

POETRY.

SUMMER AND WINTER EVENINGS.

BY SHARA.

From Fraser's Magazine.

SUMMER EVENING.

How bright, and yet how calm, this eve!
Above, below, all seems to me
So lovely, that we might believe
'Twas nature's jubilee.
For earth and sky, this glorious even,
Seems glowing with the hues of heaven.
How beautiful that vivid sky,
Lit by the parting sun's last rays!
We gaze, till it appears more nigh—
And fancy, as we gaze,
That deep blue sky a boundless sea,
Covered with vessels gloriously.
Yes! each dark cloud a barque appears,
Each whiter one the foam—
There one to distant countries steers,
While these sail quick towards home;
And all look most intensely bright,
Glowing in heaven's own glorious light.
Turn now towards earth, and even here
All, all is beauty and repose—
The perfume-breathing evening air
Is wafted o'er the rose;
While a thousand light and glowing flowers
Are cooled with dew in these evening hours.
And hushed the skylark's merry song,
And silent all the humming bees:
The soft west wind that sighs among
Those gently waving trees,
Seems to lament each parting ray,
Until the next return of day.

WINTER EVENING.

The bright and glowing summer's past;
'Tis winter, and in storm and rain
The day was darkened,—now at last
The sun appears again—
Just for a moment glads our sight,
And seen 'midst clouds seems doubly bright.
Again look upwards,—once again
Behold the wintry sun has set;
None of those summer barques remain:
A nobler image yet
Strikes on the Christian gazer's mind,
And leaves all others far behind.
The sun, whose way through that expanse
Has been since first his course began,
Through storms and clouds, seems to our glance
A fitting type of man;
For thus the Christian's narrow way
With clouds is darkened day by day.
Thus, as the sun in winter's gloom
Sinks more than ever bright,
The Christian's hopes his way illumines,
And gild his path with light:
As the sun sets, the Christian dies,—
Both on a brighter, happier day to rise.

SELECTIONS.

SCENE IN THE EARLY DAYS OF CATHERINE OF RUSSIA.—But although the life of the future emperor and his bride was one of comparative seclusion, there were certain state occasions,—such as the galas held on the imperial birthday,—when the ostentatious vanity of Elizabeth overcame even her antipathies;—when the satisfaction of seeing the inheritors of her power humbly kneeling at her foot-stool, arrayed in the splendours vouchsafed by her fearless munificence, induced her to parade the homage of the Duke and Duchess of Holstein in presence of the Boyars of her court. To know that her foot was upon the neck of those whom a word of her lips might elevate to the glories of autocracy, or plunge into the depths of a dungeon, consoled him for the spectacle of the resplendent fairness and striking dignity of her nephew's bride! It was on one of these occasions,—a gorgeous birth-night ball, which assembled in the illuminated halls of the winter palace of St. Petersburg the diplomatic representatives of every nation of Europe and the gorgeous envoys of various Asiatic princes, to vie with the adulation of the haughty but abject Boyars of Muscovy,—that Catherine, attended by her lady in waiting and favourite maid of honour—the Princesses Daszkoff and Axinia Dulgorucki—appeared on an especial invitation from Elizabeth, in the courtly throng. Wearing by the subjection to which she was condemned, or piqued, perhaps, by the sarcasms with which the rumours of court malice assured her that Prince Charles of Saxony and others were in the habit of gratifying the empress at her expense, the grand duchess for once to lay aside her policy, and brave all hazards of exasperating the superannuated etiquette. Instead of conforming to the tasteless costume of the day, with its formalities of hoop and powder, or to the national uniform habitually worn by Elizabeth, the grand duchess entered the ball-room arrayed in a flowing robe of pearly satin; her auburn hair falling in natural curls on her shoulders; her hair encircled by a wreath of diamonds, the marriage-gift of her mother, the princess of Anhalt-Zerbst; and her white draperies looped up by a solitary of matchless beauty, a present from the empress. A general murmur of admiration arose among the brilliant assemblage, as the grand chamberlain formally preceded her highness towards the throne, under which Elizabeth was seated; and it was doubtful only whether the involuntary exclamations of delight thus infringing all

