

## A VISIT TO TENNYSON.

I saw the poet to the best advantage, under his own trees and walking over his own domain? He took delight in pointing out to me the finest and the rarest of his trees,—and there were many beauties among them. I recalled my morning's visit to Whittier at Oak Knoll at Danvers, a little more than a year ago, when he led me to one of his favourites, an aspiring evergreen which shot up like a flame. I thought of the graceful American elms in front of Longfellow's house, and the sturdy English elms that stand in front of Lowell's. In this garden of England, the Isle of Wight, where everything grows with such a lavish extravagance of greenness that it seems as if it must bankrupt the soil before autumn, I felt as if weary eyes and over-taxed brains might reach their happiest haven of rest. We all remember Shenstone's epigram on the pane of a tavern window. If we find our "warmest welcome at an inn," we find our most soothing companionship in the trees among which we have lived, some of which we may ourselves have planted. We lean against them, and they never betray our trust; they shield us from the sun and from the rain; their spring welcome is a new birth, which never loses its freshness; they lay their beautiful robes at our feet in autumn; in winter they "stand and wait," emblems of patience and of truth, for they hide nothing, not even the little leaf-buds which hint to us of hope, the true element in their triple symbolism.

This digression, suggested by the remembrance of the poet under his trees, breaks my narrative, but gives me the opportunity of paying a debt of gratitude. For I have owed many beautiful trees, and loved many more outside of my own leafy harem. Those who write verses have no special claim to be lovers of trees, but so far as one is of the poetical temperament he is like to be a tree lover. Poets have, as a rule, more than the average nervous sensibility and irritability. Trees have no nerves. They live and die without suffering, without self-questioning or self-reproach. They have the divine gift of silence. They cannot obtrude upon the solitary moments when one is to himself the most agreeable of companions. The whole vegetable world, even "the meanest flower that blows," is lovely to contemplate. What if creation had paused there, and you or I had been called upon to decide whether self-conscious life should be added in the form of the existing animal creation, and the hitherto peaceful universe should come under the rule of Nature as we now know her,

"red in tooth and claw"?

Are we not glad that the responsibility of the decision did not rest on us?

I am sorry that I did not ask Tennyson to read or repeat some of his own lines to me. Hardly any one perfectly understands a poem but the poet himself. One naturally loves his own poem as no one else can. It fits the mental mould in which it was cast, and it will not exactly fit any other. For this reason I had rather listen to a poet reading his own verses than hear the best elocutionist that ever spouted recite them. He may not have a good voice or enunciation, but he puts his heart and his interpenetrative intelligence into every line, word and syllable. I should have liked to hear Tennyson read such lines as

"Laborious orient ivory, sphere in sphere;"

and in spite of my good friend, Matthew Arnold's *in terrorem*, I should have liked to hear Macaulay read,

"And Aulus, the Dictator,  
Smoothed Auster's raven mane,"

and other good mouthable lines from the "Lays of Ancient Rome." Not less should I like to hear Mr. Arnold himself read the passage beginning,

"In his cool hall with haggard eyes  
The Roman noble lay."

—*Oliver Wendell Holmes, in May Atlantic.*

## GARDENING FOR PLEASURE.

Gardening for pleasure, health and a knowledge of the vegetable world are the highest inducements that can be set before one to lead to the study and practice of horticulture. The commercial gardener and fruit grower has all the difficulties common to other pursuits to contend with besides the many perplexing ones peculiar to his own. The profits of this industry, in its various branches, have been persistently set forth in a false and alluring light by many journals, and especially by travelling salesmen interested in the sale of various horticultural products. We would not attribute any intentional dishonesty to those who have thus bolstered up the commercial horticultural movement for years, but hard facts, as they become known, show the error of their position. For one without experience and training to take up any branch of commercial horticulture is almost sure to be a courting of failure. On the other hand, one will seldom or never be disappointed who turns to the garden for recreation, or who seeks there the building up of over-strained nerves, or who would follow out to discover some of the innumerable secrets of the vegetable world that are to be found by the earnest and patient observer. It is the place for at least an hour or two every day for women, as a change from household duties, for professional men, editors, merchants, clerks, and all who may be engaged in indoor, and especially sedentary employments. More or less garden work should be engaged in every day and by every member of the family wherever it is possible.—*Vick's Magazine.*

