

SONNET.

(Translated from Alfred de Musset.)

E'en if the bitter martyrdom of love
By this dead heart could be endured once more,
E'en if a flower of hope might bloom above
My life's true pathway, as in days of yore;
E'en if thy purity and girlish grace
Loved me from pity of my care-worn brow,
Dear child, so innocent and fair of face,
To thee my rapture I would ne'er avow.
Yet thou wilt love hereafter, I foresee—
When all on earth save love then wilt despise,
Oh! then remember how I worshipped thee
With a chaste passion. 'Mid thy smiles or sighs
My hand to thee shall still be true as steel,
And my fond heart each throb of thine shall feel!

Montreal.

GEO. MURRAY.

RIDDLES.

BY REV. FREDERICK R. MARVIN.

That our riddles are degenerating into mere jeu d'esprit is a great calamity. When the solemn questions of life and destiny are changed into idle conceits, of what consequence can it be how they are answered? The fatal riddle of the sphinx was no matter of wit and laughter. The strange question: "What being has four feet, two feet and three feet; only one voice; but whose feet vary, and when it has most, is weakest?" so moved the men of Thebes that they gave Oedipus their kingdom and the hand of the queen for answering, "Man!" It required *oido-pous*, swollen feet, to explain a riddle of the feet, and a man under the pressure of necessity to solve the problem of mankind. The fable relates that when the sphinx found her occupation gone she leaped from a high rock; but she certainly did not destroy herself, for the poet's lines are still true:

The sphinx is drowsy,
Her wings are furled;
Her ear is heavy,
She broods on the world.

She will continue to "brood on the world," every moment demanding "the fate of the man-child and the meaning of man." They who solve the riddle of their own humanity save themselves and others, while all who fail are devoured. It was no shrewd guess on the part of Oedipus—he was the answer, and in self-recognition he solved the problem. It took the right man, but the moment of necessity was needed to bring him out. That moment, so fatal to all the fools in Thebes, was the coronation of Oedipus. For nothing should a wise man return deeper thanks than for necessity. It brings him in contact with himself, disciplines his affections, ripens his understanding, strengthens his nature and enriches his experience; it thrusts goodness and greatness upon him—it does more, it reveals to him the goodness and greatness latent in his nature. A moment of necessity is worth an age of opportunity. Ohnesargen's sphinx in six volumes shows us how the riddle is fallen from its high place. A riddle is now only a conundrum, and often a very coarse one at that. The "Demands Joyous," the treatise of the Abbé Cotiro, whose modesty did not prevent him from assuming the title, "Le Père de l'Enigme," and the *Mercure de France* all bear witness to the degradation of the riddle.

Samson's riddle is personal and comes nearer to our idea of an enigma, but the men of his time were deeply exercised over its solution. "Samson said, 'Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness.' And they could not in three days expound the riddle. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they said unto Samson's wife, 'Entice thy husband, that he may declare unto us the riddle, lest we burn thee and thy father's house with fire.' And Samson's wife wept before him and said, 'Thou dost but hate me, and lovest me not: thou hast put forth a riddle unto the children of my people and hast not told it me.' And he said unto her, 'Behold I have not told it to my father nor my mother, and shall I tell it thee?' And she wept before him the seven days, while their feast lasted; and it came to pass on the seventh day that he told her, because she lay sore upon him; and she told the riddle to the children of her people. And the men of the city said unto him on the seventh day before the sun went down, 'What is sweeter than honey? and what is stronger than a lion?' And he said unto them, 'If ye had not ploughed with my heifer, ye had not found out my riddle.'—Judges xiv., 14—18. The riddle was one of rare ingenuity, and in the original could be turned in every conceivable direction without disclosing its true meaning. It was clear as glass, and yet so obscure that the Philistines utterly failed to solve it until they ploughed with Samson's heifer. The riddle has a curious parallel in the German story of a woman who interceded for her husband. The man was under sentence of death, but the judges promised to release him if his wife would give them a riddle they could not solve. The woman remembered that she had that day passed a dead horse by the roadside, and that between its ribs was a bird's nest containing six young birds, which she took with her. She therefore propounded this riddle:

As ik bin glück, as ik wedder kam,
Den Lebendigen ik uet den Doden nam.
Sijn (seels) de glückes de Sazwen (den siebenten) quit,
Raet to, gy Herren, nu list tyt."

* As I came along, I took the living out of the dead; six got quit of the seventh; guess away, my masters, now is the time.

The judges had no heifer to plough with, and so the culprit was released.

