

THE OLD ARM CHAIR.

BY ELIZA COOK.

I love it, I love it; and who shall dare
To chide me for loving that old arm-chair?
I've treasured it long as a sainted prize;
I've bedew'd it with tears, and embalmed it with sighs;
'Tis bound by a thousand bands to my heart;
Not a tie will break, not a link will start.
Would ye learn the spell? a mother sat there,
And a sacred thing is that old arm-chair.

In childhood's hour I linger'd near
The hallow'd seat with list'ning ear;
And gentle words that mother would give,
To fit me to die and teach me to live.
She told me shame would never betide,
With truth for my creed and God for my guide;
She taught me to lisp my earliest prayer,
As I knelt beside that old arm chair.

I sat and watched her many a day,
When her eye grew dim, and her locks were gray;
And I almost worshipp'd her when she smiled
And turn'd from her Bible to bless her child.
Years roll'd on, but the last one sped,
My idol was shatter'd, my earth-star fled;
I learnt how much the heart can bear,
When I saw her die in the old arm-chair.

'Tis past! 'tis past! but I gaze on it now
With quivering breath and throbbing brow:
'Twas there she nursed me! 'twas there she died;
And memory flows with lava tide.
Say it is folly, and deem me weak,
While the scalding drops start down my cheek;
But I love it, I love it, and cannot tear
My soul from a mother's old arm-chair.

THE MEANS THAT DESTROY HEALTH.

Take, for example, a young girl who has been bred delicately in town, and shut up in a nursery in her childhood, in a boarding school through her youth, never accustomed either to air or exercise, two things that the law of God makes essential to health. She marries; her strength is inadequate to the demand upon it. Her beauty fades early; and her acquaintances lamentingly exclaim, "What a strange Providence, that a mother should be taken in the midst of life from her children!" Was it Providence? No! Providence has assigned her threescore years and ten, a term long enough to rear her children, and to see her children's children, but she did not obey the laws on which life depends, and of course she lost it. A father, too, is cut off in the midst of his days. He is a useful and distinguished citizen, and eminent in his profession. A general buzz rises on every side of "What a striking Providence!" The man has been in the habit of studying half the night, of passing his days in his office and in the courts, of eating luxurious dinners, and drinking various wines. He has every day violated the laws on which health depends. Did Providence cut him off? The evil rarely ends here. The diseases of the fathers are often transmitted; and a feeble mother rarely leaves behind her vigorous children. It has been customary, in some of our cities, for young ladies to walk in thin shoes and delicate stockings in mid-winter. A healthy, blooming young girl, thus dressed in violation of heaven's laws, pays the penalty: a checked circulation, cold, fever, and death. "What a sad Providence!" exclaim her friends. Was it Providence or her own folly? A beautiful young bride goes night after night to parties made in honour of her marriage. She has a slightly sore throat, perhaps, and the weather is inclement; but she must wear her neck and arms bare: for who ever saw a bride in a close evening dress? She is consequently seized with an inflammation of the lungs, and the grave receives her before her bridal days are over. "What a Providence!" exclaims the world, "cut off in the midst of happiness and hopes!" Alas! did she not cut the thread of life herself? A girl in the country, exposed to our changeful climate, gets a new bonnet, instead of getting a flannel garment. A rheumatism is the consequence. Should a girl sit down tranquilly with the idea that Providence has sent the rheumatism upon her, or should she charge it on her own vanity, and avoid the folly in future? Look, my young friends, at the mass of diseases that are incurred by intemperance in eating or drinking, or in study, or in business; by neglect of exercise, cleanliness, pure air; by indiscreet dressing, tight lacing, &c. and all is quietly imputed to Providence! Is there not impiety as well as ignorance in this? Were the physical laws strictly observed from generation to generation, there would be an end to the frightful diseases that cut short life, and most of the long maladies that make life a torment or a trial. It is the opinion of those who best understand the physical system, that this wonderful machine, the body, this "godly temple," would gradually decay, and men would die, as a few now do die, as if falling to sleep.

