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THE THACKERAY LETTERS.

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DEATH OF SUMMER.

Hark! what is that, which, borne upon the breeze,
Tolls deep and mournful echoing thro' the trees?
A passing bell.

Sadly it mourns the Summer days gone by,
Calling in vain for them with longing cry,
O'er hill and dell.

Yes, 'tis the death-knell of those happy days,
For nature mourns her child, and gently says,
Summer, farewell!

Now from each tree the leaves are falling fast,
Silent, uncared for, soon to join the past.
In it to dwell!

How quickly gone, how quickly flown away,
Time swiftly flies as night succeeds each day,
Ne'er to come more.

Yet memory clings to hours of summer joy,
Hours spent in bliss which time can ne'er alloy,
On sea and shore!

Grieve not ye then when drear this tolling bell,
Within your hearts sounds oft sweet summer's knell,
'T will come again.

For autumn's mist and winter's gloom will fade,
When summer gently steals o'er wood and glade,
And peace will reign.

Unheeded then ye wintry storms rage high,
Sob on ye winds—re-echo oft your cry.
Daylight will dawn.

Then when the trees again in bloom are dress'd,
Nature will smile and all on earth be blest,
With summer's morn.

T. T. N.

During the past Summer there has been appearing in *Scribner's Magazine*, a series of letters, written by the novelist Thackeray, to a very dear friend. To say they were charming, would give but a faint idea of their peculiar excellence. A great deal might be expected from Thackeray in the way of letter-writing, but these letters, in their drollness, their brilliancy, their courtly devotion, expressed with many quaint and captivating turns, and their all-pervading tone of real, honest, hearty feeling—every word coming right from the bottom of the writer's heart—are not only interesting, they are even affecting, and often bring tears to one's eyes. We have been accustomed to think of Thackeray as a keen-eyed, cynical-minded spectator of the world's sorrows and cares, a little moved, sometimes, by the brave and gentle spirit displayed by the actors in the drama, but, as a rule, inclined to look upon the darker sides of human character. These letters show forth a man of whom it might be said with Anthony Trollope, that he was the most tender-hearted human being one had ever known; a man who most tenderly loved his family and his friends, who was most profoundly moved by everything noble and pure, whose very unhappiness in life was caused by his sympathy with the misfortunes of others, and whose greatest pain was that he saw clearly the hollowness and cruelty of the world. The hand that delineated gentle Mrs. Pendennis and good old Colonel Newcome, here, as it were, unconsciously, depicts itself. Those who have read the '*Roundabout Papers*', will remember Thackeray tells a great deal about himself in them—somewhat after the fashion of old Montaigne,—he, metaphorically speaking, buttonholes the reader and takes him into his confidence, telling him many things about himself, often at his own expense. The same gossipy style appears in the letters with perhaps, if possible, an added charm. It is plainly to be seen they were written with not the faintest idea of publication, and for many years their sacred privacy has been maintained. We are glad, however, for our own sakes, that they have at length been made public. They afford us an acquaintance, an intimacy, with Thackeray that we should otherwise never have had; we should never have done justice to his great sympathy, his tenderness, his simple, hearty goodness, if