THE CENTRE REPORTER.

FRED. KURTZ, Editor and Proprietor. Terms: $2 a Year, in Advance.

VOL. IX. CENTRE HALL, CENTRE CO., PA., THURSDAY APRIL 13, 1876. NO. 15.

IN VAIN WE WAIT.

And still they wait, and still will wait,
While months and years are circling by,
Gazing, the while, far out and straight
To where the water meets the sky.
Ah me! they know not that they stand
So near their treasures; that they might
Find them almost in reach of hand
Just by the rock, there, hid from sight.

I, too, once stood upon the shore,
As now they stand, and gazed far out
To see my beauteous ship come o'er;
But I, alas! I turned about,
And just around that bend I went,
Beyond that rock, so grim and lone,
And Hope, that angel heaven sent,
Forever from my heart was thrown.

The shore all 'long was strewn with wrecks
Of ships as grand and fair as mine;
And far at sea, like tiny specks,
The smiling, unmoved sun did shine
On naught but wrecks; and 'mongst the rest,
I saw what all my life to me
Had been life's treasure, cherished best,
The ship I watched from o'er the sea.

MY FRIEND.

[AFTER THE GERMAN.]

The friend who holds a mirror to my face,
And hiding none, is not afraid to trace
My faults, my smallest blemishes, within;
Who friendly warns, reproves me if I sin—
Although it seem not so—he is my friend.

But he who, ever flattering, gives me praise,
Who ne'er rebukes, nor censures nor delays
To come with eagerness and grasp my hand,
And pardon me, ere pardon I demand—
He is my enemy, though he seem my friend.
—*Scribner's Monthly.*

Vandevere's Body.

BY JOHN HUMPHREY.

On March 30, 1866, the B——Medical college (in which I was then a student) received an addition to its faculty in the person of Dr. Abel Fairfield, an eminent physician from an Eastern state.

I well remember his arrival and my first impression regarding him, which were not favorable. He came on horseback from the neighboring town of B——, which was at that time the terminus of the railroad. He was a tall, gaunt round-shouldered man, and I recollect, presented a ludicrously awkward appearance on horseback. He was very dark, with long, shaggy black hair, very heavy overhanging eyebrows, and an immense beard. His features were large and coarse, his eyes intensely black and piercing. His manner was very brusque—scarcely civil—and he soon became very unpopular with the students.

On April 2, three days after Dr. Fairfield's arrival, I had occasion to visit B——on business. On my way back to the college, along the dusty country road, a voice hailed me.

"I say, Mr. Willoughby!"

I looked up and saw that I was passing a hut erected a short distance from the road, and occupied by a man known as old Diogenes, and that it was this individual who had addressed me.

The man, old Diogenes, as he was called by the students and the townspeople, for want of a knowledge of his true name, had twenty years before arrived at this spot and erected the hut in which he had ever since lived. His name, or whence he came, no one knew. He would answer no questions, and would encourage no intimacy either with his affairs or himself. He seemed a victim of profound melancholy, and the popular belief was that he had been disappointed in love, and had for this reason eschewed the world and its vanities and chosen a life of solitude. But whether this supposition had any foundation in fact, no one was able to learn, for old Diogenes quickly resented the slightest appearance of an attempt to penetrate his secret. Certain students of the college, myself among the number, occasionally visited him, and found him a rarely intellectual man, thoroughly educated, and wonderfully well informed on all subjects. His personal appearance was very prepossessing. He was tall, very straight and well proportioned, with fine Grecian features, and clear olive complexion. His hair and beard were very thick, and of a dark brown color. His mode of living was not, as one might have supposed, productive of slovenly or filthy habits. The interior of his little cabin was as scrupulously neat as the college lecture hall, and himself as neat as any of our professors.

"Good morning, sir; what can I do for you?" was my response to old Diognes's salutation.

"You've got a new professor at the college?" he said.

"Yes."

"He rode past here the other day on his way from the railroad station to the college. He's a very peculiar looking man. His name is—?"

"Dr. Abel Fairfield," I replied. "He is from a Massachusetts city, and is very eminent in the profession."

"Dr. Abel Fairfield!" replied old Diogenes. "And so he's a great physician, eh? A shining light in the profession?"

"He is, undoubtedly," I answered.

"Well, Mr. Willoughby. I want you to tell this emiuent physician that I desire him to visit me at this place tonight at 8 o'clock."

"You wish him to visit you!" I exclaimed involuntarily.

"I wish him to visit me. Why not?" Tell him that—that Mr. Vandevere desires to see him."

"Mr. Vandevere?"

"I said so," was the reply. "Good day, Mr. Willoughby."

I was too well used to the recluse's ways to be offended at this abrupt dismissal, so bidding him good morning, I proceeded on my way. When near the college I met Dr. Fairfield. I gave him old Diogenes's message. When I mentioned the name of Vandevere he exclaimed—

"Vandevere! Vandevere, did you say. Mr. Willoughby?"

I fancied that his face turned a shade paler, and that his voice trembled. I replied in the affirmative.

