Poetry.

Not always the Happiest.

A man in his carriage was riding along,
A gaily dressed wife by his side;
In satin and laces she looks like a queen,
And he like a king in his pride.

A wood-sawyer stood on the street as he passed,
The carriage and couple he eyed,
And said, as he worked with his saw on a log,
"I wish I was rich and could ride."

The man in the carriage remarked to his wife,
"One thing I would do if I could—
I'd give all my wealth for the strength and the health
Of the man who saweth the wood."

A pretty young maid with a bundle of work,
Whose face as the morning was fair,
Went tripping along with a smile of delight,
While humming a love-breathing air.

She looked in the carriage, the lady she saw,
Arrayed in apparel so fine,
And said, in a whisper, "I wish from my heart
Those satins and laces were mine."

The lady looked out on the maid with her work,
So fair in her calico dress,
And said "I'd relinquish position and wealth
Her beauty and youth to possess."

Thus it is in this world, whatever our lot,
Our minds and our time we employ
In longing and sighing for what we have not,
Ungrateful for what we enjoy.

We welcome the pleasures for which we have sighed,
The heart has a void in it still,
Growing deeper and wider the longer we live,
That nothing but heaven can fill.

Agriculture.

Give us more Mutton.

Mutton, we said, not that mass of thin, wiry muscle, tough enough for raw hides, that is sometimes offered us in the shambles as the product of a sheep's carcass. This article, if designed for tiller ropes, is admirably adapted to its office; but if destined to the table, it is a notable perversion of the gifts of Providence. We have quite enough of this article.

But of mutton, well grown and stall-fed, the fat nicely distributed through the lean flesh, as well as upon the outside, we have far too little. Of all meats, as a standard dish, commend us to this. The saddle, well stuffed, makes a splendid roast; the fore-quarters are available for soups and stews; and the leg, boiled with a piece of pork, and comely surroundings of cabbages, beets and potatoes, is the prince of farmer's dinners. *Steaks* are no *mistake*, particularly if a good cook holds them—just long enough—over a wood coal fire. In all the forms of approved cookery it is a popular and wholesome dish—probably the most healthful of all meats for habitual use.

It ought to be cheaper, and can be. The sheep is a wool-bearing animal, and it is mainly for the fleece that our flocks have been cultivated until within twenty years. The South Downs and the coarse woolled varieties—so large and so highly esteemed for their flesh—have not been in favour. The article now is increasing in estimation, and there are inducements enough in all the older states to grow sheep, mainly for their flesh. Mutton, we believe, can be produced at much less expense than either pork or beef. During summer they will thrive in pastures where cows would grow thin, and in the fall and in winter they will give better returns in flesh, for the roots and grain, than any other animal. Most of the sheep killed are simply grass-fed. Stall-feeding improves the flesh as much as that of beeves. It pays well to buy up a lot of South Down grades, or other large bodied sheep, in the fall, and fatten them for market. They want a dry place, with good shelter against storms. The staple feed may be good clover hay, and turnips. Give in addition—if you can get it—half a pound of oil cake and a pint of barley per day, to each animal. They should have constant access to good, clean, running water.—*Am. Agriculturist*

Rendering Barren Fruit Trees Fertile.

It fell to my lot, ten years ago, to take charge of some barren old pear trees, with long spurs full of cankers. Although I took a different course from that generally advocated to render them fertile, I have the satisfaction of observing that all the old stocks are filled with bearing wood. The horizontal branches were all cut off, and a graft or two put on the stumps or short arms, except in some places where buds were inserted and allowed to replace the branch; those put on in the shape of buds make less wood than the others, but are very productive. The trees first grafted have nearly covered the walls; they bore fruit freely in the second year's growth, and the year after, the produce became greater. I allude to this to show that it would have been a mistake, where there is a great consumption of winter fruit, to have torn up the old trees and planted young ones. In the latter case I should have to wait long and patiently for the first bud, (unless root-pruning had been resorted to,) while now I have plenty of growth and abundance of fruit. I think grafted trees will continue longer in bearing than if buds had been inserted in branches. I may mention another fact not a little interesting. Last spring a Barbarossa Vine produced branches somewhat irregular, leaving a longer space without fruit than I liked to see. I took a shoot from its neighbor, a Hamburgh, with a bunch just coming into flower, matched it, and put a small bottle of water to the end of it. This was done merely as an experiment, but to my astonishment every flower became a berry. The bunch progressed, and was to every one here a curiosity; it colored well, and became a compact little bunch in September.—*London Gardener's Chronicle.*

