

FRIENDS.

A few friends, to travel with us
Up and down the path of life,
Give a zest to each enjoyment,
Pluck the sting from toil and strife;
And if rugged be the pathway—
As it will sometimes I ween,
Friendly hands will point to beauties
Which alone we have not seen.

A few friends, to gather with us
Round the sacred fires of home,
With sweet music, books, and converse;
All the world outside may gloom!
Just a few, and not the many—
Lest simplicity depart,
And formality and fashion
Take the place of brain and heart.

A few friends, in time of trouble,
When the soul is bruised and crossed,
Like a ship on stormy billows,
Crippled, lashed, and tempest tossed;
Then when helpless and forsaken,
Do we prize the precious few,
That will guide us into heaven
And still keep our bark in view.

A few friends, beyond the river,
Waiting on the farther shore,
Make us long to reach the harbor
Of the dear ones gone before:
And we strive for nobler virtues,
Scatter seeds of truth and love,
Knowing that they watch and beckon,
From the sinless realms above.

JOSH BILLINGS TO THE GIRLS.

Dear girls, are you in search of a husband? That is a pumper, and you are not requested to say yes out loud, but are expected to throw yure eyes down on to the earth as tho you was lookin for a pin, and reply to the interrogatory with a kind of draulin sigh.

Not tew press so tender a theme until it be-kums a thorn in the flesh, we will presume, to avoid argument, that you are on the look-out for something in the male line. Let me give you some small chunks of advice how to spot your future husband.

1. The man who is jellus of every little at-tun-shun which you get from some other feller, yu will find after ye are married to him he loves himself more than he does yu, and what yu mis-took for solissitu le yu will discover has changed to indifference. Jellus isn't a heart diseze; it is a liver complaint.

2. A mustash is not indispensable; it is only a little more hair, and is much like moss and other excrencencies — of en does the best on sile that won't rise anything else. Don't forget that those things which you admire in a fellow before marriage you will probably condemn in a husband after, and a mustash will get to be a very weak diet for a long time.

3. If husbands could be took on trial as Irish cooks are, two-thirds of them would probably be returned; but there don't seem to be eny law for this. Therefore, girl, yu will see that after yu get a man yu have got tew keep him, even if yu buz on him. Consequently, if you have eny kold vitiles in the hous, try him on them once in a while during the courting season, and if he swollers them well, and says he will take some more, he is a man who when blue Monday comes, will wash well.

4. Don't marry a pheller who is always tellin how iz mother doz things. It is too hard to wean a young one.

5. If a man can beat you playing on a pian-ner and kant hear a fish horn playing on the street without turning a summer set, on account of the musick that is in him, I say to leave him; he might answer to tend baby, and if you set him to hoeing out the garden, you will find you have got to do it yourself. A man whoze whole heft lies in musick (and not too hefty at that) ain't no better than a seed-litz powder, but if he luvz to listen while you sing some gentle ballad, you will find him mellow and not soft. But don't marry enybody for one virtue enny quicker th'n you would flop a man for jist one fault.

6. It is one of the most tuffest things for a female to be an old maid successfully. A great many has tried, and made a bad job of it, and had a h rd time. Everybody seems to look upon old maids jist as they do on dried herbs in the garret—handy for sickness—and therefore, girls, it ain't a mistake that you shud be willing to swop yourselves oph with some truehearted phel-low, for a husband. The swop is a good one; but don't swop for any man who is respectable jist because his father iz. You had better to be an old maid for 4,000 years, and then join the Shakers, than to buy repentance at this price. No women ever made this trial who didn't get either a phool, mean cuss, or a clown for a husband.

WOOD ENGRAVING.

The art of wood-engraving has been marvel-lously quickened by the enormous demand; and, in turn, by educating and refining that demand, the art has constantly stimulated its own develop-ment. This extraordinary progress has revealed new possibilities. Effects are now produced which had been hitherto supposed to be impos-sible, and we cannot help thinking, in view even of our own pages, and of some of the best work that we have produced, that the author of the article upon the history of the art has laid down his canons rather too rigidly. Is it quite true that wood-engraving can give nothing but form in black and white, and that a certain delicate gradation and effect of chiar-oscuro is beyond it? Color, properly speaking, of course it can not give. But to the quick sense there is, in the more exquisite work, an inexpressible softness

of refinement, suggestive, at least, of the evasive play of shadow upon color. Our author holds that a certain fineness of effect is lost in the wood which is practicable in metal, because the wood edge is too friable and readily blunted or worn. But the printing is done from the metal cast, not from the wood, so that the delicacy is unimpaired. We doubt if steel could more per-fectly represent certain of the finest and lightest effects than some of the wood-cuts in our art treasury of the Magazine.

