in Serampore. The grand procession, therefore, was at the latter place. The bridegroom came by water. After waiting two or three hours, at length, near midnight, all at once it was announced, as if in the very words of Scripture, 'Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.' All the persons employed now lighted lamps, and ran with them in their hands 'o fill up their stations in the procession. The cavalcade, which consisted of horses, camels, and elephants, and a string of footmen, moved forward to the house of the bride, at which place the company entered the large area, covered with an awning and lighted up, where a great number of friends, dressed in their best apparel, were seated on mats. The bridegroom was carried in the arms of two attendants and placed on a superb seat in the midst of the company, where he sat a little while, and then went into the house, when the door was shut and guarded by sepoy. I and others expostulated with the door-keepers, and attempted to enter, but in vain. Never was I so struck with our Lord's beautiful parable as at this moment—the door was shut. I had set my mind on seeing the marriage ceremonies, but was obliged to depart in disappointment.

The total amount of money voted by the English Parliament for education, art and science, was \$2,858,810 in 1862, and \$16,890,175 in 1876. This generous appropriation is the wisest way of avoiding threatening social dangers; and, when the lower classes take advantage of their privileges as much as possible, the evils of popular disturbances will be much lessened.

Canon Liddon and the East.

The visit of Canon Liddon to the scenes which just now are of the greatest interest in the East, will furnish an inexhaustible fund of materials for his eloquent pen; and the accounts he will give of what he sees and hears will be read and listened to with profound respect. Some of the statements he has already made are worthy of being written in letters of gold; while others cannot be read without a pang of horror. He assures us that in Bosnia, Christians taken with arms in their hands are regularly impaled by the Turks, he himself having seen the poles used for the purpose. He says that sometimes death ends their sufferings in twelve hours, and in other cases they linger on in agony for three days. What a commentary is this upon the Earl of Beaconsfield's jaunty remark, which excited a laugh, that he thought the Turks were more summary in the punishments they inflicted! Well indeed may the New York journals express their surprise that the British Government should be ignorant of what was going on in those regions, until enlightened by their countryman, Mr. Schuyler! Canon Liddon gives another fact which ought to be enough to satisfy every man who is not influenced by party spirit or blinded by bigotry, that the cause of the Christian provinces in Turkey is one which ought to enlist the sympathies of the whole civilized world. He states that one hundred and sixty thousand Christian refugees have crossed the River Save in order to avoid the brutal cruelty of the Turks. We would ask the men to think of that, who applaud the thirteen states, which rebelled against Great Britain on account of a Stamp Act and a few chests of Tea.

The Canon states in reference to the regular practice of impaling the Christians, "This he observed was no wild excess of the Bashibazouks, but the usual proceeding of the regular forces of Turkey; and it is fatal to the assertion that the Turk generally despatches his victims as speedily as possible." And he goes on to say,—"Across the Drina and the Save, the neighboring peasants saw men speaking the same language, holding the same faith, showing the same aspirations as their own, condemned to writhe in agony for two or three days, for a crime which under the circumstances, was a virtue. It was sights like these on three of her frontiers which at last roused Serbia to the struggle, which if any war was morally justifiable, was one of the most righteous known to history; since it is a struggle, not for 'provinces,' but against a system which, as Mr. Gladstone has said, is 'anti-human.' The days surely will come when the Servian war will be reckoned among the most disinterested of national sacrifices; and when men will wonder that a country like England, even for one moment, could have lent her moral support to such a kingdom of organized unrighteousness as the Turkish Empire."

Thus speaks Canon Liddon; but somebody has just discovered that in the reign of Elizabeth, the efforts made to extend England's commerce included improved commercial relations with Turkey. And therefore for all time, his huge excrement in the very heart of Christendom—Turkish cruelty and outrage—must have the moral support, at least, of the British Government. It is useless to argue with people who ask in that way England can be responsible for the misdeeds of the Turks. The fact is patent that Turkey has at least the moral support of England. Whether the Earl of Beaconsfield meant it or not, the Turk understood that the presence of the English fleet in Besika Bay meant the support of Turkey; Dr. Dollinger so understood it; the English people so understood it; all Europe understood nothing else; and the Bulgarian outrages were committed on the part of the Turks, with the feeling that they would have English support. Canon Liddon's companion, a Croation, who lives in the very sight of some of these outrages, says:—"But for England, these countries would be free long before this; the Turk knows that, do what he may, he can depend upon English aid." The Bosnian peasants, and Bulgarian recruits actually believe, from what they see and hear, that the Turkish army is in the pay of England; and Canon Liddon remarks that, "so long as Sir H. Elliot remains at Constantinople and the fleet at Besika Bay, foreigners have difficulty in believing that the English people is sincere in its abhorrence of Turkish brutalities. Some outward and visible sign of our repentance for our long support of their barbarous and inhuman power is due to the conscience of Europe."

From the communications of Canon Liddon and Mr. McColl, we see no reason to join those journalists who are half repentant at the stand they made sometime ago in behalf of humanity, and who speak of the outburst of honest indignation in England as a merely sentimental effusion.—Domineon Churchman.

A LIFE of carnal ease, a death of sin, and an eternity of horror, are closely allied. In the matter of converting a soul to God, all human power is reduced to zero.—J. W. Altonator.

St. Luke.

This name is a contraction of Lukanus, and intimates that St. Luke was descended from heathen ancestors, and that he was either a slave or a freedman. He was a physician by profession, and therefore a man of education, as is also shown by the classical style in which the introduction to his Gospel and the latter part of the Acts are written, as well as by the explicit and learned details which he gives on various antiquarian, historical, and geographical subjects. He is said to have painted a portrait of our Saviour, an engraving of which appeared in the London Art Journal a few years ago. The Gospel which goes by his name contains exceedingly valuable accounts not found in the books of the other evangelists; as those concerning the childhood of Jesus, the admirable parables in the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters, the narration respecting the disciples at Emmaus, and the section from chap. ix. 51 to xix. 27, which contains particulars mostly wanting in the other evangelists. The statements he gives are taken from accounts given by eye-witnesses to the events he relates, which he appears to have accurately investigated. Besides the gospel which bears his name, St. Luke wrote also the Acts of the Apostles, which contains the history of the foundation of the Christian Church in two great sections: the first embracing the spread of Christianity among the Jews, chiefly by the instrumentality of St. Peter, contained in the first twelve chapters; and the second, its spread among the heathen, chiefly by the instrumentality of St. Paul, and which is comprised in the rest of the book. From the circumstance that the book of the Acts leaves St. Paul a captive, it is probable that St. Luke accompanied St. Paul to Rome, employing his leisure there in composing the Acts, and that he left off writing before the fate of St. Paul was decided.

It is a great work, and the greatest and chiefest of all works, to teach rightly concerning God.—Vitus Theodorus.

CHRIST and His cross are not separable in this life; howbeit, Christ and His cross part at heaven's door, for there is no house-room for crosses in heaven. One tear, one sigh, one sad heart, one fear, one loss, one thought of trouble cannot find lodging there.

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