"I never heard the name before in my life," he quickly added. "What sort of a looking person is this Vandevere or Diogenes, or whatever the name is?"

I described the recluse's personal appearance.

"Really, Mr. Willoughby," Dr. Fairfield said with a laugh when I had finished, "I am quite curious to see the fellow. I'll go to him. But what can he want of me?"

"I fancy he wishes your professional advice, sir, I replied. "He suffers from the heart disease. He has had two very severe attacks, the last of which came near ending his life. As he is aware that you are very eminent in the profession, I conjecture that he desires your opinion and assistance."

"Very likely, very likely" Dr. Fairfield said; "I'll see him to-night."

The next morning when all the students were assembled in the lecture room of the college, the president Dr. D——, arose and said: "Gentlemen I, have an announcement to make. The man whom you have all known as old Diogenes is dead, and—"

"Dead!" exclaimed Dr. Fairfield, who sat upon the platform near the president, "dead!"

He seemed laboring under great excitement.

Dr. D. frowned slightly at this interruption, but replied: "He died of heart disease, a complaint to which he was subject. He was found dead in his hut at an early hour this morning by one of the villagers."

"Ah! he was in a bad way last night, Dr. Fairfield said, quickly and nervously. "I visited him last evening, at his own request, and found him suffering intensely. I promised to call again this morning. And so he is dead? Dear, dear."

Our dignified president was evidently by no means pleased with this interruption from his subordinate but he continued:

"This morning a paper was brought to me which one of the villagers found in the old man's hut. It is a will dated several years back, and is signed with his true name, Richard Vandevere. In it he leaves his body to the college, requesting that it be used as a subject for dissection, it being his desire to—"

"His body to be dissected here!" gasped Dr. Fairfield, rising from his seat.

"The body will be here in the course of the day," continued the president, not noticing the interruption. "It will be dissected to-morrow morning in the presence of each student as—"

Dr. Fairfield uttered a piercing cry and fell to the floor insensible.

He was soon resuscitated, and explained that he had from boyhood been subject to attacks of vertigo.

The body of Richard Vandevere arrived late that afternoon, and was placed in the dissecting room, which was situated on the first floor of the building.

The next morning, just before the hour appointed for the dissection, the janitor of the college rushed, pale and breathless, into the recitation-room, and whispered a few words in the ear of our president, who immediately rose and said:

"Gentlemen, the janitor informs me that the body of the man Richard Vandevere has disappeared from the premises. Do any of you know aught of this?"

No reply was made.

Dr. D——ordered a search to be immediately commenced. But the body could not be found. When a week had passed, and no clue to the mystery had been obtained, the president sent to New York for detectives, whom he paid from his own pocket, and who were employed for several weeks; but who finally abandoned the search in despair. We then gave up all hope of ever solving the mystery.

A few weeks after the disappearance of Richard Vandevere's body I visited his former home, which had by this time gained the reputation of being haunted, and was consequently let severely alone by the country people. The place had assumed an indescribable air of desolation. Most of the movable furniture had been stolen; the door stood open, the little windows were darkened with innumerable cobwebs, the floor was dusty, and covered with beetles, which ran in all directions at my approach, and a homeless dog which had taken refuge in a corner of the hut made a hasty exit as I entered. My motive in visiting the cabin was to search for some clue to Richard Vandevere's past history. I thought it possible that some book some scrap of paper might exist by which I could learn something of the man's life and of the motives which had prompted him to sever his connection with the world and retire to this lonely spot. After an hour's unsuccessful search I noticed that the hearth stone seemed loosely fitted in its place. I lifted it and found under it a number of books, which I eagerly examined. All but one were medical and scientific works; upon this one were inscribed the words "The Diary of Richard Vandevere, M. D., of London, England." The entries in this book extended over a period of three years—from 1845 to 1848; twenty years before the date when they first met my eyes. I make such extracts from the diary as are essential to a clear understanding of my story.

May 1, 1845.—I was married to-day to Miriam Darrell, the purest and best woman in the world. * * *

November 8.—Am succeeding wonderfully well in my profession. Have more patients than I can possibly attend to. Have secured Dr. Ralph Arlington of Liverpool as a partner. He is a young physician of remarkable ability. * * * I anticipate great pleasure that my success brings with it is the thought that Miriam, my dear wife, is placed beyond the reach of poverty or want.

January 20, 1846.—I have been a blind doting fool! That cursed villian, Ralph Arlington, has stolen from me my wife. Miriam, in whom I believed as I believe in heaven and the angels, has deserted me! * * * Ralph Arlington has forged my name to a draft on the bank of England and stolen almost every shilling I possess in the world. * * * But I will hunt them down, and when we meet no power on earth can save them. * * *

May 8.—I shall cease to continue the search. I can find no trace of them. I will leave them to the punishment of heaven. I am weary, worn and heartbroken. * * * Never again will I place confidence in any human being. * * * Worldly honor, once so dear to me, I value no longer. * * * I will leave England at once and forever; I will end my days in a foreign land. * * *

May 10.—To-day I secured passage in a steamer which sails for New York to-morrow.

