

their breast. They smile but to entice. They embrace but to crush. Of all the tremendous evils that blacken and blast our day none is perhaps more wide sweeping in its deathly influence than trashy books. The pernicious tendencies and alarming dangers of a corrupt Literature stare us in the face. Its ghastly eye, its passion flushed face, its gay but hollow laugh meet us everywhere. Around every community, every home, and every mind rises a thick slimy sickening sea, which unless dammed out by the most persistent and continuous labor will bury in its putrid depths every vestige of personal piety and public morality. How often do we hear the wild shriek of unmitigated agony, and see the last faint splash of the dying hand as the liquid putrefaction bubbles and hisses about the mouth of its victim. On many a dark and bloody deed, on many a ruined life, on many a suicide's grave might be truthfully written 'the harvest of a corrupt Literature.' We doubt not but that the fierce flames that roll and curl around the huge seething cauldron of lustful passion derive much of their horrible intensity from the inflammable materials of bad books. As a spark to powder so is a licentious word or thought to a corrupt imagination.

More powerful than the ancient Cyclopean giants, more poisonous than the African cobra is an immoral press. It gathers up all the accumulated filth of debauched and degraded minds, and pours it into every home. It besmears and pollutes everything it touches. It is the grave of virtue, and the fruitful breeding ground of every form of vice. It is the parent of many a species of loathesome reptiles that fatten upon the moral and mental garbage that poisons the social atmosphere of every land.

In a future article we hope to develop this important subject.

### REVERIE.

TO-NIGHT I am alone in an upper chamber whose window looks out upon the sea, not green and brightly heaving, singing its enchanting song, in whose strains Fancy intermingles its own deep minor, and the lightsome alto and airy tenor of long-haired Mermaid and her consort carolling in their deep coral caves; but troubled and frowning in the mourning robes of winter, broken by unwelcome visitors who heave their jagged heads above the surface, careless of the indignant lashing and mournful plaint of the restless wave. By a consonance with the spirit, nature seems to have donned her leafless robe, and to bewail in sad Aeolian notes her recent bereavement, while she tosses to the silent tearless heavens her shadowy arms, bony, fleshless, withering

and worn by the attrition of the swift moving years.

To-night I realize that ever the purest joy is wedded with sad or at least grave remembrances. I live for a while in the dead-year, a year which memory will not allow to rest in oblivion. 'Tis better so. Memory is more than an intellectual principle. It is one of God's great moral agents. Under its gentle influence my spirit is subdued and chastened, while, as its hands move aside the curtains of the past, the quiet twilight that it ushers into the soul is a ray by whose aid the spirit's eye beholds with clearer vision the blissful realities which she panteth to enjoy. Hail to thee sweet visitant! The silent spirit in the silent night awaits thy coming. Thou bringest music which like the harp of Carrol is pleasant and mournful to the soul. Thou comest from the new grave, and thy voice is like the murmur of the drooping willow, and thy breath is laden with the sweet incense of the Rosemary. In thy wing my poor soul shall rise buoyant above the chaos of time, whose ocean of contraries now rolls in reflux surges around me. But thou art departed, year most replete to me of all the dead, with sorrow. To-night I am thinking of the dreaming, while the mist obscures my eyes and the care pales my cheek. What visions are identified with thee? There is darkness and tempest upon a stormy sea. Over the labouring bark the screaming "sea birds soar and hover." The waves are white and froth in their fury, pursuing and relentless. When the sun hides his countenance sable-draped, and refuses to throw his wan ray upon the scene, only a few spars drift away, spars where cold hands clung, and the agonized soul prayed importunately for strength to overcome. And canst thou tell me, deep! was it not whispered to thee, that the soul even in that hour, supremest in joy or war, was a conqueror of fate? Was it not given to that soul to triumph over material adversity by enduring like a God? there, as at Calvary, the victim a victor, and rapt in glorious psalmody to defy thee. Nay, thou art voiceless from envy. Know, oh sea! that in conquering thou thyself art conquered by an irresistible power beyond thy reach, and that power deathless shall behold thy dissolution at the fulfilment of the promise—"there shall be no more sea."

Is it necessary, oh Father! that thus the heart should be an urn for such bitter ashes? Whatever the complaint of the first intense grief, our consciousness acknowledges wisdom in the providence and bows gratefully to the King of All.

Oh, my heart be still! Flee if thou wilt, chastened and weak, beneath the shadow of His wings, who dove-like broods over the world. His peace shall

make the ashes fertile in eternal fruit and perennial morning glories. Thou shalt read in nature the mysterious indications of her analogies to paradise. For thee, the "lark at Heavens Gate sings," for thee the field puts on immortal green. My brother: To-day I walked among the graves in the city of the dead, where we were wont to weep as one by one our kindred were lowered to the unawakening sleep in the narrow bed to pay the final penalty in corruption. But there I saw no marble which bore thy name or marked the place of thy rest. In the yearning of my heart the cry "where art thou my brother! went forth on the air, but returned hollow from the echoless void. God alone knoweth the story of thy funeral obsequies. Haply in some cavern of the deep amid eternal silence thou art at rest, peacefully awaiting the resurrection of the just.

Is it wrong, is it unkind to bewail thee? Can I control entirely that emotion which mourns.

"Oh for the touch of a banished hand  
And the sound of a voice that is still?"

Not wrong. Blessed be God for the luxury of such sorrow and such tears.

But see over yonder when the Pleiades and Orion are in concert, the dun clouds floating in broken battalions southward, the moon has broken away from her dusky guards whose broken charts are flying in a panic after the main body; and I see her fully formed crescent dipping towards me the southern horn. It will soon be midnight. One half the world is sleeping now, silent as those apparent stars or as the innumerable dust that lies unremembered below. Sleep on and take thy rest; for to thee as to me, toil cometh with the morning and memory. I know not the travail of thy soul in her infinite restlessness. Oh night, couldst thou but count thy voiceless thoughts, the dull beatings of thy weary brains and heart; the shadowy forms that to their sleepless eyes arise and people all the past white arms moving to and fro restlessly, incessantly, and the weary monotone of woe; the frenzied petition cleaving the night and beating the brassy sky and dying away mid-air into nothingness or rolling back from the abyss with the borrowed echo. In vain! In vain! what a catalogue of withered leaves and darkness souls would'st thou transcribe.

But to me night is sweetest. I cannot tell the mysterious influence which magnetizes my spirit. But I know that heaven seems not far away, and when I listen in the intense stillness I almost hear the brushing of an angel's wings, and imagination tells me that the stars are choiring to my individual soul in choruses of peace as if Jesus had laden them with the message of His love. And thou too my brother, thou art not far away. Methinks