

Nothing is so striking in the letters as the unforced yet elevated beauty of the language, in description of things that are even the most familiar. He saw the works of Ariosto and Tasso, written with their own hands, in the library at Ferrara, and makes this mention of them.

"The hand-writing of Ariosto is a small, firm, and pointed character, expressing, as I should say, a strong and keen, but circumscribed energy of mind; that of Tasso is large, free, and flowing, except that there is a checked expression in the midst of its flow, which brings the letters into a smaller compass than one expected from the beginning of the word. It is the symbol of an intense and earnest mind, exceeding at times its own depth, and admonished to return by the chillness of the waters of oblivion striking upon its adventurous feet."

In one of the palaces of Bologna he saw a picture by Guido, of Samson drinking water out of an ass's jaw bone in the midst of the slaughtered Philistines, and his account of it in a few words is exquisitely complete.

"The figure of Samson stands in strong relief in the foreground, coloured, as it were, in the hues of human life, and full of strength and elegance. Round him lie the Philistines in all the attitudes of death. One prone, with the slight convulsion of pain just passing from his forehead, whilst on his lips and chin death lies as heavy as sleep. Another leaning on his arm, with his hand, white and motionless, hanging out beyond. In the distance, more dead bodies; and, still further beyond, the blue sea and the blue mountains, and one white and tranquil sail."

So with another of the works of Guido, a Madonna Lattante.

"She is leaning over her child, and the maternal feelings with which she is pervaded are shadowed forth on her soft and gentle countenance, and in her simple and affectionate gestures—there is what an unfeeling observer would call a dullness in the expression of her face; her eyes are almost closed; her lips depressed; there is a serious, and even a heavy relaxation, as it were, of all the muscles which are called into action by ordinary emotions; but it is only as if the spirit of love, almost insupportable from its intensity, were brooding over and weighing down the soul."

Nor can we resist, while referring to subjects of this kind, from quoting a portion of a noble criticism on the Niobe in the Florentine Gallery. We need not remind the reader that the immortal sculpture is the figure of a mother in the act of sheltering, from some divine and inevitable peril, the last, as we may imagine, of her surviving children. Having given the details of the statue, with a most subtle feeling for the poetic harmony of its art, Shelley thus proceeds:

"There is embodied a sense of the inevitable and rapid destiny which is consummating around her, as if it were already over. It seems as if despair and beauty had combined, and produced nothing but the sublimity of grief. As the motions of the form expressed the instinctive sense of the possibility of protecting her child, and the accustomed and affectionate assurance that she would find an asylum within her arms, so reason and imagination speak in the countenance the certainty that no mortal defence is of avail. There is no terror in the countenance, only grief—deep, remediless grief. There is no anger:—of what avail is indignation against what is known to be omnipotent? There is no selfish shrinking from personal pain—there is no panic at supernatural agency—there is no adverting to herself as herself; the calamity is mightier than to leave scope for such emotions.

"Every thing is swallowed up in sorrow; she is all tears; her countenance, in assured expectation of the arrow piercing its station in her embrace, is fixed on her omnipotent enemy. The pathetic beauty of the expression of her tender, and inexhaustible and unquenchable despair, is beyond the effect of any other sculpture. As soon as the arrow shall pierce her last tie upon earth, the fable that she was turned into stone, or dissolved into a fountain of tears, will be but a feeble emblem of the sadness of hopelessness, in which the few and evil years of her remaining life, we feel, must flow away."

See this reference to the immortal Dante.

"His very words are instinct with spirit; each is as a spark, a burning atom of inextinguishable thought; and many yet lie covered in the ashes of their birth, and pregnant with a lightning which has yet found no conductor. All high poetry is infinite; it is as the first acorn which contained all oaks potentially. Veil after veil may be undrawn, and the inmost naked beauty of the meaning never exposed. A great poem is a fountain for ever flowing with the waters of wisdom and delight; and after one person and one age has exhausted all its divine effluence which their peculiar relations enable them to share, another and yet another succeeds, and new relations are ever developed, the source of an unforeseen and unconceived delight."

DOMESTIC ECONOMY OF ICELANDERS.

Though so great a part of the year would seem from its inclemency to preclude labour, the winter is, perhaps, the period of greatest activity, and these tenants of the frigid zone can scarcely boast of

Their long nights of revelry and ease.

