

THE SNOW-BIRDS.

The lonesome graveyard lieth,
A deep with silent waves
Of night-long snow, all white and billowed
Over the hidden graves.

The snow-birds come in the morning,
Flocking and fluttering low,
And light on the graveyard brambles,
And winter there in the snow.

The singer old and weary
Looks out from his narrow room,
"Ah, me! but my thoughts are snow-birds
Haunting a graveyard's gloom!"

"Where all the past is buried
And dead, there many years,
Under the drifted whiteness
Of frozen falls of tears.

"Poor birds! that know not summer,
Nor sun, nor flowers fair,—
Only the graveyard and brambles,
And graves and winter air."

W. D. HOWELL.

Miscellaneous.

The Paris Opera House Fire.

There is a belief that the late fire at the Grand Opera, Paris, was the result of design rather than of accident. It seems that a spectacle was about to be produced, *Jeanne d'Arc*, in which a white flag was to figure prominently, and it was determined not to have the white flag, and so they started that black and red banner of smoke and flame with which the city was familiar during the reign of the Commune.

The Man in the Iron Mask Once More.

The latest researches in regard to the Man in the Iron Mask seem to prove that he was a son of Anne of Austria by Mazarin; that he had a remarkable likeness to his uterine brother, Louis XIV.; and it was to prevent dangerous complications in the State that he was kept so mysteriously incarcerated. Louis XV., who knew the secret, said: "The imprisonment of this unhappy being did no wrong to any one but himself."

Cavour's Statue.

The statue of Cavour recently unveiled at Turin represents him standing on a lofty pedestal, robed in Roman garb, with a half-naked woman, signifying Italy, kneeling at his feet, clinging to him in a loving attitude, and holding up to his breast a wreath intended for his brow. On the pedestal and round the main figures are well-grouped allegorical statues, in a variety of attitudes, representing Right and Duty, Progress, and other idealities.

The Corinth Canal.

M. Theodore Tubini, banker, at Athens, has obtained a concession for cutting a canal through the Isthmus of Corinth. The principal clauses of the concession are that the canal shall have a minimum depth of twenty-seven feet, and a width of thirty-nine feet at the bottom. Half way through the canal is to be a dock of sufficient depth to receive the largest vessels. The canal is to be completed in six years. The concession is for ninety-nine years, and a deposit of £12,000 is to be paid immediately after the Greek parliament has approved the concession. The estimated cost of the undertaking is £800,000.

Shamming Abram.

A curious case of feigning sickness recently occurred in Liverpool, England. Application was made at the work-house for the admission of a seaman suffering from cholera. He was removed from the ship where he was, and taken to the hospital, where great preparations were made for his safe reception, and the disinfection of his clothing. He appeared in a collapsed state, but the next morning had quite recovered. The suspicions of the physicians were aroused, and it was discovered that he did not wish to sail in the ship, and had therefore taken an enormous dose of salts, which produced the symptoms mentioned.

Necessity the Mother of Invention.

Young men are retrenching in these dull times, and making strong efforts to appear well dressed and at the same time save their money. Two young gentlemen of Old City, says the *Derrick*, have invented a novel plan to attain these two points. The two are nearly of the same size and build, and what one wears fits the other. By putting their money together, they were able to buy one good suit, and now take turns in wearing it, changing about, one week off and one on. Of course the man who has a week off is unable to accept invitations out to tea, hops, and balls; but then his suit or his half of the suit will be there as a representative.

A Biblical "Seven Ages of Man."

The window subscribed for by Americans which is to decorate the church at Stratford-on-Avon is to illustrate the seven ages of man biblically. It is a happy thought, and is thus embodied—first, the infant, showing "Moses in the Balmshrub;" the boy, "Samuel presented to Eli;" the lover, "Rachel and Jacob at the Well;" the warrior, "Joshua leading the Hosts of Israel;" the judge, with scarcely the same appropriateness, represents "Deborah judging Israel under the Palm Tree;" the old man, "Abraham and the Three Angels;" and the very old man, "Isaac blessing Jacob."

A Mohammedan Agitator.

There is a Moule, named Abdool Jubbor, a famous disciple of Moule Dosshee Meah, who proclaimed to the Mohammedans that it was written in the Koran that a Mohammedan ruler would again govern India when a coconut tree grew and bore fruit in Arabia. Three years ago, he came to India and told the Mohammedan villagers that the expected tree had grown, and that the Mohammedan dynasty would be re-established within the next eighteen years. He has now come amongst the villagers with the report that this tree has flowered, and fifteen years more will see a Moslem ruler enthroned in India. This worthy ought to be looked for.