The followed entries described his voyage, arrival in the new country and settlement near B——. The last words in the book were as follows:—

July 1, 1848.—Have been in this place two years now; and am resigned to my fate.

I carried the diary to President D——. He read it, then said: "Mr. Willoughby, let the poor fellow's sad story remain our secret—for the present at least."

A year passed. The mysterious affair of which I have written had long since lost its interest to the students and the townspeople and had ceased to be the one all-absorbing subject of conversation.

On the morning of June 4, 1867, President D——summoned Walter Clayton, a student, and myself to his room. When we had entered he closed the door. His face wore an unusually serious expression.

"Gentlemen," he began, "you have heard of the death of old George Garrison?"

"The sexton of the Episcopal church?" I said; "yes, sir, he died three days ago, did he not?"

"Yes. Gentlemen, just previous to his death he sent me a message requesting me to hasten to his bedside, as he had a secret of importance to communicate to me. I obeyed the summons at once. With his dying breath George Garrison cleared up the mystery surrounding the disappearance of Richard Vandevere's body."

"Is it possible!" Walter Clayton and I exclaimed, simultaneously.

"Garrison told me," continued the president, "that he himself removed the body from the dissecting-room and buried it at midnight in a spot which he designated in the churchyard; and that he was hired and assisted in his accomplishment of the deed by Dr. Fairfield."

"Dr. Fairfield!" I cried.

"Gentlemen," the president resumed, "I have caused the remains to be secretly disinterred and placed in the dissecting-room, where they now lie under lock and key. I wish to make an autopsy of the body in your presence. Come with me."

We silently followed him to the dissecting-room. There, upon a slab, lay the rude box in which Richard Vandevere's body had been brought to the college a year before. The atmosphere of the room was stifling. Dr. D——threw open the window, after which we removed the lid of the coffin. We found the remains in an excellent state of preservation. Dr. D——'s examination disclosed the startling fact that the stomach of the dead man contained a large quantity of arsenic—enough to have killed half a dozen men.

"It is as I suspected!" exclaimed the president excitedly, throwing down his knife. "The man was poisoned. How the deed was done I know not, but I am positive that Richard Vandevere was murdered!"

"By whom?" I cried.

"By Dr. Fairfield, otherwise Ralph Arlington," replied Dr. D——, who seemed in his excitement to have lost every particle of dignity with which he had been accustomed to awe us.

"Ralph Arlington!" I exclaimed.

"Yes, Mr. Willoughby. When I read that diary of poor Richard Vandevere's which you found, I recollected having met Arlington, the false friend and seducer, when in London, where I lived in 1845. It suddenly occurred to me that Dr. Fairfield bore a wonderful resemblance to Arlington. I at once caused inquiries regarding Fairfield's antecedents to be made, the result of which confirmed my suspicions, though I still possessed no positive proof of the correctness of my supposition. But little could be learned of him, save that he arrived in New York in 1846 with his wife—or a woman he called his wife—and soon obtained a lucrative practice, and later an extensive reputation. He had always given evasive answers when questioned regarding his life previous to 1846, and his friends soon learned that the subject was a disagreeable one to him. His wife died two years after their arrival in America, and—"

The report of a pistol sounded in the garden outside. We rushed to the window. Dr. Fairfield lay upon the ground, groaning terribly.

"Good Heaven!" exclaimed Dr. D——; "he has shot himself!"

"He has been outside the window listening!" Clayton cried.

We leaped into the garden, and bore Dr. Fairfield into the house. He was bleeding profusely from a wound in the side.

"He cannot live!" announced Dr. D——, after a brief examination.

"You were right, Dr. D——" the dying man said; "I am that wretch Ralph Arlington, who for twenty years led a life of torture, which he thanks Heaven is almost an end."

After a brief pause he resumed:—"I wish to confess all before I die. I murdered Richard Vandevere. When I passed his cabin on my way to this institution he recognized me, although I did not see him. He sent for me by Mr. Willoughby. I dared not disobey the summons. I went to him. As I entered the hut he closed and locked the door, crying, 'Ralph Arlington, false villain! you're in my power at last.' He grasped my throat and bore me to the ground. I was utterly powerless in his hands; he seemed endowed with the strength of a dozen men. I had abandoned all hope of ever leaving the place alive, when suddenly his grasp relaxed, and he fell back gasping for breath and crying, 'Water! water!' I saw that the terrible excitement under which he labored had brought on a severe attack of heart disease. He might die then and there! But soon it became apparent to my practical eye that he was recovering. A terrible thought occurred to me. Why allow him to recover? Why not kill him? If I spared his life I was ruined! I could poison him; in my pocket was a package of arsenic, which I had purchased for the purpose of making certain experiments. He would be universally believed to have died of heart disease. A doubt arose on the point a word from me, one of the most eminent medical men in the country, would remove it. 'Water! water! water!' the prostrate man cried, this time in a firmer voice, for he was fast recovering. In an instant I had emptied the arsenic into a tumbler, which I then half filled with water and gave to Vandevere. He drank it and fell back, crying out: "Bitter, bitter!" I cannot, I dare not tell you all that followed. Suffice it is to say that I remained with him till he died. Then I removed all trace of the poison, and hastened to the college. The next morning the announcement that a will had been found in which Vandevere left his body to this institution, filled me with horror. I knew that the presence of arsenic would be immediately discovered in the stomach; I was certain that suspicion would point to me, and that my life would be forfeited. These thoughts so affected me that, as you remember, I fainted. All that day I racked my brain for some means of escape from the terrible exposure with which I was threatened. Finally I decided upon the plan which I put into execution, and which has concealed the evidence of my crime from the world until to-day. I paid George Garrison, the sexton, fifty dollars to remove the body at midnight and bury it in the churchyard."