the rules of courtly etiquette (as the duchess assuming the respectful demeanour of a subject, advanced towards the throne, through a crowd of robes and uniforms of gold and silver)—were lavished exclusively on the dignified Catherine, or shared by the blushing Axinia, who was compelled to follow bearing the train of her mistress. Even the grand duchess, dauntless as she was, seemed for a moment fluttered by the withering sneer with which Elizabeth, having received her compliments, bade her arise from her knees—and found the attention of the circle engrossed by her singular costume;—the men all terror lest their attention, becoming dangerously apparent, should draw upon them the destiny of the exiled Saltikof. "You are come here, madam, I conclude, to dance?" said the empress, with a sarcastic glance at her dress. "We have been accustomed to see the baladins and mimes of our French ballet attired in a manner equally characteristic. Your highness will oblige me by opening the ball. Prince Schuvaloff!" she continued, addressing the chamberlain, whose golden key trembled under the asperity of the imperial frown.—"A minuet for the Duchess of Holstein!" At any other time the vain and self-possessed Catherine would have gloried in the prospect of an exhibition calculated to fix the eyes of the whole court upon her person: for she danced with dignity and grace, and was pre-assured of the suffrages of the spectators. But standing there, a mark for the scorn of the scorners, a woman, unsupported by the esteem of her husband, a princess, defrauded of the common privileges of her rank—she had the mortification of perceiving, by the ironical wave of the Duke of Courland's head, in reply to a whisper from the grand chamberlain, that he who, by precedence of rank ought to have been her partner, peremptorily declined the honour. The indignity brought tears of wounded pride into her eyes; her colour went and came; and the panting of her bosom was perceptible even through her diamond zone. But this perturbation was more propitious to her cause than she was aware of. Amid that display of feminine emotion, her delicate loveliness became a thousand times more lovely; and the minions of the empress were more vexed than surprised when, after a few moments' conference with the grand chamberlain, the Count Poniatofski, the new representative of Poland, stepped forward, and with a graceful and reverential obeisance to the young princess, worthy the grandson of princess Czartoryska and the disciple of Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, took the hand of the trembling duchess, to lead her to the centre of a space left open before the imperial throne. Having again bowed humbly to his illustrious partner, the orchestra, accepting the signal, poured forth its spirit-stirring strains. With the eyes of the vindictive empress and four hundred jealous courtiers fixed upon their movements; it is not to be supposed that the young couple, whose beauty of person, grace of deportment, and splendid attire, were worthy some fairy prince and princess of romance, found a single moment for a word of communication. But when, in the concluding movement of the minuet, they approached each other for the parting salutation, Catherine contrived to pour the effulgence of her bright blue eyes full upon her gallant cavalier. The tears of her mortification, scarcely yet dry upon those silken lashes, tended to impart a sweeter and more womanly expression to the smile of grateful admiration with which she strove to repay his chivalrous devotion. The young duchess was fully able to appreciate the moral courage and self-sacrifice which had braved, in her favour, the malignant spirit of her imperial kinswoman; and if ever the passing glance of woman's eye succeeded in revealing the fervour of wakening sympathy, it was that which caused the heart of Poniatofski to beat, and his hand to tremble, as he reverentially uncovered his head at the conclusion of the minuet, to led his accomplished partner to her place at the right hand of the throne.—*Polish Tales.*

IRON HOUSES.—The new process for smelting iron by raw coal and hot air blast, is producing a great change in the iron trade, and it is anticipated by good judges, that no long period will elapse before cast iron of the quality known as No. 1, will be manufactured at the cost of about 40s. or 45s. per ton. When this takes place generally, it must inevitably produce an effect which will pervade almost every condition of society. Rich and poor will, by degrees, find themselves inclosed in iron cages; and fir joists, and slate roofs, will become things to be alluded to as betokening something venerable from antiquity. The introduction of iron into building operations will, no doubt, spread rapidly, as the price of cast iron falls; and, if unskillfully done at the outset, we may have a number of imperishable monuments of bad taste wherever we go. It is, therefore, of importance that good examples should be given in time, and that architects should be prepared for the change, so as not to leave the matter to the caprice or taste of the workmen of the foundries.—*London's Encyclopaedia of Architecture.*