Simplicity and Temperance are of vast consequence in every state and circumstance of life.

THE PHANTOM PORTRAIT.

The story is thoroughly German, and was related—as here given—by a German scholar to Coleridge.

A stranger came recommended to a merchant's house at Lubeck. He was hospitably received, but the house being full, he was lodged at night in an apartment handsomely furnished, but not often used. There was nothing that struck him particularly in the room when left alone, till he happened to cast his eyes upon a picture, which immediately arrested his attention. It was a single head; but there was something so uncommon, so frightful and unearthly, in its expression, though by no means ugly, that he found himself irresistibly attracted to look at it. In fact, he could not tear himself from the fascination of this portrait, till his imagination was filled by it, and his rest broken. He retired to bed, dreamed, and awoke from time to time with the head glaring on him. In the morning, his host saw by his looks that he had slept ill, and inquired the cause, which was told. The master of the house was much vexed, and said that the picture ought to have been removed; that it was an oversight, and that it always was removed when the chamber was used. The picture, he said, was indeed terrible to every one; but it was so fine, and had come into the family in so curious a way, that he could not make up his mind to part with it or destroy it. The story of it was this;—"My father," said he, "was at Hamburg on business, and while dining at a coffee house, he observed a young man of a remarkable appearance enter, seat himself alone in a corner, and commence a solitary meal. His countenance bespoke the extreme of mental distress, and every now and then he turned his head quickly round, as if he heard something; then shudder, grow pale, and go on with his meal, after an effort, as before. My father saw this same man at the same place for two or three successive days, and, at length, become so much interested about him, that he spoke to him. The address was not repulsed, and the stranger seemed to find some comfort in the tone of sympathy and kindness which my father used. He was an Italian, well informed, poor, but not destitute, and living economically upon the profits of his art as a painter. Their intimacy increased, and at length the Italian, seeing my father's involuntary emotion at his convulsive turnings and shudders, which continued as formerly, interrupting their conversation from time to time, told him his story. He was a native of Rome, and had lived in some familiarity with, and been much patronized by, a young nobleman; but upon some slight occasion they had fallen out, and his patron, beside using many reproachful expressions, had struck him. The painter brooded over the disgrace of the blow. He could not challenge the nobleman, on account of his rank; he therefore watched for an opportunity, and assassinated him. Of course he fled from his country, and finally had reached Hamburg. He had not, however, passed many weeks from the night of the murder, before one day, in the crowded street, he heard his name called by a voice familiar to him: he turned short round, and saw the face of his victim looking at him with fixed eye. From that moment he had no peace; at all hours, in all places, and amidst all companies, however engaged he might be, he heard the voice, and could never help looking round, and, whenever he so looked round, he always encountered the same face staring close upon him. At last, in a mood of desperation, he had fixed himself face to face, and eye to eye, and deliberately drawn the phantom vi-age as it glared upon him; and this was the picture so drawn. The Italian said he had struggled long, but life was a burden which he could now no longer bear; and he was resolved, when he had made money enough to return to Rome, to surrender himself to justice, and expiate his crime on the scaffold. He gave the finished picture to my father, in return for the kindness which he had shown to him.

EMPLOYMENT OF RUSSIAN LADIES.—Many ladies employ a number of girls, generally the children of household servants, in embroidering and making all kinds of fancy work, which they execute most beautifully, and which their mistress sells, receiving orders for it, as is common in charity schools in England. In a house where we were visiting some time ago, we were shown a shawl with corners and borders of a most beautiful pattern of flowers, in brilliant colours, which had been entirely made at home, by a young girl, who brought it in to exhibit it, and who was then employed upon another which we saw in progress. Eved the wool, the colours of which were admirable, had been dyed in the house. The shawl was valued at fifteen hundred roubles, about sixty two pounds, it had occupied the girl who made it about a year and a half. In almost every house some art is carried on, useful or ornamental, and women are employed in spinning, weaving, knitting, carpet-making, &c.; for the raw material in Russia is worth little, and the manufactured article alone is valuable in the market. The ladies of England, "who live at home at ease," little know the disagreeable and troublesome duties of inspection and correction, which often devolve upon the mistress of a family in Russia, from all the various branches of domestic industry which she is obliged to superintend.