Some of Solomon's Proverbs are, strictly speaking, riddles. Josephus describes a contest in riddles, in which Solomon vanquished Hiram, King of Tyre, and was himself defeated by one of Hiram's subjects. An English writer calls it a philosophical gambling match. Large sums of money were lost and won at ancient riddle-matches. The "hard questions" with which the Queen of Sheba proved Solomon are believed to have been riddles. Erasmus thinks the Saviour employed the riddle in Matthew xii., 43—45. We have a riddle in Revelation xiii., 16, and a challenge to its solution in the eighteenth verse. The Syriac of Theocritus is a famous example of the classic enigma. Homer's death is said to have been caused by mortification at not being able to solve a riddle. The most inexplicable riddle of the ancients is called, from a Latin inscription at Bologna, "Aelia Laelia Crispis," and may be translated into English thus:

AELIA LAELIA CRISPIS.

Neither man, nor woman, nor androgyne;
Neither girl, nor boy, nor old;
Neither wife nor maid;
But all (of these).

Carried off neither by hunger, nor sword, nor poison;
But by all (of them).
Neither in heaven, nor in the water, nor in the earth;
But biding everywhere.

LUCIUS AGATHO PRISCUS.

Neither the husband, nor lover, nor friend;
Neither grieving, nor rejoicing, nor weeping;
But all (of these).

This—neither a pile, nor a pyramid, nor a sepulchre
That is built, he knows and knows not (which it is).
It is a sepulchre containing no corpse within it;
It is a corpse with no sepulchre containing it;
But the corpse and the sepulchre are one and the same.

—Translated by E. Cobham Brewer.

Oriental riddles are mostly in the form of poetry; even the impromptu "cup-question," given out at a festival or banquet, must be in verse. When the riddle was published the author appended the answer "up-side-down." Here are two illustrations from Hariri, elegantly translated by Rev. William R. Alger:

It is a more prodigious tree,
A weaker man it seems to be.
It is its fate to join with all
The solid things upon this ball.
But with the falling of its foe—
How strange it is!—itself doth go.

When the sun dies,
The shadow dies.

What dried-up stick, before or since the flood,
Was turned into a thing of flesh and blood?

His life did Moses make
Of the staff which he took.

One of the best forms of the riddle is the anagram, specimens of which may be found in Hebrew literature. The ancient Jews ascribed to it cabalistic and occult qualities. Plato entertained curious superstitions with regard to it, and thought that every man's destiny might be discovered from his anagram. The solemn Puritans employed it in sermons and hymns, and for political purposes. Thus Cotton Mather, extolling the virtues of John Wilson, the first pastor in Boston, speaks of

His care to guide his flock and feed his lambs
By words, works, prayers, psalms, aims and anagrams.

Camden has devoted considerable space in "Remains" to the subject of anagrams, and a very pleasing chapter on both anagrams and echoes may be found in Disraeli's "Curiosities of Literature." The best of all anagrams is that which changes Pilate's question to our Saviour—*Quid est veritas?*—into the only true answer, *E-t vir qui adest*. The author of the famous anagram is unknown, but he was certainly a very devout and skilful artist in words. Some of the most ingenious and interesting of the many anagrams on record are: Charles James Stuart (James I.), claims Arthur's Seat; Marie Touchet (Mistress of Charles IX.), *Je charme tout*; Frère Jacques Clement (assassin of Henry III.), *C'est l'enfer qui m'a crée*; Georgius Monke, Dux de Aumarle, *Ergo regem reduxit* An. Sa. MDCLV.; Sir Roger Charles Doughty Tieborne, Baronet, You horrid butcher, Orton, biggest rascal here; Horatio Nelson, Honor est Nilo. Lady Eleanor Davies, wife of the poet Sir John Davies, thought herself a prophetess, because she found in her name the anagram "Reveal, O Daniel!" She published a number of mad predictions of questionable patriotism which brought down upon her the vengeance of the authorities. The discovery of the following anagram robbed the good lady of her dear delusion—"Dame Eleanor Davies, never so mad a ladie!" It was a better anagram than the first, which had an L that did not belong to it, and was wanting by an S. Frenzelius, an eccentric German, boasted that for fifty years he had kept up the practice of celebrating, by way of obituary, the names of distinguished persons "called down into the grave," and that in every case he had produced a successful anagram. He tells us that the cheerful occupation was attended with physical torments resembling the death-pangs of the persons whose names he anagrammatized.

The modern riddle is generally a puzzle—sometimes it is little more than a coarse jest. Having no object in view but that of amusement it is so arranged as to provoke laughter. Here is a specimen from the sixteenth century—riddles have not improved since then: "What is the worst bestowed charity that one can give?