CHESS AND CARDS COMPARED.—The preference which Franklin gives to cards over

chess can only be considered a piece of special pleading intended to display the ingenuity of the advocate. Chess is not merely a pastime:—to excel in it, requires the continual exercise of powers of combining and calculating to as great a degree as in studying the mathematics; and if these last are cultivated by a man, not for the practical use to be made of them in after life, but solely for the habits of reasoning, they tend to produce, why should not chess be encouraged with the same views, and with the additional advantage of amusing while it instructs? There is no danger that it will lead to gambling, and still less to other excesses. Chess-players, in fact, have long formed a temperance society, whose members religiously confine themselves to coffee and cigars: and though there are many who think cards an abomination, yet chess has ever been excepted from the rigid interdict of the most fastidious puritan.—*Monthly Magazine.*

PERSIAN ASTROLOGERS.—There is nothing whatever done in Persia without an astrologer first gives his opinion respecting it. Sir John Malcolm relates that a certain Persian ambassador was once about to set out for India on a mission. His excellency's astrologer told him that he must not leave his house by the ordinary door, for that there was an evil star in the heavens which shed a malignant influence upon the house in that direction. The ambassador then, in order to leave the premises, had a hole made in one of the walls at the side of his mansion, but he found when he passed through it that he got into the residence of a neighbour; in short, his excellency had to make breaches in five succeeding walls in order to pass into the street, in a quarter which was shut out from the power of the evil constellation. In the street, however, a fresh obstacle presented itself, for he had already ascertained that the mischievous influence presided as much upon the gate of the fort as upon the door of his house. Under these circumstances, not being able to proceed by land in the natural road, he took a boat, in order to land and pursue his journey to India; two miles off. But the roughness of the sea forbade the experiment, and it is an absolute fact, that permission was granted by the governor of the town to the ambassador to throw down a part of its wall, in order to let out the gallant diplomatist by a passage which was luckily deserted by the ill-omened star.

TASTE OF ENGLISH TRAVELLERS.—In the neighbourhood of Clisson stands a spot called the Garenne, which is so celebrated for its beauties that it draws annually a number of visitors merely to witness them. Like all places of general resort, Garenne has its album, in which, as in a mirror, every fool's mind is faithfully represented. According to that fatal law, which impels the inhabitants of this our favoured nation to do every thing in a way different from every other people in the world, we find that even in the album of Garenne there is a proof of its uniformity; for, whilst every visitor, from every land, wrote praises of the charms around him, in the album, the entry made by a single Englishman alone was in contradiction to the general judgment. That entry was to the following effect:—"Francis Fisher, Nov. 2, 1831, drove to Clisson, in a hard rain, and saw nothing which even in fine weather could repay a solitary excursion." No one but an Englishman, assuredly, could think of setting off for pleasure, all alone in his cab, in search of the picturesque, on a rainy day in November; "that month," adds our author, with sarcastic force, "so peculiarly set aside for his countrymen to hang or drown themselves."

Piron the celebrated French academian, was, one morning, walking homewards from Notre Dame, when he was accosted by a blind man, who asked him for charity; he replied, in the language of St. Peter, that he had neither gold nor silver; but of that which he possessed he would readily bestow some portion on the mendicant. He thereupon took out his tablets, and wrote the following verses, which he pinned to the old man's breast:

You that enjoy the light of day,
Relieve a wretched blind man, pray:
Unseen by me, your alms let fall,
He sees them clear, who sees us all;
And when his rays remove all shade,
In sight of all, you'll be repaid.

ANECDOTE OF THE LAIRD OF LOGAN.—This facetious person was once consulted by one of his spendthrift companions as to the best method of laying out the remaining fragments of his patrimony, so as to secure a competency for his future support—"Buy Drumshough," said the Laird, with a knowing look. "Drumshough!" cried the other in astonishment, "what the d—l would I do wi' Drumshough? it's naething but a hatter o' peat pots frae the ta' end to the tither." "That's my reason for advising the purchase," said Logan, "for ye wadna be able to run through it in a hurry."

