

A RELIC OF BURNS.

Scoon and Perth Masonic Lodge, known as No. 3, the third oldest lodge in Scotland, has become possessed of a very interesting relic of Burns, which is understood to be hitherto unpublished. It is addressed to "Mrs. W. Riddell, Haleatha." The poem appears to have been written on three pages of a sheet of letter-paper, the following note occupying the first page:—"Mrs. W. Riddle, Haleaths,—The health you wished me in your morning's card is, I think, flown from me for ever. I have not been able to leave my bed to-day till about an hour ago. Those wickedly unlucky advertisements I lent (I did wrong) to a friend, and I am ill able to go in quest of him. The Muses have not quite forsaken me. The following detached stanzas I intend to interweave in some disastrous tale of a shepherd:—

"Despairing beside a clear stream,
L'amour: toujours l'amour!
Volte subito.

The trout in yonder wimpling burn
That glides, a silver dart,
And safe beneath the shady thorn
Defies the angler's art:
My life was once that careless stream,
That wanton trout was I:
But love w' unremitting beam
Has scorched my fountains dry.
That little flower's peaceful lot
In yonder cliff that grows,
Which, save the linnet's flight, I wot,
No ruder visit knows,
Was mine, till Love has o'er me passed,
And blighted a my bloom;
And now beneath the withering blast
My youth and joy consume.

The waken'd lav'rock warbling springs,
And climbs the early sky,
Winnowing by the dewy wings
In morning's rosy eye:
As little reckt I sorrow's power,
Until the flow'ry snare
O' witching love, in luckless hour,
Made me the thrall o' care."

FOR EVERYBODY.

A Fruitful Vine.

"The Lord Raleigh Grape Vine," which was growing when Sir Walter landed at Roanoke Island in 1610, and was then but three inches in diameter, is now spoken of as one of the largest vines in the world. It covers one and a half acres, and last year yielded 48 barrels of wine—1,840 gallons in all—which sold for two dollars per gallon, yielding 3,680 dollars.

An Actress Flattered.

A well-known author was about to read a new piece in the green-room of a West-end theatre, when, before commencing, a young and charming actress, who is always remarkable for the elegance of her toilettes, smirking, said, "My dear Mr. —, is the part you have written for me well within my power?" "Perfectly," replied the author. "You have to change your dress seven times!"

Important Invention.

The necrometer is a newly-invented instrument designed to afford the means of distinguishing real from apparent death. Dr. Bouchut, a French physician, recently obtained a prize from the Academy of Medicine for this discovery, which simply has reference to the temperature of the body after death. When the temperature of the body falls to 20 deg. above zero in the centigrade scale (68 deg. F.), death is certain. The necrometer is so arranged as to indicate the temperature of a dead body.

A Gentle Hint.

At a concert recently given at Marseilles for the benefit of the Poles the conversation gradually became something more than audible. Some happily inspired person despatched a little billet to the performers, who were then executing an exquisite piece of music. The note ran thus: "The performers are requested to play extremely *piano* in order not to disturb the conversation." The billet was passed from hand to hand; the *spiritual* rebuke was accepted in good part, and silence was restored.

Scotch Thrift.

The spirit of Scotch thrift was never, perhaps, better exemplified than in the following anecdote, which shows that even the fowls of the air and the barn in Glasgow have the propensity strong within them—yes, even unto their very eggs. The *Glasgow Citizen* assures us that on Sunday morning, at breakfast, a lad was in the act of eating a hen's egg boiled when a spixence, bearing date 1857, was found about the centre of the egg. Two-thirds was imbedded in the yolk, the rest of it projecting into the white part.

The Old Coach.

Several four-horse coaches will commence running from London to various parts on the 1st of May. This mode of travelling is pleasantly connected in the mind with associations of "the good old times" and in summer, or fine weather at any time of the year, it is delightful. The old knack has by no means died out, and it is really a pretty sight to see the coach from St. Albans coming into town about five in the afternoon. Swift and sure, easy and well in hand, the cheerful-faced, well-conditioned Jehu looks the very embodiment, though heavy and stout, of the light of other days.