One hour later Ralph Arlington died.

The Ancients on Dreams.

Cicero, Plutarch, and other ancient authors, have preserved the following anecdote: "Simonides, having met with the dead body, on the highway, of a man who was a stranger to him, had it buried. As he was about to embark, he dreamed that the man whom he had buried appeared to him and informed him that if he persisted in embarking his voyage he would perish. This warning induced him to alter his mind, and it appeared subsequently that the vessel was wrecked."

Says Bernadin St. Pierre: "The opinion that truth is sometimes presented to us during sleep prevails among all nations. The greatest men of antiquity believed in it, among others Alexander, Cæsar, the Scipios, the two Catos, and Brutus, none of whom were weak-minded men. The Old and New Testament furnishes us with numerous examples of dreams that have been realized. For myself, I need nothing beyond my own experience, and I have more than once found that dreams may be warnings, giving us some information interesting to ourselves alone, and that it is not possible to combat or defend with reasonings things that surpass human reason."

Cicero, (De Divin. lib. I.) tells of a famous dream. Two friends arrived at Megara, and lodged at different places. One of the two, was scarcely asleep when he dreamed that his companion announced to him with a melancholy air, that his host had plotted to assassinate him, and entreated him to come as quickly as possible to his succor. Upon this he awoke, but convinced that it was only a dream, he went to sleep again. A second time his friend appeared and conjured him to hurry, as the murderers were about to enter. Much disturbed he was amazed at the recurrence of his dream, and prepared to go to his friend, but reason and fatigue gained the mastery, and he returned to bed. His friend then appeared for the third time, pale, bleeding, disfigured. "Wretch," said he, "you did not come at my entreaty! It is now over; nevertheless revenge me. At daybreak you will meet at the city gate, a cart load of dung; stop it, and have it unloaded; you will find my body concealed in the center; inter me honorably and pursue my murderers." Such tenacity, such consistent details allowed no hesitation. The friend arose and repaired to the gate indicated; found the cart, stopped the driver, who was disconcerted, and on searching discovered the body of his friend.

The Timidity of Orators.

A writer of the *Fortnightly Review* asks whether artists, and especially orators, are peculiarly liable to the sensation of pain and to fear. He thinks that they are, and attributes it to an unusually sensitive organization. Peel is believed to have owed his death to being unable to bear an operation which a less sensitive man might have borne. An eminent operator described Bishop Wilberforce as a "bundle of nerves," and as the most sensitive patient he had ever known. Orators, as a rule, show a painful anxiety about their own speeches, and toilsome uneasiness seems a condition of their success. A junior counsel once congratulated Sir William Follet on his perfect composure in prospect of a great case. Sir William merely asked his friend to feel his hand, which was wet with anxiety. The late Lord Derby said that his principal speeches cost him two sleepless nights—one in which he was thinking what to say, the other in which he was lamenting what he might have said better. Cicero, according to Plutarch "not only wanted courage in arms, but in his speaking also; he began timidly, and in many cases, he scarcely left off trembling and shaking even when he got thoroughly into the current and substance of his speech."

A Deep Well.

This well, which is over four thousand feet in depth, is in the village of Sperenberg, about twenty miles from Berlin. It was begun about five years ago by the government authorities, to ascertain the existence of rock salt beneath the strata of gypsum occurring in the locality. At a depth of two hundred and eighty feet the salt was reached. The boring was prosecuted by steam until the final depth was attained. At the lowest points, the sal deposits still continue.

The Causes of Insanity.

