

From Festus, a Poem by W. Pickering.

YOUTHFUL FRIENDS.

I had

A friend with whom, in boyhood, I was wont
To learn, think, laugh, weep, strive, and love, together ;
For we were always rivals in all things—
Together up high springy hills to trace
A runnell to its birthplace ; to pursue
A river ; to search, haunt old ruined towers,
And muse in them ; to scale the cloud-clad hills
While thunders murmured in our very ear ;
To leap the lair of the live cataract,
And pray its foaming pardon for the insult ;
To dare the broken tree-bridge across the stream ;
To crouch behind the broad white waterfall,
Tongue of the glen, like to a hidden thought—
Dazzled, and deafened, yet the more delighted ;
To reach the rock which makes the fall and pool ;
There to feel safe, or not to care if not ;
To fling the free foot o'er my native hills,
Which seemed to breathe the bracing breeze we loved,
The more it lifted up our loosened locks
That nought might be between us and the skies ;
Or, hand in hand, leap, laughing, with closed eyes,
In Trent's death-loving deeps ; yet was she kind
Ever to us ; and bare us buoyant up,
And followed our young strokes, and cheered us on—
Even as an elder sister bending above
A child, to teach it how to order its feet—
As quick we dashed, in reckless rivalry,
To reach, perchance, some long green floating flag—
Just when the sun's hot lip first touched the stream,
Reddening to be so kissed ; and we rejoiced,
As breathing it on we went over depth and death,
Strong in the naked strife of elements,
Toying with danger in a little fear
As with a maiden's ringlets. And oft, at night,
Bewildered and bewitched by favourite stars,
We would breathe ourselves amid unfooted snows,
For there is poetry where aught is pure ;
Or over the still dark heath, leap along, like harts,
Through the broad moonlight ; for we felt wherever
We leapt the golden gorse, or lowly ling,
We could not be from home.—That friend is gone,
There's the whole universe before our souls.
Where shall we meet next ? Shall we meet again ?
Oh ! might it be in some far happy world,
That I may light upon his lonely soul,
Hard by some broad blue stream, where high the hills,
Wood bearded, sweep to its brink—musing, as wont,
With livelike eagerness, upon sacred things ;
For much in youth we loved and mused on them.

CASTLES.

A CASTLE of the "Chen time," was a fortress or place rendered defensible either by nature or art, or both. In the reign of Henry II., of England, in whom the Anglo-Saxon line was restored, there were no less than eleven hundred and fifteen castles each of which included a manor, or an estate of lands of large extent. The greater part of which he ordered to be demolished. The situation of the castles of the Anglo-Normans, was most commonly on an eminence, and near a river ; a situation on several accounts eligible. The whole of the castle, (and the like observations apply to castles generally in various parts of Europe,) was frequently of great extent and irregular figure, and surrounded by a deep and broad ditch, sometimes dry and sometimes filled with water, called the *Fosse*. Before the great gate or entrance was an outwork called a *Barbacan* which was a strong and high wall with turrets upon it, designed for the defence of the gate and drawbridge. On the inside of the ditch stood the wall of the castle about eight or ten feet thick, and between twenty and thirty feet high, with a parapet and a kind of embrasures, called crennels, on the top. On this wall, at proper distances, *squar* towers of two or three stories high, which served as lodgings for some of the principal officers of the castle, and for other purposes ; and on the inside were lodgings for the lord's retainers, granaries and storehouses and other necessary offices. On the top of the wall, and on the flat roof of these buildings, stood the defenders of the castle when it was besieged, and from thence discharged arrows, darts, stones, fire, molten lead, etc. upon the besiegers. The great gate of the castle stood on the course of this wall, and was strongly fortified with a tower on each side, and rooms over the passage between the towers. Thick folding doors of oak, studded with huge nails, which secured a lining of thick iron-plates ; and a portcullis, or lattice of iron work which dropped down from above, effectually secured the entrance. Within the outward wall was a large open space or court, called, the largest and most perfect castles, the *outer Bayle*, or *Bal* in which stood a church or chapel. On the inside of the

outer Bayle was another ditch, wall gate and towers enclosing the inner Bayle or court, in which the chief Tower (the lord's residence) or Keep was built. This keep was a very large square fabric, four or five stories high, having small windows in prodigiously thick walls, which rendered the apartments dark and gloomy. Underneath were dismal dark vaults, for the confinement of prisoners, which sometimes gave it the name of the *Dungeon Keep*. In the Keep was the great Hall, in which the baron or proprietor displayed his hospitality by entertaining his numerous friends and followers. At one end was a place raised a little above the floor called the *Deis*, where the chief table stood, at which persons of the highest rank only dined or feasted with the proprietor. Such were the castles or fortresses of the great feudal barons ; and such, no doubt, was the strong hold of the tyrant Macbeth. The walls of these places of strength were from twelve to twenty feet thick at the base ; and in their thickness were the winding staircases, the well-water, the vast oven, enclosed galleries and chimnies, and passages and stairs communicating with the vaults and dungeons, which received all their light and air there from. There were also secret passages in the walls, known only to the proprietor, who by that means could gain access to various parts of the castle, and make himself acquainted with the concerns of his household or guests. There was likewise a kind of flue for conveying sounds to every part, not more than eight inches in diameter. The *state apartments* occupied the whole third story ; and the *state staircase* was large and commodious—large enough to admit of military engines. Adjoining the great chamber was a private *Oratory* or chapel, for the especial use of the proprietor and his family. In short it was a little town, the resources of which were in itself. It was very natural for the lord of so extensive a fortress to "hang out his banners on the outer wall," in stern defiance of his foes ; and such were Macbeth's directions.

