

"Do you know Caroline," said I, in the course of the evening, "what Mrs. Lennox was saying of you, no longer ago than this morning?"

"No, surely—what?"

"Why, she was saying to me—after all this talk about training and teaching girls, I can't see that education makes much difference. If a girl has good sense, it comes out at last, bring her up as you will. Now, there was Caroline Staples, one of the slightest girls in —, see how she has settled down into a fine woman; she could not have done better if she had been lectured, and hacked, and hewed all the way up, as these very educational people would do."

"Mrs. Lennox does not know the hacking and hewing I have been through," said Caroline. "No, indeed; and, for my part, I am determined my daughters shall never suffer what I have done. They shall be early accustomed to exertion and responsibility, and trained to self denial, and they shall have that expertness in domestic management that nothing but early practice can give."

"Well, take care, Caroline," said I, "that you do not go to the extreme, of making your daughters mere housekeepers, and not accomplished women."

"I think," replied Caroline, "that the foundation for intellectual improvement in girls must be laid by cultivating their moral feelings. Bring up a girl to feel that she has a responsible part to bear in promoting the happiness of the family, and you make a reflecting being of her at once, and remove that lightness and frivolity of character which makes her shrink from graver studies. My mind doubled in energy and power of application from the time I became a mother—and why? Because, the responsibility made me think—and having thought on one subject, I found it easy to think on others. So with a young girl—make her responsible in certain respects for the care of her brothers and sisters—the managing household accounts—the providing and care of her own wardrobe, and you daily exercise her judgment and give her the patience, steadiness, and reflection, which she will need in pursuing any course of mental improvement, or gaining any elegant accomplishment."

"Would not she make a pretty public speaker, now?" said Hamilton. "You see that Caroline has not merely learned to think, as she says, but has become very apt in oratory."

"Come now, Hamilton!" said Caroline, laughing—and reader, lest we should bore you with too much wisdom at once, we will put down no more of the evening's conversation, though there was a great deal of instruction in it, we assure you.

MARCH.

"Lady wrap thy cloak around,
Pale consumption's in the sky."

This month is positively trying to feeble constitutions. The bleak winds of March wither the hope and destroy the life of many a precious and delicate blossom, which parental love had fondly thought to cherish till the warm breath of summer could give it strength, and freshness of health. Consumption is the Minotaur of our country, which selects the best and brightest of our young men and maidens for its yearly tribute. And no Theseus has yet been able to stay the lot. The labyrinth of fashion seems more difficult of escape than that of Crete, for there is no clue, save the unromantic one of good sense, which few are willing to follow.

While young ladies will walk abroad in winter, wearing thin-soled slippers, and often leaving their delicate throats uncovered to the chill air, they must incur sudden and often violent colds—and then comes the "slight cough," which is never to be cured. The disease is "only a cold"—but its process is consumption, and its end death!

The main source of that predisposition to consumptive complaints, manifested by young men as well as maidens in our country, doubtless arises from the feeble constitution of their mothers, which they inherit. The sex are too delicately reared. Female children are treated like tender exotics, not natives of the climate. We should strenuously protest against females of any station being employed in out-of-door labour, except the care of the garden, or of silk worms. The Creator never imposed on women the duty of toiling to "subdue the earth"—nor has he endowed her physically for such a work. But females should be accustomed to exercise in the open air; playing abroad when children; and walking and riding in maturer years should be considered a duty as well as pleasure, never to be neglected. And then, in our Northern climate, warm clothing in winter should always be the fashion—and shoes that will, when walking abroad, effectually protect the feet from damp and cold. India-rubbers are odious looking things to be sure, and many a lovely girl has sacrificed her life, rather than wear abroad what would disfigure her beautiful foot. One instance is most painfully impressed on our memory. A few winters ago, a young lady called on us—it was a bitter day, and her feet were only shielded from the cold icy pavement, by thin slippers and silk stockings. The young lady was about eighteen; she looked the personification of health; and that enjoyment of life which almost seems to hold exemption from care and disease. How gaily she bid defiance to the winter air, she never felt the cold, and her merry laugh almost persuaded us that over-shoes for her were as unnecessary, as we could not but acknowledge they were

disfiguring. And thus brightly passed the vision away forever. That walk was the last the fair girl ever took. The same night she was seized with a brain fever, occasioned by the sudden and severe cold caught in her morning ramble, and in less than a week she was laid in the tomb, a martyr to the vanity of display which fashion has sanctioned.