METAPHORS.—The following novel and interesting intelligence is contained in the Clonmel Advertiser:—"Wheat is looking up since our last." A Waterford paper improved upon the phrase, by announcing to

the bacon-merchants, "Dead pigs are looking up."

At the fashionable balls this season the floors are waxed, instead of being chalked, as heretofore. At one of these assemblies a young lady, to the great dismay of herself and her partner, found she had lost her shoe, which, after a search, was found sticking to the floor.—*Globe.*

ANCIENT STATUE.—There is now preserved in the Carmelite Church, in White Friar-street, Dublin, a very interesting sample of ancient sculpture—a statue of the Virgin, with the *Infant Jesus in her arms*, carved in Irish oak, as large as life. The style of the execution is dry and gothic, yet it has considerable merit, and is by many attributed to some pupil of Albert Durer's school, to whose time and manner it seems to belong. There are some traditional circumstances relative to the preservation of this statue, which are interesting. It was originally a distinguished ornament in St. Mary's Abbey, at the north side of Dublin, where it was not less an object of religious reverence than of admiration for the beauty of its construction. (See Archdall's Monasticon.) Its fame, however, was lost when the religious house in which it was deposited was suppressed. The Abbey was given to the Earl of Ormond for stables for his train, and the beautiful relic alluded to was condemned, and supposed to have been consigned to the flames. One half of the statue was actually burned, but it was fortunately the less important moiety, and when placed in a niche, the deficiency is somewhat concealed. The portion remaining was carried by some person to a neighbouring inn-yard, where with its face buried in the ground, and the hollow trunk appearing uppermost, it was appropriated to the ignoble purpose of a pig-trough! In this situation it remained until the irreligious tempest had subsided, and the vandalism of the Iconoclasts had passed away, and then it was restored to its ancient respect in the humble chapel of St. Michan's parish (Mary's-lane), which had timidly ventured to rise out of the ruins of the great monastery, to which the statue originally belonged. During the long night of its obscurity a great change had, however, taken place in the spirit of the times, more dangerous to its safety than even the abhorrence of its Iconoclast enemies. No longer an object of admiration to any except the curious antiquary, it was considered of such little value by its owners, that within the last few years the ancient silver crown which adorned the head was sold, for its mere intrinsic value, and melted down as old plate. The statue itself would most probably have shared the fate of its coronet, had it been composed of an equally precious material, but fortunately it was rescued for a trifling sum, by the very Reverend John Spratt, Prior of the Carmelite Convent, White Friar-street, where it is at present deposited, at the Epistle side of the High Altar.—*Tipperary Free Press.*

SNUFFING CANDLES.—When the wick of the candle is permitted to gain an unusual length, the expenditure of the inflammable material is so great as to be a consideration of some moment to the economist; besides, it does not yield a proportional degree of light—on the contrary, the light is diminished by the excess of the inflammable matter being more than can undergo a perfect combustion; fuliginous matter consequently interferes, and reduces its amount of illumination.—*Murray on Flame and Safety Lamps.*

EXTINCTION OF FLAME.—It is of importance to observe that flame, by a statical law, ever tends upwards. Attention to this circumstance might be the means of preventing many a fatal issue when females clothes accidentally take fire. Let the individual be instantly thrown down on the floor, and the flames are as immediately subdued. A few moments in an upright position are so many moments of imminent peril, which is rendered almost certainly fatal, if the individual endeavours to make an escape by the doorway, for the current of air imparts energy to the devouring element. With the simple precaution referred to, rugs or other wrappers are unnecessary.—*Murray on Flame and Safety Lamps.*

INDUSTRIOUS FEMALE POLITICIANS.—During the discussion of the Sugar Tariff, in the French Chamber of Deputies, lately, two ladies in a conspicuous part of the gallery, finding, we presume, the discussion not over amusing, began to employ themselves in embroidering, recalling the old days of the revolution, when good housewives used regularly to take their knitting, and turn the legislative palace into a work-room. The president, on observing the fair embroiderers, sent a huissier round to them to hint that their industry would be better employed at home, on which the work promptly disappeared.—*Galignani's Messenger.*

Corneille was killed by the unkindness of Louis XIV. The poet presumed to offer his majesty advice, and the king resented this impertinence by utter neglect.

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