

SCRAPS.

POWER OF LETTERS.—At the station next Tyerhova, one of the tribe of Israel came up, and asked us if we would like to see some curious rocks, only a quarter of an hour from the village. As we followed him to the spot, he asked us those questions, as to where we came from, what we were doing, and whither we were going, so common in most countries except our own, where they are avoided, as though every one was doing something of which he is ashamed, and which he desired to conceal. On hearing that we were English, he asked very earnestly if one Walter Scott was yet living, and expressed the greatest regret when he learned his death. Surprised at such a sentiment from such a man, and suspecting some mistake, I enquired what he knew of Scott; when he pulled from his pocket a well-thumbed translation of *Ivanhoe*—the very romance of persecuted Judaism—and assured me he had read that, and many others of his works, with great pleasure. I do not know that I ever felt more strongly the universal power of genius than when I found the bard of Scotland worshipped by a poor Jew in the mountains of Hungary. It is astonishing to an Englishman who knows how ignorant even well-informed persons of his own country are of the literature and politics of a great part of the continent, to find the names of the best authors of England familiar as household words among nations of whose very existence the greater part of that country is scarcely aware. In Hungary, this fact struck me with more force even than in Germany, though the taste for English literature is there immeasurably more advanced than in France or Italy. But the Hungarians, with very little literature of their own, and generally possessing a knowledge of several foreign languages, are not only entirely thrown on the resources of others for their mental food, but are thus eminently well provided with the means of enjoying it. In many cases I have found the originals in English, but in general they are read in excellent German translations. With what ecstatic pleasure have they told me of the new light which English literature opened to them! With what admiration have they spoken of the strong and vigorous train of thought which pervades our authors, of that scrupulous decency which they observe, of that warm love of nature they express, and of the universal respect in which religion is upheld by them!—*Page's Hungary and Transylvania.*

THUNDERSTORMS are generally more severe on the banks of rivers than at a distance—yet we believe that steamboats, although containing a vast amount of iron and other kinds of metal, are seldom struck by lightning. We do not recollect a single case—although it is likely that some instances are on record. Why are they less likely to be struck by the electric fluid than sailing ships on the ocean, which appears to be the fact. We pause for a reply.—*Boston Mercantile Journal.*

The explanation is easy. All their iron about a steamboat operates as a conductor, or a set of conductors, and draws off the electric fluid silently from the surrounding atmosphere.

If a single rod will ordinarily protect a dwelling from lightning, how much more should a hundred tons of iron, extending upwards many feet above the promenade deck, and downward to within a few inches of the water, protect a steamboat! It would be a miracle, almost, if a steamboat should be struck with lightning, under such circumstances, yet we recollect reading, 15 or 20 years ago, of a young woman being killed by lightning on board a steamboat on the Mississippi. No other instance of the kind ever came to our knowledge.—*Journal of Com.*

THE TRAVELLER'S FRIEND.—In Madagascar grows a singular tree (*Urania*) which, from its property of yielding water, is called the Traveller's Friend. It differs from most other trees, in having all its branches in one place, like the sticks of a fan, or the feathers of a peacock's tail. At the extremity of each branch, grows a broad double leaf, several feet in length, which spreads itself out very gracefully. These leaves radiate heat so rapidly after sunset, that a copious deposition of dew takes place upon them; soon collecting into drops, forms little streams which go down the branches to the trunk. Here it is received into hollow spaces of considerable magnitude, one of which is found at the root of every branch. These branches lie one over the other alternately, and when a knife, or what is better, a flat piece of stick, (for it is not necessary to cut the tree,) is inserted between the parts which overlay, and slightly drawn to one side so as to cause an opening, a stream of water gushes out, as if from a fountain. Hence the appropriate name of Traveller's Friend."

CONFLICT WITH A CATAMOUNT.—The Lakeville (Ohio) Journal gives the following:—A number of Catamounts had come over the Michigan boundary, and caused great terror among the farmers. One of them entered the window of Mr. Hawkins, which had been left open, while his wife was engaged in an adjoining room, and had crept to the cradle, where a babe, six months old, was sleeping, before he was discovered. The mother, on perceiving him, seized a broad axe which lay upon the hearth, and commenced an attack. The first blow stunned without injuring the beast. He recovered, sprung upon the woman, and throwing her down, tore her left arm severely. She contrived to raise herself upon her knees with the animal still clinging to her, and struck a second blow. The edge of the axe penetrated the skull, and laid the monster dead upon the floor. Her husband

came home shortly after, and found her lying prostrate, and exhausted, with the catamount stretched at her feet, and her two eldest children weeping over her. The woman was considerably injured, but the account states, that she is recovering rapidly. Her arm and side were badly torn, but she received no dangerous wound.

