

## POETRY.

## THE OCEAN.

*The Ocean hath its silent caves,  
Deep, quiet, and alone;  
Though there be fury in the waves,  
Beneath them there is none.*

*The awful spirits of the deep,  
Hold their communion there;  
And there are those for whom we weep,—  
The young, the bright, the fair.*

*Calmly the weary seamen rest,  
Beneath their own blue sea;  
The ocean solitudes are blessed,  
For there is purity.*

*The earth has guilt, the earth has care,  
Unquiet are its graves;  
But peaceful sleep is ever there,  
Beneath its dark blue waves*

## BIOGRAPHY.

## WILLIAM CAXTON.

*The first English Printer. Born, A. D. 1412;—Died, A. D. 1491.*

Of all the arts invented by the ingenuity of man, the art of printing is in some respects, the most important: and certainly none has a closer bearing upon the best interests of our race, both in time and eternity. When books were only produced by the tedious process of copying by the pen, they were necessarily expensive, and could only be obtained by the rich. All who are fond of reading, and desirous of mental improvement, will naturally regard with interest the inventor and improvers of this noble art, and to them a brief account of the first English printer, cannot fail to be acceptable.

William Caxton was born in the Weald of Kent. In his time, learning was less cultivated in England than in most of the continental countries, and few obtained even the slightest degree of education. The children in our Sunday schools have superior advantages to many of the higher classes in those days. The parents of Caxton, however, performed their duty to him. "I am bounden," says he, "to pray for my father and mother, that in my youth sent me to school, by which, by the sufferance of God, I got my living, I hope truly." He was apprenticed at the proper age, to William Large, a mercer, of London, and afterwards mayor. Those called mercers were then general merchants, dealing in all kinds of goods. Having served his apprenticeship, he took up his freedom in the mercers' company, and became a citizen of London. He afterwards spent some years in visiting many countries on the continent; and in 1464 he was appointed ambassador to the court of the Duke of Burgundy. He perfected his knowledge of the French language, gained some knowledge of the Flemish or

Dutch, imbibed a taste for literature and romance, and at a great expense made himself master of the recently invented art of printing. He returned to England in 1472, and brought with him the art he had learned; and thus gave the first impetus to the increase of knowledge in this country. The first book he printed in England, was either a treatise on the "Game of Chess," executed in Westminster Abbey, or another entitled the "Romance of Jason;" though he had previously printed abroad, in 1471, the "Recuyell of the History of Troy," translated by himself from the French.

To the inestimable art he had thus introduced, he was ardently attached, and in the cultivation of it he was indefatigable. Beside the labour of superintending his press, he translated not fewer than five thousand closely printed folio pages, though advanced in years. In 1480 he published his "Chronicle," and his "Description of Britain," usually appended to it. These works were very popular, and passed through various editions.

Caxton was a great admirer of Chaucer, and published two editions of his "Canterbury Tales." The whole number of distinct works which issued from his press was sixty four. He was buried in St. Margaret's church, Westminster, to which he left some books.

He was a man of good sense and sound judgment; steady, persevering, active, zealous, and liberal in his services to that important art which he introduced into England, and for which he is entitled to the gratitude and admiration of all succeeding ages.

## ON THE UTILITY OF FOREIFTS.

I recollect, when I was a boy, a plan which used to be adopted in my father's family, at the return of the holidays, and which was found to be very useful. It was this. Being about six in number, we each of us agreed to forfeit a half-penny for every ungrammatical or improper expression which either of us employed in conversation. The money thus obtained, was devoted to the promotion of benevolent objects. An account was kept of the mistakes and errors which any of us made, and thus we were enabled to ascertain the faults which we most commonly committed, and against which we should guard with the greatest care. By these plans we were led to think before we spoke, we were mutual checks against improprieties, and we gradually found that the style of our common conversation was much improved, and our knowledge of grammar increased.

I have recently, in conjunction with some friends, adopted nearly a similar plan with respect to early rising; by which many valuable hours have been already redeemed from sleep. We have agreed that each of us would keep a regular daily account of our time of going to bed, and of rising; and that every individual, who slept longer than seven hours,

should forfeit one penny each morning. When we meet together, which is generally once a week, we compare accounts, and put the fines into a Box.

Having thus recommended the plan of forfeits, it may be necessary to make two or three observations. There are many faults like those two I have mentioned, for which young people probably would not be punished by their parents or masters; but which are certainly very reprehensible, and should be diligently avoided. It is this class of faults to which I think forfeits are peculiarly applicable; and if young persons voluntarily imposed them on themselves, they would find an easy method of correcting bad habits, and of acquiring various excellences.

## HALF OF THE PROFIT.

A Nobleman, resident at a chateau near Pisa, was about to celebrate his marriage feast. All the elements were propitious, except the ocean, which had been so boisterous as to deny the very necessary appendage of fish. On the very morning of the feast, however, a poor fisherman made his appearance with a large turbot, Joy pervaded the castle, and the fisherman was ushered with his prize into the saloon, where the nobleman, in the presence of his visitors, requested him to put what price he thought proper on the fish, and it should be instantly paid him. "One hundred lashes," said the fisherman, "on my bare back is the price of my fish, and I will not bate one strand of whip-cord on the bargain." The nobleman and his guests were not a little astonished; but our chapman was resolute, and remonstrance was in vain. At length the nobleman exclaimed, "Well, well, the fellow is a humorist and the fish we must have; but lay on lightly, and let the price be paid in our presence." After fifty lashes had been administered, "Hold, hold," exclaimed the fisherman, "I have a partner in this business, and it is fitting that he should receive his share." "What! are there two such madcaps in the world?" exclaimed the nobleman, "name him, and he shall be sent for instantly." "You need not go very far for him," said the fisherman; "you will find him at your own gate in the shape of your own porter, who would not let me in until I promised that he should have the half of whatever I received for my turbot." "Oh, oh," said the nobleman, "bring him up instantly; he shall receive his stipulated moiety with the strictest justice." This ceremony being finished, he discharged the porter, and amply rewarded the fisherman.

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