Dr. Clouston Physician Superintendent of the Royal Edinburgh Asylum, in his annual report, says: "Glancing over the summary of assigned causes, it is at once seen that intemperance stands out as by far the most frequent. It alone causes the 48 of the 260, or about 20 per cent in which the causes were known; and along with other allied excesses for which the patients had themselves been responsible, it accounts for 72, or 28 per cent, of the cases. Much is properly said about the prevention of diseases nowadays. Most unquestionably the sum total of the mental diseases in our city might have been lessened by that amount if the laws of nature had been better obeyed. Fifty of the cases thus resulting from drinking and excesses being paupers, each costing £27 a year to the public rates, over £1,300 will have been paid for one years production of lunacy from very preventible causes, and, of course, this takes no account of the cost of the old incurable cases already in the asylum from the same cause. I am quite sure that intemperance was the remote cause of the disease in more of the cases; but even allowing for these, we cannot put this down as accounting in any way for more than one in four of all cases of insanity. In assigning intemperance as the cause of insanity in a number of cases, two things must not be forgoten. The first is, that the taking of stimulants may not be a cause at all, but merely a symptom of the brain disorder; and, as a matter of course it is often one of the early symptoms in many cases. The second thing to be kept in mind is that there are many cases in which it is the real cause of the mental disorder; but the mental balance had always been so unstable, and the brain working so easily overset, that a very little alcohol indeed will bring on an attack of insanity in the persons, just as in those same people a fright of a little over-excitement will upset their sanity. This is the class of persons who, in my experience, get upset by religious revivals. The resetling and recuperative power that is really an essential part of a healthy nervous system, whereby the effects of not too long-continued over-eating or over-drinking, over feeling over-work are at at one recovered from, is wanting in these people. It is a poor sort of boiler that bursts whenever the exact pressure needed for its daily work is exceeded. And before I leave this subject I may mention that I have not reckoned in any way the mere drink craving, or the inability to resist it, as constituting insanity. I believe that this may or may not be a real insanity in different cases, but it was from developed and unmistakable mental alienation that all my patients suffered. When the causes of the insanity of our 88 private patients are compared to the 222 paupers, the difference is most striking, and entirely bears out the general law already indicated. Of these 88 private patients, mental cause produced the disease in about 48, physical being only 12 per cent under them, while in the paupers they have just one third as numerous. These facts tend strongly to show that the higher in the social scale we go the more strongly do purely mental and moral shocks act in upsetting a healthy mental balance, and that those cases operate more powerfully on the lower classes of a town population than an agricultural."

A Musicale "At Home."

This is an afternoon "AT HOME." These words, you will observe, are printed in very large type. In a corner of the card we gather from the small words of "music" the quite mixed and genial nature of the whole entertainment.

Signor Boreo Guffaw, the well-known bass singer, is expected to look in; a few amateurs have promised to help if necessary, and every one who knows Mrs. de Perkins is aware that this is one of those two annual assemblies in which that well-meaning lady endeavors to pay off the various dinners and "At Homes" which she may herself have been exposed to during the past year. De Perkins, who is elderly, engaged in the city, and not wealthy, won't give dinners; he does not like these "At Homes," but he is told that they are necessary—and then Guffaw, who taught Mrs. De Perkins before she was married, is very good-natured, and so is every one; and the rooms, not very large, are soon full, the staircase soon ceases to be navigable, and Mrs. De Perkins, who really is rather nice, stands at the door, and does her best to catch every one's eye, although, by a certain wild and anxious look in her face, we know that she is wondering why Guffaw does not begin.

Jammed into a niche which just fits me if I hold my arms quite stiff and stand up stark and straight, I presently hear the eminent foreigner begin "In questa Tomba scura." Do I enjoy this song? In the first place I am ill at ease. I crane my neck to look round the corner. I can just see the portly basso with his thumbs in his waistcoat pockets, but just opposite me stands my hostess receiving more guests, and the consequence is that Guffaw's "Tomba" is mixed up with all kinds of *sotto voces*—"So glad you've come," "How's——? "You musn't talk," "Tea in the next room"—while in front of me conversation, momentarily suspended, recommences, all about some garden party and some one being lost, and where they were found, and who they were with, and so on.

Do I enjoy the music? Whether I do or not I intend to get out of this miserable niche—away to the other room, where there is tea. The song is over, and there is naturally a pause in conversation; at last I find some one that I wish to talk to. I am just explaining with unequaled lucidity the new scheme for boring the channel—attracting, in short, more than one attentive listener—when up trips my anxious but smiling hostess, "You must really listen to this gentleman who is playing; a clergyman, you know, most gifted; he plays nothing but the oldest masters—Bach, and that sort, you know. Hush! hush!" and she glides off tapping and silencing people right and left, just they have got into a nice chat and are beginning to make way—as I was, in fact.

I look around me. Disappointed, cross, irritable-looking faces, which a moment before were smiling and animated, and from the distance the hard tinkle of the perfectly satisfied musician grating upon every one's nerves—why? Not because it is so bad, simply because it is not wanted then and there. Gradually, as the everlasting fugue goes on and on, or runs into another fugue, people begin to talk feebly. I begin about the Channel again, but try this time my audience has dispersed, my most devoted hearer—a lady who suffers frightfully from sea sickness—does not seem to remember where I left off. I can't quite remember myself—we drop the subject. I have got to begin all over again, but something different, to some one else, then at last the fugue leaves off. Did any one enjoy the music? Then Guffaw is put on to sing a duet just as I was telling that capital story about the sparrow in church. Well, of course it was no good, all the point was taken out of it because I had to hurry over the end in a guilty kind of underbreath. I did not stay to hear the new amateur tenor, Mr. Flutuloo, who, I am told, sang with an eye-glass fixed rigidly in one eye, while he positively wept with the other. I can believe that the sensation he created may have been considerable, I was a great deal too sore about the Channel tunnel and the sparrow, etc., to care; in short, I left Mrs. de Perkins' At Home in a very bad humor, after, I regret to say, hearing some music, but certainly not enjoying it. The moral of this:

1. Let it be either music or conversation, but not both.

2. If music, let all the audience be musical, and all the musicians good.

3. Don't cram the room and suffocate the singers, but ask a moderate company; let them all be seated, and let the conversation in between be limited to the merest interchange of courtesies.