But we trust these absurd modes are giving place, among our countrywomen, to more rational ideas of the beautiful in fashion, which can only be seen in its best aspect when sustained by the fitting and appropriate. Comfort is essential to grace. A constrained posture, tight lacing, garments unsuited to the season, all detract from that pleasure which youth and beauty are naturally calculated to excite in the beholder. And then the duty of preserving the health and constitution is most imperative on woman. We hope none of our fair readers will neglect the motto we have chosen, and that when another spring is approaching we shall not have to say, on the remembrance of any of our young friends who have perished by that insidious destroyer, the consumption,

"Ye have given the lovely to earth's embrace,
She hath taken the fairest of beauty's race,
With their laughing eyes and their festal crown,
They are gone from amongst you in silence down."

TO MY SISTER—ON HER TWENTY-THIRD BIRTH-DAY.

BY MISS M. A. BROWNE.

Thine eye is radiant still: thy silken hair
Curls just as darkly o'er thy radiant brow;
Still is thy cheek as soft, thy hand as fair,
Thy forehead was not smoother then than now,
And yet two years, two busy years, have past,
Sweet sister! since I sang thy birthday last.

Two changeful years! since then two hoary heads
Have from our home been pillowed in the grave,
And we have known full many an hour that sheds
A double darkness on life's troubled wave,
Friends have been cold, and fortune's sunshine brief:
Sister! those years have had their hours of grief.

And, saddest far, from our own chain of love,
One gentle sister of our hearts is taken,
No more her fairy footsteps round us move,
No more her smile a kindred smile doth waken;
She faded but as dew-drops fade—to rise,
And paint a rainbow in the gloomy skies.

Even so her spirit passed from earth, is yet
Seen like a star in its ethereal light;
And on the misty clouds of our regret,
Bright Hope's bow of promise, pure and bright;
She hath departed for the holler sphere,
Mourn we, but never wish that she were here.

And I am changed, sweet sister,—even thou
Knowest not the waves of feeling and of thought,
That o'er my heart have passed in troubled flow,
And channels in its wilderness have wrought—
Suffice it that one spot unchanged I see,
The spot whereon is fixed my love for thee.

A love that changeth not, save as the young
And tender sapling, 'tis the firm set tree;
Fresh branches from its stem there may have sprung,
Matured and deeper rooted it may be;
O that it might have power to grow and spread,
A three-fold shield above thy precious head!

Vain hope! thou hast a better shelter proved,
A changeless refuge from the heavy storm,
A shadow from the heat. He who hath loved,
And chosen, and gaved thee, will His vows perform,
And bind thee in His sheltering mantle fast,
And bring thee to His glorious Home at last!

THE BLIND GIRL.

The blind Agnes was sitting by a clear brook—I can never forget that evening; the brook glittered along the winding valley, and the stars and the moon played in the pearly waters at the feet of the blind girl, and either bank was fringed with a thicket, the bowery home of the nightingale. As I came nearer—how was it, Hermione?

"You heard that a friend was reading to her by moonlight, out of Thomson's Seasons."

"And sweetly she read, but soft and low. At my voice—physiognomy to the blind—the dark one knew me, and presented her friend to me, who immediately lifted up her long veil. I had seen her once before; you must know where, reverend sir?"

"In a convent at —, which the emperor afterwards suppressed. The recommendations of an abbot, to whom I had introduced a priest, who could read mass more rapidly than any other priest living, opened my path to the refectory, where, out of all the nuns, who were generally too fat, only one pleased me; and she was neither the one nor the other, for she was a novice—this very friend of the blind girl. I shall never forget that gentle, pale, serene face, with a wooden trencher on which were only lentils, set before it for mortification sake."

"So strange are we men; I should rather much more willingly see a lovely creature suffer, sigh, and weep bitter tears from fruitless love of me, for two whole days, than endure that she should have to eat a miserable piece of ashen bread, or wear a

garment of humiliation, or a girdle of hair-cloth, for discipline by a walk of three miles on my account."

