

of "Hallowe'en" is red lined ("Whyles owre a linn," etc.) "The Cottar's Saturday Night" must have been read and re-read. Stanzas ii., ix., xvi. are blue and red lined. "To a Mouse" has stanza ii. red lined, and close of stanza iii. and the last stanza.

The "Epistle to Davie" is blue lined against stanzas iv. and v. "Despondency" seems to have struck an answering chord, for these sad lines are heavily blue marked:—

"O life! thou art a galling load,
Along a rough, a weary road,
To wretches such as I."

"Man was made to Mourn" has a red pencil hand again (*Æt*) at the opening. "To a Mountain Daisy" has the golden second stanza red marked:—

"Alas! it's no thy neebor sweet
The bonnie lark," etc.

The "Epistle to a Young Friend" has the great sixth stanza blue lined. "To a Louse," the closing stanza is blue marked, "O wad some pow'r," etc. The "Second Epistle to Lapraik" has two lines blue marked, as indicating the Poet's age:—

"Now comes the sax and twentieth simmer,
I've seen the bud upo' the timmer."

The kindred epistle to W. S. has a blue pencilled hand (*Æt*) opposite the tribute to Robert Ferguson; and stanzas xiv. and xv. and part of xvi. are blue lined. Of the Songs, only one is specially marked with a red hand—"The gloomy night is gath'ring fast." Finally, the last stanza of "A Bard's Epitaph" is red underlined.

Such are the markings on Cowper's copy of the Poems of Robert Burns. I think most will agree with me in recognizing the perspicacity of the reader, and the staying power that twice over led him to read these poems in a "language new to him," and which language, while it is of Earth's most dulcet and supremest speech (John Ruskin witness), could not but be as "barbarism" to English, peculiarly English William Cowper. I must reiterate that the word-markings throughout testify to the persistence and thoroughness with which the volume was mastered, nor less to his prescience of critical insight—Alexander B. Grosart in The Bookman.

PILLOW-PROBLEMS.

The pillow-problem is one of practically universal interest, for he must be healthy and happy far beyond ordinary human experience who can say that he never remembers to have laid down his head on his pillow with the dread of sleeplessness before him. Most men at some times in their lives have known what it is to be in bed in the dark and yet wide awake, and look upon the return of such a condition with horror; for, in truth, the inability to sleep, coupled with the desire, is one of the most distressing sensations which mind and body are capable of enduring. Sleeplessness comes from many different causes, and thus the pillow-problem has a plentiful variety of aspects. First, there is the real disease of insomnia; one of the most painful and one of the most incurable and obscure of maladies. Of that we propose to say nothing, for it is a matter beyond the alleviation of mere palliatives and dodges. Sleeplessness caused by actual pain must, again, be left to the doctors. The sleeplessness produced by neuralgia or toothache can only be attacked by removing the pain. The

moment the pain is gone, sleep falls in an instant, and with the sweep of a heavy curtain released from its cords. If one has had two sleepless nights from a bad tooth and then has the tooth taken out, sleep comes on the third night, not only unimplored, but unawares. The pillow-problem for ordinary men and women under ordinary circumstances is what we have to deal with. Speaking broadly, we want to consider what is the best way of getting to sleep at night when worry or excitement, or overwork, or indigestion, or some such cause has banished sleep. Unquestionably, one of the best ways is to drink a tumbler, or a couple of tumblers of hot water in sips as one is undressing. The soothing effect is wonderful; and if care is taken to let at least two hours elapse since the last meal, no possible harm can come of the treatment. Another excellent device is to get up and take forty to sixty drops of sal-volatile in a wine-glass of water, with a good pinch of carbonate of soda added. That is a prescription which seldom fails. Many persons, however, either find these physical remedies of little or no avail, or else cannot be at the pains to use them. They argue that when they go to bed, they cannot tell whether they are going to sleep or not; and since sleeplessness is the exception, they are not going to swill hot water on the chance. Others, again, declare that sleeplessness is sure to attack them when they have no soda and sal-volatile handy; or that the bore of getting up and blundering about the room, striking matches, opening cupboards, wrenching out stoppers, mixing doses and finally taking them, is worse than the disease. Such people are not ill, they will tell you, but only upset for the moment. If they could distract their thoughts for a few minutes from this or that subject, they would, they feel, be asleep at once. What then they want is some good "tip" for distracting their minds, and so getting rest.