TIPPOO SULTAN'S DEATH.—This triumph decided the fate of Tippo's capital and kingdom. Fresh troops now entered through the breach, while death continued to sweep the streets of the city and walls of the fortress with its desolating arm. Finding further efforts useless, Tippo withdrew with a few followers towards the

inner fort, and, as he passed along slowly, complained of a pain in one of his legs, in which he had once received a wound. Here he was informed that his favourite officer, Meer Goffar, to whom he had sent orders to keep a strict watch, was slain; to which he only replied, "Well, Meer Goffar was never afraid of death." Pursuing his way still onward to the gate of the fort, he there received a musket ball in his right side, and passing under the gateway, where his advance was interrupted by the fire of the 12th Light Infantry, he was wounded a second time, the ball entering his side near to the other. His horse having also received a fatal wound, sunk beneath him, and he was now removed to his palanquin, which had been laid at one side of the entrance way. Here, as he lay, a broken-hearted and expiring captive at his palace gate, a passing soldier was attracted by the brilliancy of his girdle, and attempted to pull it away; but the haughty chieftain, summoning all the powers of life that would obey his call, cut at the plunderer and wounded him in the knee. The savage immediately raised his piece, and discharged his piece into the fevered brain of the Sultan of Mysore.—*Wright's Life of Wellington.*

APHORISMS.

A poet ought not to pick nature's pocket; let him borrow, and so borrow as to repay by the very act of borrowing. Examine nature accurately, but write from recollection; and trust more to your imagination than to your memory.

Really, the metre of some of the modern poems I have read, bears about the same relation to metre properly understood, that dumb-bells do to music; both are for exercise, and pretty severe, too, I think.

Sympathy constitutes friendship; but in love there is a sort of antipathy or opposing passion. Each strives to be the other, and both together make up one whole.

Know that nothing is trifling in the hand of genius, and that importance itself becomes a bauble in that of mediocrity;—The shepherd's staff of Paris, would have been an engine of death in the grasp of Achilles: the ashen spear of Peleus could only have dropped from the effeminate fingers of the curled archer.

Some enter the gates of art with golden keys, and take their seats with dignity among the demi-gods of fame; some burst the doors and leap into a niche with savage power; thousands consume their time in chinking useless keys, and aiming feeble pushes against the inexorable doors.

He who pretends to have sacrificed genius to the pursuits of interest or fashion; and he who wants to persuade you he has indisputable titles to a crown, but chooses to wave them for the emoluments of a partnership in trade, deserve equal belief.

Sensibility is the mother of sympathy. How shall he fill the eye with the dew of humanity, whose own never shed a tear for others?

Nothing ever left a stain on that gentle creature's mind, which looked upon the degraded men and things around him like moonshine on a dunghill, which shines and takes no pollution. All things are shadows to him, except those which moves his affections.

THE MAJORITY MUST GOVERN.—The old saying that "the majority must govern," was practically illustrated a short time since in a theatre in Germany. The audience consisted only of seven persons, and taking offence at the miserable acting of one of the performers, they hissed him off the stage. By way of retaliation, the manager brought out the "whole strength of his company," and in turn hissed the audience out of the house!

Some fruits, and those in many instances the most noble, require a longer time than others for their formation and maturity, to instruct us; that this is the case also with some virtues, the more excellent of which are more slow and tardy in their growth and progress to perfection, in proportion as their character and quality are of a higher and more distinguished order.

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