

SONG OF PEACE.

BY ROBERT GILFILLAN.

Awake the song of peace—
Let nations join the strain;
The march of blood and pomp of war
We will not have again!
Let fruit-trees crown our fields,
And flowers our valleys fair;
And on our mountain steep—the songs
Of happy swains be there!

Our maidens shall rejoice,
And bid the timbrel sound;
Soft dreams no more shall broken be
With drums parading round.
No tears for lovers slain,
From lovely eyes shall fall;
But music and the dance shall come
In halcyon joy to all!

The rider and his steed,
Their path of fame is o'er;
The trumpet and the trumpeter
Shall squadrons rouse no more?
No fields of vict'ry won
With blade and battle-brand!
A nobler triumph shall be ours—
A bright and happy land!

Too long the man of blood
Hath ruled without control;
Nor widows' tears, nor orphans' sighs,
Could touch his iron soul!
But, lo! the mighty's fallen—
And from his lofty brow
The chaplet fades that circled there—
Where are his trophies now?

Look to the countless graves,
Where sleep the thousands slain!
The morning songs no more call forth
The stirring bands again!
The din, the strife is past
Of foe with falling foe—
The grassy leaves wave o'er their heads
And quiet they rest below!

Sound high the harp of song,
And raise the joyous strain;
But war's rough note be it ne'er heard
To swell the chords again.
Put all its trappings past—
Vain pomp of bygone years—
To ploughshares grind the pointed swords,
To pruning-hooks the spears!

Come, man, to brother man,
Come in the bond of peace;
Then strife and war, with all their train
Of dark'ning woe, shall cease.
Come with that spirit free,
That art and science give;
Come with the patient mind for truth,
Seek it and ye shall live!

Then earth shall yield her fruits—
The seasons forth shall bring,
And summer fair shall pour her sweets
Into the lap of spring!
While autumn, mellow, comes
With full and liberal hand,
And gladness then shall fill each heart
Through all the happy land.

Chambers' Journal, No. 366.

OLD SCHOOLS.

BY PROFESSOR ALDEN.

I prefer old things, that is, when I do not like new things better. For this reason I look with sorrow on the gradual decline of old-fashioned schools, and the rise of high, eclectic, collegiate, and other schools. Not but that intellectual improvement is in some cases promoted, for in those good old schools, that was the last thing thought of, but I think the sum of juvenile happiness is diminished, and when is man happy if not in youth? Where is the lawyer, congressman, editor, or preacher, who some twenty years ago passed through the process of reading, writing, and ciphering, that does not look back to those as his happiest days—days when the necessity of comprehending things was unfelt, when five hours per diem was the ultimatum of restraint, and when a goodly portion of that was spent in planning enterprises for execution when the delightful stereotyped expression, "school's dismiss'd," should be uttered.

Who does not recollect his feats at reading, especially after he had arrived at a height and circumference entitling him to a standing with the first class?

"First class read," cries out the pedagogue, opening Scott's Lessons before him, and deliberately persevering in ruling the ink-unsullied sheets, fated ere long, to bear the traces of unearthly characters.

"First class read," and lo! a simultaneous rush to the open space diversified by a few intentional stumbles over the smaller scholars, whose improving employment was to sit upright on backless benches, and avoid whispering, or by a furtive appro-

printion of some flaxen locks, or by an attempted elongation of some luckless urchin's ear, followed by a solo attracting the attention and eliciting the enquiries of the master, ending in a threat of flogging next time. At length the line is formed, and the charge commences. The head boy, who, in order to secure the station, has taken a place so near the fire that one side of his person is well nigh in a roasting state, begins at the top of his lungs, and hurries on that he may get through with his paragraph and use his book as a fender for the more sensitive parts of his frame. He is about half through when some rogue at a distance of four or five below him gives a side lurch to his neighbour, who not at all unwilling, communicates the impulse to one above him, and so on till the reader is shoved against the blazing forestick, and there is a pause to adjust matters and find the place.

"Read on," cries the master, "next read."

"Giles hasn't read a verse," cries out half a dozen voices.

"Giles, why don't you read on?"

Giles at length gets through his verse, and forthwith turns to his neighbour, and in a horrible whisper, "Damnation take you, if you don't get it when the boys go out."

"Giles don't stand straight," cries out some ill-natured boy at the foot of the class. Poor Giles had advanced in front of the line in order to avoid crisping. It was an excellent rule of the school that each one should keep the place he took at first.

"Giles stand back in your place," says the inflexible magister. There is no alternative, he must toast till the last lazy boy has blundered through.

The time to take seats at length arrives, and on their way Giles falls in the rear and adds to the momentum of his neighbour by the application of his foot, its weight being increased by horse points innumerable.

"Giles' been a kickin' me."

"Ha'n't been a kickin' him nother."

"Who saw Giles kick Ben?"

The parties were about equally divided in popularity, and amid the cries of "I did," and "I didn't," the poor pedagogue found it difficult to discover the truth. At length, all was reconciled and made plain by the testimony of one who cries out, "Master, I see all how it was. Ben just kicked himself, and then tried to lay it to Giles." This explanation seemed satisfactory to all parties; they laughed heartily and were left with an admonition to behave themselves.