To try to satisfy this demand for a mental anodyne, Mr. Dodgson—better known to the world as the author of "Alice in Wonderland"—has published with Messrs. Macmillan & Co., a little volume entitled "Pillow Problems." The book, as he explains in the preface, is a collection of seventy-two problems, nearly all of which were solved while lying awake at night. The object of the publication is to bring comfort to those who are sleepless because they are "haunted by some worrying subject of thought which no effort of will is able to banish." As Mr. Dodgson says, it is useless to say: "I will not think of it any more! I have gone through it all thoroughly. It can do no good whatever to go through it again. I will think of something else;" for, two minutes after the resolve is made, up pops the head of the mental Jack-in-the-box with a grin and a "Here we are again, old fellow!" Who does not know the process? Your head touches the pillow; and you begin at once to wonder what could have induced you to sell out Corporation stock and to reinvest in Mexican railways. 'Well,' you say, 'what's done is done, and it is sheer madness to make myself ill by thinking of it now. That will only make me incapable of retrieving the blunder by earning more in my profession. Here goes, then to think of something else.' You begin, accordingly, to wonder what you shall think about. One subject after another is dismissed. The Bill for marking foreign

meat, or for stopping the adulteration of feeding-stuffs, is too dull; the utter inability of the Navy to cope with the combined fleets of Hungary, Belgium and Switzerland, too exciting. The cheapest place for a holiday at first sight seems good, but it suggests ways and means, and this suggests investments. No, no; for that way madness lies. Bimetallism! No, that will not do for Mexican railway dividends are paid in silver; or if not, at any rate Mexican fares and freights are, and the currency is therefore little better than a short cut to the tabooed subject. Home-rule! But the mind put to work on Home-rule in bed and in the dark, goes round and round without going like a screw that has come against a piece of stone or an iron bolt. 'Hang it! what shall I think about? you say' and in an instant up starts the horror, 'Only too happy to oblige.' 'I,' it says, 'alone am constant.' I stick to you everlastingly; and, like a whirlwind on the dykes, thoughts on the folly of not sticking to trustee investments rush upon you, and overwhelming all obstacles, take possession of your mind, riot and revel there, light their constant lamps, and wave their purple wings. It is all no good. You cannot prevent yourself thinking of Mexican railways merely by saying to yourself, 'I will not.' It is utterly impossible, by a mere effort of volition, to prevent these thoughts on present discontents. "Witness," says Mr. Dodgson in his "Alice in Wonderland" manner, the common trick played on a child of saying, "I'll give you a penny, if you'll stand in that corner for five minutes and not once think of strawberry jam. No human child ever yet won the tempting wager." But is it necessary, then, to own defeat, and to proclaim the triumph of worry—to hail the mental man of the sea? "Ave Cesar Imperator non dormituri te salutant." Assuredly not. Indeed would the curate's misreading be true: "And when they arose in the morning behold, they were all dead men." Then, you cannot will yourself not to think of Mexican rails, and cannot easily find ordinary subjects as substitutes, it is possible to select a topic of thought which will keep your mind occupied. The only way to clear your mind of Mexican rails is to fill it full of something else, and of something abstract in its nature, something which will not start, say as microbes in butter, and by a process of evolution end in a new chapter of "hints to small investors." Now, for this purpose, the more abstract the subject chosen the better. If you can take a simple problem in geometry, and hold your mind down on it till it becomes interesting, you can successfully banish the demon. The angles which make up a right-angle never put on the horrid shape of a board of directors recommending the omission of a dividend for the past half-year. No doubt, for this purpose of abstracting the mind, and for getting it rapt into regions of pure thought, mathematics are the best possible resource. Geometry and algebra, in other words, afford the ideal pillow-problems. Unfortunately, however, not all minds will bite on such questions as "Find a general formula for two squares whose sum=2," or on "In a given triangle to place a line parallel to the base such that the portions of sides intercepted between it and the base, shall be together equal to the base." There are thousands of men who would far rather not know than to know the general for-