BIBLES IN PRISON.—The Bible is the only means the prisoner has of mitigating the solitude of his cell.

So great are the benefits which flow from placing a small Bible with a prisoner in his solitary cell, that it has become almost as much a matter of course to see it lying upon the little shelf, as to see the fastening of the door which secures his prison. These Bibles are generally provided by a law of the state. They are read exceedingly, and a multitude of inquiries are raised and proposed to the chaplains concerning the meaning of the sacred page. Hundreds of leaves, in a single Bible, are sometimes turned down to assist the memory of the prisoner in referring to those passages concerning which he wants instruction. And it is not a little curious how pungent are the truths, how much like the fire and the hammer, which the Spirit of God has used to arrest the attention of these men; so that what they began to read, perhaps with no good design, has been fastened in the conscience, as a nail in a sure place. And were the question now to be asked, whether all other books could supply the place of the Bible in the solitary cell, it would be answered by all the experience of the reformed Prisons in the negative.—*Am. paper.*

THOMAS JEFFERSON.—In the works of Thomas Jefferson, is the following letter to his namesake, Thomas Jefferson Smith:—“This letter will, to you, be as one from the dead. The writer will be in his grave before you can weigh its councils. Your affectionate and excellent father has requested that I would address you something which might possibly have a favourable influence on the course of life you have to run, and I too, as a namesake, feel interested in that course. Few words will be necessary, with good dispositions on your part. Adore God—reverence and cherish your parents—love your neighbour as yourself, and your country more than yourself—be true—murmur not at the ways of Providence. So shall the life into which you have entered be the portal to one of ineffable bliss. And if to the dead is permitted to care for the things of this world, every action of your life will be under my regard. Farewell.—*Monticello, February 12, 1840.*

How calm and quiet a delight
This alone
To read and meditate and write
By none offended and offending none;
To walk, ride, sit, or sleep at one's own ease,
And pleasing a man's self, none other to displease.
C. COTTON.

ILLUSTRATION OF A PASSAGE IN SCRIPTURE.—In the tenth verse of the tenth chapter of Job we find the following words:—“Hast thou not poured me out like milk, and curdled me like cheese?” Much philological research has been brought to the explanation of this passage. In the preceding verse Job is speaking of his death. “Wilt thou bring me unto dust again?” But what has the pouring out of milk to do with death? The people of the East pour milk on their heads after performing the funeral obsequies. Has a father a profligate son, one whom he never expects to reclaim, he says, in reference to him. “Ah! I have poured milk upon my head;” i. e. “I have done with him, he is as one dead to me.” “And curdled me like cheese.” The cheese of the East is little better than curds, and these also are used at funeral ceremonies.—*Robert's Illustrations of Scripture.*

LOOKING A WITNESS OUT OF COURT.—Daniel Webster, when a young practitioner, had a bad case to manage in Court. He told his client that there was one witness against him, who, if he testified, would ruin him. “When the trial comes on (said Webster) point him out to me.” The man was shown to him, sitting on an upper seat near the bench, in a crowded court room. Webster, with his withering glance, surveyed him from head to foot. The witness receded a short distance. During the examination of other witnesses, Webster gave him another piercing look. He removed farther towards the door. Three or four more scrutinizing observations, looked the witness out of Court!”

TIME-SERVING.—The French newspapers, which, in 1813, were subject to the censor, announced the departure of Bonaparte from Elba, his progress through France, and his entry into Paris, in the following ingenious manner:—9th March, the Anthropophagus has quitted his den—10th, the Corsican Ogre has landed at Cape Juan—12th, the Tiger has arrived at Cab—12th, the Monster slept at Grenoble—13th, the Tyrant had passed through Lyons—14th, the Usurper is directing his steps towards Dijon, but the brave and loyal Burgundians have risen en masse and surrounded him on all sides—18th, Bonaparte is only sixty leagues distant from the capital; has been fortunate enough to escape the hands of his pursuers—19th, Bonaparte is advancing with rapid steps, he will enter Paris—20th, Napoleon will to-morrow, be under our ramparts—21st, the Emperor is at Fontainebleau—22d, his Imperial and Royal Majesty, yesterday evening arrived at the Tuilleries,

amidst the joyful acclamations of his devoted and faithful subjects.—*Athenaeum.*