No doubt in this art, as in all others, there is that kind of charlatantry which springs from the effort to make a certain dash and carelessness impose upon the observer for free and forcible accuracy. There is much that is printed pre-tentiously as excellent wood illustration which, as it means nothing in the drawing, can not mean anything in the engraving. The wood engraver can not be expected to supply either the invention or the skill of the draughts-man, except in those instances where he is himself both draughtsman and engraver. How-ever dexterous and consummate a musician the accompanist may be, it is not to be asked that if the singer fail, he should supply the voice also.

No dash or affectation of freedom can take the place of precision. Certain spurious effects may be produced which may impress the ignor-ant eye, but they are sure to vulgarize and de-grade the art. Michael Angelo may climb to the ceiling of a Roman villa and with a few bold strokes in charcoal he may draw in a moment a head which every anatomist and every artist will commend; Couture may be so sure of his line that he may cut the paper with his thumb-nail to indicate its certain course; but only Michael Angelo and Couture, only the great masters, after long experience and painful study and assured knowledge, can "throw off" a sketch, which is, however, not a "spirit" nor a "dash," but the carefully matured fruit of laborious and con-scientious training. Many a bright tyro writes a sketch which strikes the public taste, and he is hailed as a new genius. But his sketch is the speech of Single-speech Hamilton. De Quincey, past thirty, writes a brilliant paper for a maga-zine, and for thirty years he pours out a series of rich and brilliant papers, with constantly ac-cumulating fame, and at last, although only a magazine writer, leaves a name in English litera-ture. The secret lay, not in the fortunate "dash," but in the full mind, the various know-ledge, the literary instinct and training.

But while the very demand for fine wood-engraving leads to a supply of pinchbeck, and really, so far as art is concerned, fraudulent work, yet the beautiful art itself is so swiftly advancing, its delicacy and subtlety are devel-oping so evenly with its power, this Magazine itself is so interested to push the good work strenuously forward, that we do not willingly see its possibilities too sternly defined. When we look at our own pages, and reflect that *Harpers Monthly* led the way in the popular diffusion of wood illustrations, that it has kept pace with the astounding progress of the art, and that it is itself the monument of that ad-vance and of the present triumphs of this branch of art, we hear with incredulity that the Pillars of Hercules mark the end of exploration, and we hoist our sails for a voyage to Atlantis and the far, fortunate isles.—*Harpers*.

A STRANGE AND IMPRESSIVE CUSTOM.

I witnessed one night a most singular custom among the native South Americans, which made a deep impression on me. On returning home rather late, after accompanying some captains of my acquaintance to the landing, where their boat was waiting for them, I passed a low-roofed house, in whose well-lit room music and dancing were going on. I tried to get a look through the curtained window, but did not succeed, and was just passing on when the door opened and two men came out. A third one was just going to shut the door again, when he saw me, and ad-dressing me, asked, in the most friendly way, to come in and be welcome. Always ready to see what I could wherever I got a chance, I fol-lowed on this kind invitation, and found myself the next minute in a perfect flood of light but in a very small room crowded with people. Taking in the whole at the first glance, the room seemed rather poorly furnished, with whitewashed walls, only here and there ornamented with small and colored pictures of saints and martyrs. The tables and chairs were made of pine wood, the latter with cane bottoms; and one corner of the room, and a great part of the whole space, in fact, was taken up by a large bed covered with flower-ed curtains instead of a mosquito net, but the curtains thrown back at present to afford room for those guests who would not dance themselves. Aqua-ardente and dulces were handed round, while all, men and women—the dancers excepted—smoked their cigarillos. But the most remarkable thing in the room seemed to me a large kind of scaffold, which occupied the other corner, opposite the bed, consisting of a light frame-work, orna-mented all over with artificial flowers, little pictures of saints and a small quantity of small lighted wax candles. On the top of it a most extraordinarily well-made wax figure of a little child was seated on a low wooden chair, dressed in a snow-white little frock; he eyes were closed, the pale cheeks tinged by a soft, rosy hue, and the whole figure perfectly strewn with flowers. It was so deceptive that when I drew near at first I thought it a real child; while a young woman below it, pale and with tears in her eyes, might