Unnatural Foliage.

In the middle of the space occupied by Brazil in the Vienna Exposition is a large standing case filled with stuffed birds of the brightest plumage, and flowers made of feathers in bouquets and wreaths of the richest colour conceivable. Here is a flower of seven petals, a bud or two, and leaves along a hanging stem. Alas! every petal, every bud and leaf is made of the breast of a gold-throated humming-bird. So brilliant and yet so cruel, who could wear them with pleasure? One could as soon relish nightingales' tongues. There are many of the flowers made out of a variety of humming-birds' nests. No material half so rich or so wonderful in colour could be found for this purpose. The gold, or green, or blue upon the breast of one of these tiny creatures is only a spot surrounded with a very dark colour; these are so shaped that each petal and leaf takes the bright spot and a border

der upon the edge of dark, making a flower very rich, but not so very beautiful; indeed, not at all so when one thinks of the twelve or fifteen bright fairy birds that once glanced in the sunshine, and now represent a very unnatural flower.

Royal Visitors at Vienna.

The Vienna *Presse* states that the Exhibition was visited by two emperors, one empress, three kings, five queens, five reigning grand dukes, three grand duchesses, thirteen heirs to a throne, five crown princesses, twenty princes and dukes, and fourteen princesses. The Potentates who did not go to Vienna were the Queen of England, the Sultan, the Kings of Greece, Portugal, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Bavaria, and Saxony, and the Grand Duke of Hesse. Only three European courts were altogether unrepresented at Vienna, namely, the Turkish, the Portuguese, and the Hessian. The Shah of Persia is not included in the above list of visitors.

Wanted "A Spellin' Skool."

At an English school examination recently, a class of 40 boys, having been set to write out the second commandment, contrived to spell the word "jealous" in twenty-eight different ways. The same bright youths metamorphosed Pontius Pilate into "pindit spilit," "bunch of spied," and "punches pilot." A more advanced pupil explained the Estates of the Realm as those which belonged to the Crown. Those choice bits, gleaned from the field of elementary education, are, however, poor in comparison to those to be found in academical pictures. The last muddle made by a university man in the agonies of examination is, we hear on the best authority, the following question. The question asked was—"Who was Joab?" The instantaneous reply, "Joab is my wash-pot."

A Chinese Cyclopaedia.

A great book is a great evil, but the mind of man never conceived one so appalling in its proportions as that which M. Perny describes—a cyclopaedia of one hundred and sixty thousand volumes, like the Chinese *Se-koo tsuen choo*. This colossal work was first conceived by the Emperor Kien Long, who, in 1773, formed a committee of learned men entrusted with its compilation. They set about it with exemplary Chinese patience, and at the present moment 73,710 volumes have been already published. Of these, M. Paul Perny, of the French Congregation of Foreign Missions, gives the following account:—"7,353 tomes are devoted to theology, 2,127 treat of the four classical books—*Se-choo* and of music. The historical part absorbs 21,626, while the remaining 47,604 comprise philosophical and scientific matter.

From Greenland's Icy Mountains.

Dean Howson, in a recent English publication, tells how the missionary hymn, "From Greenland's icy mountains," came to be written: "When Bishop Heber was a young man missionary sermons were not so frequent as they are now, and on one occasion, when he was staying with Dean Shirley, vicar of Wrexham, his father-in-law, such a sermon was to be preached, and the want of a suitable hymn was felt. He was asked on the Saturday to write one; and seated at the window of the old vicarage house, he produced, after a short interval, in his clear hand writing, with one single word corrected, that hymn beginning, 'From Greenland's icy mountains,' with which we are all familiar. It was printed that evening, and sung the following day in Wrexham church." The original manuscript of the hymn is now in the possession of Mr. Edward Raffles, the magistrate of Liverpool.

Parson and Clerk.

The late Rev. W. Lewell was put out of countenance in the performance of divine service. He was taking the service for a friend at the little church of Wythburn, at the foot of Helvellyn. All went well till he gave out the Psalms as the 21st day of the month, when to the astonishment of the congregation, and consternation of the parson, the clerk turned and in a loud voice exclaimed, "You're wrong, parson, 'tisn't 21st day of the month." Parson: "Yes, yes, it is; let us gang on." Clerk: "Nay, nay, I tell ye you're wrong, it's no use gangin' on." This went on for a short time, when the clerk said, "Now look here, parson, and I'll prove you're wrong. K—fair is on the 20th, (placing his right first finger on the left) that was last Wednesday." Then in a lower tone he proceeded—"Thursday, 21st, Friday, 22nd," and after a short hesitation, coming to the knowledge of his error, he added abruptly, "You're reet, parson, after all, noo gang on."

