

be taken as they exist. The religious thought of some is easily dissipated. Sydney Smith has well said that "a sparrow fluttering about a church is an antagonist which the most profound theologian is wholly unable to overcome." To those who would justify a disregard of ministerial orthodoxy, we find an apt reply in Dr. Campbell's *Lectures on Pulpit Eloquence*. A popular preacher of the author's time was asked by one about to publish a religious work, whether he thought it befitting a writer on religion to be concerned about such little matters as grammatical construction. Note his answer, "By all means. It is much better to write so as to make a critic turn Christian, than so as to make a Christian turn critic."

RYE.

MUSINGS.

NO. II.

Among the many things that terrify women—as spiders, bugs, worms, mice and men—guns stand pre-eminent. I do not assert that all women are alike in this particular. There are exceptions to the rule who can discharge a gun or pistol with as much bravado and accuracy as they can touch the keys of the piano, wield the broom, or use the dish cloth (for I speak now not of the pseudo-ladyism that confines itself exclusively to the parlor, but of that which understands the functions of pots and pans as well as those of the more refined household utensils); but the great body of femininity regards guns great and small, loaded and unloaded, with feelings that find vent in shrieks, shiverings, tears, and all the other symptoms of hysteria.

To what source can this peculiarity be traced? There is no "inexorable fate" impelling women to handle guns. They may pass life without once touching powder, if they will.

Among the objects which excite terror in the feminine heart, I have classed men. Opinions differ as to the correctness of this item. Some assert that the number of women who entertain feelings which compel

them to grow old in their maiden simplicity is small. This virtually admits the fact that the male race is not a detestable race.

"The heart like a tendril, accustomed to cling,
Let it grow where it will cannot flourish alone,
But will lean to the nearest and loveliest thing
It can twine with itself and make closely its own,"

sings Moore. Grant that this applies to woman, man is "the nearest and loveliest thing." Here, then, is the tie that binds the male heart and the female heart in the same bundle; and while the fair ones have no more dread of guns as guns than of men as men, they are still sadly worked upon when they conceive the possible effects of guns upon men.

Thus it happened that, when I proposed for myself a day's shooting in the woods, a most violent storm arose. Having had some experience in the matter I was prepared for this, and, seizing my gun on the first murmurings of the tempest, made my way to the more serene forest.

I have always had a liking for shooting. Whether it is because my maternal grandfather was a sharp sighted gunner in the navy of His Majesty King George the Fourth, or that in my infancy I was frequently dosed with dead-shot lozenges, can never be fully established. Certain it is that I took to popguns and pistols as naturally as a young cock to crowing.

Partridges were the object of my tramp. These birds love the shady retreats along the small water courses, diversified with sunny clearings and mossy banks. They are excellent drummers, but unlike these attendants of the great mercantile army, are not at all intrusive. They shun the walks of the sportsman; and it requires a sharp eye and quick ear to detect the uplifted head and almost noiseless rustle of the feathers. Partridges go in pairs oftener than in coveys. The quality of becoming invisible is possessed by them in an eminent degree. Shoot one; the other with head and tail projected vanishes with the smoke of your gun. Then, when you have tramped a circuit of half an acre or so in extent,