

READINGS FROM CURRENT LITERATURE.

SEA DREAMS.

ALL through the night the sea sobs in mine ear ;  
I scent the sea-weed tossing in the bay,  
And hear the sea-gulls call, now far away,  
Now ever coming closer, yet more near ;  
Now do I hear the storm-wind shrilly clear,  
Now see the foam-crown deck th' expanse of gray,  
Now listen to the words the billows say  
As one by one their stately heads they rear.

Ah ! sea, dear sea, sob ever through the dream :  
That is my life ; for naught is real to me  
Save thy true self ; 'tis but thy silvern gleam  
That bids me live in hope that I may be  
Once more where billows dance and sea-fowls scream,  
Once more may drink thy breath, O perfect sea !

—The World.

AN INTERESTING HISTORICAL RELIC.

THE Montreal Herald records an interesting antiquarian find on the part of Mr. Henry J. Morgan of this city, in the shape of an old church bell belonging to the Anglican congregation at St. Andrews in the Ottawa Valley. The bell in question, as the figures on its face denote, was cast in the year 1759, which was also, as may be remembered, the year of the conquest of Canada. It was brought to this country by Sir John Johnson, who formerly owned the Seignior of Argenteuil and resided, during a portion of each year, at the old Manor House at St. Andrews, the ruins of which may still be seen near the confluence of the Ottawa and North rivers. Sir John, like his distinguished father, General Sir William Johnson, who gained the battle of Crown Point and Niagara, for which services he was created a baronet and received a grant of money, held the office of Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs for North America. He died in 1830. His eldest son, a colonel in the army and an "Ottawa boy" by birth, married a sister of Sir William de Lancy, Wellington's favourite general, who fell at Waterloo. Upon his death the widow married Sir Hudson Lowe, who held Napoleon in captivity at St. Helena. The old bell found by Mr. Morgan turns out to be the oldest Protestant church bell in existence within the Dominion, the next oldest being the one formerly belonging to the private chapel of another old Seignior, Hon. James Cuthbert, at Berthier, which was cast in 1774. The congregation of Christ Church, St. Andrews, whom the old bell with all the historical associations clinging to it summons regularly to their religious duties every Sabbath, may well be proud of so interesting a relic.—Ottawa Journal.

THE CONQUEST OF MODERN SCIENCE.

SURELY I have established my thesis that dirt is only matter in a wrong place. Chemistry, like a thrifty housewife, economizes every scrap. The horse-shoe nails dropped in the streets are carefully collected, and reappear as swords and guns. The main ingredient of the ink with which I now write was probably once the broken hoop of an old beer barrel. The chippings of the travelling tinker are mixed with the parings of horses' hoofs and the worst kinds of woollen rags, and these are worked up into an exquisite blue dye, which graces the dress of courtly dames. The dregs of port wine, carefully decanted by the toper, are taken in the morning as a seidlitz powder, to remove the effect of the debauch. The offal of the streets and the wastings of coal gas reappear carefully preserved in the lady's smelling bottle, or are used by her to flavour blanc manges for her friends. All this thrift of material is an imitation of the economy of nature, which allows no waste. Everything has its destined place in the process of the universe, in which there is not a blade of grass or even a microbe too much, if we possess the knowledge to apply them to their fitting purposes.—Lord Lyon Playfair, in North American Review.

LORD BYRON TO M. GALIGNANI,

A HITHERTO unpublished letter written by Lord Byron to the founder of this paper (says Galignani's Messenger) has been found in the office of the Celestial Empire of Shanghai. Our readers are likely to find it interesting. It is addressed to "Monsieur Galignani, 18 Rue Vivienne, Paris": "Sir,—In various numbers of your journal I have seen mentioned a work entitled 'The Vampire,' with the addition of my name as that of the author. I am not the author, and never heard of the work in question until now. In a more recent paper I perceive a formal announcement of 'The Vampire,' with the addition of an account of 'my residence in the Island of Mitylene,' an island which I have occasionally sailed by in the course of travelling some years ago through the Levant—and where I should have no objection to reside—but where I have never yet resided. Neither of these performances are mine, and I presume that it is neither unjust nor ungracious to request that you will favour me by contradicting the advertisement to which I allude. If the book is clever it would be base to deprive the real writer—whoever he may be—of his honours; and if stupid, I desire the responsibility of nobody's dullness but my own. You will excuse the trouble I give you—the imputation is of no great importance—and as long as it was confined to surmises