## WILL IT BE STEPHENSON OR DARWIN?

All through the Queen's reign the grand antagonist of thought, the spirit of intolerance, once the strongest of all motive powers, has been slowly dying, till now statesmen and sovereigns and leaders of the people scarcely recognize that it is not quite dead. In theory no one is persecuted for religion's sake, and in practice throughout Europe not only the reception, but the propagation of negative thought,

has become entirely free. When the Queen ascended the throne, though the laws were the same, the spirit in which they were executed was entirely different; society looked on religious freedom with an abhorrence half pious and half pharisaic, and an avowed atheist was in the greater portion of Europe a social pariah. To-day no man is such an unbeliever that he may not utter his unbelief; hardly any man so separate from his fellows that he cannot obtain at least a silent, if not an appreciative hearing. Had Bunyan lived till to-day he would have drawn in the shadow of that cave, beside which Pope and Pagan stood half paralyzed, a stronger and more dangerous figure yet, clad in the enchanted armour of science, as ready to encounter Greatheart as Greatheart to draw sword on him. In that unflinching of the human mind, in the step forward of that armed figure intent on destruction, there are surely distinctive marks of the Victorian era, and marks which are not prosaic. It has often been said that in 1950, the names of our time would be Stephenson, Wheatstone and Simpson, of the man who made the railway, the man who applied electricity to the transmission of thought, and the man who, at least for the operator, conquered pain; but in 2050 may it not be that the man of our age will be Darwin, and the subject of interest that rushing tide of destructive thought of which his name is, not quite fairly, made the concrete embodiment? Are there angels, or only men? Has not that been the grand question of the Victorian time, the one which, all through its bustle and business and vulgarity and rush for physical comfort, has been heard like a recurring moan or, to be less imaginative, like the sound of the wind as it rises during a dinner at sea? There is the clatter of plates and the noise of the talk and the sound of many feeding; but still through it all comes in the sharp swish of the wind, to which all who can foresee listen with bent-down ears.—*The Spectator.*

## ONE LESS AT HOME—ONE MORE IN HEAVEN.

One less at home!

The charmed circle broken—a dear face  
Missed day by day from its accustomed place,  
But cleansed, and saved, and perfected by grace!  
One more in heaven!

One less at home!

One voice of welcome hushed and evermore  
One farewell word now spoken; on the shore  
Where parting comes not, one soul landed more—  
One more in heaven!

One less at home!

Chill as the earth-born mist the thought would rise,  
And wrap our footsteps round, and dim our eyes,  
But the bright sunbeam darteth from the skies—  
One more in heaven!

One more at home!

This is not home, where, cramped in earthly mould,  
Our sight of Christ is dim—our love is cold,  
But there, where face to face we shall behold,  
Is home and heaven!

One less on earth!

Its pain, its sorrow and its toil to share;  
One less the pilgrim's daily cross to bear;  
One more the crown of ransomed souls to wear,  
At home in heaven!

One more in heaven!

Another thought to brighten cloudy days,  
Another theme of thankfulness and praise.  
Another link on high our souls to raise  
To home and heaven!

One more at home!

That home where separation cannot be,  
The home where none are missed eternally,  
Lord Jesus, grant us all a place with thee,  
At home in heaven!

## THE IMPORTANCE OF PARTIES.

Those, therefore, who call for the destruction of either or both of our present parties expose their ignorance as to the important service they are rendering. If it be said that they are corrupt, it is quite obvious that they are not more corrupt than are the people who compose them. And should they be abandoned, and other parties organized in their places, unworthy and unscrupulous men could not be kept out—they would be sure to push themselves to the front, if possible. In other words, the vicious element of society cannot be eliminated by any manœuvring. But an arch may be reconstructed, section by section, without demolishing the structure; and so a party may be readjusted to meet new issues, while all the time it does better work in sustaining the interests of the Government. The lessons of history are proof that parties themselves do change, and, indeed, are very quick to conform to a popular demand. The sudden abandonment of a political party is analogous to revolution in a Government, warrantable only in extreme emergencies.—*Levi Parsons, in New Princeton Review for May.*

MRS. A. DUNLAP WARD, president of the New Zealand Women's Christian Temperance Union, has travelled 1,900 miles in the two islands during the past year, and formed seven new societies. The work is being nobly supported throughout the colony by Christian people.

ARCHDEACON JEFFREYS, who spent thirty-one years as a missionary in India, died in 1849. Within a week of his death he declared at a temperance meeting, that for one really converted Christian as the fruit of missionary labour, the drinking practices of the English have made 1,000 drunkards!

## British and Foreign.

THE Rev. Peter H. Laird, Glasgow, has been called to Walkerston and Eton, Queensland.

A GOTHIC mural tablet has been erected in Duncairn Church, Belfast, in memory of the late pastor, Dr. T. V. Killen.

THE Rev. R. J. Morrell, a minister of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, has applied for admission into Belfast Presbytery.

