

Original Poetry.

UNKNOWN.

BY PAMELIA S. VINING, WOODSTOCK.

You have marked the lonely river,
On whose waveless bosom lay
Some deep mountain shadow ever,
Dark'ning e'en the ripples play;—
Did you deem it had no murmur
Of soft music though unheard?—
Deep beneath the placid surface
That the waters never stirred?

You have marked the quiet forest
Where the moonbeams slept by night;
And the elm and drooping willow
Sorrowed in the misty light;
Did you deem those depths so silent
Held no fount of tender song
That awoke to hallowed ut'rance
As the hushed hours swept along?

And the heart hath much of music
Deep within its chambers lone,
Very passionate and tender,
Never shaped to human tone;—
Deem not that its depths are silent,
Though thou ne'er hast stooped to hear;
Haply, even thence, some music
Flouts to the All-Hearing ear.

Gossip.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

WE do not know that we can more appropriately resume our 'Gossip' in this number, or more fully gratify our own inclinations, than by heartily wishing all the readers of the CANADIAN ILLUSTRATED NEWS, a Happy New Year! This is the season of good wishes, of kindly thoughts, of musical greetings; and most sincerely do we tender to each and all of them, as our best and brightest wish,—"Many Happy Returns of the Season."

We cannot but congratulate ourselves, in passing, on the fact that the number of our readers, have, week by week, increased to such an extent, that we can already count up more than any other Newspaper in Canada, with perhaps two, or at the utmost, three, exceptions. But it is not our province to discuss business matters in our 'gossip' page, and we will therefore content ourselves, with expressing the hope, that a (discerning public,) will so encourage our efforts, in making the 'Illustrated,' what it ought to be, that the circle, to whom, in the beginning of 1864, we may be privileged to send our friendly greeting; shall have so widened and increased; that every township, and every hamlet in our country will be embraced in it.

Now when the old year is drawing his last breath, and the new born one is joyously beginning life, the beautiful lines of Tennyson in 'In Memoriam,' chime their rich music in many memories.

Ring out wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light;
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:
The year is going, let him go;
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,
For those that here we see no more;
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,
And ancient forms of party strife;
Ring in the nobler modes of life,
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,
The faithless coldness of the times;
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,
The civic slander and the spite;
Ring in the love of truth and right,
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease,
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;
Ring out the thousand wars of old,
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;
Ring out the darkness of the land,
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

THE NEW YEAR.

EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND SIXTY-TWO, is already 'numbered with the years before the flood.' Its character has been written in letters of blood. It has left its impress, in ruined hopes, desolated homes, broken hearts, and famine-stricken forms; it will be remembered as long as the present generation exists.

Its successor has but just greeted us—buoyant as young life, sanguine as young hopes—a singular destiny awaits it. 1862 has not been a year of conclusions; everything has been let loose, and unhinged; and to 1863, has been left the labor of settling—what it can.

Born of war and famine—child of troubled parents—the New-Year cannot but have a strange and eventful history. Some portion of its destiny is written in the past; how large a portion *unwritten*, is awaited with anxious expectancy, and bated breath by nations and princes; is indicated by the millions of men, in both Continents, lying on their arms, or engaged in deadly conflict,—by the feverish uncertainty pervading the minds of statesmen, and the gloomy forebodings of the wise and thoughtful in many lands,—by the nations longing and thirsting for peace, as they never did before; yet striving to outdo each other, in the mighty armies they are creating; and in the magnitude of their preparations for the coming strife.

Retribution always follows crime, but seldom so rapid with nations as with individuals. The past demands a day of reckoning; and for ought that you or I can tell reader; before we see the end of the year, that has but dawned, the retributions stored up for them by the misdeeds of a long train of their predecessors, may be visited upon the present generation of peoples and governments.