THEATRICAL CUPPING AND BLEEDING.—Soon after Keane's first appearance, in *Sir Giles Overreach*, the Drury-lane actors, wishing to keep pace with the march of intellect, proposed to collect among the brethren the purchase-money of a silver cup, on which they intended to emblazon all the virtues of “the abstemious Roscius;” and present it to him as a token of their admiration. The veteran Munden, on being asked for his subscription, flatly refused with—“I part with my guinea because Mr. Keane is a good actor! My precious eyes! I have been called a good actor these 50 years, but my brethren never gave me any silver tokens of their admiration; my brethren never gave Mrs. Siddons or John Kemble any metallic tokens of their admiration! Posh! I was born before this age of humbug. My precious eyes! It won't do, sir—you may cure Mr. Keane, but you won't bleed old Josy Munden.” And he buttoned up his pockets, as though he was afraid some rebellious guinea should jump out of them.

DO SOMETHING.—It is a false and indolent humility, which makes people sit down and do nothing, because they will not believe that they are capable of doing much; for every body can do something. Every body can set a good example, be it to many or few; every body can, in some degree, encourage virtue and religion, and discountenance vice and folly; every one has some one whom he can advise and instruct, or in some way help to guide through life.—*Miss Talbot.*

THE MEMORY OF THE DEAD.—It is an exquisite and beautiful thing in nature, that when the heart is touched and softened by some tranquil happiness or affectionate feeling, the memory of the dead comes over it most powerfully and irresistibly. It would almost seem as though our better thoughts and sympathies were charms, in virtue of which the soul is enabled to hold some vague and mysterious intercourse with the spirits of those we dearly loved in life. Alas! how often and how long may those patient angels hover over us, waiting for the spell which is so seldom uttered, and so soon forgotten!—*Dickens.*

PRAYER AND PRAISE.—If prayer be exhilarating to the soul, what shall be said of praise! Praise is the only employment, we had almost said it is the only duty in which self finds no part. In praise we go out of ourselves and think only of Him to whom we offer it. It is the most purely disinterested of all services. It is gratitude without solicitation, acknowledgment without petition. Prayer is the overflowing expression of our wants, praise of our affections. Prayer is the language of the destitute, praise of the redeemed sinner. Prayer is the child of faith, praise of love. Prayer is prospective; praise takes in, in its wide range, enjoyment of the present, remembrance of past, and anticipations of future blessings. Prayer points the way to heaven, praise is already there.—*Hannah Moore.*

A CANON BALL.—I was reclining one day upon a sort of couch or stretcher which I had placed in one corner of my room—with a cigar in my mouth, and a cup of wine beside me, when down came a canon ball through the roof of the house and struck the stone floor within a yard of me. Being a good deal spent, it rolled towards the partition, through which, as it was made of deal, it burst, and then running over the feet of another man, who lay in a blanket in an adjoining apartment, it lamed him for life. Not yet exhausted, it passed through a second partition and tumbled into the kitchen beneath the grate of which, to the astonishment of several persons who witnessed its evolutions, it made a final lodgment.—*Cleig's Hussar.*

INFANTILE COURAGE AND GENEROSITY.—Two bulls, of equal bravery, although by no means equally matched in size and strength, happening to meet near the front of a laird's house, in the highlands of Scotland, began a fierce battle, the noise of which soon drew to one of the windows the lady of the mansion. To her infinite terror, she beheld her only son, a boy between five and six years of age, belabouring with a stiff cudgel the stouter of the belligerents. “Dougald, Dougald, what are you about?” exclaimed the affrighted mother. “Helping the little bull,” was the gallant young hero's reply.

THE BEGINNINGS OF EVIL.—Young men, for the most part, are but little aware of the danger which attends the beginnings of evil. No one becomes suddenly abandoned and profligate. There is always a gradual progress. He begins in slight, occasional departures from rectitude, and goes from one degree to another, till conscience becomes scared, the vicious propensity strong, the habit of indulgence fixed, and the character ruined.

In dreaming, it is remarkable how easily and yet imperceptibly the mind connects events altogether differing in their nature; and if we hear any noise during sleep, how instantaneously the sound is woven in with the events of our dream and as satisfactorily accounted for.

Inward goodness, without an outward show of it, is like a tree without fruit, useless; and an outward show of goodness, without inward sincerity, is like a tree without heart, lifeless.

Many men, while they spend their time in disputing what they should do, do too often neglect the things which are without dispute.