4. Avoid the current musical "At Home." The De Perkins' method never answers; it offends the real musicians, encourages imposters, and bores the company.—*Good Words.*

The Thorn in the Flesh—A Sermon in Disguise.

In the range of our common history we cannot fail to see the presence of this thorn in the greatest and noblest lives. It may be a thing like Byron's club-foot; it shall torment, as if there were no greater misfortunes possible to man than to go halting all his days; or it may be as great a thing as Dante's worship of Beatrice, as he appears in the picture, with that face sad beyond expression, looking up to the beautiful saint whose "soul was like a star and dwelt apart." Or it may be a great vice, like that which seized and held Coleridge and DeQuincy and put them down in the dungeon of despair. Or it may be like the dyspepsia that darkens the whole vision of Carlyle, turning his afternoons into a grim and lurid sunset.

In Luther it was a blackness of darkness that would come, defying both physicians and philosophy, and beating down the soaring soul as a great hailstone beats down a bird.

With one man it is every now and then a black day; like those that came to Luther; with another it is the bitter memory of a great sin, or a great wrong or a great mistake. It is a pain in the citadel of life with another, which cannot be removed, in spite of all that the doctors can do.

With men like Edward Irving and Robert Hall, and Johnathen Swift it is the fine edge, as sharp as that over which the Mussulman dreams he will pass into Paradise, dividing transcendant genius from its saddest ruins. There is a man, whose name will stand high in our history, of whom it might be said, "he must be one of the happiest of men." But there is a pain which follows him like his shadow; not a bodily but a mental pain, which he will carry with him to his grave.

Nothing can reveal a more beautiful manliness or womanliness than quietness and steadiness through intense physical or mental pain. To see the patient face on which sorrow has graven its lines, reflecting an unconquered soul, is a royalty, to which the purple robe and acclamation are a vain show.

Medicine in Ancient Egypt.

Ebers, the German archæologist, has made an interesting discovery of what is said to be a portion of one of the lost Hermetic books of medicine. Hitherto all attempts to trace the origin of the reputed Hermetic writing have failed, and it has been assumed that the great "Hermes" was a mythological personage invented by the earlier alchemists to credit the acquired knowledge with the authority of antiquity. The manuscript, when thoroughly deciphered, may throw some light on this doubtful point; but, even if it fails to do so, the fact that a fragment of the lost learning of the Egyptians has been recovered is a matter of scientific interest. The manuscript was discovered among the bones of a mummy some years ago by an Arab, and on his death it was offered to Dr. Ebers, who eventually purchased it at a considerable price. It consists of a single sheet of papyrus, about sixty feet in length, and the characters are in red and black ink. Judging from the characters, the date of the manuscript may be placed about 1,500 years B. C., making it over 3,300 years old, and, if the earlier portion of the century, it would have been contemporaneous with the period of Moses' residence at the Court of Pharaoh. Only a portion of the document has at present been translated by Ebers, including some of the headings of the various chapters, such as "the secret book of the physicians," "the science of the beating of the heart," "the knowledge of the heart as taught by the priest-physician Nebseclit," "medicines for alleviating the abdomen." There is every reason to suppose that the Egyptians attained a high degree of scientific knowledge at a very early period of their history. At the present day it is still called, we believe, by the Copts the Land of Kemi. Lindas has suggested that a knowledge of this art was introduced into Europe by the Argonauts, who sailed to Colchis to carry off the Golden Fleece. The Colchians, according to Herodotus, were an Egyptian colony, and Lindas supposes the Golden Fleece to have been a book written on sheepskin, teaching the method of making gold by the chemical art. The date of the Argonautic expedition was, according to most chronographers, 1250 B. C., or 300 years later than the supposed date of Ebers' manuscript. It is to be hoped that future researches may bring to light further evidence of the scientific history of the past, and so enable us to estimate the degree of civilization and scientific attainment reached by the early races of mankind.—*London Lancet.*

Kite Day in Japan.