THE Rev. Dr. Jackson Smith, Armagh, is suffering from severe illness, and is at present under medical treatment in London.

THE Government Committee recommend the General Assembly to sanction the erection of an assembly hall as a jubilee memorial.

MR. SALT of Saltire says the zero of character among his men is: "I don't think now of him; he'll sit in a public-house to drink."

MR. ST. GEORGE MIVART is to be called from England to the chair of science in the new Roman Catholic university at Washington.

PERE HYACINTH is drawing large congregations in his church in Paris, and has quite recovered his health, which was somewhat impaired in midwinter.

MR. R. W. GAMBLE, county court judge of Armagh and Louth, died suddenly last week when addressing the Dublin Synod on the revision of the Church Hymnal.

DR. SOMERVILLE preached on a recent Sabbath at Lamlash and Brodick. After visiting all the congregations in Arran he intends to finish his tour in Perthshire.

THE South Hackney Congregational Church, with no property, no debt and no obligation, has applied for admission, and the London Presbytery is to consider the matter.

THE Rev. R. W. Dobbie recently gave the first of a course of three lectures on the Disruption in the Free Church at Kilsyth to a large gathering of young men and women.

THE Rev. R. S. Macaulay, Irvine, has been presented with a gold watch and chain on completing the twenty-seventh year of his ministry there. His wife received a diamond ring.

THE Glasgow University is to confer the degree of D.D. on Rev. John Dunlop, M.A., professor of theology, Dundee, late of St. David's, Dundee, and Rev. David Scott, F.S.A.Sc., Saltcoats.

PRINCIPAL CAIRNS preached an earnest evangelical sermon in St. Giles at the commemoration service in connection with the Edinburgh university graduation ceremony. Professor Taylor read the prayers, and the St. Giles choir led the hymns.

THE Synod of Argyll has found Mr. McKercher of Kilmore guilty of the major charges against him. Mr. McKercher of Inverary characterized the finding of the Presbytery as a piece of "delicious preposterousness." An appeal has been taken to the Assembly.

MR. AUGUSTINE BIRRELL, the gifted son of the late Rev. Charles M. Birrell of Liverpool, is about to issue a second series of "Obliter Dicta," which, unlike the first, will bear the author's name. The new volume will contain two lengthy papers on Milton and Pope.

THE Presbytery of Deer are in a fix. They have been ordered by the Synod to proceed with the libel against the minister of Savoch, and mature the case for the Assembly. The Procurator of the Church is, however, spending a holiday in Germany, and they cannot get the libel revised.

THE following parish ministers are to receive the degree of D.D., from Glasgow University: Revs. Thomas Fraser, Newport; John Maclean, B.D., Tarbert, Lochfyne; John Mair, Southdean; and James Somerville, Irvine. The degree is also to be conferred on Rev. Charles Strong, of Melbourne.

DR. ALEXANDER WHYTE is to conduct the services at Aix-les-Bains on the 15th and 22nd May, and is to be followed by Mr. Macdonald, of Inverness. Professor Bruce, Messrs. Black, Dundee and Low, of Edinburgh, are to be at Interlaken; Mr. Minto, of Cannes, at Lucerne; and Dr. Gray, of Rome, at Upper Engadine, during the summer.

THOUGH the fast day in Edinburgh is now to be a thing of the past, it is hoped that Dr. Andrew Bonar will continue, as long as his strength permits, to give his annual Fast-day sermon to children. On Edinburgh's last Fast-day, he was equal to the occasion, delivering with great vigour a powerful sermon to the young from the text, "Search the Scriptures."

EX-BAILIE CRAIG, an elder in Gorbals Church since he was twenty-three, has died of paralysis, which confined him to the house for twelve years, in his seventy-seventh year. For thirty-five years he was a director of the Glasgow night asylum, and took a warm interest in the Tradesmen's Tract and Benevolent Society, the Gorbals Benevolent Society, etc.

THE amount of solid reading that is done in the Mitchell library at Glasgow, the second largest collection of books in Scotland, and the worst-housed of all the great collections in the empire, is indicated by the fact that the issue of works of fiction last year formed less than ten per cent. of the total issue. In most circulating libraries they form from fifty to eighty per cent.

MR. WALTER PATTERSON, of Mountblow, Dalmuir, who died lately in his seventy-seventh year, was an attached office-bearer, and took a deep interest in the Schemes of the Church. He was associated with the society for augmenting the smaller livings, was chairman of the deaf and dumb institution and took a special interest in the prison gate mission and prisoners' aid society, while he was a warm supporter of every benevolent and philanthropic society.