All things betoken the near approach of a fearful crisis in human affairs. We cannot see how human wisdom, or human foresight can prevent it. It is the necessary result of the past, it may be the indispensable condition of the future. We pretend not to prophesy; living as we are, in the midst of vicissitudes more fleeting and transient than the phenomena of a northern sky, it hardly becomes us, even to speculate. Yet we cannot shut our eyes to the signs of the times. Here, a nation of twenty millions, in arms; a people to whom the art of war was unknown, involved in all its horrors,—brother thirsting for his brother's blood,—leading politicians proclaiming their intense hatred of the government, which they themselves created; and foremost statesmen heading outbreaks of discontent. There, the people of a mighty continent, feverish and excited,—reeling from side to side with an uncontrollable impulse,—Kings distrustful, and Nations fearful of one another,—confidence between rulers and people, and between man and man destroyed; and that confidence transferred to the sword—an echo sufficient to fill a nation with panic; a voice, as faint, sufficient to still it for a time, into security again,—one Nation alone, with the beacon light of liberty and loyalty, pure and piercing, held aloft; elevated above the rising tempest, and visible through the darkening night. And so the universal confusion becomes worse confounded. It is as though the creative behests of the Almighty, which, at the beginning, constituted order the law of the Universe, had been countermanded; for verily chaos has come again, with the Spirit of Evil triumphant. When will the Spirit of God move again upon the face of the waters, dispel the vengeance from these dark, brooding clouds, and cause a new world to spring up, consecrated to happiness, peace and love.

Thus, the new born year greets the nations. What, friend are its greetings to us. You and I find the world as we are born to it; we leave it as we help to

make it. The year just begun, will surely be to us, as we have partly helped to make it, by what we did, or did not in the past. Work was done in those years to be finished; work undone to be supplied—now.

The summer is past; autumn is gone; winter shrouds the earth with its mantle; and man's day for work is shorter; yet, the ear of an informed faith can hear the grass growing, listen to the melody of the winds, blowing over the blossoms of future spring; and in the dim distance, too far for distinct interpretation, can discern the voices of happier generations.

SERMONS.

Anything, but Canadian politics, form the theme of our 'gossip,' with that we must positively be excused from intermeddling. Men and books; morals and manners; the street talk, and the table talk, of young and old, are within our scope; and, this being the case, we cannot see why sermons, forming, as they do, the subject for so much gossip elsewhere, should not be introduced into ours likewise.

In another part of our present number will be found an outline of a sermon—taken from an English periodical—by the Rev. Peter Jobbling, of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, or someway in its neighbourhood, to whom we now beg to introduce our readers. Peter, it may be premised, was formerly a pitman, in an extensive colliery, but his preaching talent having been discovered, he was translated from the pit to the pulpit—albeit without Episcopal ordination. None the worse of that we think, for we dare to assert, there is not a Bishop in England, who could preach with as much acceptance to Peter's congregation, as he does himself. Peter is a successful preacher, of that we have no doubt; and the secret,—alas! that it should be such a secret,—lies in his earnestness and zeal; in his piety and simplicity. For an illustration of his genius, the reader is referred to the sermon alluded to, or rather to our brief outline of it, his text being taken from Ps. lxxxviii, 6. 'Thou hast laid me in the lowest pit.'

Peter's sermon is suggestive. It contains food for reflection. And this brings us to the point of our 'gossip' Sermons in general—what they are, and what they ought to be.

The age we are told is a religious age. It may be so, but the evidence that it is a christian age, is anything but satisfactory. Men do not, indeed, in our day, teach christianity as if it was fictitious,—they rather extol it; substituting at the same time, a christianity of their own, in place of it. Infidelity is no longer loud-tongued and ribald; it finds refuge in the cloudy mysteries of a transcendental philosophy. What has now to be contended with, is not an active but a passive unbelief,—not the hostility, but the unconcerned indifference of the masses, and one of the great questions of our time, is, how that indifference may be overcome, and how society is to be educated, to a perception of those Great Truths, which alone can elevate the character of a people, and make them understand the true dignity, and high destinies of humanity. Into this question we do not at present enter; we can but glance at facts as they are placed before us. And the one that presents itself to our notice, is, that christianity in its present forms, or rather disguises, has ceased to a great extent, to be considered a solitary, divine thing,—the one thing needful. It has come down to, or below the level of the other influences which sway our age. The oracular power which once dwelt in the Pulpit, has departed from it; and those who occupy it, have, for the most part become a timid apologetic class,—consulting, not commanding, the taste of their audiences. The thunders of the pulpit have died away, and sermons are now criticized, not obeyed. A modern Paul may preach, but Felix instead of trembling,—yawns, if he does not slumber outright. John Howe, we are told, could preach six hours,