A letter from Nagaski, Japan, printed in the New Orleans *Southwestern Presbyterian* says: "On the 15th of April was the great kite day for Nagaski. The Japanese are very fond of kite flying, and display a great deal of skill. The kites have no tails like ours, and are made of two pieces of bamboo crossed, covered with the thin but very strong Japanese paper. The people all assembled on the top of "Kompira," a hill about eleven hundred feet high, and the air was thick with kites. Several hundred kites were in the air at the same time, and the great aimof each operator is to maneuver his kite so as to cut the string of the others. For this purpose the first couple of hundred feet of string from the kite is covered with rosin and pounded glass. Sometimes four or five kites would get foul of each other, then the thing was either to get your kite clear or cut the string of the others. Then again, having cut the kite-string, it was wondeful to see them catch this detached kite, away up in the air, with their kite and capture it, the universally accepted rule being that a kite belongs to you just as long as you can keep it out of somebody's else hands. The Japs never get angry at such things. It would have been hard to find 20,000 or 30,000 people anywhere else in the world to enjoy themselves so much and with nothing disagreeable attending it.

Night Railroad Riding.

We have sometimes heard it remarked by timid persons that they would not travel at night upon a railroad—their impression being that there is more danger of accidents in the dark than there is in daylight. Upon first thought it would seem to be the fact.—There are many circumstances which make night travelling comparatively safe. All work upon the track is stopped. Comparatively few other trains are on the road.—Switches are more likely to be right than at any other times, as they are not in use for other trains, and are locked. The signals for night trains, being made at night, would scarcely fail to be observed and obeyed; and what is more important, would be seen at a greater distance than if made at daylight. The engineer has less to attract his attention than in daylight. While after all, a rock or tree falling across the bend in the track in broad daylight, or an intended obstruction, is nearly as much a "hidden danger" as if encountered in the night. There are many places in nearly all roads where the range of view is less than the reflecting headlight at night. So, after all it would appear that one could take a night's rest in a railroad car with comparative safety.

Social and Religious Customs in Alaska.

These Indians believe in evil spirits who live in the water, and send sickness among the people—a belief to which the occasional disasters caused by mussel or fish poisoning have doubtless given rise. They hold communication with these spirits through their sorcerers, but do not worship them in any way, or try to propitiate them with offerings. When a Kolosh dies his body is burned, and a rude monument placed where the ashes are buried. They believe that the spirit lives forever, but have no idea of any reward for virtue or punishment for vice. According to their belief strict distinction of rank is preserved in the other world, all the chiefs being in one place, the common people in another, and the slaves in a corner by themselves. Only when slaves are killed at the funeral of their chief their souls remain in eternal attendance on their master. This cruel custom was said to be abolished under the Russian rule, but it always has existed and is kept up to the present day, though the ceremonies are performed out of reach of the authorities. Several cases of the kind have occurred since the transfer of the territory in spite of the vigilance of the authorities, and no wonder, as our government has done nothing to suppress slavery where it exists right under the very eyes of military rule. When a child is born it is carried and nursed by the mother until it is able to crawl and munch away on dried salmon; then the scanty clothing of fur with which it was covered at first is removed, and to strengthen its constitution the child is immersed in the river or sea every morning; but as their own parents would be likely to yield to the piteous cries of the little martyrs to discipline, this duty is generally entrusted to an uncle or some other relative who stops all weeping or screaming with a liberal application of switch. The children implicitly obey their parents at all ages, and great care is bestowed upon the old and disabled. Orphans are provided for by the community, and fare as well as any of the other children. When a young man wishes to marry he first asks the consent of his parents, and when that is obtained he goes to the village where his intended lives, and sends a proposal through some "mutual friend," and if the answer is favorable he repairs to the house at once with some presents for the parents and relatives of the girl, and then takes immediate possession of his new chattel without any further ceremonies. A short time after this the new Benedick pays a visit to his wife's relations in company with her, and if she has nothing to complain of then, presents must be made to him and his bride, exceeding in value those he made at first. The Koloski only regard relationship on the mother's side and the succession and inheritance are all traced to female line. Polygamy is the general custom and exists even among the Christian Kenaitze, where it is tolerated by the native and half-breed priests in the families of chiefs. The wives often quarrel, and stabs with knives and daggers are not of very rare occurrence.

How to Make Marriage Beautiful.

In the first place, let people defer to the laws of health, of sanity, hereditary soundness; let them obey restrictions, consult wholesome seasons, respect the limits set up by the sense of nature. Mutual ignorance on these points is filling marriage with unneccessary evils; they not only spoil the well being of a family, but spoil its disposition. Let the work in every house be reduced, by a reduction of its ambitions, till all its tables, all the clothes, exactly represent the current conditions of prosperity; not a bracket or a ribbon for exaggeration, not a single room for parade, neither sewing, washing, eating, scouring, company giving beyond actual needs, and all done by the least elaborate methods. Then, in the second place, reduce to the lowest possible point the disturbances which arise from ignorance and vanity, from artificial training; you simply liberate marriage for more effective discharge of its spirtual purpose. The men and women might suspect that they were ill-mated till life itself pronounced the banns. Teach children that marriage only prolongs their school hours into the future or sterner discipline and less perishable attainments. Warn them against those affectionate extravagances which undermine respect, against the physical errors which so sap the will that it is humbled and enslaved by annoyance which health and freshness laugh at. And teach them simplicity, make vulgar habits and ambitions appear odious to them, ply their imagination with austere and noble models, tempt them to fall in love first with spiritual beauty, whose service makes them free, then they will be better prepared to discover that marriage withholds felicity until it has been earned.