WASHINGTON.—The following anecdote was told of General Washington in a lecture by Theodore Parker: At Cambridge, Gen. Washington had heard that the colored soldiers were not to be depended upon for sentries. So one night when the pass word was "Cambridge," he went outside the camp, put on an overcoat, and then approached a colored sentinel. "Who goes there?" cried the sentinel. "A friend," replied Washington. "Friend, advance unarmed and give the countersign," said the colored man. Washington came up and said "Roxbury." "No sar!" was the response. "Medford," said Washington.—"No, sar!" returned the colored soldier. "Charlestown," said Washington. The colored man immediately exclaimed, "I tell you, massa, no man go by here, 'out he say "Cambridge." Washington said Cambridge, and went by, and the next day the colored gentleman was relieved of all further necessity of attending to that particular branch of military duty.

Miscellaneous.

From the Western Christian Advocate.

From Rome.

An Italian holiday is very different from the same occasion in Germany or France. The Germans sing the French dance, and the Italians quarrel. My last day at Milan was, unfortunately, an occasion of this kind. The densely-peopled villages had poured their rustic masses into the city. The stores were closed, and the streets seemed the more thronged by the stillness of regular business. Cakes, pictures, and gaudy toys were spread out in the markets, and one might judge by the noise that business in this line was unusually brisk. Observing more closely, it would be seen that comparatively few exchanges were effected. The question whether five or six cents should be paid was not set at rest except by the occurrence of the dispute about measure or weight, and then followed the worst of all, as to the kind of currency in which it should be paid. There is no place in Italy where coins are so confused as at Milan. The customer has used the word *lira* or *centesimo;* but there are three coins in Milan called *lira*—one worth twenty cents, another seventeen, and another fifteen. The *centesimi* are hundredth parts of each, and there is a complicated series of coins for two, three, five, and ten *centesimi* of the various *lira*. Each party in the bargain immediately seizes upon the interpretation most favorable to himself, and fighting every foot of ground, yields only to a compromise in the very last extremity.

Another feature of an Italian holiday in the city is the crowd which throngs every church. It is no rest-day for the priests. Their customers, are more numerous, more quiet, but much more sure to complete the bargain entered upon. Over all the church doors were inscriptions such as the one I here copy: "*Indulgenza plenaria quotidiana perpetua per vivis et defunctis,*" which translated liberally into American might read, "Constantly on hand a good supply of pardons for the living and the dead." The haste with which these crowds are confessed and absolved on such occasions must prevent all the good consequences which might result from the intercourse with and consel of the priests, and be little more than a merchantable transaction, in which so much money is really weighed against so much sin. What is more repulsive both to reason and the sensibilities is the public declaration that the sins of the dead are also to be absolved for the money paid by the living. There is a church in Milan in whose vaults are shown the bones of some hundreds of persons, regularly piled along the walls. It is not known to whom they originally belonged; yet the Church presumes they were sinners, and receives more than ten thousand *lira* annually for the avowed purpose of having those sins forgiven. I present these things as they appear to a traveler in Italy. Sincere Catholics have, or think they have, a reason for this course, and they may in this instance use their ever-present argument, "The end justifies the means." No one can deny that the Catholic Church exhibits in a larger proportion of its membership than in any other a self-sacrificing benevolence. Of this every land furnishes examples, and they are no where more manifest than in Italy. As Protestants we can not only *protest*, but are willing to see our own faults, and, I hope, disposed to correct them.

DILIGENCES.

The last hope of railroad riding must be relinquished by one going from Milan to the south. He will, indeed, find about Florence some short lines; but they are so soon passed that he scarce seems to have seen them. A lumbering wagon, staggering horses, and a driver or postillion will be his helpmeets and *companions du voyage* for most of the way to Rome. Railroads are in progress along all the principal routes; but south of this city the word "progress" is likely to constitute the major part of all reports upon them for years to come. The *diligenza*, as it is called, is the choice of those evils which are presented; but it is far behind that well-regulated institution on the great thoroughfares of France. A painful feature in both countries is the excessive cruelty to the animals employed. Neither country protects these dumb brutes by law, and there is no bound to the ill-treatment to which they are subjected by the hard-hearted drivers. Passengers of their own country are shocked, and universally-expressed public opinion does influence a few. To English and Americans this unaccustomed barbarity, carried to the excess which it is in Italy, renders diligence riding an incessant torture of the finer feelings of the heart. There is much in habit which reconciles us to the situation we are compelled to occupy; but I think a slave-driver would need extra discipline to enable him to look calmly upon such brutality. No one who has traveled by this conveyance in Italy will ever forget the constant "Hee-up! hee-up!" uttered by the postman, and, with the strokes of the lash, forming the chief music of a long day's ride.