The homely hearth of the humblest cottager of the present day, far exceeds, in domestic comfort, the rude pomp and iron splendor of the barons of the olden time. Of a surety it was the "iron age," as handed down to us ! The remains of the Tower of London, as it now exists, is a beautiful specimen of the inner walls, fosse and keep, of an ancient fortress. The outer walls have long since been destroyed, its ditch filled up, and the sites thereof covered with streets and buildings.—*New York Reporter*.

BOOKS ETC.

Sheets of copper and lead, the bark of trees, bricks, wood and stones were anciently used as books. Two columns, the one of stone, the other of brick, are spoken of by Josephus, who says that the children of Seth wrote their inventions and discoveries in science upon them. Porphyry speaks of some pillars which were preserved in Crete, on which the Corybantes, it was said, recorded the ceremonies which were in vogue at their sacrifices.—The leaves of the palm-tree were used, and the finest part of the barks of the ash, elm, lime and maple trees. Hence comes the Latin *liber* (book) which signifies the inner bark of the trees, and as these barks were rolled up, for convenience, the roll was called *volumen* or volume, a name afterwards given to rolls of paper and parchment, and now to any one packet of sheets. By degrees wax and leather were employed, and the skins of sheep and goats of which, at length, parchment was made. The ancient rolls were sometimes four or five feet wide, and fifty feet long, being composed of several sheets fastened together. The letters at an early period were divided into lines, then into distinct words, which afterwards, were distributed and pointed by marks into paragraphs, chapters and sentences. Among the Eastern nations the writing was commenced at the right and read to the left ; in the northern and western, the contrary way. The Greeks used both ways ; alternately commencing at the right and left. The Chinese commence their lines at the top of the page and read to the bottom. The Turks place the name of God at the beginning of all their works.

The word book is from the Saxon *boec*, which comes from northern *buch*, a beech or service-tree, on the bark of which the ancient Britons used to write.

King Alfred gave a large estate for a work on Cosmography. In 1499 they were sold from £10 to £20 each. The first printed book was the Vulgate edition of the Bible, in 1462 ; the second was the *De Officiis* of Cicero, in 1466. Two thousand books were ordered to be burned by Leo I., at Constantinople, during his reign. In the suppressed monasteries of France, in 1790, there were found four million, one hundred and ninety four thousand four hundred and twelve volumes, of which nearly one half treated on theology. The end of the book was formally marked by a \gg , called coronis, and the volume was frequently washed with an oil taken from cedar to preserve it from decay.

PHOTOGENIC DRAWINGS.

A correspondent of the London Times gives the following account of an important improvement in the art of photogenic drawing, calculated we think to add considerably to the value of the discovery :

A new method of producing photogenic drawings was yesterday

exhibited to a small circle of scientific persons. The drawings produced, which combine the minute exactness detailed in Daguerre's tables with the powerful contrast of the light and shadow of an original drawing, are effected by means of Indian ink. By this new process, the plate on which the light is to act is placed in the camera obscura entirely black, and the action of the light upon it destroys either partially or entirely the blackened surface, thus producing the various tints of a drawing from the most perfect white through all the different degrees of shadow, to a jet black. The blackened plate is so sensibly affected by the rays of light, that objects illuminated only by the faint light of a common candle are depicted in all their detail as distinctly as if acted on by the brightest sunlight. Whilst putting the plates into the camera obscura, the operator must only make use of a small lantern with a coloured glass, in an otherwise perfectly darkened room, and the same precaution must be taken in fixing the images produced in the camera obscura. Unfortunately the preparation of these new photogenic plates is rather complicated, requiring the science of a chemist as well as the skilful hand of an artist, and the inventor (Dr. Schaffhaeul, of Munich) has not yet correctly ascertained how long these plates will remain sensible to the action of light. The doctor hopes, however, that they may be kept in that state for years, and there is nothing to prevent a most extensive use of this new method, as the process of generating and fixing these wonderful images is very short and simple. The inventor promises, as soon as he has simplified the mode of preparing the plates for his new method, to make it public through the medium of one of our scientific journals.

SHOOTING A RAT.—A few weeks since, while the rail road was progressing at Palmer, Mass., the workmen employed there were in the habit of placing the powder they used for blasting in a neighboring grist mill for safety. At one time they had two open kegs and one with the head off and the powder exposed standing in one corner of the mill. Two men and a boy were in the mill at the time, and discovered a very large rat, which one of them proposed shooting, the gun was loaded from the powder kegs, but the rat hid himself. After chasing it round the building some time they at last fired and killed the rat, took it up, and were retreating, when one of the party spoke of the powder. Upon looking back they discovered that they had fired at the rat behind the powder, and that the wadding was on fire and on the edge of the open keg. With great courage and presence of mind, the boy offered to go and remove it, which he did ; but just as he turned his back from it, the whole of the three kegs exploded, blowing the building to pieces, killing one of the men on the spot and wounding the other, and the boy in such a manner that they died shortly after.—*New Bedford Mercury*.

MISFORTUNES.—It was one of Bulwer's finest ideas, comparing misfortunes to the Cadmean creations, for they destroy one another. If they did not, they would soon destroy those who experience them.

A reserved haughtiness is a sure indication of a weak mind and an unfeeling heart said Patrick Henry.

Life would be as insupportable without the prospect of death as it would be without sleep.

VIRTUE.—It is more difficult to convince the vicious that virtue exists, than to persuade the good that it is rare.

PERVERTED TALENTS.—Education, says Dr. Channing, is now chiefly a stimulus to learning, and thus men acquire power without the principles which alone make it a good. Talent is worshipped ; but if divorced from rectitude, it will prove more of a demon than a god.

SPINSTERS.—Formerly women were prohibited from marrying till they had spun a regular set of bed furniture, and, till their marriages, were consequently called *Spinsters*, which continues to this day in all legal proceedings.

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