and reports I should have received it as I have received many others—in silence. But the formality of a public advertisement of a book I never wrote, and a residence where I never resided, is a little too much—particularly as I have no notion of the contents of the one nor the incidents of the other. I have, besides, a personal dislike to 'Vampires,' and the little acquaintance I have had with them would by no means induce me to divulge their secrets. You did me a much less injury by your paragraphs about 'my devotion' and 'abandonment of society for the sake of religion'—which appeared in your Messenger during last Lent—all of which are not founded on fact; but you see I do not contradict them, because they are merely personal—whereas the others in some degree concern the reader. You will oblige me by complying with my request of contradiction. I assure you that I know nothing of the work or works in question, and have the honour to be—as the correspondents of the magazines say—'Your constant reader' and very obedient, humble servant, BYRON. To the Editor of Galignani's Magazine, etc.'

THE FIRE OF AUTUMN.

A WEST Country orchard, when

like living coals the apples  
Burn among the withering leaves,

is one of the sights of autumn. This year the harvest is but scanty, and the heaps of red and yellow that are wont to shine upon the orchard grass are few and far between. Another fortnight will heighten still the colours of the landscape. But here, at this sunny corner, on the southern edge of the wood, the trees are at their best and brightest. Behind them, further in, the oaks are green, and make no sign. But here the sun is warm even on these chill October days. Here there is a splendour of red and yellow, of russet and gold, of brown and of fiery crimson, as in some

great minster transept,  
Where lights like glories fall.

Chief among all is one tall beech tree. Its foliage is thin and scattered, but against the dark, unchanging green of the stately firs behind it, its every individual leaf is like a point of fire. Clear cut upon the shadowy spaces of the wood behind, the flaming sprays hang motionless. To right and left its fair companions are beautiful in soft tones of green and gold. On one tall oak that towers above the dark waves of the wood the change has fallen, and its great head glows as with the light of sunset. The maples of the hedgerow, gorgeous in yellow, orange, and deep red, are fitting frame to a rare scene of beauty. The path into the wood is deep under fallen leaves. A coloured rain floats lightly down among the branches. At times there stirs across the woodland slope a sudden gust

from whose unseen presence the leaves dead  
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing.

Sitting here in the shade of a tall beech tree, looking up through the brilliant canopy, the very air seems warmer for the rich light streaming down. Far off, in the dim recesses of the wood, a great maple bush, one blaze of colour, lights up the shadows like a fire. The trees are alive with birds, and among the red leaves that strew the ground is a continual stir of busy feet, of tits, of finches, searching for the fallen beech-mast. Nor birds alone. High up among the boughs of a beech near by there is the stir of some heavier figure. Nothing but a squirrel could sway the tree like that. Yes, here he comes, straight this way, racing along his airy highway, the colour of his coat and brush just in harmony with the russet of the leaves. Lightly he leaps from bough to bough, from tree to tree; and pausing at last right overhead, settles down calmly to his dinner. You can hear the wrench with which his white teeth tear the shaggy beech-mast, you can feel the hail of fragments that patter on the dead leaves at your feet.—Daily News.

LANGUAGES are the keys of science.—Bruyère.

So intense was the love of the Roman for games of hazard that wherever I have excavated the pavement of a portico, of a basilica, of a bath or any flat surface accessible to the public, I have always found gaming tables engraved or scratched on the marble or stone slabs, for the amusement of idle men, always ready to cheat each other out of their money. The evidence of this fact is to be found in the Forum, in the Basilica Julia, in the corridors of the Coliseum, on the temple of Venus and Rome in the square in front of the Portico of the Twelve Gods, and even in the House of the Vestals after its secularization in 393. Gaming tables are especially abundant in barracks such as those of the seventh battalion of vigiles near by S. Critogono, and of the police at Ostia and Porto, and of the Roman encampment near Guise in the Department of the Aisne. Sometimes, when the camp was moved from place to place, or else from Italy to the frontier of the empire, the men would not hesitate to carry the heavy tables with their luggage. Two, of pure Roman make, have been discovered at Rusicade in Numidia and at Ain-Kebira in Mauretania. Naturally enough they could not be wanting in the Prætorian camp, and in the taverns patronized by its turbulent garrison, where the time was spent in revelling and gambling and in riots ending in fights and bloodshed.—From "Gambling and Cheating in Ancient Rome," by Prof. Rodolfo Lanciani, in North American Review.

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