

have preserved your son, and I bless God for enabling me to do so. The thought that I have been of use to a fellow-creature, and done my duty, is reward enough for me." The merchant was for a moment too much surprised to reply. "Excellent man," said he, at length, "I will not again hurt you by offering what is not worthy of you. But you have laid me under an obligation, of which I must in some way or other relieve myself. Tell me then, is there any thing that I can do for you?" Nothing, sir," respectfully returned Thomas," with health, honest, though hard employment, the best of fathers, of wives and children, what can I desire that wealth and interest can procure? Some of my companions, however, are not so well off, they will be glad of your bounty; give therefore to them, if you please, instead of to me, and I shall be doubly rewarded." Thomas looked toward his father for his approbation. "You have done right, very right," said the latter, in a tone of honest exultation. "I am a happy old man," continued he, turning to the merchant, "the life of a son is dear, but the virtue of a son is dearer." "Dad," said Tom, who though unable fully to comprehend the nobleness of his father's conduct, felt in his heart that there was something much to admire in it, "I wish I was big enough to save a man." "And I too," said Robert, "Oh I am so happy! I said I liked Christmas-day better than any other day in the year, and so I always shall. Yes, let me live as long as I may, I shall never forget Christmas-eve." "Let it be the mercy then that you remember," said his grandfather, "not the distress that marked it, and let gratitude dwell in your hearts forever."

DESCRIPTION OF A WELCH LABORER'S COTTAGE.

It was one of those poor huts that are thinly sprinkled by the sides of the hills, inhabited by peaters and shepherds. As we approached, first one, and then two more fine children, almost in a state of nakedness, ran out to see what little Toby, the dog, could be so alarmed at. A stout fresh colored woman, with dark sparkling eyes and black hair, made her appearance; who seeing our condition, welcomed us, by the most inviting sounds in her language, to her cot. It was partly formed by a hollow in the slate rock, and partly by walls of mud, mixed with chopped rushes, covered with segs, and having a wattled, or basket-worked chimney; the entrance was at the gable end, facing the south east, which was defended during the night, or in very cold weather by a wattled hurdle; covered with rushes. A wall of turf for fuel, served as a partition for the bed-room, furnished with a bed of heath, and dried rushes in one corner. The furniture was such as necessity dictated; some loose stones formed the

grate; two large ones with a plank across, supplied the place of chairs; a kettle, with a backstone for baking oaten cakes, answered every purpose for cooking; and two coarse earthen pitchers stood by, for the preserving, or carrying water and dodgrifael, the usual beverage of the family. On our making some inquiries respecting the neighborhood, she expressed a wish that her husband had been at home, as he would have been able to have given us the desired information. "You have a husband, then?" said I. With a smile of approbation on her face, she replied, "Yes, blessed be God; he and his father before him, were born here; I am as happy as any of the great folks, for he loves me and his children, and works very hard, and we want for nothing that he can get for us. He is a peater, digging peat in the adjacent moors, and carrying it for sale." Asking what wages he might get, she said, "that depends upon the weather, sometimes six shillings in the week, and sometimes three or four; they had a little cow on the lease, and a few sheep on the hills." "What assistance do you yourself give?" said I. She observed, shaking her head at the time, "that she could do very little; her work was knitting, at which, with assistance of her two eldest girls, one five, and the other seven years old, if not interrupted, they could earn five pence a day, but that the younger children engrossed much of her time. Now, recollect they had to maintain a family of seven; a man, his wife, and five children! The mother looked in health, and the children though thinly clad, ruddy and smiling.

—What alas!
Has o'er their little limbs its livery hung
In many a tattered fold; yet still those limbs
Areshapely; their rude locks start from their brow,
Yet on that open brow, its dearest throne,
Sits sweet simplicity!"

Indeed, there did not appear any thing like the misery and filth observable in the dwellings of many of the poor, whose weekly income is four or six times as great. Though the floor was formed of the native rock, it was regularly swept with a besom made of segs, bound with a band of the same, and the fuel, was as regularly piled as bread on a baker's shelves. All appeared in order; but the air of content apparent in the looks of this humble cottager and her family, put us all justly to the blush! and a multitude of superior blessings too often abused rushed instantly upon our recollection, at witnessing so much reason and gratitude in the habitation of strait poverty. If we had reason to be thankful that we were not constrained thus to earn our bread, and live secluded amidst these mountains, we had still more so for the education which had given us greater degrees of knowledge, and, if not lost to ourselves, of greater happiness.

We were anxious to know in what school this woman had learnt so important a lesson. "Sir," says she, "we regularly go to yonder church, (pointing to the hills,) where we hear that all we have is the gift of God; and that if we possess health and strength, we possess more than we deserve. If, sensible of our utter unworthiness, we sincerely believe in the Redeemer, and, following his example, perform the duties enjoined on us in his gospel, relying for assistance on his Holy Spirit, conducting ourselves with propriety in that state of life in which it has pleased God to call us, we shall, after death, change this poor uncertain life for a better, where we shall be for ever happy; and the frequent burial of our friends and neighbors informs us daily, that this event can be at no great distance." Astonished at so much good sense and piety, where I so little expected to find it, I exclaimed, "Just step into this humble cottage, ye rich and gay, and learn that happiness ye so earnestly seek in vain, a happiness which neither wealth nor pleasure can bestow."

LEAP YEAR.—The coming year, 1836, will be, what is denominated in the almanacks, bissextile or leap year, containing one day more than the ordinary years, by the addition of twenty-four hours to the second month, February. Leap year is a most important year to all unmarried people, inasmuch as during its continuance it is the especial prerogative of ladies to make love to the gentlemen, and the especial duty of gentlemen, under very severe penalties, to accept and reciprocate the proffers of love from the other sex. The authority for this regulation is found in an old volume, entitled "Courtship, Love, and Matrimony," printed in the year 1606, which has lately fallen into the possession of the editor of the New-York Transcript, and from which the annexed extract is made:

"Albeit, it is now become a part of the Common Law, in regard to the social relations of life, that as often as every bissextile year doth return, the ladies have the sole privilege during the time it continueth, of making love unto the men, which they may doe either by wordes or by lookes, as unto them it seemeth proper; and moreover, no man shall be entitled unto the benefit of Clergy who doth refuse to accept the offers of a ladye, or who doth in any wise treat her proposal with slight or contumely."

Four Rules for Composition.—Be certain first that you mean something. Then be certain what it is that you do mean. Be certain that what you have to say is worth saying; and then be certain that you have said it.—*N. E. Galaxy.*