Alms to a blind man; for he would be glad to see the person hanged that gave it to him." Here is a riddle in the form of a conundrum and bearing evidence of very recent construction: "Why is this insurance policy a contradictory thing? Because when I can't sell it I can-*cel* it; and when I can-*cel* it I can't sell it." Schiller sought to restore the riddle to its original religious solemnity, and he succeeded so far as to invest it with a certain literary finish, but no farther. Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes has given us one of the most ingenious of rhymed riddles.

"I'm going to blank," with falling breath,
The falling gladiator said;
Unconquered, he "consents to death;"
One gasp—the hero's soul has fled.
"I'm going to blank," the school-boy cried;
Two sugared sweets his hands display—
Like snow-flakes in the ocean tide
They vanish, melted both away.
Tell with one verb, or I'll tell you,
What each was just about to do.

From a dozen answers to the above we select two:

"Succumb," the gladiator groans,
And breathes away his life with moans;
"Suck 'em," the school-boy cries in glee—
You needn't, Dr. Holmes, tell me—SUCKER.

This blank, blank verse is well, no doubt,
Although it breathes a Holmesian strain;
But certain facts have been left out,
Which mark this interesting twain.
Obedient to some mystic plan,
Like language still their lips employ—
"I'm gladiator," sighs the man,
"I'm glad I ate 'em," cries the boy.
And he whom mortal thrust hath pricked
Quite fails his rival to outdo,
For while he owns he's badly licked,
The school-boy boasts that he's licked two.

THE LAWYER WHO WOULDN'T GET UP.

An amusing story of Daines Barrington, Recorder of Bristol, is related by one of the English press. Having to appear for a plaintiff in a case at Clonmel, he let into the defendant in unmeasured terms. The individual inveighed against not being present, only heard of the invectives. After Barrington, however, had got back to Dublin, the defendant, a Tipperary man, named Foley, lost no time in paying his compliments to the counsel.

He rode all day and night, and, covered with sleet, arrived before Barrington's residence in Harcourt street, Dublin. Throwing the reins of his smoking horse over the railing of the area, he announced his arrival by a thundering knock at the door. Barrington's valet answered the summons, and opening the street door, beheld the apparition of the rough-coated Tipperary fire-eater, with a large stick under his arm, and the sleet sticking to his bushy whiskers.

"Is your master up?" demanded the visitor, in a voice that gave some intimation of the object of his journey.

"No."
"Then give him my compliments, and say Mr. Foley—he'll know the name—will be glad to see him."

The valet went upstairs and told his master, who was in bed, the purpose of his visit.

"Then don't let Mr. Foley in, for your life," said Barrington, "for it is not a hare nor a brace of ducks that he has come to present me with."

The man was leaving the bedroom, when a rough, wet coat pushed by him, and a thick voice said:

"By your leave," and at the same time Mr. Foley entered the bedroom.

"You know my business, sir," said he to Barrington. "I have made a journey to teach you manners, and it's not my purpose to return until I have broken every bone in your body," and at the same time he cut a figure of eight with his shillalah before the cheval-glass.

"You do not mean to say you would murder me in bed?"

"No," replied the other; "but get up as soon as you can."

"Yes," replied Daines, "that you might fell me the moment I put myself out of the blankets."

"No," replied the other; "I pledge you my word not to touch you until you are out of bed."

"You won't?"

"No."

"Upon your honour?"

"Upon your honour."

"This is enough," said Daines, turning over and making himself comfortable, and seeming as though he meant to fall asleep. "I have the honor of an Irish gentleman, and may rest as safe as though I were under the Castle guard."

The Tipperary salamander looked marvelously astonished at the pretended sleeper, but soon Daines began to snore.

"Halloa!" said Mr. Foley; "ain't you going to get up?"

"No," said Daines; "I have the word of an Irish gentleman that he will not strike me in bed, and I am sure I am not going to get up to have my bones broken. I shall never get up again. In the meantime, Mr. Foley, if you should want your breakfast, ring the bell; the best in the house is at your service. The morning paper will be here presently, but be sure and air it before reading, for there is nothing from which a man so quickly catches cold as reading a damp journal." And he affected to go to sleep.

The Irishman had fun in him as well as ferocity; he could not resist the cunning of the counsel.

"Get up, Mr. Barrington, for in bed or out of bed I haven't the pluck to hurt so droll a heart."