very well have been the mother. But that was most certainly a mistake, for at this moment one of the men stepped up to her and invited her to the dance, and a few minutes afterwards she was one of the merriest in the crowd. But it must really be a child! no sculptor could have formed that little face so exquisitely; and now one light went out, close to the little head, and the cheek lost its rosy hue. My neighbors at last remarked the attention with which I looked upon the figure, or child, whichever it was, and the nearest one informed me, as far as I could understand him, that the little thing up there was really the child of the woman with the pale face, who was dancing just then so merrily. The whole festivity, in fact, was only on account of that little angel. I shook my head doubtfully, and my neighbor, to con-vince me, took my arm and led me to the frame, where I had to step upon the chair and nearest table, and touch the cheek and hand of the child. It was a corpse! And the mother, seeing I had doubted it, but was now convinced, came up to me and smilingly told me it had been her child, and was now a little angel in heaven. The guitars and caques commenced wildly again, and she had to return to dance. I left the house as in a dream, but afterwards heard the explanation of this ceremony. If a little child—I believe up to four years of age—dies in Chili it is thought to go straight to heaven, and become a little angel, the mother being prouder of that, before the eyes of the world at least, than if she had reared her child to happy man or womanhood. The little corpse is exhibited then, as I had seen it; and they often continue dancing and singing around it till it dis-plays signs of petrification. But the mother, whatever the feelings of her heart may be, must laugh, and sing, and dance. She dare not give way to any selfish wishes—for is not the happiness of her child secured? Poor mother!

THE PRISONER.

"So the lad has chosen death. The Lord be with him," said Le Père Caron, solemnly. He was one of the devoted band of Waldenses who endured such hardships and perils in the reli-gious persecutions of 1600.

"He was a brave lad. I loved him as my own son," said La Mère Caron, wiping her tear-ful eyes. "Have you never a word to say, Aline, that you stand there so still and cold? You said plenty when the boy was amongst us."

Aline Caron, fair-haired and blue-eyed, an-swered not, but presently she glided from the house and stood alone with quivering lips and clasped hands in the sunset flush that fell over the peaks of the Col. St. Julien. What could she say? Can you lay bare your heart's core in a few set words? And her whole heart and life were bound up in him whose fate she had just heard.

He was her lover, Julien Lunel. He had ren-dered himself conspicuous even among that band of heroes, by his bravery in the Waldensian cause, and had been seized by the Inquisition, carried before the fierce Marquis of Angrogne, and lay fettered in a tower of the neighboring castle. Aline had known this for a month past, and morning and evening had watched from the valley the light shine upon the grating of his prison window, and prayed for his release; but to day the news had come that Julien had faced the tribunal, and, rather than adjure his faith, had chosen death, and the messenger added in Aline's ear, "Julien had not long to live, and would fain see her before he died." The girl had al-ready gone with trembling steps to the castle gate and piteously besought an interview with her lover, but the brutal warders cursed her for a heretic, and the rough soldiery had thrust her back with coarse jests that brought the sensitive blood to her cheeks. Now, as she glanced up-wards at the dark pile reared defiantly against the sky's pure background, a resolve born of despair leapt into her heart, and she vowed pas-sionately to herself that she would see him, at all hazards, though she perished in the attempt.

The fortress stood on a precipitous height, flanked with hard rocks, whose sides were riven with treacherous clefts and seamed with water-courses. Seen from below, it looked inaccessible, yet up those perilous crags, where scarce the chamois-hunter could find footing, the brave Vandois maiden resolved to go. Her feet had been light on the mountain paths since her childhood, and the thought of her lover drove all fear from her breast. She waited till midnight, when all the valley was still, and then, stealing from her chamber, she made her way alone up the steep. It was a strange venture for a girl. Far off she heard the low thunder of the falling avalanche; nearer the winds fought together down the wild gorges, pursuing and retreating from each other over the chasm's brink, and rolling fainter and fainter down its unfathomable depths. But the stars cheered her, and the pines fringing the chasm lifted spectral arms in the wan moon-light, and pointed her onward—onward—ver onward. . . . Julien could not sleep that night. He dragged himself with pain (for his fetters were heavy) to his window bars, and gazed for the last time at the wonder of the moonlight upon the eternal snow peaks. He was not afraid of death, for the same dauntless spirit that in-spired Janavel and Jayer fired his pulses, and he rejoiced to be able to add his name to the list of those who had died nobly for their freedom and their God.

"Alas! our valleys," he murmured. "If my life were the only sacrifice needed, how gladly would I lay it down; but it is but a drop in the red stream that must flow before the voice of

prayer can arise without fear from your ruined homesteads."