Celestial Pharmacology.

The Chinese Pharmacopoeia is varied and curious, according to an interesting account in the *Madras Standard*. Here are a few of the most favourite celestial remedies. Leeches are not utilized alive, but dried and boiled down in spirits for outward application. Toads, prepared in various ways, and particularly "toad's venom," obtained by irritating the animal with a stick, are invaluable specifics. The blood-vessels of the eel are used in "moonstruck" cases, while boiled crickets are greatly sought after as blood purifiers. Snake's skin, dragon's skin, with the inside membrane of an egg and certain roots, cure jaundice, while spots on the skin are dispersed by a decoction of spiders and green snakes. Scorpions dried and powdered, or even eaten raw, calm a fever, dragon's teeth are good for the liver, butterflies make good plasters, while the skin of the porcupine is made into pills. Deer and rhinoceros horns are also used as strengthening and cooling medicines.

Rapid Painting.

The facility with which Sir Edwin Landseer produced his pictures was remarkable. Many instances are known of his extreme rapidity of execution. In an English gallery which contains many works by this artist are two which are peculiarly illustrative of this quality: one is a spaniel rushing out of a thicket with a wounded rabbit. The rabbit and dog are of the size of life. They have the fullest appearance of completeness, yet the picture was painted in two hours and a half. The other picture is of a fallow deer, and of the size of life, painted down to the knees. Mr. Wells, to whom these pictures belonged, used to relate that on leaving the house to go to Penshurst Church, the panel for this picture was being placed on the easel by his butler, and on his return, in about three hours, the painting was complete—so complete, indeed, that it is more than doubtful if equal truth of imitation could have resulted from a more laboured execution. Another instance of rapidity of execution is a portrait of the second Lord Ashburton. It is a three-quarter view, painted on canvas thirty-six inches high by twenty-eight inches wide, and it is stated to have been executed in a single sitting.

Getting Used to It.

In an historical and descriptive account of Persia recently published in London appears the following story, which, according to the author, gives a fair idea of the oppressions that, under the guise of law, are allowed to take place in that country: "An acquaintance of the writer of these pages, while he lodged in a certain town, was alarmed by hearing in a neighbouring house a sort of periodical punishment going on daily. 'Amaun! Amaun!' were given, and a person was continually crying out, 'Amaun! Amaun!' (Mercy, mercy)—I have nothing! Heaven is my witness, I have nothing! Upon inquiry, he learned that the sufferer was a merchant reputed to be very rich, who afterward

confessed to him that, having understood the Governor of the place was determined to have a share in his wealth, and expecting to be put to the torture, he had resolved to habituate himself to the endurance of pain, in order to be able to resist the threatened demands. He had brought himself to bear one thousand strokes of the stick, and, as he was able to counterfeet exhaustion, he hoped to be able to bear as many blows as they would venture to inflict, short of death, without conceding any of his money."

Comforting.

During the prevalence of the yellow fever in Memphis, a Nashville man had occasion to go to that city over the Northwestern Railroad. There were but few passengers, and after nightfall the conductor went and sat down by him in a friendly way.

"Goin' to Memphis, are you, stranger?" he asked.

"Yes, Sir," said the Nashville man.

"Mighty rough road, ain't it? queried the conductor, with a yawn.

"Very," was the reply.

"Last time I went over the road this car we're in was upset, and a man was killed all to smash," said the communicative ticket-puncher, with another yawn. Then he added, as if it were a bit of comfort, "I've got the most reckless engineer on the road with me to-night, too; but I hope we won't have any accidents."

"I certainly hope we will not," responded the passenger, with a slight feeling of uneasiness.

"Well, I don't know as it would make much difference to you," said the conductor cheerfully; "you'll die any way, if you're goin' to Memphis."

Père Hyacinthe's Wife.