Stepping into the omnibus for Lodi we drove off just at the hour appointed, and then waited thirty minutes in an adjoining street till we were all fairly ready. I was surprised first at the promptness, and then at our delay of half an hour in the street not fifty yards away. I learned that the company had their published time for departure, and they always drove out of the court at that hour, but sometimes remained in the street an hour longer. The road to Lodi is very level, and it was on this occasion very muddy. The sights of the country were scarce a relief to the confusion of the city. I said the villages had sent their inhabitants to increase the throng there; but when I came to the villages I could not see but they were also full. There is a kind of festive fermentation, I suppose, which always makes the mass rise to the brim, however much is withdrawn. Here, too, were the stalls in the market, and the "indulgenza" at the church. The satisfaction of being in motion was some relief, and the long intervals of open country afforded occasionally, amid the mist, glances of nature's soothing charms. As evening advanced we encountered many persons on foot, of all classes. They were returning to their homes from the festivities. Some were happy over the joys of the day, and others gave evidence, which many a farmer boy in America can understand, that a holiday in town is, after all, about the "tiresomest" work of the whole year's programme. A few were drunk. They staggered along the high road alone, or balancing their own wavering by linking with two or three equally intoxicated, they went singing, quarreling, and boasting on their homeward way. One poor fellow puzzled our postillion not a little. We wished to drive past him, and were willing to concede the choice of sides; but he was not perfectly certain himself as to the validity of our title to the road or the probable position he might occupy just at the moment we would come up. By promptly taking advantage of one of his longest spherical aberrations, we finally succeeded.

A large, rather well-dressed man was passed just at nightfall. He wished to ride, but was refused. Running behind he put one foot upon the step, and grasped the door with his hand. His face appealed for an advocate, and I have seldom seen a finer face or a more earnest expression. I wished to open the door, but was not allowed. Our speed was increased; his foot slipped from the step; his beaver hat crushed against the side, and finally fell to the ground. He held on desperately, although half his body was dragging in the mud. At last one of the passengers rudely loosened his hand and we drove away, leaving him to pass a December night on this cold and lonely couch.

It was nine o'clock when we arrived at Lodi. The huge wooden gates of the city were closed; but after some rapping and a due recognition they were thrown back, and we drove along the rocky streets to the office. I sought, early the following morning, the single bridge over the Adda, rendered famous by Napoleon's brilliant charge. It is a low, wooden structure. Even the piers are beams. A slight ascent is on the side next the city, and a little descent on the opposite. Lodi is a little city now of twenty thousand inhabitants, about one-tenth the size of its great rival, Milan, with whom it does not pretend longer to compete. A single postroad leads to it, and as two parallel railroads will run at the distance of twenty miles on either side, it is likely to remain a rural city in all time to come.

P. C. WILSON.

Rome, January 12, 1859.

USEFUL TO HOUSEKEEPERS.—Recent experiments in more than one family have established the fact that the plant known to botanists as the *polygonum punctatum*, usually known as "water pepper" or "smart weed," which may now be found in abundance along ditches, roads, lanes and barnyards, is an effectual and certain destroyer of the bed-bug. A strong decoction is made of the herb, and the places infested with the insect well washed with it. The plant may also with much advantage be stuffed in the cracks and corners of the room. Elderberry leaves, laid upon the shelves of a safe or cupboard, will also drive away ants and roaches.

The origin of the word "wife" has recently been the subject of some discussion. Trench, a high authority on the "study of words," remarks that the word belongs to the same family as weave, woof, web, and the German weben. It is the title given to a person who is engaged at the web and woof, these having been the most ordinary branches of female industry and wifely employment when the language was forming. So that in the word itself is wrapped up a hint of earnest, in-door, stay-at-home occupations, as being the fittest for her who bears this name.

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