The result was that in less than an hour afterward Daines and his intended murderer were sitting down to a warm breakfast, the latter only intent upon assaulting a dish of smoking chops.

THE SAVILE CLUB.

The Savile Club is a comparatively modern but cozy and characteristic institution. It is located in Savile Row, the quietest of by-ways, yet but a step from Piccadilly, and almost in the rear of Burlington House and the lively bustle of the Burlington Arcade. The dainty booths and bazars of the Arcade, wherein everything from a walking-stick to an eyeglass can be bought, are dear to the hearts of Londoners in exile. When I congratulated a late Governor of the Bahamas upon the earthly paradise to which he had been transferred, he expressed his hatred of banishment in this wise: "My good sir, I would rather have a half-hour in Burlington Arcade than a whole season in Nassau," which I took to be the unconscious Mayfair equivalent of a hackneyed line in "Locksley Hall." A turn through the Arcade, and you are speedily in Savile Row, where the grass would soon crop out between the stones were it not for the chariot wheels of those who are fitted to their coats at Poole's. The young London writers as they take their lunch are little like to envy the patrons of the swell tailor; their clothes have at least the easy work-a-day grace to which Poole's can never attain—that which becomes the garb of the gentleman and scholar whom nine tailors could not model, and this with all due respect to every craft. The Savile is essentially a literary club, compact of writers, critics, journalists, and of poets a goodly number indeed; now and then a poet's publisher, like Mr. Kegan Paul, who takes his pick among them, from the laureate to the youngest of those who reach for the laurel, and who has every claim to their fellowship in his capacity as an author and metrical translator. His article upon George Eliot is fresh in the minds of the readers of this Magazine. The Savile does not approach our Century in years and wealth, and in the number of prominent lawyers, divines, college professors, and the like, belonging to it, nor does it pay special attention to art, and count some fifty artists upon its muster-roll. But it is equally a literary club, and a comfortable, unpretentious haunt for working men of letters. A nice feature of their usual life is the lunch which your London writer, even in the civil service, feels it his prerogative to enjoy at mid-day, the best, to my mind, of English meals, with its joint and salad, cheese and beer; and at the Savile I counted upon meeting not only native Londoners, but stray writers who chanced to be in town, such as young Stevenson, who told that idyllic story of his gypsyings with a donkey in the Cévennes, and two of my own countrymen—George W. Smalley and Hans Breitmann—who, I think, were regular members of the club.—E. C. STEDMAN, in *Harper's Magazine* for May.

VARIETIES.

CHEEK.—What is known as "cheek" is, if remarkable, charming, provided you are not the victim of it. And this country can show some amazing examples of it. The story is told of an American visiting Montreal, who gave a waiter a silver trade dollar as a fee. Said the waiter, "Sir, did you intend to give me a dollar?" "I did." "Well, sir, this coin is at a discount. I can only take it for ninety-two cents. Eight cents more, please."

WHEN Morice Margorot was tried for sedition, Lord Justice Clerk Brayfield, who always talked broad Scotch upon the bench, said "Ha's ye any counsel, mon?" "No." "Do ye want tae ha'e any appointit?" "No; I only want an interpreter to make me understand what your lordship says." This was received with a burst of laughter by the whole court, in which his lordship heartily joined.

ON an interesting occasion, an intending Benedict appeared in such a bemuddled condition that the clergyman was obliged to refuse to proceed with the marriage. A few days later, the same thing occurred with the same couple, whereupon the clergyman gravely remonstrated with the bride, and said they must not again present themselves with the bridegroom in such a state. "But, sir, he—he winna come when he's sober," was the candid rejoinder.

As the car sped up Shawmut Avenue, his arm began to steal around her waist, and his head inclined lovingly, unconscious of observation. Just as the car approached Sawyer-street the conductor thrust his head inside, and shouted "Sawyer" close to Hayseed's head. The latter, hastily drawing himself into form, indignantly remarked, "You needn't hev howled it through the car, if you did. We're engaged!" and the rest of the freight set their faces towards the driver and grinned.

TWO OF A TRADE.—Scene—Helenaburg Pier: artist and house-painter with traps leaving Gareloch steamer. House-painter: "I see you're a brother brush." Artist, annoyed: "Imph!"—sarcastic. "Is figure or landscape your forte?" H. P.: "Architectural. A wis pentin' the inside o' a stable the day. What were you busy at?" Artist: "I gave the first coat to the outside a loch, second-coated a couple of villages, a few pine-trees, and a hill-side, and finished a thunder-cloud and a flash of lightning." H. P.: "Goodness gracious! Piecework, I suppose?"