Then he thought of Aline, and with the thought the peace that possessed his soul fled. A sharp quiver of agony shook his frame. It was hard to die without one farewell. Suddenly he started. Was it a vision he saw before him, or was the pale beautiful face of an angel sent to strengthen him to the end? The vision spoke one word—"Julien!" And their hands met, and he knew her. Words could not tell the bitter sweetness of that meeting. They could hardly tell them-selves of what they talked. The night waned, dawn broke, and yet they seemed heedless of the time. A mountain bird, awakened from its nest by the gathering light, swept past them towards the valley, and its pinions, cleaving the blue air, aroused them to the consciousness that they must separate.

"I cannot take you in my arms," he said, "but kiss me, Aline, for the last time."

He had pleaded for a kiss many a time in the happy valley days, and she had refused him co-quettishly; but the time for trifling had gone over, and she laid her face against the cold bars, and they kissed each other sadly and lingeringly.

"Our next will be in heaven," she whispered; and then, with unnatural calmness, she smiled as she used to smile, and they loosed hands for ever, and she turned away.

Julien was shot at noon in the great square of the castle, and he met the bullets without flinch-ing, men said. When they told Aline she smiled again, with a far-away look in her eyes, so that the neighbors marvelled and said, "She never loved him."

But, by-and-by, they missed her, and, after a wild search of a night and a day, they found her lying beneath his prison-window. And, when they lifted her, she was dead.

THE FOLK LORE OF LOWER CANADA.

There are two species of loup-garou in Lower Canada: one that kills and eats children, and another that, like the feux-follets, seeks the destruction of souls. The former is never seen except by children, whose evidence is not wor-thy of credence, inasmuch as the loup-garou appears to wicked children only; but the exist-ence of the latter has been vouched for by thou-sands of good habitants. A habitant, deep in the back-woods of the St. Maurice or Lac St. Jean, has said his prayers, and is preparing to turn in for the night, when he hears a shout outside, and, going to the door, is told by a belated teamster bound for the shanties that his neigh-bor at the "clearing," ten miles away, is lying at the point of death, and that there is no priest with fifty miles. The habitant harnesses his horses, and starts without delay, taking with him the bottle of holy water he brought from his native parish at Easter, his beads, and *petit Alher*, a collection of prayers. The wind is moaning in the forest, and the trees throw gaunt shadows upon the snow. Suddenly he hears the sound of rushing feet, and, looking over his shoulder as he plies his horses with the whip, discovers to his horror that he is being pursued by a loup-garou. The fiend resembles a huge wolf, but its cry is human, and its eyes are like the lights of the feux-follets. The habitant mutters a prayer, and drives furiously. It is a hard race through the woods and over the frozen streams, but, thanks to the good Ste. Anne, the patronne of Lower Canada and the kind protector of backwoodsmen and sea-faring men, the habitant reached the house first, and, placing the open prayer-book on the table, de-fies the loup-garou to cross the threshold. He is in time to sprinkle the dying man with a holy water, receive his last words, and close his eyes. Then, fastening his beads upon the lintel, to preserve the window and children from the loup-garou, he sets out to call the neighbors and fetch the priest, that the body may receive Christian burial. It is proper to add that in the good old times, when the habitant was blessed with abundant harvests from a virgin soil, and hard drinking was the rule, — *Il est soit comme dans les bonnes années* is a proverb, — loup-garous were more numerous than they are now.—*Atlantic*.

HUMOROUS.

THE æsthetes now speak of hash as "a mo-saic."

In a game of cards, a good deal depends on good play, and good play on a good deal.

AN exchange says:—"Gas is all right in the main, but gets all wrong in the metres."

THERE are two reasons why we don't trust a man. One is because we don't know him, and the other because we do.

"YOU are to be hanged," said an Irish judge, when addressing a prisoner, "and I hope it will prove a warning to you."

"How greedy you are," said one little girl to another, who had just taken the best apple on the dish. "I was just going to take that."

"WHAT plan," said an actor to another, "shall I adopt to fill the house at my benefit?" "Invite your creditors," was the tart reply.

A COXSQUIRE the other day asked a stammering barber's boy, "Did you ever shave a monkey?" "No, sir," said the boy, "but if you will sit down I'll t-try."

AN Irish clerk who was snowed up in a train during the recent severe storm telegraphed to his firm in the city:—"I shall not be at the office to-day, as I have not got home yesterday yet."

TOWARD the conclusion of a diplomatic din-ner, a Frenchman selected a toothpick from a tray lying near him, and politely passed the receptacle to his neighbor, a Turk, who declined his offer, exclaiming, "No, thank you; I have already eaten two of these things, and I want no more."