Oriental Names.

The Orientals are as fond of calling people by nicknames as Westerners could possibly be, and these names, suggested by some peculiarity of feature or manner are often exceedingly appropriate. Six-fingered, half-mustache, shovel nose; liquor jug, a drunkard; catch-no-jackals, an unsuccessful hunter; son of golden hair, a red-headed man; son of the nightingale, laughter, come and go, busybody; son of a fox, son of a cat, son of a wolf, a sheep thief; son of thunder, son of the devil, and many similar, are but examples of the appropriateness of these names. The designations of girls are supposed to be expressive of those charms which will aid them in securing a fortunate alliance in matrimony, the chief end of an Eastern woman's life. Often the names of the most brilliant stars are given them, as Venus and others; the word Esther means a star, and was the favorite name for Jewish girls. They were named light, dawn, twilight, moonlight, and the names of favorite trees also given them, such as the pomegranate, almond, and date palm. They were also called after precious metals and gems, and given the names of fleet and graceful animals and birds, as well as of moral qualities, Diamond, emerald, pearl, brilliant, gem, sugar lip, princess, gazelle, dove, sparrow, and among the moral attributes well-spoken, love, affection, and the holy one.

Good Manners.

'Tis a rule of manners to avoid exaggeration. A lady loses as soon as she admires too easily and too much. In man or woman, the face and the person lose power when they are on the strain to express admiration. A man makes his inferiors his superiors by heat. Why need you, who are not a gossip, talk as a gossip, and tell eagerly what the neighbors or the journals say? State your opinion without apology. The attitude is the main point, assuring your companion that, come good news or bad, you remain in good heart and mind, which is the best news you can possibly communicate. Self control is the rule. You have in you there a noisy, sensual savage, which you are to keep down, and turn all his strength to beauty.

For instance what a senescbal and detective is laughter. It seems to require several generations to train a squealing or a shouting habit out of man. Sometimes, when in almost expression the Choctaw and the slave have been worked out to him, a coarse nature still betrays itself in his contemptible squeals of joy. The great gain is, not to shine, not to conquer your companion—then you learn nothing but conceit—but to find a companion who knows what you do not; to tilt with him and be overthrown, horse and foot, with utter destruction of all your logic and learning. There is a defeat that is useful. Then you can see the real and the counterfeit, and will never accept the counterfeit again. You will adopt the art of war that has defeated you. You will ride to battle horsed on the very logic which you found irresistible. You will accept the fertile truth instead of the solemn customary lie.

When people come to see us we foolishly prattle, lest we be inhospitable. But things said for conversation are chalk eggs. Don't say things. What you are stands over you the while, and thunders so that I cannot hear what you say to the contrary. A lady of my acquaintance said "I don't care so much for what they say as I do for what makes them say it." The law of the table is beauty—a respect to the common soul of all the guests. Everything is unseasonable which is private to two or three or any portion of the company. Tact never violates for a moment this law; never intrudes the orders of the house, the vices of the absent, or a tariff of expenses, or professional privacies; as we say, we never "talk shop" before company. Lovers abstain from caresses, and haters from insults, while they sit in one parlor with common friends. Would we codify the laws that should reign in households, and whose daily transgression annoys and mortifies us, and degrades our household life, we must learn to adorn every day with sacrifices. Good manners are made up of petty sacrifices.—*Ralph Waldo Emerson.*

Some Traits of Beethoven.

Beethoven used to sit for hours at the piano, improvising the thoughts which he afterwards jotted down on paper, and subsequently elaborated into the music with which he astonished the world. If he discovered that he had been overheard at such times—as happened once when Cipriana Potter called upon the great composer and was shown into an adjoining room—he was incensed to the highest degree. In another mood, especially after he had become deaf, while working out a subject in his mind, he would leave his house at night or in the early morning, and walk for many hours through the most remote and solitary places, through woods and by-ways, absorbed, silent and abstracted. In this way he sometimes would take the circuit of Vienna twice in a day, or, if he were at Baden, long excursions across the country. When engaged in his magnificent *Sonata Apassionata* he one day took a long walk with Ferdinand Ries, his pupil. They walked for hours, but during the whole time Beethoven spoke not a word, but kept humming, or rather howling up and down the scale. It was the process of incubation. On reaching home he seated himself at the piano without taking off his hat, and dashed into the splendid finale of that noble work. Once there he remained for some time, totally regardless of the darkness, or the fact that he and Ries had had nothing to eat for hours. His appearance became perfectly well known to people of all classes, who exclaimed, "There is Beethoven," when they saw him; and it is related that once, when a troop of charcoal burners met him on a country path, heavily laden as they were, to let him pass, for fear of troubling the great master's meditations. When composing in his own room at home, he would sometimes walk about in a reverie, pouring cold water over his hands alternately, from jug after jug till the floor of the room was inundated, and the people came running up-st