In summer, the fatigue of mowing, and carrying home the hay is comparatively light, and is rather a time of merry-making than of labour; but in winter each member of the family has his ap-

pointed share of business, to which he applies in earnest till the return of summer. It is usual for one individual to be sent out to the coast, and there engage himself to serve in a fishing boat for the season. Another has the care of the cattle allotted to him; the making of horse-shoes and other smith's work employs a third; and the remainder of the family of both sexes employ themselves in making nets, and knitting their clothes.

In some houses of a better description, a loom of a rude construction serves to supply the natives with a kind of native cloth called Wadmál, which is used for trousers and petticoats; but the knitting of frocks and coarse stockings for exportation, as well as their own use, is a more general occupation than weaving. The clothes are not dyed until they are completed, and then undergo the operation by being wrapped up with indigo and logwood scattered in the folds, and in that state boiled till they have acquired the desired depth of colour, which is mostly a black hue. The making of ropes, by the tedious process of plaiting the wool by hand, also takes up no inconsiderable part of their time, as well as the providing themselves with sandals, which being of raw hide last but a very short time.

Huddled together in a small apartment, usually the loft, without stove or any warmth but that arising from the confined atmosphere, and the packing of twelve or fifteen persons in a place of just sufficient capacity to contain their bulk, the family continue their labour, till a late hour in the night, often till two and three in the morning, enlivened by listening to one of the party who chants some Saga out of a book by the light of a dim seal-oil lamp. At times the monotony of the single voice is relieved by a hymn, the kind of music most relished by the Icelanders, in which the whole family join. Occasionally they indulge in instrumental music, and the Longspél is taken down from the wall to serve as an accompaniment to their mournful ditties.

This is the only musical instrument known among them, and is by no means calculated to enliven their spirits; indeed, if its gloomy tones are capable of producing any effect, I should say that it was that of instilling a black melancholy into the mind. In form it is a mere oblong tapering box, about two feet long and three inches wide, terminating somewhat like the head of a fiddle, and played upon with a violin bow. When in use it is laid upon a table, and the forefinger is applied only to the outer one of its three steel wires; and were it not for this difference it would give one the idea of a guitar in a rapid state of decline.—From 'A Winter in Iceland and Lapland,' by Hon. A. Dillon.

THE PEARL.

HALIFAX, SATURDAY MORNING, MARCH 28, 1840.

MECHANICS' INSTITUTE.—Mr. A. McKinlay lectured on Electricity last Wednesday evening, to a crowded audience. Numerous experiments were exhibited. The subject will be continued next Wednesday evening, by the same lecturer.

LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY.—The subject of discussion last Monday evening, was, Is a transgression of the laws of morality excusable under any circumstances for political purposes.—Decided in the negative. Subject for next Monday evening,—Has party spirit beneficial tendencies.

We have this week made copious extracts, from English periodicals, which are indicative of the current literature. William Howitt's "Visits to Remarkable Places" seems one of the most attractive of late publications. It brings imagination, poetic feeling, and literary recollections, to embellish matters of fact, very delightfully. What romantic ground must many parts of England be, to those who are versed in its history and literature, and who have susceptibilities for some of the finest emotions of the mind.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.—The British Queen steamship arrived at New York on the 19th inst.—bringing London dates to February 29.

Nothing of interest appears from England.—The French Ministry had been defeated in the Chamber of Deputies, and had resigned in consequence. Some difficulty is said to be experienced in forming a new cabinet.—The Queen Regent of Spain, accompanied by the young Queen, Isabella II., opened the session of the newly-elected Cortes on the 18th Feb. The speech adverted to the Provinces which still remained unsettled, and to several other topics of interest to the kingdom.—Many apprehensions seem to exist, respecting the intrigues of Russia against the power of Great Britain.

The Provincial politics of the week have been interesting. Appointments to seats in the Legislative Council, have been made, as follows: M. G. Black,—M. Tobin, junr.—J. L. Starr, Esqrs. of Halifax,—Dr. Bond, of Yarmouth,—P. DeCarteret, Esq., Arichat,—and D. McFarlane, Esq., Wallace. Mr. Black declined the honour,—Mr. Tobin and Mr. Starr took the oaths and their seats; the other gentlemen are in the country. Alex. Stewart, Esq., now in England, is appointed to the Executive Council.

On Tuesday the House of Assembly passed a series of resolutions respecting the Civil List Bill,—which was lost in the Coun-

cil,—and a resolution against the appointment of Mr. Stewart to the Executive Council.

On Wednesday the Assembly passed an Address to her Majesty, complaining of the policy of the Lieut. Governor, and praying for his removal.

On Friday his Excellency came down in state, and closed the legislative session, by proroguing the branches.