Easter in London.

Easter in London was marked by an unusual number of "high celebrations." The Ritualist churches were profusely decorated, and early communion commenced in some cases at half-past five o'clock. At one of them the principal service opened with a procession in which four trumpeters and eighty robed choristers preceded the cross-bearer. He was followed by incense-bearers, candle-bearers, and magnificently-embroidered curates. Throughout the day the church was numerously attended. The theatres were not open in the evening.

A Somebody.

The Marquis of Lorne will in the next generation be an important personage. He will be brother-in-law, or brother-in-law by courtesy, to the following personages, whom I place in the ascending scale of their dignities—the King of Greece, the King of Denmark, the Emperor of Germany, the Emperor of Russia, and the King of England. What gentleman can

you call to mind (out of a fairy tale) who had five kings for his brothers-in-law? I think the above calculations will be interesting to some persons in even a republican country.

Noel Apparatus.

Dr. Schuppert, of New Orleans, proposes a simple method of extinguishing fires on shipboard. He would place at various points in the hold of a vessel boxes filled with marble waste, each box communicating with the deck by means of lead pipes terminating in a funnel. Should a fire break out in the hold sulphuric acid is poured down the pipes, and this coming in contact with the marble, causes the active evolution of carbonic acid gas, which finds its way in large quantities into the hold through perforations in the boxes, and thus the cargo is quickly surrounded with an atmosphere in which combustion cannot take place.

Ante-Natal Marks.

A remarkable instance of the ante-natal impression has been discussed in the *Lancet*. In a village near Glastonbury, England, there is now living one Eli H., aged 75 years. Before Eli was born his mother had three daughters in succession, and his father vowed if the next child should be a girl he would never speak to the child as long as he lived. The child turned out to be a boy. But the boy, who was christened Eli, could never speak to any one in his father's presence—never spoke to his father, and until his father died could not speak to a male person. No scientific solution has as yet been given of this singular case.

Horticultural Prediction.

A Mr. Campbell claims to be able to ascertain in advance the qualities of seedling grapes. He says that "in the taste or flavour of the green tendrils of the vine may be found a true index of the character of its prospective fruit." He further declares that the tendrils of each variety possess a distinguishing flavour, by which it may always be detected from any other, and a seedling with this peculiar character may be at once set down as good, even in advance of its crop. His predictions are said to have been verified in every instance, and frequently, too, when the appearance of the foliage would lead him to an opposite conclusion.

Dramatic Criticism.

A critic on critics writes the following: "A healthier and more vigorous tone of criticism in operatic matters is much to be desired. Every notice you read gives you the idea that the writer has been 'got at' or 'squared,' not by venal means, but by little friendly attentions, for which, as a rule, critics representing the public are far too grateful. I should like to see a critic advertised for who had always paid his money at the door, and who did not know personally a single manager or actor. It would then be seen whether the tribe of critics, once represented by Dr. Johnson, Haslitt, Charles Lamb, and Leigh Hunt are quite extinct, and, if so, whether they could not be revived."

A Homely Curry Dinner.

The coffee planters in the hill country of Ceylon are the most hospitable of men. But a rapid succession of travellers sometimes leaves the bungalow bare, and supplies have to be brought for miles on the heads of coolies. Late one afternoon two officers were seen approaching; the planter was in despair. He called out, "Boy, try to get something to eat for officer-gentlemen." After some delay an excellent curry was on the table, and the bitter beer not being exhausted, the officers enjoyed their tiffin very much, and went on their way rejoicing. A couple of days afterwards the planter missed his cat, and the following colloquy ensued:—"Boy, where is the cat?" "Oh, pardon, master; nothing to eat for officer-gentlemen, me curry the cat."

Nibbling Ideas.