"Do you relate the rest, Hermione, you had it from me." "You told me, further, that the good Agnes was more cheerful than the nun, and willingly alluded to her misfortune which you could not have expected."

"Yes, for women speak, and we men are silent, about griefs; we always turn over the leaves of our lives, to get at the pleasantest engravings and the last chapter; but, go on."

"The good girl hung a black gauze over her dead eyes, out of consideration for others. She always looked at you when you spoke, but it was only the voice she sought. You asked her what the British scene-painter of nature, (that was your expression,) or, indeed, what a fine evening could be to her. She said she enjoyed a cheerful day as much as any one—that the air was purer and fresher—the song and call of the birds clearer—and the gurgling and rustling of the brook and leaves more pleasant; and, when all this entered her watchful soul, she rejoiced to its inmost depths, without knowing wherefore."

"Who then can help being, as I am, ashamed and repentant at the murmurings in which we often pass a few cloudy days, when he thinks of the contented spirit which is blessed through all its wholly benighted ones? But blindness, though a polar winter without day, in this resembles the night that softens and stills; the blind is a child, whom its mother, Nature, has fashioned darkling for the deepest tranquillity. Like a man in a balloon, high above the clouds, the hermit blind knows only voices and sounds; but the bewildering, gaudy shows of life, the low, the hateful and hating forms, full of scars and wounds, are hidden under the thick cloud which enwraps him."—Jean Paul.

DEFINITION OF FAITH.

BY DR. CHALMERS.

Let us look to the apostolical definition of faith, as being the "substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen"—let us look to it; not as the mere acquiescence of the understanding in the dogmata of any sound or recognized creed, but as that which brings the future and the yet unseen of revelation so home to the mind, as that the mind is filled with sense of their reality, and actually proceeds upon it. Conceive it to be that which places the unseen Creator by the side of what is visible and created, and so gives the predominance to his will over all those countless diversions of influence, where-with sense hath enslaved the vast majority of this world's generations. Or conceive it to be that which places eternity by the side of time, and so regards the one as a mere path or stepping-stone to the other—that the man whom it possesses actually moves through life in the spirit of a traveller, feels his home to be heaven, and all his dearest hopes and interests to be laid up there; walking, therefore, over the world with a more light and unencumbered footstep than other men, just because all its adversities to him are but the crosses of a rapid journey and all its joys but the shifting scenery of the land through which he is travelling, and visions of passing loveliness. Keep by this definition of faith, and bear it round as a test among all the families of your acquaintance. Go with it to the haunts of every-day life, and see if it can guide you to so much as one individual, whose doings plainly declare that he is pressing onwards to an immortality, for the joys and exercises of which he is all the while in busy preparation; and we fear, that even in this our professing age, faith is rarely to be found; that nearly a universal species are carried through life in one tide of overbearing carnality; that the present world dominates over almost every creature that breathes upon it; and were the Son of man now to descend in the midst of us, we know not how few they are who would meet and satisfy his inquiries after faith upon the earth.

For let there pass under our review that mighty host who live in palpable ungodliness; who, if you cannot say of them that they are against God, are at least without God in the world; who spend their days, not perhaps in positive hostility, but certainly in most torpid apathy and indifference towards the Father of their spirits—who feelingly alive to all the concerns of time, are dead and insensible to all those beyond it. These indisputably are children without faith. Eternity is a blank in their imagination. They are alike unmoved by its hopes and by its fears, and it bears as little influence to move them as does that dark and unpeopled nothingness which lies beyond the outskirts of creation.

The thought of a distant planet that rolls afar in space, carries in it no practical operation on their business or their bosoms. And the thought of some distant misery or happiness that may cast up in eternity, has just as little of practical operation over the minds of the vast majority of this world. That which lies between acts as an insuperable barrier between the things of faith and their principles, whether of feeling or of action; and so it is that they can fetch, from the region which lies on the other side of the grave, no moving force which might practically tell on their hearts or on their history upon this side of it.

It were certainly premature and presumptuous to make these affirmations of all; but we leave it to your observation, whether it does not apply, and in its full extent, to many of your friends or familiars in society—to many, and very many, who daily throng