

interesting to jot down the charming variety of applications that cross his path. A librarian in the United States records that he was once asked for our old-time favorite "Robinson Crusoe" as "Robinson Crucified;" and I can believe it. I will "nothing extenuate, nor aught set down in malice," but simply recount two or three incidents within my own knowledge.

Whilst serving in a library in this city, I was asked for the works of the Greek philosopher as "*Sofo-kels*," and "The Cruise of the Midge" and "Tom Cringle's Log" (written by Michael Scott), as Sir Walter Scott's novels; one reader returned Thackeray's "Pendennis" as the "*stupidest*" book he had ever read,—indeed, his verdict was that "*it was so stupid, that he could not read it*,"—my reply was, he might depend upon this, that "it was not the fault of the book;"—another client returned a book, after having had it only a few hours, and upon my expressing surprise at his having got through it so quickly, he very gravely furnished as explanation, that "*after reading 60 pages of it I found I had read it before*."

But I can say, with a pardonable pride, that nothing of that sort is the matter with McGill, "*that's all right*;" nevertheless, the bill-of-fare called for, during a day or two, is varied enough, and one may be forgiven if it is now and then a trifle puzzling to find what is asked for; I do not allude to the Grotes and Mommsen, the Beowulfs and Cynewulfs, the Grays and Besseys, the Nicholsons, the Prestwichs, the Tennysons and Wordsworths, the Mills and Hamiltons, the Tacitus and Plinys, almost beyond counting, these pass in review daily as a matter of course; but there is a field beyond all these which is being continually ploughed, let me note a few which have been "modern instances" within the past week:—

The application is generally introduced with a smile and a pleasant "*Can you tell me*."

1. When the book of Exodus was written?
2. What is the origin of minding your P's and Q's?
3. Whence comes the proverb of pouring oil upon troubled waters? etc., etc.

These are easily enough answered, with a little patience, and I venture to subjoin the replies:—

1. A preponderance of evidence is in favor of the year B.C. 1652. Hales places the Exodus B.C. 1648. Usher B.C. 1491, and Bunsen B.C. 1350.

Smith's Dictionary of the Bible.

2. This expression arose from the ancient custom of hanging a slate behind the all-house door, on which was written P or Q, (*i.e.*, *Pint* or *Quart*) against the name of each customer, according to the quantity which he had drunk, and which was not expected to be paid for till the Saturday evening, when the wages were settled.

Notes and Queries, 1st S., Vol. III., p. 357.

3. Dr. Brewer, in speaking of this proverb, refers to the Biblical passage, "*a soft answer turneth away wrath*." It may be found in Plutarch, Aristotle, Pliny's Natural History, Erasmus, Plautus, Bede's Ecclesiastical History, Pennaut, Benjamin Franklin, and so

on, down to the popular novelist Jules Verne in *Dick Sands*.

See Notes and Queries.

But beyond all these, there is an ebb and flow of transient queries, that are

"Like a snow fall in the river,
A moment white, then melts for ever."

e.g., the subject of *Hypnotism* and *Du Chaillu*, which name, by the bye, brings to mind a furore of a short time back, for the writings of the now eclipsed Stanley, and a still more erratic form of application from outsiders, who have been recommended by a friend to ask! "I have been reading lately about the Relief of Lucknow, *can you tell me* the meaning of the name *Jessie*?—and another querist named Jones, who is descended from the old Welsh princes, but as there are several branches of the Jones-es (!) *can I put him on the track* of something to prove his pedigree?"

I desire to put on record my appreciation of the uniform courtesy and politeness of my clients proper—the most complete good-nature reigns:—

Good sense and learning may esteem obtain,
Humor and wit a laugh, if rightly ta'en:
Fair virtue admiration may impart;
But 'tis *good nature* only wins the heart:
It moulds the body to an easy grace,
And brightens every feature of the face,
It smooths the unpolished tongue with eloquence,
And adds persuasion to the finest sense.

H. M.

BACHELORS.

"Shall I never see a bachelor of three-score again?"

"A young man not yet, an elder man not at all;" thus wrote the wisest and brightest of mankind. Poor fellow, his philosophy finds little favor in modern days. Indeed, at the present moment, the secular press is raising the hue and cry against the few remaining specimens of bachelors, that most innocent and gentle class of humanity.

It has been proposed with much blowing of trumpets tin horns, and other instruments for stirring up the mind of the intelligent proletariat, to levy a tax on bachelors, just as the prudent Civic Fathers levy on dogs, goats, and undesirable quadrupeds in general, which it is the policy of civic wisdom to discourage and keep down.

This cry having been taken up, and passed on by various wisacres about town, doubts are expressed as to whether it may not prevail. Several younger celibates have betaken themselves to wedlock, and even some of the elder members of the order appear to falter.

A little reflection might teach these prophets the function of bachelors in the social fabric and the folly of accomplishing their extirpation, as well as the disastrous results which would follow a successful issue to their efforts.

Bachelors—men past twenty-five who seem irresolute