M. Octave Feuillet, whose drama the "Sphinx" has just been represented at the Théâtre Français, is a well-known fisherman, with rod, line, and bait, quite as primitive in this kind of sport as is Thiers, Jules Favre, and several other celebrities. It is while thus tranquilly occupied that M. Feuillet thinks out his dramas and poems. He hardly catches anything, a result that never annoys him; besides, he asserts a "bite" ever deranges his thoughts. His pocket or basket companion is a Walter Scott, of whose works he has a copy in every edition that has ever appeared. His book-marker is original, and consists of a toy-dog, that he has trained to put its paw on the open book, and never to stir till ordered to do so.

A Curious Illustration of Capillarity.

The following experiment was described at a recent meeting of the French Academy of Sciences: Put into a flask a small quantity of carbonic disulphide (bisulphide of carbon), and let a small tight roll of filtering paper pass through a hole in the cork and dip into the liquid, which will ascend through the pores of the paper and evaporate rapidly on coming in contact with the air outside. The temperature is thus reduced to about zero of the Fahrenheit scale, and the moisture of the air is condensed and precipitated in the state of hoar frost, forming with the disulphide a peculiar white hydrate. As the evaporation goes on, this gradually accumulates until it rises in mushroom shape to the height of an inch or so above the cork.

The Transit of Venus.

The preparations at Greenwich for the observation of the transit of Venus in December next are on a grand scale. The Astronomer Royal has chosen five principal stations for our share of the enterprise. Honolulu, Rodriguez Island, near the Mauritius; Christmas Harbour, in Kerguelen Land; Christchurch, New Zealand; and Alexandria. To each of these will be sent a party consisting of a chief astronomer in charge, one or more solar photographers, and several assistant astronomers. Other parties will be sent to the three subsidiary stations. The instrumental outfit is said to be the largest and most perfect of its kind which has ever been brought together. The most trustworthy observations hitherto made leave an uncertainty in the computation of the sun's distance from the earth of about 300,000 miles. The observations of next December will probably result in the determination of the distance within 50,000 miles. As already stated, France, Germany, America, and Russia will co-operate in this great undertaking.

Mental Recovery.

A case has been recorded of a lady who, when suffering under an attack of delirium, spoke a language which nobody around her could understand. It was at length discovered to be Welsh, or something similar. None of her friends could form any conception of the time or manner in which she could

have acquired a familiarity with that tongue; but after much inquiry it was ascertained that, in her childhood, she had had as nurse a native of the French province of Brittany, the dialect of which is derived from the same Cymric stock as Welsh. The lady had during those early years learned a good deal of the dialect, but had entirely forgotten it in later life, until her attack of illness produced some inexplicable change in the mental action. This case was in every way remarkable, for the lapse of memory was in the native tongue, while the language brought vividly into action was that which she had only heard during some of her child years. In all probability it was not really Welsh, but something like it.

Grammatical.

Highlanders have the habit, when talking their English, such as it is, of interjecting the personal pronoun "he" where not required, such as "The king he has come," instead of "The king has come." Often, in consequence, a sentence or expression is rendered sufficiently ludicrous, as the sequel will show. A gentleman says he has had the pleasure of listening to a clever man, the Rev. Mr. — (let his locality be a secret), and recently he began his discourse thus: "My friends, you will find the subject of this afternoon in the First Epistle General of the Apostle Peter, fifth chapter and eighth verse, in the words, 'The devil he goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.' Now, my friends, with your leave we will divide the subject of our text to-day into four heads. Firstly, we shall endeavour to ascertain 'Who the devil he was.' Secondly, we shall inquire into his geographical position, namely, 'Where the devil he was,' and 'Where the devil he was going.' Thirdly—and this of a personal character—'Who the devil he was seeking.' And fourthly and lastly, we shall endeavour to solve a question which has never been solved yet, 'What the devil he was roaring about.'"

The Duchess of Edinburgh.