HIGHLAND SOCIETY.—The Annual Meeting of the Highland Society of Nova Scotia, was held on Saturday evening, William Young, Esq. President of the Society, in the chair. A Report of the proceedings of the last year, and a number of letters from correspondents in Britain, were read, and ordered to be printed. The Society agreed to appropriate £50 for the importation of school books, &c. to be disposed of under the direction of the committee. The following gentlemen were appointed office bearers for the ensuing year:—

James McNab, Esq. *President.* Charles W. Wallace, James F. Gray, Alex. Primrose, the Right Rev. the Bishop of Tanen, Roderick C. McDonald, Esqrs. *Vice Presidents.* W. Young, G. R. Young, Alex. Keith, Wm. Gossip, Rev. John Martin, Archibald McDonald, John Williamson, John Munro, and Hugh Munro, *Directors.* Charles W. Wallace, *Treasurer.* John McGreggor, Samuel Gray, *Secretaries.* Rev. James Mackintosh, *Chaplain.*

A large number of new members were admitted into the Society. A vote of thanks was passed to W. Young, and R. McDonald, Esqrs. for their exertions in forwarding the objects of the Society.

GAS LIGHT AND WATER COMPANY.—An adjourned Meeting of above Company was held at the Exchange Coffee House on Thursday morning at 12 o'clock, but owing to the whole amount of Stock not being taken up, it was Resolved that a *Provisional Committee* should be appointed to call upon all such parties as were desirous of becoming Stockholders in the same, and to report thereon at the next General Meeting.

MARRIED.

On Wednesday last, by the Rev. Mr. Marshall, Mr. Albert Laurillard, to Mary Osborn, both of Halifax.

On the 10th inst. by the Rev. Robert Blackwood, Mr. John Goodwin of Lower Stewiacke, to Miss Esther Denton, of Middle Stewiacke.—On the same day by the same, Stephen G. Pollock, Esq. to Miss Lydia Campbell, of Stewiacke.

At Chester, by the Rev. Dr. Shreeve, Mr. Walter Pearl, to Miss Ann Matilda Church, of Tahcook Island.

DIED.

At 27 Pitt-street, Edinburgh, on 28th Jan. Mrs. Isabella Sinclair, wife of Thomas Cochran Hume, Esq. and second daughter of the late William Sinclair, Esq. of Freswick.

At the Catholic Chapel House, Dunfriess, on the 14th Jan. in the 80th year of his age, the Hon. and Right Rev. Alexander McDonell, Bishop of Kingston, U. C.

On Tuesday morning, Mr. Edward Poyser, aged 43 years.

At Londonderry, on Sunday evening the 22nd inst. in the 33d year of her age, after a few days illness, Agnes Spencer, wife of Capt. Samuel Davison, leaving a husband and four children to lament the loss of an affectionate wife kind parent and a large circle of friends and relatives to mourn the loss of one beloved and respected by all her acquaintance.

NEW BOOK STORE.

NO. 88 & 89, GRANVILLE STREET.

THE Subscriber has just received, and offers for Sale as above, cheap for Cash or approved credit:

Dilworth's, Fenning's, Carpenter's, and other Spelling Books, Murray's and Lennie's Grammar,

Pot, Foolscap, Demy, and Post Papers,

Red, Black, and Blue Writing Inks,

Printing Ink in canisters of 8 and 16 lbs.

Coloured and Demy Printing Paper,

Scott's Poems,

Keith on the Use of the Globes,

Bibles and Prayer Books, handsomely bound in Morocco,

Very cheap School Books, with plates—and Testaments,

Murray's Introduction and Sequel,

Campbell's Rhetoric—Blair's Lectures,

Johnston's and Walker's Dictionaries,

Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress,

Do. with notes,

A large collection of handsomely bound Miscellaneous Works,

Steel slip Pens,

Indian Rubber and patent regulating Spring Pens,

Toy Books—a great variety,

Pope's Homer, and Cowper's Poems,

Paints and Paint Boxes,

Camel Hair Pencils,

Lead Pencils, and Indian Rubber,

Sealing Wax and Wafers, and Wafer Stamps,

Wafer Seals, with mottos and names,

Copy Books, Memorandum Books, Ledgers, Blotters, &c.

Slates and Slate Pencils.

Orders from the country thankfully received and punctually attended to. A liberal reduction made from the retail prices to persons sending orders to the extent of £5; and also a discount all Cash purchases.

ARTHUR W. GODFREY.

February 22.

JUST PUBLISHED.

"THE LETTER BAG OF THE GREAT WESTERN,"

And for sale at the Bookstore of

ARTHUR W. GODFREY.