Leonard Bacon writes in the *Christian Union* that "another influence which has been potent in overcoming the prejudice among the Geneva Catholics against the marriage of priests has been the excellent womanly dignity and devotion of Mme. Loyson. I have hesitated to speak of her personally in a public letter, but, after the incredible insult and abuse that have been bestowed on her by the Ultramontane newspapers here, one kindly mention can hardly be accounted an annoyance. I do not mean to speak of the cheerfulness and charm of the little cottage home about one mile from the city on the lake shore, nor of the honoured position in the highly cultured society of Geneva that is awarded to her; but I have had some opportunity of observing the zeal and wisdom with which she has improved those peculiar opportunities of counselling and helping and comforting which always open themselves to the wife of a Christian pastor, and which are specially numerous in the case of a parish like this, every woman of which has been religiously trained from infancy not to rely on her own moral judgment in any case whatever. It is really touching to see the eager satisfaction with which the unheard-of comfort of having a minister's wife to talk and counsel with, and a minister's home to help provide for, and a minister's baby to knit little socks and blankets for, is appreciated by these poor people. Was ever a minister's house before so stuffed with droll little bits of needle-work?"

A Schoolmaster's Experience.

Now, a schoolboy is an animal whose main object in life is to get into mischief; and every scrape which his fertile ingenuity suggests to him may possibly be the cause of petty vexation to his master. A schoolmaster with a large house is a man who can never call half an hour his own. He cannot calculate upon finishing a meal or reading a newspaper without danger of interruption. Except in the holidays, which are not more than enough to give him a chance of recovering his strength, he is exposed to one incessant series of troublesome interruptions. If a boy has a pain in that vague but perverse organ, his "inside," if he tumbles into a stream, or has a dispute with one of his fellows, or hurts himself at football, or runs into debt with a confectioner, or breaks windows, or gets into any of the thousand and one little troubles for which the schoolboy has a preternatural facility, he may be starting a series of annoyances which will worry the schoolmaster's life out of him. The parent will hold him responsible for anything that happens; and a temporary relaxation of watchfulness may be punished with tenfold severity. In short, the very theory of a schoolmaster's life is, that you catch the most cultivated scholar and gentleman that you can for the money, set him down to be worried by thirty or forty lads, each of whom is too troublesome to be managed at home, and require him, by perpetual vigilance, to keep them out of any serious mischief.

Ways of Wooing Inspiration.

Some persons can think only standing, or in walking the room with swift strides. Some, like Montesquieu, compose in a post-chaise. One has need of complete isolation—profound calm; another, of the open air and the noise of the crowd. Napoleon loved to write his orders of the day upon the blank side of the letters addressed to him. Desaugiers ran through the Camps Elysées, rolling in his fingers little bullets of paper. Inspiration came to him thus; he returned to his house, and the fortunate repertoire possessed one song the more. The atelier of Delacroix was a veritable hot-house. Buffon wrote in lace ruffles; Alexandre Dumas, in his shirt-sleeves. Etex sculptured his "Cain" in the costume of the Middle Ages. Housaye works only in the daytime, and in his great picture-gallery. There, surrounded by marbles and rare bronzes and with the life and bustle all about him, Arsene Housaye dictates to four secretaries on various subjects: to this one a romance; to that one, a critical *feuilleton*; to another, some political notes; and to still another, a page of "The History of the Eighteenth Century." Theophile Gautier wrote, or rather designed, his *feuilleton* of ten columns upon a big square of paper like a thousand-franc bill. Jules Sandeau smokes while writing, though it is true his cigar is generally extinct. Girardin works only at night; he needs lamp-light to see the future. Wee to his story if his lamp smokes! Diaz places four pictures before him. Ziem will paint only in riding-boots. And inspiration flees wholly from Gounod unless he is in constant motion, from the opera to the church, or from the church to the opera. We know certain men of letters who cannot write anything with a pen—others who can write nothing with a pencil. If they attempt to resist this folly, their inspiration suddenly ceases. Milton composed his "Paradise Lost" in a large arm-chair, with his head thrown back. Bossuet worked in a cold room, with his head warmly enveloped. When Fox had eaten heartily, he would retire to his study, envelope his head in a napkin soaked in vinegar and water, and work sometimes ten hours in succession. We are told that Schiller composed with his feet in ice-water. Mathurin, the author of "Bertram" and "Melmoth," withdrew from the world in order to compose. When the inspiration seized him, he placed a wafer between his eyebrows, and his domestics, warned by this signal, would keep their distance. Jeremy Bentham jotted his ideas on little squares of paper, which he piled up on each other; and this pile of little papers, stitched together, was the first form of his manuscripts. Napoleon, too, had his peculiar mode of meditation and work. When he was not in council, says Bourrienne, he stayed in his study, talked to himself, and sung, or, like a child, cut the arms of his chair; then, suddenly rousing up, would give the plan of a monument to be erected, or dictate those immense movements which have astonished the world.