

with a Dundreary drawl, but still with some anxiety depicted on his countenance, "Will you be good enough to see in which half he has gwo't the key of my carpet-bag?" To a sensitive mind his anxiety seems to have been misplaced. The same unconsciousness to the awful aspects of death was exhibited by a man in New Jersey in 1859, who was employed to convey to his friends the body of a Mr. Wilson who had died about fifty miles from home, of the cholera. On finding the house he knocked at the door and the wife of the deceased opened it. "Does Mr. Wilson live here?" said the man. "Yes," said the lady, "but he is not at home to day." "No, I know he ain't" said the man, with a soothing tone of voice, thinking to break the news gently, "but he will be in a minute, 'cause I've got him here dead in the wagon." There was still more reprehensible moral obtuseness in the remark of a man who was sentenced to be hung and who inquired of the sheriff the night before the appointed day, "I say, Mr. Sheriff, at what hour does this little affair of mine come off?"

I have mentioned these incidents to illustrate some occasions when complacency appears unseemly to a person of delicate sensibility. Probably the reason people laugh at such anecdotes is because they are such outrageous deviations from the ordinary course of thought and sentiment.

Still, excitements are dangerous. It has occurred to me recently that it is peculiarly proper that we should remember this in political contests. There is always in these national emergencies, whether from fights or from celebrations, a smell of gunpowder in the air. Vituperation becomes the fashion in conversation and in the newspapers. Vindictiveness is fostered between friends and brothers. We are told that ruin hangs over us, and that terror unutterable awaits us if one or the other of the candidates is elected. Good men are defamed and bad men exalted solely because of their politics. Half the nation is in danger of becoming howling maniacs for a time, forgetting all the decencies of social intercourse and all the sweet and beautiful aspects of life. Enter not into it. The country comes out of it

safe and strong, and safer and stronger as you hold your passions in check. Take pains to say, at such a time, that you think there are honest men among your political opponents. Take pains to reprove persons on your own side for attempting to aid their cause by slander, malignity, and inflammatory appeals. Let your moderation be known. Avoid vile nicknames and epithets. The lying, the malice, and uncharitableness, the confusion and indecencies of political contests in this country are utterly disgraceful.

ENGLISH COMPOSITION.

(HINTS TO STUDENTS AND YOUNG AUTHORS.)

BY G. V. LE VAUX.

Skill in writing one's native language is the most desirable of all accomplishments. It is evident, judging by the vast number who constantly endeavour to appear in print, that most people set a high value on the power of expressing their thoughts with beauty, grace, force and facility. Skill in this respect, is often the gift of nature, but more frequently an acquired power—the result of continuous study, aided by natural ability. Talent, when it exists, must be incited by an innate ambition to excel, and a vigorous pen must give form to its conceptions. Whilst judgment guides its course, and good taste and sense direct its efforts, simplicity and grace must skilfully polish its productions so that dignity, if not durability, may characterize its labours.

The importance of this accomplishment—skill in writing one's native language—is generally acknowledged although imperfectly understood. Fully appreciated by every lady and gentleman, a right conception of its excellency is confined, nevertheless, to a very limited number. We freely admit that it is almost impossible to judge the merits of composition correctly and with any degree of certainty except on the principles and precedents adduced, practised, enunciated, and established by the standard authors of the present and preceeding ages. Whilst at