The new Parliament and the opera opened simultaneously in London. At the latter were present, in the same box, the Prince and Princess of Wales and the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh. It was impossible not to compare the two ladies, of whom one is really beautiful, while the other has nothing to recommend her but the charm which is almost inseparable from youth—health and a lively disposition. The Princess of Wales was very pretty when she was first married, she is beautiful now, she will be handsome ten years hence, and she can never be otherwise than refined and distinguished in appearance if she lives to no matter what age. The Duchess of Edinburgh, on the other hand, is not only without beauty, she is almost without features. She has a round head, a flat face, small eyes, and a nose so insignificant that one may almost describe it as "conspicuous by its absence." The redeeming point about her is that she is animated, as any one may see, and, according to report, very good-tempered. Her father is known to entertain the greatest possible affection for her. At St. Petersburg he was scarcely ever seen without her, and the Emperor Alexander and his much-loved daughter have been photographed together for the benefit of their faithful subjects times out of number.

The Laughing Plant.

In Palgrave's work on Central and Eastern Arabia we read of a plant whose seeds produce effects similar to those of laughing gas. It is a native of Arabia. A dwarf variety of it is found at Kaseem, and another variety at Oman, which attains to a height of from three to four feet, with woody stems, wide-spreading branches, and bright green foliage. Its flowers are produced in clusters, and are of a bright yellow colour. The seed pods are soft and woolly in texture, and contain two or three black seeds of the size and shape of French beans. Their flavour is a little like that of opium, and their taste is sweet; the odour from them produces a sickening sensation, and is slightly offensive. Those seeds contain the essential property of this extraordinary plant, and when pulverised and taken in small doses, operate upon a person in a most peculiar manner. He begins to laugh loudly, boisterously; then he sings, dances, and puts all manner of fantastic capers. Such extravagance of gesture and manner was never produced by any other kind of dosing. The effect continues about an hour, and the patient is uproariously comic. When the excitement ceases the exhausted exhibitor falls into a deep sleep, which continues for an hour or more, and when he awakens he is utterly unconscious that any demonstrations have been enacted by him. We usually say that there is nothing new under the sun; but this peculiar plant, recently discovered, as it exercises the most extraordinary influence over the human brain, demands from men of science a careful investigation.

"Le Mari de la Reine."

A writer on "Actresses' Husbands" says: "The most ordinary type is Fred. Fred has married an actress whom my friend, Lord Bonton, thinks the most charming creature on earth. Bonton would once have given his eyes to be introduced to her. And he is not singular. Sir William Ventnor throws her a bouquet twice a week. 'Polly' Farquhar, of the Guards, has been heard to say at the Marlborough, in the presence of the Prince, that she is the only woman he cares for. Young Fenton, son of Sir Charles Fenton the millionaire, is ready to spend any amount of money to please her. All the men like her, and wish to be near her. But Fred is near her, and he does not trouble himself about her doings. Just as people who sell sweetmeats are said to have little inclination for what they have in abundance, so Fred, who lives in the full blaze of her charms, does not exult in his lot. He gives himself no airs on account of his good fortune. Nobody would know from his manner that he was the lucky possessor of what other men desire. Fred is the best-natured fellow in the world. Bonton, Sir William, 'Polly' Farquhar, of the Guards, young Fenton, have each in turn been presented to his wife, and he treats them all good-humouredly. Their attention to her is honour to him. Fred and his wife are equally satisfied with the arrangement which leaves both free. That is their great talent. He has the sense of heart, if not at head, to exact little. He never reproaches her. If she seems to interrupt the course of her attachment for himself, he knows it cannot endure, for—is he not her husband? After all it does him no harm. By encouraging the attentions of influential men like Bonton, which he knows are of the most innocent nature, he benefits himself and advances her interest. He hates being selfish, and if he ever appears chagrined the mood is only transient. It sometimes occurs to him that were she not an actress people would hesitate to make up to his wife; but then, were she not an actress, he would have to be his own bread-getter."