There is less incident in the reading of the second and third classes, the first class "tending to written" in the mean time. Scribble, scribble it goes, with occasional shouts of "mend my pen," "John's joggling," etc. In about half an hour one makes a discovery, and cries, "Master, my ink's frozen," and away he goes to the fire to thaw it. Pleased with the warmth and conspicuousness of his station, he, with great composure, suffers his ink to boil for another half hour. Not daring to delay longer for fear of the frown of his master, who has by this time completed the copies of the day, and begins to look around, he guards his face from the flaming embers with one hand, and seizes with the other the inkstand, which is now at a temperature equal to boiling water.

"Gaul darn the inkstand," is the involuntary exclamation of the young writer.

"What is that you said?"

"I said as how the inkstand is hot."

"That is not what you said—come here, give me your hand!" crack, crack, crack goes the ferule. "There, that was for swearing." Crack, crack, crack again, "That was for lying; go to your seat."

After this exploit there is silence for nearly half an hour. At length some urchin breaks the monotony by a dexterous discharge of a bullet of soaked and chewed paper, which takes effect on the nose of one of the opposite side of the house. This is a signal to recommence operations. The whispering becomes louder; the complaints of "crowdin'" thicken; till at last an open explosion, it should seem, is prevented by only, "boys may go out," bursting from the lips of the master. Books are closed, inkstands overturned, toes trodden upon, curses not loud but deep, uttered; at last, there is silence in the house and peace for the master; for girls, for the most part, as every pedagogue will testify, are a peaceable, quiet race. By and by the boys must come in, and then there is a glorious time of crowding around the fire. At length there is a degree of quiet till some long-necked fellow is curious to know how it looks up chimney, and while taking the position necessary to determine that important fact, his neighbour gives him a tilt that brings the line of gravity without the base, and to avoid falling on the now quiet embers, he seizes on the coat of his neighbour, when a "darn you, let go," and a jerk in the opposite direction, restores him to his perpendicularity, and at the expense of the coat.

"Jim's been tearin' my coat."

"Master, he tore it himself. I just took hold on him, and he twiched and tore it."

"Take your seats, all of you," thunders the magister.

Well, the girls in, and all seated, again the process of instruction recommences. In the first case, the course was from the eldest even unto the least, now the beginning is with the least, and

so working upwards to the greatest, spelling only being substituted for reading in the first and second classes.

The youngest toddler comes to read:

"What is that?" No answer.

"It's A—say A."

"A—y," says the toddler, looking at the four points of the compass, and so on to the end of the alphabet.

The remaining exercises are in considerable more order, for when the command, "First class take your places to spell," is uttered, the master is seated, or standing in full view, and there is no opportunity for a repetition of the exploits of the morning. By and by, the joyful sentence "school's dismiss'd," is heard, and then perfect happiness is felt, if there is any such thing on earth. Now, as I said before, I grieve at the extinction of those schools, for it will be seen that they were the very nurseries of happiness. It was there I acquired my irresistible propensity to laugh at every thing save old age and religion, and there is no estimating the value of such an acquisition.

If I thought there was any part of the land safe from the sophisticated invasion of steamboats and railroads and newspapers and orators, I would retire thither and establish a school on the old plan, and thus live over my early days. But the age of chivalry is gone, and that of high-schools, institutes, and practicalities is come. You can scarcely distinguish a schoolmaster now from an ordinary man.

CONTEMPORARY JUDGMENTS.—Contemporaries are tolerable judges of temporary merit, but often most erroneous in their estimate of lasting fame. Burnet, you know, speaks of "one Prior;" and Whitelocke of "one Milton a blind man." Burnet and Whitelocke were men of reputation themselves. But what say you of Heath, the obscure chronicler of the civil wars? He says, "one Milton, since stricken with blindness," wrote against Salmasius; and composed "an impudent book, called Iconoclastes."

FACE-PAINTING.—Lady Coventry, the celebrated beauty, killed herself with painting. She bedaubed herself with white, so as to stop the perspiration. Lady Mary Wortley Montague was more prudent: she went often into the hot bath, to scrape off the paint, which was almost as thick as plaster on a wall.

HEROISM OF A PEASANT.—The following generous action has always struck me extremely; there is somewhat even of sublime in it:—A great inundation having taken place in the north of Italy, owing to an excessive fall of snow in the Alps, followed by a speedy thaw, the river Adige carried off a bridge near Verona, except the middle part, on which was the house of the toll-gatherer, or porter, I forget which; and who, with his whole family, thus remained imprisoned by the waves, and in momentary danger of destruction. They were discovered from the banks, stretching forth their hands, screaming and imploring succour, while fragments of this remaining arch were continually dropping into the water. In this extreme danger, a nobleman, who was present, a Count of Pulverini, held out a purse of one hundred sequins, as a reward to any adventurer who would take a boat, and deliver this unhappy family. But the risk was so great of being borne down by the rapidity of the stream, of being dashed against the fragment of the bridge, or of being crushed by the falling stones, that not one, in the vast number of spectators, had courage enough to attempt such an exploit. A peasant, passing along, was informed of the proposed reward. Immediately jumping into a boat, he by strength of oars gained the middle of the river, brought his boat under the pile, and the whole family safely descended by means of a rope. "Courage!" cried he, "now you are safe." By a still more strenuous effort, and great strength of arm, he brought the boat and family to shore. "Brave fellow," exclaimed the count, handing the purse to him, "here is the promised recompense." "I shall never expose my life for money," answered the peasant. "My labour is a sufficient livelihood, for myself, my wife, and children. Give the purse to this poor family, who have lost all."—Horace Walpole.

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