to unwearied throgs; not many years ago, Edward Irving could protract his speech to midnight; but now, and amongst us, a sermon of forty minutes, even from eloquent lips, is thought sufficiently exhaustive, both of the subject, and the audience,—while, in the capital of Scotland,—that land of great theologians, and noble preachers,—periodicals of standing and position, advocate a monthly, instead of a weekly sermon.

This is but one of the symptoms of our spiritual disease; and reflecting men can but ask for the cause and the remedy. To indicate the one, is to point out the other.

Now it may as well be confessed at once, plainly and simply, that it is not Neologians, Pantheists, or Rationalists, who have caused this dead weight of indifference; and taught men that the Bible is an old oriental document, with which modern civilization has nothing to do. The churches and professing christians of our day have done that most effectually for them. 'We speak that we do know and testify that we have seen,' when we assert, that the miserable inconsistencies,—the jealousies,—the worldliness,—and the want of earnestness, characteristic of the bulk of the professing christians of our day,—ministers as well as people, have done more to place stumbling-blocks in the way of earnest, thoughtful men, and more to hinder the progress of the religion of the Prince of Peace,—has furnished harder arguments for infidelity,—and proved more sure extinguishers of the good, produced through the instrumentality of those faithful to their profession, and principles, than all the exertions and influences of the Hume's and Paine's of the past; or of the Newman's or Colenso's, of the present.

Earnestness and singleness of purpose, as far as human pursuits are concerned, is the characteristic of our day, and shall they be wanting, where, above all else, they are most required and looked for?

ENNUI.

This is a French word, but it has been deservedly naturalized, because it expresses a source of trouble from which those who speak the English language are unfortunately not exempt. The complaint has been described by Pascal in the following words:—"One feels an insupportable annoyance in living with himself, and thinking of himself—hence, all his care is to forget himself, and let this short and precious life flow on without reflection." Ennui is a domestic fiend, as troublesome as the demon of Frankenstein. It is the curse of the gentleman loafer, and is born of idleness and want of occupation. Like other kinds of misery it drives men into bad company, causes them to seek extraordinary excitement to induce forgetfulness, and makes them associate with gamblers, wine-bibbers and blackguards. A French gentleman, laboring under this affliction, when a beggar told him he was suffering from hunger, answered,

'Happy rascal, how I envy you!'

'Ennui,' it is said by an English writer, 'drove Alexander the Great to India, and poverty has often sent a vast number of persons to the same place, which, in both instances, has produced a great deal of bloodshed and robbery—and so far, things are pretty much on the square.'

Who ever knew poverty to offer a reward for the discovery of new pleasures? Was poverty ever reduced to kill flies?—or (coming nearer home), did poverty ever make a man walk a thousand miles in a thousand hours, or ride one hundred and fifty miles, walk twenty, and kill forty brace of birds, all within the narrow space of one natural day?

The wood-sawyer, who earns the wherewithal to live by severing gigantic logs into portable fragments, may be weary when night comes, but one thing is certain, he is not troubled with ennui; he eats his frugal supper, and lies down on his humble bed to enjoy a dreamless and refreshing sleep, while the monarch or the courtier tosses on his bed of down, racking his brain to discover what he shall do to-morrow.

Crowned heads are famous for suffering ennui, and though they do not probably appreciate the remedy, a popular revolution is a real god-send to them. What a luxury for a stupid and sleep consumed king, whose hours hang listlessly on his hands, to be roused in the middle of the night or gray of morning by the sharp rattle of musketry before his palace gates, and to be forced to escape by the back stairs, and climb over a garden wall, and risk breaking his neck to save his head! A popular revolution is a sovereign remedy for royal ennui!